



Stand Up for Europe

Argumentation training against undemocratic slogans:
European extension and updating

ref. No 2023-2-DE04-KA220-YOU-000175190

Exchange and Best Practices

December 2024

German National Report



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The Stand Up for Europe (Argumentation training against undemocratic slogans: European extension and updating) project is funded by the European Union through the Erasmus+ KA220-YOU Cooperation Partnerships in Youth Programme. However, the views and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or the European Agency for Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for this situation.

1. Current State of Argumentation Training in Germany

In Germany, the promotion of democracy has been an integral part of schools, extracurricular educational work and adult education at least since the end of the Nazi era. The Western ‘occupying powers’ played a major role in this, initiating an extensive programme of re-education and thus laying the foundations for an institutionally, conceptually and methodologically very comprehensive education on democracy. It is called “political education” (Politische Bildung) in German. The term is somewhat problematic, as it can also refer to education and upbringing in the sense of a particular policy or world view and to propaganda or indoctrination. For this reason, the English-speaking world speaks of “citizenship education”, i.e. education to become active, informed and committed citizens.

As Germany is organised as a federal state, the individual federal states determine the specific education policy. The comprehensive term “social studies” (Sozialkunde) or “politics” (Politik) has become established as a subject in schools. In addition to other subjects such as economics, this subject can also include “political education” or “civics” (Staatsbürgerkunde). Recently, there have also been repeated efforts to place the value basis of the constitution at the centre of interactive discussions in the school context. In the 2024/2025 school year, for example, Bavaria introduced the format of a ‘constitutional quarter hour’, in which individual values of the Bavarian constitution are discussed and linked to the reality of one’s own life.

However, “political education” is not only practised in schools. Due to the importance of anchoring liberal-democratic principles in society as a whole, separate organisations were set up in Germany after the war from 1952 onwards at federal and state level to promote democracy through education, i.e. also outside of schools (Caruso, Schatz 2018). In Germany, these activities are known as “extracurricular political education” (außerschulische politische Bildung) and “adult political education” (politische Erwachsenenbildung). There is a state-funded but independent “Federal Agency for Political Education” (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung) and a “State Agency for Political Education” (Landeszentrale für politische Bildung) each federal state. These institutions not only produce relevant (educational) material, create publications and organise courses, but are also often present in public discourse as representatives and advocates of democratic principles.

The activities are primarily aimed at adolescents and young people but include people at all stages of life. Experts, teachers and educational organisations are addressed – as well as the target group directly via events, projects, workshops and other activities. In the context of extracurricular citizenship education, the terms ‘learning democracy’ or ‘democracy as a way of life’ are often used to emphasise the non-indoctrinaire and open-process nature of this type of citizenship education. While political didactics at universities is essentially characterised by political science in the school sector, the reference science for extracurricular citizenship education is often educational science and sociology.

Educational institutions outside of schools that provide citizenship education are usually financially supported by the state through “continuing education laws”. The provider landscape is colorful and ranges from municipal adult education centres to institutions organised by trade unions or churches. Germany has a very diverse and differentiated system of education outside of traditional initial education such as schools or universities (Sander 2022).

Discussion of values in Germany – the Basic Law

Political education primarily refers to the values set out in the German Basic Law. These are usually labelled with terms such as “liberal”, “social” or “democratic”. The Basic Law was created in the wake of the crimes of the Nazi dictatorship and is based on the experiences of Western democracies. It describes absolute values (e.g. human dignity, freedom), values and norms that the state must respect towards its citizens (e.g. privacy, freedom of religion)

The value system of Basic Law provides a framework for orientation, but also offers plenty of room for manoeuvring, contradictions and potential for development. New technologies and social developments require new regulations, for example in the area of protecting nature and the environment or asylum.

In principle, the values outlined in the Basic Law can also be described as “European values”. However, it is much more difficult to identify a universally valid “European” catalogue of values from the many different European documents.

