



“TOGETHER –TOWards a cultural understandinG of thE oTHER”

IO1 – The Comparative Analysis Report

‘Intercultural Dialogue Awareness in EU:
The case study of
Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Italy and Lebanon’



This publication was created by the 6 partners of the Erasmus + Key Action 2 project:
“TOGETHER –TOWARDS a cultural understanding of the oTHER”

No:2020-1-EL01-KA204-079099
<http://thetogetherproject.eu>



CULTUREPOLIS
Corfu, Greece,



(EWORX S.A.)
EWORX YPIRESIES ILEKTRONIKOU
EPICHEIREIN ANONYMOS ETAIREIA
Athens, Greece



A.B. INSTITUTE OF
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
DEVELOPMENT LTD
Polis Chrysochous, Cyprus



GEORGIAN ARTS AND
CULTURE CENTER InTbilisi,
Georgia



FATTORIA PUGLIESE DIFFUSA ASSCULT.
In Taurisanq Italy



LEBANESE DEVELOPMENT
NETWORK
Beirut, Lebanon

ISBN:

(English publication)





Authors

Irine Surmanidze (Georgia)
Xanthippi Kontogianni (Greece)
Antonios Moras (Cyprus)
Iulia Gabriela Badea (Italy)
Evangelista Leuzzi (Italy)
Adele Benlahouar (Italy)
Guita Hourani (Lebanon)

Contributors

Paris Papavlasopoulos, Laura Charogianni, Eleftheria Karamitrou,
Dionysia Koutsi, Vayia Kyratzouli, Amin Nehme, Rita Nassif, Maka
Dvalishvili, Natia Trapaidze, Mariam Kakhniashvili.

Design

Antoinette Moubarak



Disclaimer

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Table of Content

<i>Overview</i>	6
- Introduction	6
- Method	6
- Key Findings	7
- Concluding Remarks	8
<i>Part 1 - An EU Policy & Strategies Review of Intercultural Dialogue</i>	10
- Introduction	11
- The Challenges of Intercultural Dialogue in EU	11
- The EU Policies and Strategies for Intercultural Dialogue, Cultural Diversity and Cultural Heritage	12
1. Convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	14
2. White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue	17
3. Towards an EU strategy for International Cultural Relations	21
4. Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century	25
5. A New European Agenda for Culture	28
6. Council Conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019 – 2022 (2018/C 460/10)	31
- Conclusions	34
- References	36
<i>Part 2 - Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: The Case Studies of Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Georgia and Lebanon</i>	37
<i>Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: CYPRUS</i>	38
1. Introduction	38
2. Executive Summary	39
3. Country Background	39
4. The Study Methodology	42
5. Key findings	45
6. Conclusion	49
7. Recommendations	50
8. References	52
9. Appendices	53
<i>Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: GEORGIA</i>	59
1. Introduction	59
2. Executive Summary	60
3. Country Background	61
4. The Study Methodology	61



5. Key Findings	63
6. Conclusion	71
7. Recommendations	72
8. References	73
9. Appendices	74
<i>Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: GREECE</i>	77
1. Introduction	77
2. Executive summary	78
3. Country Background	79
4. The study methodology	81
5. Key findings	83
6. Conclusions	91
7. Recommendations	92
8. References	94
9. Appendices	95
<i>Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: ITALY</i>	98
1. Introduction	98
2. Executive Summary	99
3. Country Background	100
4. The Study Methodology	102
5. Key Findings	104
6. Conclusions	113
7. Recommendations	115
8. References	116
9. Appendices	117
<i>Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: LEBANON</i>	121
List of Acronyms	121
1. Introduction	121
2. Executive Summary	122
3. Country Background	123
4. The Study Methodology	125
5. Key Findings	127
6. Conclusions	135
7. Recommendations	136
8. References	137
9. Appendices	138
<i>Appendices of the Comparative Analysis Report</i>	142

Overview

Introduction

Over the past decade, much research has been devoted to investigating how intercultural dialogue (ICD) can help build more prosperous, peaceful and sustainable societies. In our globalized world, and with the rapidly increasing pace of intercultural interactions within and between countries, communities and neighbourhoods, the need to build strong intercultural competencies is of the utmost importance. The scope and hope for intercultural dialogue, as articulated by many scholars and numerous EU policies, is to recognize and embrace both what we share as well as what makes us different, and to create a peaceful environment of social cohesion despite diverse linguistic, religious or ethnic identities and varying political, historical or economic positions.

