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Reaching the hard-to-reach with political education on the EU

Märthe-Maria Stamer

University of Göttingen

Measuring and Evaluating the Effectiveness of Active Citizenship Education Programmes to Support Disadvantaged Youth
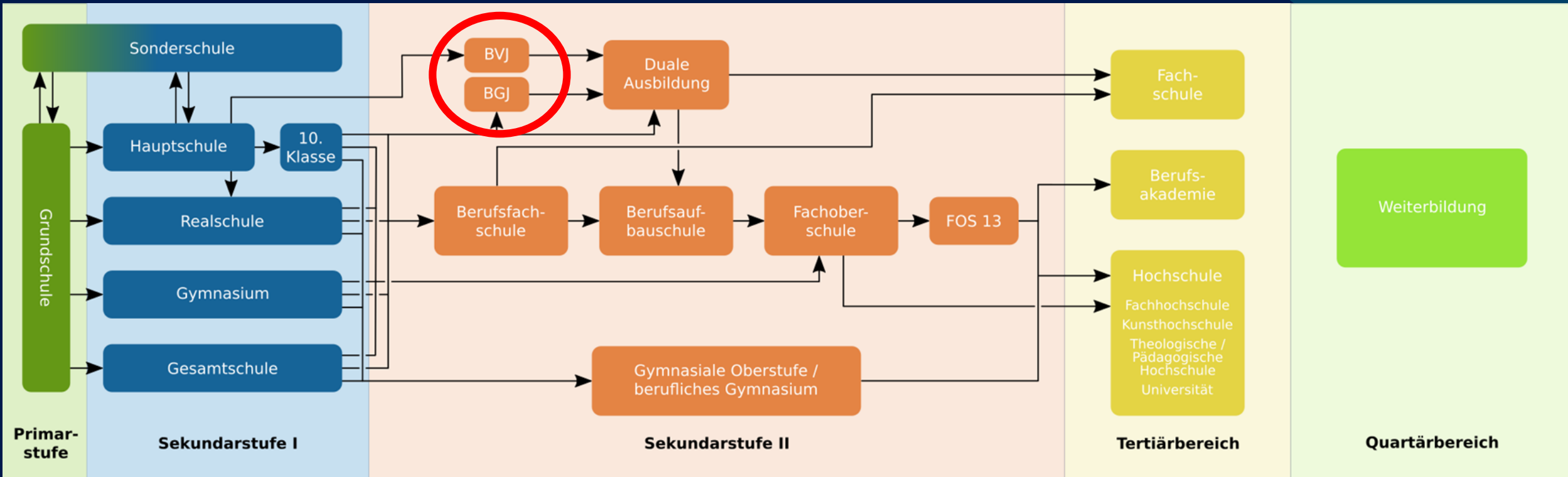26 September 2019, University of Roehampton

Why civic education on the EU?

- Especially those with a low formal education level have little connection with the political system: no adequate political representation (Brinkmann 2009, Vester 2009)

- People with a lower socioeconomic status tend to have more sceptical attitudes towards the European Union (Hix 2008, Grimm et al. 2018)

- Fundamentally eurosceptic attitudes and little willingness to participate often come along with little (subjective and objective) knowledge about the EU (Westle 2015)

- European citizenship education should also (and especially) target individuals who feel like they do not have an impact on EU politics (Eis 2013)

- Change of attitudes with regards to politics most likely in the case of young people (Brinkmann 2009)

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The target group

- Hard-to-reach „basically includes educationally and socially disadvantaged people who are often 'forgotten' by the mainstream of citizenship education or left behind in schools or other educational facilities. Young people, especially immigrants, are particularly affected." (Kakos/Müller-Hofstede/Ross 2016, 10)

- PhD project targets young people between 15 and 27 who have not obtained a *Hautpschulabschluss* (basic certificate of secondary education)

The target group

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Vocational transition system

- Measure specifically designed for young people who did not complete basic secondary education

- About 5.9% of pupils leave the education system without a school leaving certificate
(Deutscher Caritasverband 2017)

- Characteristics:
  - Small classes, very heterogeneous groups
  - No curriculum: each school creates own concepts for the measure → tailored to the specific needs of the participants

- The primary aim is vocational orientation and integration into the labour market after completion of the programme

Research Questions

- Which dispositions (political knowledge, political motivations and political attitudes) does the target group have in relation to the EU?

- Are these dispositions changeable through an intervention that has been specifically tailored to the needs of the target group?
  - Intervention = two-day workshop focusing on the European Union

Research Design

- Mixed Methods Design:

1) Questionnaire survey at **three measuring points**: pre, post and follow-up (all participants, n=150)

- Socio-demographic data (Pre)
- EU-related political knowledge, motivations and attitudes of the participants (Pre)
- (Change of) EU-related political knowledge, motivations and attitudes of the participants (Post, Follow-Up)
- *(the participants' assessment of the workshops)*

2) Guideline-based qualitative interviews (selected participants)

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Junge **M**enschen erreichbar machen mit **p**olitischer **Eu**ropabildung

- Head of project: Prof. Dr. Monika Oberle

- Jean Monnet Project, co-financed by Erasmus+

- Development of a two-day workshop: Civic education on the EU for young hard-to-reach learners

- Evaluation and evidence-based improvement of the workshop material

- Dissemination of promising approaches, materials and findings through training seminars for multipliers and a closing conference

- Free download of workshop materials on the project website: http://www.jumper.uni-goettingen.de

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Workshop

- Will be developed in the course of JUMPER

- Two-day workshop (2x6 hours)

- Two facilitators, 15 participants; total of 10 workshops (n=150)

- Centre of the workshop: Simulation game

- Specifically designed to meet the needs of the target group
    - Edutainment: use of different media, smartphones
    - Avoid reading tasks
    - Reduced complexity
    - *Lebensweltorientierung*: Link the EU to the participants' everyday life
    - Aim: provide participants with basic knowledge on the EU, facilitate political motivations

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- Prof. Dr. Monika Oberle and her team's research shows that simulation games
  - are suitable for pupils in secondary schools, vocational schools as well as primary schools and participants indicating a **low interest in politics** (e.g. Oberle et al. 2018)
  - lead to **increased (subjective and objective) knowledge** about the topic as well as political interest and self-efficacy (e.g. Oberle & Leunig 2018)
  - Participants **enjoy** the simulation game experience (e.g. Oberle & Leunig 2018)

- In addition:
  - Simulation games are a good way to teach **complex topics** (e.g. Rappenglück 2004)
  - Participants are very **motivated** (e.g. Rappenglück 2004)

Literature

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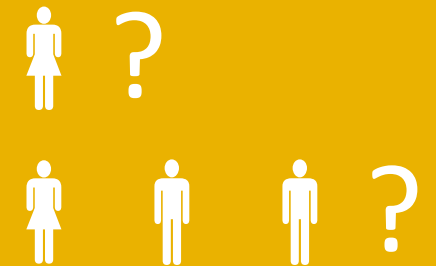
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- ...owledge, interest and attitudes of the participants (Post,
- ...e workshops)

possibly: increase n by conducting more questionnaire surveys in control groups without carrying out the workshop

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Thank you!

👤 Märthe-Maria Stamer

📱 0049 (0)551 39 13996

✉️ Maerthe-Maria.Stamer@uni-goettingen.de

🌐 www.jumper.uni-goettingen.de