In addition to the normative side of (political) values, the reality and implementation of values at various levels must be considered: By the citizens themselves, by civil society, political parties, the media and academia, by those in power and the economy. The more recent focus on value formation mentioned above aims to focus on the different prioritization of certain values, contradictions and dilemmas between values and thus the responsibility of everyone to make value decisions. This is also intended to increase understanding of openness, complexity and enduring challenges of democratic political processes.

This National Report presents the debate on values in Germany and how they are considered in political education in general and in argumentation training in particular.

Argumentation training against regulars' table slogans

Background

This diversity also applies to the "Argumentation training against regulars' slogans" programme. Klaus-Peter Hufer developed, implemented and continuously improved the curriculum as a practitioner and head of department at a municipal adult education centre in 2000. He is still a trainer and lecturer throughout Germany today, organising around two events per week (Deutscher Volkshochschulverband n.d.). He has also trained other trainers who also use the programme. Various universities in Germany (in particular Essen/Duisburg, Cologne and Augsburg) are involved with the training programme and have developed quality criteria and enhancements and conducted studies.

Demand has risen sharply, particularly due to political events (e.g. the AfD's entry into the Bundestag, Trump's election in the USA, etc.).

What is argumentation training against regulars' table slogans? The inventor Klaus-Peter Hufer describes it as follows: "Argumentation training against regulars' table slogans is a special case of argumentation training in that it involves dealing with conflictual encounters that are politically explosive. In this argumentation training, political education takes place – initiated and developed by everyone together. Rhetorical skills are also learnt and practiced, but it is not just empty rhetorical training. The participants' self-confidence is also strengthened, but it is not an individualising seminar for self-awareness." (Deutscher Volkshochschulverband n.d.).

Hufer defines regulars' table slogans as "unambiguous ideological, preferably political messages, in favour of flat slogans and aggressive dogmatism". (Deutscher Volkshochschulverband n.d.)

Method

The aim of the training is to learn techniques for countering provocative, racist and undemocratic slogans in specific situations of personal encounters and confrontation. Various techniques are rehearsed in role plays, such as counter-questions or irony. For example, typical positions of conspiracy theorists, overt or covert racism and anti-Semitism, misogyny or anti-European prejudices are discussed. The positions can be loud, provocative, hurtful, illegal and obvious – as well as covert and even unconscious. The spectrum ranges from statements such as "All politicians should be gassed" to quite inconspicuous slogans and jokes such as "Women can't park". The courses therefore also teach participants to recognise such anti-democratic statements in the first place, to identify the underlying values and to summon up the courage to take a stand against them with arguments. Finally, the participants should also critically scrutinise their own attitude to avoid the suspicion of arrogance.

Hufer gives the following strategies in his book:

- Stick to one topic, don't just touch on different topics like buzzwords
- Take the initiative
- Establish rules of dialogue
- Targeted enquiry
- Forcing people to listen
- No instruction
- Do not moralise
- Position yourself
- Do not use generalised terms for groups of people ("foreigners")
- Clarifying problems
- Uncovering contradictions

- Ask questions
- Distract and de-escalate
- Address feelings
- Building bridges
- Set boundaries
- Change the perspective
- Pay attention to the undecided
- Stay authentic
- Bringing in humour and irony
- Reduce claims
- Consider the long-term effect

The training is primarily aimed at those who are already politically engaged or are willing to do so. It is not designed to change the users of the slogans or to motivate a disinterested group of people. Accordingly, the training is primarily requested by clubs, associations, extracurricular educational institutions, NGOs and political parties, churches, groups and similar civil society organisations. For example, workshops are held for certain migrant groups, trade union organisations or Catholic parishes. The main target groups are young people aged 16 and over and adults.

Of course, there are also many other approaches and training programmes in this area – either modified versions of Hufer’s argumentation training or other approaches and approaches throughout the German-speaking world, as well as approaches to defending oneself against fake news and insults on the internet. An overview of the most important publications on this topic is provided at the end of this chapter. Three further examples of best practice are also presented below.