The TOGETHER project aims to respond to the challenges of these complex and diverse cultural relationships and to support efforts towards peace, reconciliation and democracy between EU countries and their neighbours by embedding intercultural dialogue in the agendas of local communities. The Project's first output is a Comparative Analysis Report that presents the current state of awareness and development of intercultural dialogue in the Project's five partner countries—Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Italy and Lebanon. It provides insights into how ICD is understood, shaped and reflected both in policy and in practice, identifies the needs of local actors involved in ICD, and outlines examples of best practice in each country.





Method

The research adopted a mixed-method approach incorporating both desk-based research and a primary research instrument:


- a) The desk-based research was used to draw an overview of:
 - i. policies and strategies set out and implemented in the context of the European Union in order to contextualize the position of intercultural dialogue and explore its interconnection with the richness of the European cultural heritage and the potential of cultural diversity for a sustainable future; and
 - ii. relevant policy documents and reports concerning ICD in each country;
- b) Primary research involved a survey and in-depth interviews focused on the following themes: general awareness of ICD; policy and practice; and the needs of local actors.

The survey was developed through an online platform and distributed to government, civil society and local community organizations (see Appendix 1). The sample size achieved consisted of 195 responses in all five countries. As for the in-depth interviews, fifty were conducted in total (10 in each country). The selection criteria for the respondents and interviewees aimed to cover a wide range of sectors involving professionals and local actors at both policy and practice levels.

Key Findings

The results give a comprehensive overview of the needs and opportunities for promoting ICD in all partner countries. The following were highlighted as common needs and challenges:

- There is an increasing need for strengthening ICD and creating spaces for dialogue to enhance tolerance and respect for difference in local communities;
- Respondents see ICD as instrumental in constructing peaceful and inclusive societies and as a tool to promote tolerance and openness, overcome prejudices and enhance respect for human rights;
- Knowledge of ICD policies and programmes is low, as are funding opportunities and support for ICD-related activities;
- Public awareness and knowledge of the needs and importance of ICD is insufficient, as are cultural, educational and media programmes that would strengthen awareness-raising efforts among the general public;
- There is a lack of professional development and training opportunities for intercultural competence building; and
- A lack of political will and poor levels of inclusion in policy and implementation practices were also highlighted by all respondents, regardless of country.



The present report also highlights a vast amount of accumulated good practice and offers findings-based recommendations on what needs to be done to overcome the challenge of living in multicultural societies. Recommendations were provided in following directions:

- 1) Strengthening efforts to teach intercultural competences to educators, teachers, decision makers and professionals working on ICD through trainings and workshops, and the creation of teaching materials such as toolkits, guides, videos and other interactive lessons;
- 2) Reinforcing policies that support ICD and incorporating relevant implementation practices, with a particular emphasis on education, arts, culture and sports;
- 3) Creating financial mechanisms and increased funding opportunities for ICD-related activities across various sectors, including cultural and education projects that showcase cultural diversity, and reinforcing inclusive participation by all groups of the societies;
- 4) Launching awareness raising campaigns in order to inform the general public of the value of intercultural dialogue, most respondents underlining the importance of ensuring an equal participation among government, civil society, local communities and media outlets in these campaigns; and
- 5) Enhancing ICD education in schools and creating innovative teaching materials to support pluralism and respect for difference.

Concluding Remarks

Overall, the report demonstrates the mutual dynamics of current challenges and opportunities for intercultural dialogue in Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Italy and Lebanon, which tend to complement rather than contradict each other. That said, context is evidently crucial in defining and applying ICD in policy and in practice. Religious, ethnic, linguistic or other characteristics create different landscapes for the development of ICD in each country, and policies and approaches therefore need to be reinforced in accordance to specific contexts (e.g. the challenges of migration to Europe, Georgia's Soviet legacy and ethno-political conflicts, inter-faith and inter-ethnic disputes in Lebanon). Nevertheless, both the survey's respondents and the interviewees were united in stating that respectful cultural encounters, mutual understanding and constructive dialogue are the foundation for building cohesive and sustainable societies despite differences in lifestyle, values, traditions and belief.

Evidently, there are many barriers to intercultural dialogue. Some simply spring from the difficulty of communicating in another language, but others are related to power and politics, historical memory, cultural and social positioning, poverty, exploitation and discrimination and to the often troublesome day-to-day experience of persons belonging to disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Besides, as the reports outline, we are currently faced with the rise of groups and political affiliations preaching xenophobia, homophobia, racism and hatred of the 'other', of the 'immigrant', of the 'foreigner'—thereby limiting the space for tolerance and openness and rejecting the very concept of intercultural dialogue.



