

INTER Project



A practical Guide to implement
Intercultural Education at
School



INTER Project: A Practical Guide to Implement Intercultural Education at School...

... is the title of a European Socrates Comenius 2.1 project whose aim is to improve quality of education and contribute to innovation in school by supporting them in the implementation of an intercultural approach



INTER Project

- The project focuses on developing, using and validating a practical Guide for teacher training (both in training and in service) which will facilitate analysis, implementation and improvement of Intercultural Education in schools



INTER Project

■ Participant institutions:

- UNED, Spain (Coordinator)
- CSIC, Spain
- UCM, Spain
- Huelva University, Spain
- Navreme, Austria
- Universidade do Porto, Portugal
- Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom
- Universiteit I Oslo, Norway
- Globea, Czech Republik
- Latvijas Universitate, Latvia
- Charles University, Czech Republik



INTER Project

- It is being carried out in three different stages (2002-2005):
 1. Needs Assessment
 2. Development of the INTER Guide
 3. Guide implementation and evaluation



INTER Project

- The *objectives* of the first stage were:
 - To analyze and assess the current situation of Intercultural Education within the different local spheres of all partners
 - To identify the needs where teacher training is concerned in order to elaborate the Guide
- Output: *Needs Assessment Report (NAR)*



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- The *needs assessment covered various sections:*
 - institutional context*
 - cultural diversity map*
 - educational policies*
 - teacher training programmes*
 - identification of resources and practices*



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- The main *conclusions* of the *needs assessment* were:

- Diversity is persistently associated with deficiency or disability. Cultural diversity is associated to immigration, bilingualism or “minorities”.

- Intercultural Education is poorly implemented. The term “intercultural” usually refers to practices which do not conform to the intercultural approach.

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- The main output of the second stage is

INTER Guide. A practical guide to implement intercultural education at schools

*(Full text available at:
<http://www.uned.es/interproject>)*

Together with a Directory of Resources and a Video





INTER Guide objectives

- To make explicit those ideas that underpin teaching and learning
- Critically think about them in relation to actual practices
- Consider different ways and ideas in order to teach/learn
- Facilitate information and examples for those who wish to change their current practices



INTER Guide pretends to CHALLENGE...

- Implicit goals of current Education.
- The idea that Education should mainly be transmission of knowledge.
- The association of cultural diversity with some social labels or categories (immigration, ethnicity, minorities, nationality, etc.).
- The ideas of school success and school failure.
- The homogeneity perspective.



INTER Guide pretends to CHALLENGE...

- The idea that Intercultural Education has to do only with celebrating diversity
- Compensatory Education as an integration/adaptation strategy
- The idea that Intercultural Education gives actual recipes to solve specific problems
- The myth that Education should evaluate only students' academic achievement



INTER Guide proposes INSTEAD...

- Alternative goals in Education
- To understand Education as a way to develop individual strategies and capabilities to live in a multicultural society
- To regard diversity as a richness
- To develop a critical attitude towards our own beliefs and to learn to live together with people who have different behaviour patterns
- To use cultural relativism as an approach to develop empathy



INTER Guide proposes INSTEAD...

- To fight against discrimination and racism
- To acknowledge the need of an antiracist Education for everybody (including ourselves)
- To adapt the curriculum according to students' own opinions and perspectives
- To promote cooperative learning and empathy
- To promote better and deeper relationships between schools and communities
- To evaluate the whole process of teaching/learning, and not only students' achievement



We think Intercultural Education is...

- “[An] Educational approach based on the respect and appreciation of cultural diversity. It is targeted at each and every member of society as a whole, proposing an integrated model of involvement in the student’s education that underpins all aspects of the educational process in such a way that we achieve equal opportunities/results for all, overcomes racism in its various manifestations and establishes intercultural communication and competence”

(Aguado, 1995)



We think Intercultural Education is...

- To take into account all individual differences which could play a role not only within the formal context of Education, but also in other more informal contexts



We think Intercultural Education is NOT...

- To celebrate differences only through “intercultural weeks” and similar events
- To consider other people as “the others” avoiding the possibility of getting to know them better on equal terms
- To look for recipes to solve eventual problems
- To treat differences as if they were in need to be “compensated”
- To assign people to the same class and do not work to promote positive relationships among them
- To avoid conflicts! Conflicts are part of everyday life and we have to learn to deal with them



INTER Guide structure

- ***Module 1: Compulsory Education***
Challenges the reader into rethinking the meaning of compulsory education today, critically analyzing its aims and functions, and introducing the Intercultural approach as a proposal for school transformation



INTER Guide **structure**

- ***Module 2: Diversity versus Homogeneity in Education*** defines the ideas of homogeneity and diversity, helping the reader to identify them in his/her environments, to finally show the benefits and difficulties of switching from a mostly homogeneous perspective to a diversity one



INTER Guide structure

- ***Module 3: School, Home, Community,***
Reflects on the importance of good relationships and collaboration between families, schools and other community agents, considering different alternatives of collaboration



INTER Guide structure

- ***Module 4: Theoretical Assumptions,***
Focuses on identifying the implicit/explicit theories of teachers, showing theories underlying the Intercultural approach and reflecting upon the practical implications of former analysis



INTER Guide structure

- ***Module 5: Educational Policies***, analyzes educational policies trying to go beyond the plain understanding of laws, norms and regulations to identify and recognize the ideological interests underlying models and ideas which give reason and drive all legislation



INTER Guide structure

- ***Module 6: Evaluation, Student Assessment and Quality Assurance,*** encourages reflection on what evaluation is and what we think it should be. It goes beyond the testing of students' academic performances and concentrates attention on the teaching and learning process



INTER Guide **structure**

- ***Module 7: School Structure and Organization***, tries to make explicit our mental models about schools, to reflect about the main dimensions in school organization, and to elaborate on the practical implications in order to build an intercultural school



INTER Guide structure

- ***Module 8: Teaching and Learning Strategies*** its aim is to study learners' and teacher's roles in depth, to contribute to the improvement of competences that teachers have to attain, to help teachers be aware of and practice different strategies, to present different experiences which teachers could implement



INTER Guide structure

Each module has a similar structure, including the following sections:

- To start thinking
- Information
- Activities
- Proposals for collaboration
- Planning and adapting the curriculum
- Specific resources and additional links
- Reflective questions and evaluation



INTER Guide structure

- Along the current last year of completion of the Project, the INTER Guide is now being implemented by the partners in different European countries to be tested and evaluated.