Effectiveness

Are such training programmes even useful and can they have an effect? The question of effectiveness or evidence is not easy to answer in the field of education. In principle, possible effects relate to the three levels of knowledge, attitude and action and can be both short-term and long-term and vary depending on the target group. In political education, and in particular in argumentation training, very different effects are conceivable: Strengthening and consolidating commitment, motivation, deciphering populist codes, self-reflection, strengthening self-confidence, communicative competence, strategic knowledge, changing attitudes and raising awareness, etc. These learnt skills can be used in the short term (e.g. at the next birthday party), solidify as personality patterns in the long term or have a social impact, for example in elections or general commitment to democracy. These indicators of effectiveness are usually difficult or impossible to operationalise in a research setting. This form of educational work is therefore based on a general attitude in defense of democracy on the part of the providers and most of the participants. This applies in particular to groups consisting of voluntary participants. This could be different for groups such as school classes. Studies suggest that training has a positive influence on motivation, strategic knowledge and the quality of argumentation (see Reinfeldt 2013, Ahlheim & Heger 2006, Gronostay 2019, Zeuner & Pabst 2020).

Target groups

More precise conclusions about the structure of the target group (young, politically engaged people and representatives of minorities) can be drawn from research into the political behaviour and values of the population. This also includes a look at the group of people who use populist or anti-democratic slogans.

Primary target group: politically and socially engaged people

Argumentation training is primarily aimed at people who are prepared to stand up for democracy and human rights. These can be “professionals” involved in political debate and decision-making, such as those who are active in political parties, civil rights movements, interest groups, associations, clubs, the media or other groups. Those who are active on social media and make posts are also likely to be considered politically interested. The second subgroup is those who are “interested” but not necessarily “active”. Good argumentation training can turn interested people into active ones and further strengthen active ones in their commitment.

According to the renowned Shell study from 2019, 8% of young people in Germany describe themselves as politically active and a further 33% as politically interested. The EU is viewed positively (43%) or very positively (7%), while 7% have a negative or even very negative (1%) image of the EU.



Freedom of movement, a Europe without borders, cultural diversity and democracy in Europe are particularly important to them. The study formed five “populism categories” clusters. They show that around a third support European democratic values, while another third are undecided. A third of young people are also in favour of populist tendencies:

- Cosmopolitans: 39%
- Populism leaners: 24%
- National populists: 9%
- Not clearly positioned: 28%

(Albert, Hurrelmann, & Quenzel Kantar / Shell Study 2019)

Secondary target group: people with “group-focused enmity”

German scientists have described and scientifically proven the syndrome of group-focused misanthropy (GMF) in the book “Deutsche Zustände”. The GMF syndrome comprises 13 elements: racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, hostility towards Muslims, sexism, devaluation of certain groups of people such as Sinti and Roma, asylum seekers, homosexuals, trans people, homeless people, the long-term unemployed and people with disabilities (Zick, Küpper, & Berghan 2019, 58 ff., Heitmeyer 2024).

The individual categories of the GMF syndrome correspond to the statements that can be found in regulars’ table slogans and to which Hufer’s argumentation training refers.

As already seen in the values of young people (see above), around 30% of Germans are populist, although they mostly hold moderate positions. Global criticism of the “establishment” and the mainstream media is particularly common, although the majority of this group do not call for radical change, but rather certain corrections. A majority (37%) of respondents in the study reject populist attitudes. According to the study, populism in Germany “is to be categorised as moderate rather than radical. For example, more than two thirds of people with populist attitudes are in favour of EU membership and 85% approve of the democratic system. However, over three quarters believe that EU integration has gone too far and a narrow majority of 52% believe that democracy “does not work well” or “does not work at all” in Germany (Vehrkamp & Wratil 2017).

A European comparison also produces similar figures: in Germany, 18% stated that they agreed with the positions of the right-wing populist party (“Alternative für Deutschland”). In Poland, on the other hand, the figure is 78%, in France 63% and in the Netherlands 55% (Twyman 2016).