Be that as it may, the problems outlined above do also provide opportunities for intervention by civil sector actors and the TOGETHER project in particular. The role of ICD was highly regarded by most respondents in every country, while highlighting the need to develop greater competence and skills in this domain. Cultural heritage and learning about common values was seen as pivotal in fostering trust and creating a positive environment for dialogue. Based on these findings, the TOGETHER Project's second output, 'Ambassadors Curriculum' (IO2), will oversee the development of innovative study modules and educational materials to strengthen the intercultural skills and competences of local actors and practitioners, the transfer of knowledge about intercultural dialogue and liberal values, and efforts to motivate local actors to become ambassadors of ICD in their own communities.

In sum, the idea of intercultural dialogue, as seen through the lenses of the reports that mapped needs, opportunities and examples of best practice, seems to be both endorsed as a prerequisite for peaceful and prosperous societies and contested by past experiences and by current polarising practices that divide communities into 'us' and 'them'. Also, in many cases, ICD seems to be neglected or absent from national governmental agendas. As one of our respondent outlines, 'political overview related to the promotion of ICD is silent or maybe so absent that it can't leave any traces'. As the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (2008) emphasises, it takes a community effort to promote integration, solidarity and equal opportunities for all, and it is our shared responsibility to achieve a society where 'we can live together as equals in dignity'.





Part 1 -An EU Policy & Strategies Review of Intercultural Dialogue

by



Institute of Entrepreneurship Development



Lebanese Development Network

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Introduction

One of the founding principles of the European Union is respect for identity and cultural diversity. The importance of these principles as vital elements of our European society has been formulated in many policies and strategies of the continent. With the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009, the value of cultural diversity has become even more significant, building momentum for the peaceful co-existence of the European citizens. This is also apparent in the Preamble of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (European Parliament, Council OF Europe, & European Commission, 2016) which states that


“the Union is founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity; it is based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law. It places the individual at the heart of its activities, by establishing the citizenship of the Union [...]. The Union contributes to the preservation and to the development of these common values while respecting the diversity of the cultures and traditions of the peoples of Europe as well as the national identities of the Member States”.

Europe is home of a great diversity of people living closely together under the united context of the European Union. Besides, their co-existence has been intensified by social media and technological communication, establishing, thus, the prerequisites for a more direct dialogue between them, and simultaneously changing the economic and cultural landscapes of all Member States.

The challenges of Intercultural Dialogue in EU

Although individuals and communities are more connected than ever, conflicts and misunderstandings persist between and within societies. Some researchers explain (Deardorff, 2020) that hate speech spreads the idea that diversity and unity are irreconcilable and triggers violent acts that can dissolve the social fabric in the long term. The world is torn by conflicts and wars, and new global challenges and threats – such as populism, deep inequalities, and violent extremism – are on the rise, undermining women and men’s abilities to live together. In this regard, the various challenges which Europe has been facing since the very beginning of the 2nd millennium cover a wide spectrum of cases, from the “climate change to humanitarian tragedies, and from political turbulences and extremist attacks to social adversities”, all along its territory (Lähdesmäki, 2020).

The last 10 years, as part of a globalized world, European Union has been struggling, with the economic crisis of the Eurozone and European financial markets as well as with the crisis of democratic legitimacy and the increase of the Eurosceptic political parties seeking to exit the Eurozone and the Union. Moreover, rises in the movement of human populations, international migration flows and brain drain effects have also been noticed in the today’s European landscape, transforming the continent, in “one of the main destinations on the world map of international migration” (Wilk-Woś, 2010). Along with this phenomenon, the recent refugee crisis (2015 – present) has placed Europe in the front of enormous humanitarian challenges and has been triggering political conflicts between the political actors of the European Union and the Member States.



Last but not least, since 2020, Europe has been confronting the exceptional circumstances of a global health crisis: the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to its devastating health impacts, it has become apparent that COVID-19 is leading to an unprecedented economic and geopolitical crisis (UNESCO, 2020). According to a relevant UNESCO's report (2020) on the social impacts of COVID-19, they are expected (i) the amplification of social inequalities and vulnerabilities; (ii) the rise of xenophobia and ethnocultural racism; (iii) increased gender-based violence; and (iv) rising discrimination against non-citizens.

In this fast - changing landscape, the role of culture is more important than ever. Europe's rich cultural heritage has the potential to promote common values, social inclusion and intercultural dialogue within and beyond Europe, creating a sense of belonging, being an antidote to any confrontation society is facing nowadays. Dialogue between cultures, the oldest and most fundamental mode of democratic conversation, enables people to live together peacefully and constructively in a multicultural world, develops a sense of community, improves lives, generates jobs and growth, and creates spillover effects in many economic sectors (Council of Europe website). In other words, intercultural dialogue stresses the value of cultural diversity, which according to sustainable development theory constitutes a rich source of innovation, human experience and knowledge exchange, enabling communities and societies to move to more sustainable futures (Tilbury & Mulà, 2009).

