

Civic Education in Europe based on the example of Austria

Islamic religious instruction and Civic Education in Austria

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Regardless of the longstanding debate whether Austria is a country of immigration or not, multiculturalism is an irreversible social reality over here.

Due to the increase of immigrants with different – and sometimes for the majority unknown – cultural and religious backgrounds, the existing social complexity has increased.

Nevertheless the desire to live in peace, harmony, security and prosperity is still a common aspiration of all people.

History teaches us that the recognition of pluralism is essential for the peaceful coexistence of different worldviews. The acceptance of secular state law, as an institutional condition of free and equal coexistence of people with different ideologies, is of essential and existential meaning.

In this paper, we will analyze the developments and characteristics of Civic Education in Austria. Our particular interest is the contribution of Islamic religious instruction in Austria for civic education.

It is undisputed that it's not the primary task of religious education to teach civic education. but it's of enormous significance for the preservation of the Plural Society to know how the Islamic religious education deals on topics such as, human dignity, freedom, equality, democracy, secularism, tolerance, solidarity, peace and justice. Therefore we have the opportunity to determine the influence of religious instruction for the internalization of certain values by the students which are necessary for civic education.

The Islamic religious instruction is an interface between the state and the religious community and should support the common values that are mediated by the state in civic education.

In this article based on the analysis of curricula for Islamic religious instruction and other activities of the official representation in Austria we try to give an overview of the situation in Austria, in order to ascertain potential opportunities and conflicts.