Conspiracy theorists

The above-mentioned studies were mainly written in the period from 2015 onwards – motivated by the rise of right-wing populism and the election of Donald Trump as President of the USA. The coronavirus pandemic has given rise to a new wave of populism that, like the right-wing populists, is characterised by an anti-scientific stance and a fight against the (political) establishment and European politics: The “conspiracy theorists”. According to a recent study, 30% of Germans believe that the world is controlled by secret powers. This proportion is particularly high among voters of the right-wing populist Alternative for Germany (AfD) party. Around 13% of Germans are convinced that the coronavirus is a Chinese bioweapon. In contrast, 46% of the population believe that these are completely made up, while 40% believe that they are based on a kernel of truth, even if not everything is true. On the other hand, the proportion of Germans who see conspiracy theories as a growing threat to democracy is high at 66% (Statista Research Department 2024).

These statistics clearly show that in a group of 30 people – a school class or a birthday party – statistically speaking, at least 10 members are likely to be right-wing populists or conspiracy theorists. Three of them tend towards radical convictions. The group that is democratically orientated is just as large. Of these, three are also so committed and interested that they would argue specifically against undemocratic and anti-scientific statements. Ten other people in the group are indifferent to the issue. This also means that the above-mentioned categories of group-focused misanthropy in each of these groups specifically affect certain discriminated groups in everyday life.

2. European Values in the German National Context

Normative values

In Germany, a distinction can be made between normative values, which are primarily derived from the Basic Law but also from religions and other world views, and people's lived values. Both overlap and both are subject to constant change.

Of the normative values, "human dignity" stands out. A violation of human dignity usually also involves a violation of another fundamental right and vice versa. Human dignity, and consequently human rights, is therefore a meta-value that is beyond question in Germany and to which every person, including non-Germans, is entitled (cf. Reheis 1999, p. 72). Article 1 of the Basic Law (Grundgesetz GG) reads:

"(1) Human dignity is inviolable. It is the duty of all state authorities to respect and protect it.

(2) The German people therefore recognise inviolable and inalienable human rights as the basis of every human community, of peace and of justice in the world."

There are three types of fundamental rights. Some, like human dignity, apply to all people ("human rights"), while others are intended for citizens ("civil rights"):

Fundamental freedoms: These fundamental rights grant citizens freedoms vis-à-vis the state. They are primarily aimed at state omission and include, for example, freedom of opinion, freedom of information and freedom of the press in Article 5 of the Basic Law.

Fundamental rights to equality: These fundamental rights grant individual equal treatment before the law and protect against discrimination. They include, for example, the principle of equality and equal rights in Article 3 of the Basic Law.

Participation rights: These fundamental rights grant individuals the right to participate in state behaviour and include, for example, the right to petition.

In Germany, fundamental rights also include the democratic form of government, the separation of powers and the sovereignty of the people.

In addition to the Basic Law, sources for the value system in Germany include the judgements of the Constitutional Court, the relevant UN conventions and EU documents, in particular the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights = ECHR). In addition, there are values that can be taken from religions and world views, such as "love of neighbors" or "animal welfare".

Basically, it can be said that there is no fixed catalogue of values in Germany, but that people and institutions (such as the federal government, courts or administrations) pursue a variety of values and legal norms, some of which contradict each other. Human dignity and general human rights are the values that have an overarching effect. Other values, such as tolerance, inclusion, climate protection, work, equality or solidarity, happiness, prosperity and quality of life are subject to continuous change (Juraforum 2024).

Values of the population

The attempt to research and map "the values" within the population is just as multi-layered and complex. Age, stage of life, social affiliation, health, income - to name just a few - are factors that determine personal values. In addition, many people are not even aware of their values or state values that they do not actually put into practice in their everyday lives - such as climate protection or solidarity.

The following values have been identified in studies and surveys of the German population:

1. **Family and community:** Family is highly valued in Germany. Most Germans attach great importance to close family ties and see the family as an important social support system.
2. **Education and professional success:** Education is seen as an important factor for personal and social progress. A high level of education and professional success are of great importance to many Germans.