The EU policies and strategies for intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and cultural heritage

European Union but also the United Nations have the fundamental role to face the European and global challenges through establishing and promote understanding within and between societies. Policies and strategies for the protection of cultural heritage, for the advocacy of cultural diversity but also for the promotion of intercultural dialogue are powerful tools to build bridges between people, reinforce mutual understanding, boost economic and social development and enable Europe and its neighboring countries to face common challenges as a whole context for social cohesion and sustainability.

The "EU Policies and Strategies Report" constitutes an integral part of the first intellectual output of the TOGETHER project, the "Comparative Analysis Report". Its aim is to present a series of fundamental policies and strategies, set out and implemented in the context of the European Union in order to contextualize the position of intercultural dialogue in Europe and explore its interconnection with the richness of the European cultural heritage and the potential of cultural diversity for a sustainable future.





1. Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

Author United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation General Conference at its seventeenth session-Paris.

Publication Date 16 November 1972

Title Convention Concerning The Protection Of The World Cultural And Natural Heritage

Government Department UNESCO


URL <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/convention-en.pdf>


Overview of Content

- The most critical characteristic of the 1972 World Heritage Convention is that it links the principles of protection of nature and the preservation of cultural resources together in a single text.
- The Convention acknowledges how people communicate with nature and the basic need for harmony between the two to be maintained.
- The Convention defines the kind of natural or cultural sites which can be considered for inscription on the World Heritage List.
- The Convention sets out the duties of States Parties. By signing the Convention, each country pledges to conserve not only the World Heritage sites situated on its territory, but also to protect its national heritage.
- It explains how the World Heritage Fund is to be used and managed and under what conditions international financial assistance may be provided.
- The Convention stipulates the obligation of States Parties to report regularly to the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of their World Heritage properties.

Summary of Policy Recommendations

- “Cultural Heritage” are monuments, groups of buildings, and sites.
- “Natural Heritage” are physical and biological formations, geological and physiographical formations, and natural sites.
- Each State Party to this Convention identifies and delineates the different properties situated on its territory. Each State Party recognizes is responsible for the identification, protection, and preservation of these sites and will do so using its own resources and when needed with international cooperation.

- 
- Each State Party shall endeavour to: adopt a general policy to integrate the sites into the life of the community and in its comprehensive planning programs; set up within its territories services for the protection and preservation of the sites; develop scientific and operating methods to make the State capable of counteracting the dangers that threaten its cultural or natural heritage; take the appropriate legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures necessary for the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation of this heritage; and foster the establishment or development of national or regional centres for training in the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage and to encourage scientific research in this field.
 - States Parties recognize that such heritage constitutes a world heritage for whose protection the international community as a whole must co-operate. The States Parties assist a member State at its request. Each State Party not to take any deliberate measures that might damage directly or indirectly the cultural and natural heritage of another Member State.
 - “The World Heritage Committee” is an intergovernmental committee under UNESCO whose 15 members are elected by the general assembly. Every State Party shall in so far as possible, submit to the World Heritage Committee (WHC) an inventory of property forming part of the cultural and natural heritage, situated in its territory and suitable for inclusion in the list. The inclusion of a property in the World Heritage List requires the consent of the State concerned. The WHC issues also a “list of World Heritage in Danger.” The WHC shall study the State’s proposed sites, determine the value, decide on assistance, etc.
 - “The World Heritage Fund” (WHF) is a fund established for the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The States Parties undertake to pay a compulsory contribution, every two years, to the WHF, beyond any voluntary and gift donations. Each State is encouraged to establish national public and private foundations or associations whose purpose is to invite donations for the protection of the cultural and natural heritage sites.
 - To obtain financial assistance from the WHF, each State must submit with its request such information and documentation to allow the WHF to decide. Requests based upon disasters or natural calamities should, by reasons of the urgent work which they may involve, be given immediate, priority consideration by the Committee. The Committee carries out its own studies before making decisions.
 - Assistance granted by the WHF may take the following forms: studies, provisions of experts, technicians and skilled labour, training, the supply of equipment, low-interest or interest-free loans, which might be repayable on a long-term basis; and the granting, in exceptional cases and for special reasons, of non-repayable subsidies.
 - The World Heritage Committee may also provide international assistance for the training of staff and specialists at all levels in all fields. International assistance on a large scale is based on detailed scientific, economic, and technical studies. States benefiting from international assistance should make known the importance of the property for which the assistance has been received and the role played by such assistance. The contribution of the State benefiting from international assistance shall constitute a substantial share of the resources devoted to each program or project unless its resources do not permit this.

