

Press Release

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Democracy, language, and participation: International Winter School brings together prospective teachers from Germany, Israel, and Northern Ireland

Together with its partner universities in Israel and Northern Ireland, the Karlsruhe University of Education is hosting an International Winter School for prospective teachers from December 14 to 19. The aim is to raise awareness among prospective teachers of how language, democracy, and participation are interlinked.



In a workshop at the Winter School „Democracy – Language – Participation” at the Karlsruhe University of Education. Photo: Hahl/PHKA

Developing one's own intercultural skills and working out ideas for sustainable teaching and learning formats in an international exchange – these topics are the focus of the International Winter School „Democracy – Language – Participation” for prospective teachers, which takes place from December 14 to 19 at the Karlsruhe University of Education (KUE). This program is organized by the KUE, the Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology, and the Arts in Tel Aviv (Israel), and Queen's University Belfast (Northern Ireland). It is intended for KUE prospective teachers and prospective teachers from its partner universities and includes workshops with international guest lecturers on intercultural and transcultural skills, school visits, and a cultural program. Topics include literature and identity, connection and cooperation, and education and multilingualism. „Language as a means of communication enables participation in educational processes, which is essential for social and political participation. With our International Winter

School, we aim to foster prospective teachers' critical language awareness and sensitize them to how language, democracy, and participation are interlinked," explains Dorothee Kohl-Dietrich, head of the KUE international cooperation project „[Get ready for global teaching!](#)“, which is funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Aerospace and the DAAD and within which the International Winter School takes place.

For Dr. Ian Collen from Queen's University Belfast, the Winter School offers „a wonderful opportunity for prospective teachers to learn about multilingualism in different contexts.“ According to Collen, language proficiency leads to improved social cohesion and understanding; no more so than in a post-conflict society like Northern Ireland. Dafna Yitzhaki from Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and The Arts in Tel Aviv says: „The Winter School creates a unique space where future educators from three countries can compare their systems, reflect on diversity and learn collaboratively.“ In a world of growing polarization, this kind of shared learning is essential for promoting dialogue, empathy and democratic values. And Anna Schmeichel is particularly looking forward to „cultural exchange and new perspectives on education.“ „I think we can learn a lot from each other,” says the student, who is enrolled at KUE in the primary school teaching program with a specialization in European teaching.

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<https://ph-ka.de/presse>

As a university of education with the right to award doctorates and habilitations, the Karlsruhe University of Education (KUE) researches and teaches educational processes in and out of school. Its distinctive profile is characterised by its focus on education in a democratic society, educational processes in the digital world and STEM in a culture of sustainability. Around 220 academic staff supervise around 3,400 students. The courses on offer include teacher training programmes for primary and lower secondary level as well as Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes for other fields of education. The part-time continuing education programmes are characterised by their particular proximity to research and practice. <https://en.ph-karlsruhe.de>