3. **Security and stability:** Political and economic stability as well as personal security are important values. Many people value a stable and secure environment, both in their private and public lives.
4. **Freedom and independence:** Individual freedom and independence are core values. This includes freedom of expression as well as personal fulfilment and self-determination.
5. **Sustainability and environmental protection:** Protecting the environment and acting sustainably are becoming increasingly important. Many Germans attach importance to environmentally friendly practices and the conservation of natural resources.
6. **Solidarity and social commitment:** Solidarity and support for the weak are important aspects of social cohesion. This is reflected in a high willingness to volunteer and donate to social causes.
7. **Health and well-being:** A healthy life and well-being are very important. This includes physical health as well as mental and emotional balance.

In countries such as Italy, Spain and Greece, family often plays an even greater role than in Germany, and there tends to be less emphasis on career success and economic security. Work ethics can also vary, often in favour of work-life balance. Religion plays a diminishing role in the lives of many Germans, although ethical and moral values remain important. In many southern and eastern European countries, religion plays a greater role in daily life and has a stronger influence on values and attitudes (Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach 2024, World Values Survey, Eurobarometer 2024).

Relevant populist slogans in Germany

A study has determined which slogans and statements receive a high to very high level of approval in Germany:

- "If you're new somewhere, you should first settle for less.": 65.3%
- "Most long-term unemployed people are not really interested in finding a job.": 50.6%
- "Most asylum seekers are not persecuted in their home country.": 44,2%
- "There are too many foreigners living in Germany.": 35.0%
- "The many Muslims here sometimes make me feel like a stranger in my own country.": 34.9%
- "It's disgusting when homosexuals kiss in public.": 14.8%
- "Women should focus more on the role of wife and mother again.": 12.1%
- "Most homeless people are work-shy.": 11.7%
- "Whites are rightly leaders in the world.": 10.6%
- "Jews have too much influence in Germany": 8.1%

(Zick, Küpper & Berghan 2019, 70ff.).

In addition, there are other topics that can be identified from various sources (evaluations of publications, statements, election programmes and corresponding studies and research). The topics of migration/deportation/Islam, political actors, media and press freedom, nationality/tradition, climate protection/credibility of science and gender are mentioned particularly frequently. It is striking that left-wing positions currently play a significantly subordinate role in the national discourse in Germany. With the entry of the right-wing populist party "Alternative für Deutschland" (AfD) into the parliaments from 2013 and the election of D. Trump as President of the USA in 2016, right-wing populist statements in particular are present in the discourse (Decker, Kiess, & Brähler 2016, Decker & Brähler 2022, Hufer 2018, Tiedemann 2018, Kraske, & Laabs 2024, Quent & Virchow 2024). Since then, various academics, constitutional guardians and politicians from left-wing, liberal and conservative parties have repeatedly emphasised that the greatest threat to democracy currently comes from the 'right'.

3. Gaps and Limitations

Political education and its didactics have been an integral part of educational work in Germany since the end of the Second World War, both in schools and in extracurricular education and adult education. There are numerous university chairs, institutes, networks and extracurricular educational organisations dedicated exclusively to this work. Civic education is a compulsory part of the curriculum at all schools and state-funded adult education centres. Due to the abundance and diversity, it is difficult to determine whether there are comparable training programmes to Hufer's argumentation training and how they are used. It cannot be ruled out that there are more effective approaches. Focusing on this one training and using it as the basis for this project could be arbitrary and unjustified. However, hoof training is in any case very widespread and has been used for 25 years. It is also problematic to determine whether there are long-term and political effects of these activities. Impact research cannot provide reliable methods and results in this regard. It is also necessary to reflect on the world view and political stance behind such training. In Germany, representatives of the right-wing populist party strongly criticise the work of democratic political education because it belongs to the "left-liberal spectrum". The AfD party pursues right-wing populist educational goals in its political education work (via the Erasmus Foundation), for example on topics such as tradition, national consciousness, migration, etc. (Schillo 2019)