- 
- The States Parties shall endeavour by all appropriate means, and in particular by educational and information programs, to strengthen appreciation and respect by their peoples of the cultural and natural heritage. They shall undertake to keep the public broadly informed of the dangers threatening this heritage and of the activities carried on in pursuance of this Convention.
 - States should, in their reports to UNESCO, give information on the legislative and administrative provisions, which they have adopted, and other actions, which they have taken for the application of this Convention, together with details of the experience, acquired in this field. These reports will be shared with WHC.

Keywords Inventory, Institution, Research, Cultural heritage, Natural heritage, Financing, Education, Management/conservation, Data collection/reporting, Special fund, Protected area





2. White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue

Author Council of Europe Ministers of Foreign Affairs

Publication Date May 2008

Title White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue - “Living Together as Equals in Dignity”

Government Department Council of Europe Ministers of Foreign Affairs

URL https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf

Overview of Content

The White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue formulates the political orientations of the Council of Europe in the subject of “intercultural dialogue” based on a wide-scale consultation which involved discussions, questionnaires and dialogue events with significant stakeholders from all member states. The Paper is addressed to policy-makers and administrators, educators and media, civil-society organizations, migrant and religious communities, youth organizations and other social partners.

In introduction, the policy draws the attention on the commitment of the Council of Europe member states to foster a diverse society, based on the core values of the Council of Europe, namely human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The first chapter describes the design and the editing process and defines the main concepts. Also, it brings into discussion a more suitable route to follow in order to achieve an inclusive society, and intercultural dialogue is the one.

The second chapter points out that intercultural dialogue is the main tool in managing cultural diversity and that pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness is no longer sufficient. Moreover, the instruments and mechanism that are used to boost and preserve the Council of Europe’s values and the risks that any society would face it in the absence of intercultural dialogue are presented.

The third chapter explores the conceptual framework of intercultural dialogue and lists the conditions in which intercultural dialogue can become a prosperous endeavor. It’s understood that intercultural dialogue as a powerful tool of an inclusive society, helps individuals to manage the different cultural affiliations in a multicultural environment by enriching his/her heritage and social background. The paper points out the two models of cultural diversity, assimilation and multiculturalism, both of them being no longer the elements that can bring integration and social cohesion. Also, it highlights that the rule of law, human rights, democracy, equal dignity, mutual respect and equality are the fundamental components that can ensure the intercultural dialogue. The role of religion and interreligious dialogue plays, is brought into discussion in the framework of the Council of Europe.

The last two chapters analyses the five approaches to the promotion of intercultural dialogue, all being based on the Council of Europe's values. The paper points out that the rules of the "majority" do not justify any kind of discrimination, hate speech and identity exploitation. In the end a list of recommendation for a proper promotion of intercultural dialogue is presented.

Summary of Policy Recommendations

The final chapter outlines five policies and formulates a list of recommendations and guidelines that, in respect of Council of Europe's values, the shared responsibility comes to all stakeholders.

Democratic governance of cultural diversity

"Intercultural dialogue needs a neutral institutional and legal framework at national and local level, guaranteeing the human rights standards of the Council of Europe and based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law." (p.37)

"An inner coherence between the different policies that promote, or risk obstructing, intercultural dialogue should be ensured." (p.37)

"Public authorities should be sensitive to the expectations of a culturally diverse population and ensure that the provision of public services respect the legitimate claims, and be able to reply to the wishes, of all groups in society." (p.38)

"Public debate has to be marked by respect for cultural diversity" (p.38)

"Public authorities are encouraged to take, where necessary, adequate positive action in support of the access of persons belonging to disadvantaged or underrepresented groups to positions of responsibility within professional life, associations, politics and local and regional authorities, paying due regard to required professional competences." (p.39)

Democratic citizenship and participation

"Public authorities and all social forces are encouraged to develop the necessary framework of dialogue through educational initiatives and practical arrangements involving majorities and minorities." (p.41)

"No undue restriction must be placed on the exercise of human rights, including by non-citizens." (p.41)

"Public authorities should encourage active participation in public life at local level by all those legally resident in their jurisdiction, including possibly the right to vote in local and regional elections on the basis of principles provided for by the Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level." (p.42)

"Public authorities should support effectively the work of civil-society organisations promoting participation and democratic citizenship, particularly those representing or working with youth and with persons belonging to minorities including migrants." (p.42)

“Local government particularly is strongly encouraged to develop initiatives to strengthen civic involvement and a culture of democratic participation.” (p.42)

