

The year 2025, which also marks the 80th anniversary of WWII, will be remembered for a profound shift in the global order, where democratic backsliding and geopolitical fragmentation have accelerated in ways that once seemed unthinkable. Across Europe, ideologies once considered marginal have now cemented themselves at the centre of political institutions. While mainstream political discourse normalises the rhetoric of exclusion and division, a new generation is coming of age in a world where democratic principles can no longer be taken for granted. The question we have now is not whether these shifts will have lasting effects, but rather how societies, and especially Europe, will respond.

It is at this moment of historic uncertainty, we have chosen to centre the **NECE Festival 2025** on the theme of **HOPE** – not as passive optimism, but as a commitment to action that empowers individuals and communities to shape the future. With the help of renowned experts, this year's festival will explore how hope can become an integral part of civic education. Through interactive and exciting formats including panels, masterclasses, arts and cultural activities, we will examine strategies for sustaining engagement in the face of disillusionment, training our imaginations to envision futures beyond crisis, and developing the skills needed to create these futures based on the following four pillars:

- **Hope as resilience**
- **Hope as a collective and unifying force**
- **Hope as a force for action**
- **Hope as a moral foundation**

The festival will be held on **2-4 September** in **Oslo, Norway**. Register to secure your spot through the following link: <https://gstoo.de/nece-festival-2025>

We also invite you stay informed about the festival's programme, speakers and formats here: <https://nece.eu/nece-festival/>.

Should you have any questions or inquiries, please don't hesitate to contact us via [nece-festival@thecivics.eu](mailto:nece-festival@thecivics.eu).

The NECE Festival 2025 is organised with **The European Wergeland Centre (EWC)**. NECE is funded by the **German Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb)**.