In contrast, there is a wealth of analyses, concepts and research on the subject of values, both theoretical and empirical. This reflects the great diversity and complexity of this topic. Even the operationalisation of the term "values" in a research setting is problematic. Does it only refer to the deeper, often unconscious and often contradictory attitudes and convictions? Or are they one's own life goals or ideas of social development? Are these values adopted by others (e.g. from the constitution, a church, the social environment, political parties)? It is also necessary to scrutinise one's own values, which (even unconsciously) form the basis of one's own actions, for example in political education, in researching values or in writing. In principle, the values of the liberal-democratic order laid down in European resolutions should also apply to this analysis.



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- Racism "How racism shapes (our) everyday life - on the implementation of racism-critical educational work"
- Classism "Classism: recognising class, acting with class"
- Identity "Who am I, what am I, where do I belong?"
- Gender "Falling out of role!"
- Radicalisation "What does RADICAL mean?"

<https://www.volkshochschule.de/verbandswelt/projekte/PGZ/publikationen/Konzepte-des-PGZ-Projekts.php>.

Deutscher Volkshochschulverband (2020): When words fail - arguments against regulars' table slogans. Showing attitude, passing on knowledge - a series of articles by Prof Klaus-Peter Hufer. <https://www.volkshochschule.de/verbandswelt/projekte/PGZ/journal/argumente-gegen-stammtischparolen.php>.

Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte. Teaching materials on the topic of human rights education, https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/Unterrichtsmaterialien/unterrichtsmaterialien_der_schutz_vor_diskriminierung.pdf.

Further Argumentation Training:

Den Menschen im Blick. Training Antidiskriminierung. Bd. 1: Schwerpunkt Rassismus / Bd. 2: Schwerpunkt Sexismus, <https://www.den-menschen-im-blick.de/aktuell/2019/training-antidiskriminierung>.

Gegen Vergessen - Für Demokratie e.V. ARGUTRAINING #WieDER_SPRECHEN FÜR DEMOKRATIE. <https://www.kommunikation-demokratie.de>.

Den Menschen im Blick. Training Antidiskriminierung. Bd. 1: Schwerpunkt Rassismus / Bd. 2: Schwerpunkt Sexismus, <https://www.den-menschen-im-blick.de/aktuell/2019/training-antidiskriminierung>.

Gegen Vergessen – Für Demokratie e.V. ARGUTRAINING #WieDER_SPRECHEN FÜR DEMOKRATIE. <https://www.kommunikation-demokratie.de>.

Gesicht Zeigen! (2017). Was ist Zivilcourage? Das 4-Ecken-Spiel. Beltz.

von Kempis, F. (2019). Anleitung zum Widerspruch: Klare Antworten auf populistische Parolen, Vorurteile und Verschwörungstheorien. Mosaik.

Jonas, K. J., Boos, M., & Brandstätter, V. (2007). Zivilcourage trainieren! Theorie und Praxis. Hogrefe.

Kunter, B., Eich, M., Tholen, B., & Wutzler, M. (2022). LOVE-Storm. Das Trainingshandbuch gegen Hass im Netz. Wochenschau-Verlag.

Leo, P., Steinbeis, M., & Zorn, D.-P. (2017). Mit Rechten reden: Ein Leitfaden. Klett-Cotta.

Mernyi, W., & Niedermair, M. (2010). Demagogen entzaubern: Hetzer stoppen, Propaganda entlarven, Vorurteile entkräften; im Betrieb, am Stammtisch, bei öffentlichen Veranstaltungen. ÖGB-Verlag.


Methodenpaket Tadel verpflichtet!

Steffan, P. (2019). Sag was! Radikal höflich gegen Rechtspopulismus argumentieren, Oetinger Taschenbuch, 5. Edition.

Steffan, P. (2020). Sprich es an! Rechtspopulistischer Sprache radikal höflich entgegentreten Oetinger Taschenbuch.