Learning and teaching intercultural competences

“The learning and teaching of intercultural competence is essential for democratic culture and social cohesion. – education is the key element in preventing educational disadvantage.” (p.43)

“Intercultural competences should be a part of citizenship and human-rights education. Competent public authorities and education institutions should make full use of descriptors of key competences for intercultural communication in designing and implementing curricula and study programmes at all levels of education, including teacher training and adult education programmes. – School and family-based exchanges should be made a regular feature of the secondary curriculum.” (p.43)

“Educational establishments and all other stakeholders engaged in educational activities are invited to ensure that the learning and teaching of history follow the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers on history teaching and focus not only on the history of one’s own country, but include learning the history of other countries and cultures, as well as how others have looked at our own society (multiperspectivity), at the same time being attentive to the respect of the fundamental values of the Council of Europe and include the dimension of human rights education” (p.43)

“An appreciation of our diverse cultural background should include knowledge and understanding of the major world religions and nonreligious convictions and their role in society.” (p.44)

Spaces for intercultural dialogue

“Public authorities and all social actors are invited to develop intercultural dialogue in the spaces of everyday life and in the framework of the respect of fundamental freedoms” (p.46)

“Civil-society organisations in particular, including religious communities, are invited to provide the organisational framework for intercultural and interreligious encounters.” (p.47)

“Journalism, promoted in a responsible manner through codes of ethics as advanced by the media industry itself and a culture-sensitive training of journalists, can help provide fora for intercultural dialogue.” (p.47)

“Public authorities and non-state actors are encouraged to promote culture, the arts and heritage, which provide particularly important spaces for dialogue.” (p.47)

Intercultural dialogue in international relations

“Local and regional authorities should consider engaging in cooperation with partner institutions in other parts of Europe.” (p.48)

“Civil-society organisations and education providers can contribute to intercultural dialogue in Europe and internationally, for example through participation in European non-governmental structures, crossborder

partnerships and exchange schemes, particularly for young people.” (p.48)

“The media are encouraged to develop arrangements for sharing and co-producing – at the regional, national or European level – programme material which has proven its value in mobilising public opinion against intolerance and improving community relations.” (p.48)

Keywords Intercultural dialogue, multiculturalism, social cohesion, stakeholders, public authorities, positive action measures, human rights, integration, inclusion



3. Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations

Author High Representative Of The Union For Foreign Affairs And Security Policy

Publication Date 8.6.2016

Title Joint Communication To The European Parliament And The Council - Towards An EU Strategy For International Cultural Relations

Government Department EUROPEAN COMMISSION

URL [communication-eu-africa-strategy-join-2020-4-final_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

Overview of Content

The Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council about the EU strategy for international cultural relations outlines this contribution to the formulation and promotion of these relations, aiming at enhancing EU's objectives to promote the principles of peace, stability, diversity, and growth with socioeconomic development.

EU plays a very important role as a global actor to the preservation of human rights and the promotion of diversity within the cultural relations that are developed among countries. The Union and its members are devoted to the promotion of a global order whose main pillars are peace, the rule of law, freedom of expression, mutual understanding, and respect for fundamental rights.

EU's fundamental values, such as gender equality, democracy, freedom of expression, cultural and linguistic diversity are constantly being challenged and culture is the answer for solutions to be found. Culture, and especially in terms of inter-cultural dialogue (ICD), can contribute to the development of solutions for many problems and challenges nowadays. To name a few, conflict prevention and resolution among countries, integrating refugees, protecting cultural heritage are presented as some of the plenty challenges that countries face and culture can be a walking stick for nations to communicate with each other and move towards setting common goals for the preservation of peace and solidarity.

Growth and progress can also be accomplished through inter-cultural dialogue. Job creation, economic development, and competitiveness are some of the benefits inferred by cultural exchanges not only inside EU, but beyond its borders, as well. World cultural heritage and creative industries can benefit the economic and employment development of many nations.

Some important guiding principles of EU action in the field of international cultural relations are the promotion of cultural diversity and respect for human rights, the adoption of Mutual Respect and Inter-Cultural Dialogue, the ensured respect for Complementarity and Subsidiarity, the encouragement of a cross-cutting approach to culture, and the promotion of culture through existing frameworks for cooperation. Also, three work streams are proposed for the enhancement of international cultural relations:

- supporting culture as an engine for sustainable social and economic development,
- promoting culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations, and
- reinforcing cooperation on cultural heritage.

All three streams contain policy recommendations and strategies about how they can be implemented in order to foster cultural relations as tools for the establishment of inter-cultural dialogue among nations.

