

CologneSummerSchool „IUS meets IDEC – Democratic Education in Israeli Diversity“

In Israel, 27th of March to 5th of April 2017

This Summer School at different locations in Israel aimed for teacher trainees of the University of Cologne to gain insight into the inclusive educational practices of the diverse, multicultural and democratic state of Israel during the 10-day long stay. Democratic values in education take on an important role when it comes to the inclusive development of schools.

In the first part, the Summer School “IUS¹ meets IDEC” stayed in Tel Aviv-Yaffo where the participants had the possibility to get to know the city on their own as well as by a lead tour through the old part of the city, Yaffo. The stop at the LGBT center showed some of the diversity of Israeli society. Through the visit of Beit Hatfutsot – the Museum of the Jewish People – the students got an insight into Jewish history and today’s Jewish life.

The attendance of the “International Democratic Education Conference (IDEC) 2017” from 28th of March to 4th of April in Hadera was the second part of the Summer School in Israel. IDEC 2017 brought researchers and players in the fields of democratic education from all over the world together and offered workshops as well as lectures. Due to the extensive program the students could visit democratic schools in Israel like the Bialik Rogozin School in Tel Aviv and come in contact with pupils as well as teachers. The team of the »school is open« BildungsRaumProjekt as the organizers of this Summer School and with the students’ help could expand the conference’s program with a workshop on their own.

Democratic development is also closely related with combatting all forms of antisemitism. Therefore the third and last part of the Summer School “IUS meets IDEC” dealt with commemorative culture and how to facilitate the deconstruction of antisemitic patterns of thoughts and behavior. To extend this examination by a concrete, experience-based competence the students spend a study day at the International School of Holocaust Studies in Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Memorial Center. Yad Vashem addresses not only the persecution and annihilation of the European Jews but wants to tell the people’s lives before and after the Holocaust. The current antisemitic discrimination, especially Israel related antisemitism is sadly part of today’s life of Jews which was further tackled in a workshop during the study day.

The different parts of the Summer School were an excellent way for the students to discover Israeli diversity and the multiple perspectives at first hand. All participants of the Summer School were able to acquire new experiences in the field of democratic education for their further professionalization. The experience is represented in areas like dealing with heterogeneity, intercultural competences, participation and social interaction, which are all features of successful inclusion. They could also broaden their professional competences regarding democratic and inclusive values regarding commemorative culture and the combat against antisemitism. Further contacts to pupils, teachers, researchers and facilities of teacher training in Israel are hopefully going to lead to exchanges and other forms of continuous, long term cooperation.

¹ IUS stands for „Helios Schools - Inclusive University Schools of the City of Cologne“. The schools' concept is based on the idea of a university practical school with a broad inclusive orientation. The elementary school started in August 2015 at an interim site, the secondary school will approximately start 2018. A new outstanding building for both schools with highly inclusive standards is under construction at the Helios Area in Cologne-Ehrenfeld.