5. Best Practices from Germany

Best Practice 1: CounterBUNT

Logo	
Topic / Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online education tool (app)
Title	CounterBUNT
Target group	Young people from 16, all interested parties
Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital app, game/simulation • Game/Simulation
Publication date	2019
Partners / Network	Responsible coordination: Niedersächsische Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, supported by numerous experts and specialist organisations. Scientific support: Prof. Dr Klaus-Peter Hufer, Wilhelm Heitmeyer
Level	National (German-language) APP
Description of the method / approach, the theory	The app is based on the concepts of argumentation training to counter populist slogans and group-focused misanthropy. Designed as a game, the app is aimed at young people, who can go through various real-life scenarios and select answers to typical populist slogans. There is also a "mini guide" in short form and a collection of typical slogans.
Purpose / Goal	Low-threshold and playful methods to raise awareness of the topic, increase motivation and learn easy strategies.
Evaluation (result), re-search (if available)	Scientific studies are regularly conducted on the theory of group-focused misanthropy and argumentation training (see Heitmeyer 2024 and the analyses by Hufer)
Overview of the relevant aspects that are important for this project	The game offers various scenarios and topics that have been intensively developed with the participation of the groups involved and can be used as a model for further development.
Weblink	https://konterbunt.de // App Stores Google / Apple
References, online sources	https://www.bpb.de/lernen/digitale-bildung/werkstatt/293715/konterbunt-app-gegen-stammtischparolen/
Additional remarks	The app can also be used in connection with argumentation training (e.g. preparation or follow-up).



Best Practice 2: Village Talk

Logo	
Topic / Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil society activity
Title	Village talk
Target group	Members of a village community
Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manual, Guidelines
Publication date	2020
Partners / Network	<p>Federal Agency for Civic Education Cooperation Foundation Bavarian Political Education Network University of Augsburg (scientific support, development) disKurs e.V. (realisation) Various districts and towns/villages (realisation)</p>
Level	Regional
Description of the method / approach, the theory	<p>The 'village talk' concept is a preventative approach that brings together a wide variety of people in protected rural areas in order to prevent the emergence of slogans and derogatory slogans and thus contribute to constructive democracy.</p> <p>In a two-month preparatory phase, around 40 very different "key people" from each village are contacted and interviewed.</p> <p>On this basis, three dialogue evenings are planned, each lasting three hours, which will bring as many and very different villagers as possible into an intensive dialogue.</p> <p>A total of over 50 dialogue facilitators have received further training to support local volunteers as professional process facilitators. Village dialogues are mainly held in southern and eastern Germany</p>
Purpose / Goal	<p>Promote understanding of other values, positions and perspectives as well as acceptance of plurality and diversity, prevention of radicalisation and promotion of democracy, promotion of the village community, appreciation, identification and self-efficacy</p>
Evaluation (result), re-search (if available)	Realisation of a scientific model project, positive feedback from numerous applications in practice
Overview of the relevant aspects that are important for this project	<p>Integration of argumentation training into a larger concept that takes all positions into account. The focus is not on fighting against regulars' table slogans, but on developing the ability to exchange opinions and look for solutions together in the local area.</p>

Weblink	https://www.dorfgesprach.net/
References, online sources	<p>Wenzel, F., & Boeser, C. (2022). Village dialogue. A contribution to the development of democracy in rural areas. Working aids for self-help and citizens' initiatives No. 53, Verlag Stiftung Mitarbeit.</p> <p>https://padlet.com/FlorianWenzel/hintergrundinformationen-dorfgespr-ch-e3vfuttlv1xl5gvi</p>
Additional remarks	<p>Numerous recent publications in Germany, e.g: Wenzel, F. (2024). Village dialogue. Village renewal in people's minds. Democratic impulses and methodological suggestions. In: Hammer, Veronika (ed.) (2024). Learning democracy. Rural areas and adult education centres Weinheim, pp. 210-222</p>