To make the most of this cooperation with partner countries in these streams, EU stakeholders should put efforts on ensuring complementarity and synergies, such as several governments, local cultural and civil society organisations, the Commission and the High Representative, Member States and their cultural institutes, through EU Cooperation and inter-cultural exchanges of students, researchers and alumni.

Finally, an EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations is proposed taking into consideration that the cultural cooperation with partner countries must be advanced, based on considering culture as a factor for sustainable social and economic development, highlighting the need for peaceful inter-community relations, and establishing the cooperation on cultural heritage.

Thanks to the new digital era more cultural exchanges and inter-cultural cooperation are developed, so culture can aid in advancing international relations in more ways, too.

Summary of Policy Recommendations

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EU ACTION

1. Cultural diversity and respect for human rights: Respect to human rights equals to respect for cultural diversity, ensuring fundamental freedoms
2. Mutual Respect and Inter-Cultural Dialogue: Respectful communication, equality, a spirit of partnership, reciprocity, mutual learning and co-creation should be the pillars of EU's international cultural relations.
3. Complementarity and Subsidiarity: Actions to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States, the Union and the Member States to foster cooperation with third parties taking into account provisions of the Treaties to promote international cultural relations
4. A cross-cutting approach to culture: Promotion of culture within the EU's external policies and not only through arts or literature.
5. Promotion of culture through existing frameworks for cooperation: Frameworks for thematic and geographic cooperation and financing instruments have been developed by the EU for cultural relations promotion.

ADVANCING CULTURAL COOPERATION WITH PARTNER COUNTRIES

Work streams proposed to advance international cultural relations with partner countries:

1. supporting culture as an engine for sustainable social and economic development

- Supporting the development of cultural policies: the EU should help partner countries incorporate culture in national policies, by sharing experience with enlargement and neighbourhood countries and strengthening cultural policies.

- Strengthening cultural and creative industries: By (a) Increasing economic revenues from creative industries, (b) Creative hubs and clusters, (c) Entrepreneurship and skills development, (d) Support to European Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), (e) Structured territorial cooperation frameworks.

- Supporting the role of local authorities in partner countries: Cultural activities boost local development dynamics and the EU's approach concerns the innovative partnerships, cultural city twinning, Capitals of Culture, urban strategies in historic towns, for sustainable urban development.

2. promoting culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations

Another goal of inter-cultural dialogue is the building of fair, peaceful and inclusive societies. As a result, it can defuse tensions, prevent crises from escalating, promote national reconciliation, and encourage new narratives to counter radicalisation. Inter-cultural dialogue can be promoted through:

- Cooperation amongst cultural operators: Cooperation and mobility of cultural operators and cultural productions establishes ties among partner countries. Some examples of cultural operators are Creative Europe, Eastern Partnership, and Anna Lindh Foundation

- Peace-building through Inter-Cultural Dialogue: ICD is also a tool to enhance actual cooperation and the processes of reconciliation among diverse cultures and societies, especially with minorities, with the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), Youth inter-cultural dialogue, Training for observers of Election Observations Missions and staff to be deployed in civilian stabilisation missions and Promoting cultural rights.

3. reinforcing cooperation on cultural heritage

Tourism can boost economic growth and tourism can be boosted by promoting cultural heritage. Strong partnerships among countries aiming at developing sustainable strategies through research on cultural heritage, strong combat trafficking of heritage, and protection of heritage, including training, skills development and knowledge transfer should be an aspect of cooperation on cultural heritage.

A STRATEGIC EU APPROACH TO CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

1. Enhanced EU Cooperation: joint projects are not very precarious and thanks to the partnerships created they are disseminated more with greater impact and greater opportunities for learning.

2. Inter-cultural exchanges of students, researchers and alumni: Within the inter-university cooperation programmes, international cooperation is promoted and communication among scientists of different cultural, national or religious backgrounds is established, thus creating inter-cultural ties.

Keywords

EU action, cultural relations, inter-cultural dialogue, members, human rights, diversity, cultural heritage



4. Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st century

Author The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

Publication Date 22 February 2017

Title Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st century

Government Department The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

URL <https://rm.coe.int/16806f6a03>

Overview of Content

This document highlights the role of cultural heritage as the key to progressing our societies on the basis of “dialogue between cultures”, “respect for identities and diversity”, and a “feeling of belonging to a community of values”. It defines Cultural Heritage as a powerful instrument in coping with social, economic, cultural, and environmental issues. In addition, through diverse activities it generates, underlines its impact on helping other sectors - education, tourism, employment - to achieve their goals.

The document further provides a framework and scope for the strategy implementation. It explores existing tools and policies and strives to advance them on the basis of international and European legal instruments in force.

