

Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation (DISCO)



Promoting democracy through teacher education policy and practice is a series of two seminars convened by [Edda Sant](#) and [Jonas Thiel](#) (Manchester Metropolitan University) and funded by the Council of Europe and the European Union.

What kind of society do we want our children to live in? For many of us, democracy mirrors some of the ideals of a society in which we are all in an equal position to have a say. But in recent times, we have seen how democracy is in crisis: growing inequalities, rise of xenophobic and racist attitudes, increasing distribution of fake news and hate speech on social media, and high levels of frustration and alienation particularly among marginalised groups and young people.

Teachers are essential to respond to these challenges. Education can open possibilities for building new, more democratic futures, and teachers have a unique opportunity and a responsibility to mirror democratic principles and to facilitate that new generations embrace democratic ways of life. But are universities preparing teachers to respond to such an important challenge? Do teacher educators have the policy frameworks and the practical tools to prepare new generations of teachers to embed a democratic culture in their practices?

This event is part of a series of activities organised within the research project “[Embedding a Democratic Culture Dimension in Teacher Education Programmes](#)” (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Manchester Metropolitan University), which is funded by the Council of Europe and the European Union through the “[Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation](#)” (DISCO) Programme. The event will be simultaneously translated between English, Spanish and Portuguese.

The event comprises two independent seminars:

Teacher Education Policy and Democratic Culture (20th April).

This seminar is particularly addressed to teacher educators, policymakers, and student teachers but it is open to any member of the public interested in teacher education policy. The seminar will feature the participation of policy and teacher education experts and will allow knowledge exchange on policies that underpin teacher education programmes in England, Spain and Portugal. The purpose is to discuss what policy frameworks are better suited to facilitate the inclusion of the Council of Europe’s Competences for Democratic Culture in teacher education programmes.

Schedule

15:00 – 15:30 Welcome and introduction

15:30 – 16:00 Diane Warner (Manchester Metropolitan University): Getting there: stories of persistence among Black student teachers in England.

16:00 – 16:15 Discussion

16:15 – 16:30 Break

16:30 – 17:15 Analysis and comparison of Initial teacher education policies in Spain, Portugal and England

17:15 – 18:00 Debate, forum and conclusions. Facilitated by Lana Jurko, Network of Education Policy Centres

Teacher Education Practice and Democratic Culture (21st April).

This seminar is particularly addressed to teacher educators, teachers, and student teachers but it is open to any member of the public interested in teacher education practice. The seminar will feature the participation of teacher education experts on democratic education and will allow knowledge exchange between teachers, student teachers and teacher educators from Portugal, Spain and England. The aim is to facilitate discussion on how teacher educators can prepare future teachers to mirror and promote democratic values.

Schedule

15:00 – 15:30 Welcome and introduction

15:30 – 16:00 Andreas Mårdh and Ásgeir Tryggvason (Örebro University): Democratic citizenship education – Some problems and possibilities with common teaching strategies

16:00 – 16:15 Discussion

16:15 – 16:30 Break

16:30 – 17:15 Good practices for Teacher education, contributions from Spain, Portugal and England

17:15 – 18:00 Debate, forum and conclusions. Facilitated by Rita Sousa, Mentortec