The strategy calls for an inclusive and participatory management approach focusing on the conservation, protection, and promotion of heritage by society as a whole, involving local, national and regional authorities, communities and all heritage stakeholders together with professionals, civil society and the voluntary sector. Besides, it highlights the heritage-related experience and achievements of countries in Europe.

Summary of Policy Recommendations

The strategy outlines thirty-two policy recommendations under three priority components – “social”, “economic and territorial development” and “knowledge and education” – and their interaction. Recommendations are articulated as guidance on how to oversee twenty-four challenges identified within these three priority components.

All of these recommendations are complemented with a detailed list of suggested “course of actions” and a broad selection of best-practice examples from all over Europe. Every recommendation is followed with an explanatory paragraph outlining why it is important to follow the recommendation and what does it require to achieve the best outcomes. In addition, each recommendation has a predefined target audience(s) varying from local, to regional, national, and European.

“The “social component” (S) focuses on the relationship between heritage and societies, citizenship, the transmission and sharing of democratic values through participatory governance, and good governance through participatory management”.

- S1.** Encourage the involvement of citizens and local authorities in capitalising on their everyday heritage
- S2.** Make heritage more accessible
- S3.** Use heritage to assert and transmit the fundamental values of Europe and European society
- S4.** Promote heritage as a meeting place and vehicle for intercultural dialogue, peace and tolerance
- S5.** Encourage and assess citizen participation practices and procedures
- S6.** Create a suitable framework to enable local authorities and communities to take action for the benefit of their heritage and its management
- S7.** Develop and promote participatory heritage identification programmes
- S8.** Encourage heritage rehabilitation initiatives by local communities and authorities
- S9.** Support intergenerational and intercultural projects to promote heritage
- S10.** Facilitate and encourage (public and private) partnerships in cultural heritage promotion and conservation projects

“The “territorial and economic development” (D) component focuses on the relationship between cultural heritage and spatial development, the economy and local and regional governance with due regard for the principles of sustainable development”.

- D1.** Promote cultural heritage as a resource and facilitate financial investment
- D2.** Support and promote the heritage sector as a means of creating jobs and business opportunities
- D3.** Promote heritage skills and professionals
- D4.** Produce heritage impact studies for rehabilitation, construction, planning and infrastructure projects
- D5.** Encourage the reuse of heritage and use of traditional knowledge and practice
- D6.** Ensure that heritage is taken into account in development, spatial planning, environmental and energy policies
- D7.** Give consideration to heritage in sustainable tourism development policies

D8. Protect, restore and enhance heritage, making greater use of new technologies

D9. Use innovative techniques to present cultural heritage to the public, while preserving its integrity

D10. Use the cultural heritage as a means of giving the region a distinctive character and making it more attractive and better known

D11. Develop new management models to ensure that heritage benefits from the economic spinoffs that it generates

“The “knowledge and education” (K) component focuses on the relationship between heritage and shared knowledge, covering awareness raising, training and research”.

K1. Incorporate heritage education more effectively in school curricula

K2. Implement measures to encourage young people to practise heritage

K3. Encourage creativity to capture the attention of the heritage audience

K4. provide optimum training for non-professional players and for professionals from other sectors with a connection to heritage

K5. diversify training systems for heritage professionals

K6. develop knowledge banks on local and traditional materials, techniques and know-how

K7. ensure that the knowledge and skills involved in heritage trades are passed on

K8. guarantee the competences of professionals working on the listed heritage

K9. develop study and research programmes that reflect the needs of the heritage sector and share the findings

K10. encourage and support the development of networks

K11. explore heritage as a source of knowledge, inspiration and creativity

Keywords

Cultural heritage; democracy; diversity; identity; economic development; tolerance; intercultural; values; creativity; social; knowledge; education.



5. A New European Agenda for Culture

Author European Commission

Publication Date Brussels, 22.05.2018

Title Communication from The Commission to The European Parliament, The European Council, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of The Regions. A New European Agenda for Culture.

Government Department EUROPEAN COMMISSION

URL <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2018:267:FIN>

Overview of Content

The “New European Agenda for Culture” SWD (2018) 167final is a Communication document from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions issued in 2018 with the aim to “harness the full potential of culture to help build a more inclusive and fairer Union, supporting innovation, creativity and sustainable jobs and growth”.

In the introductory part of the communication, the Commission refers to EU policies which are milestones in the establishment and the formulation of the shared interest of all Member States towards a further expansion of the education’s and culture’s potential in the European territory. At this point, it is highlighted that the continent’s rich cultural heritage and the transformative cultural and creative sector have the power to foster civil participation in public affairs, strengthen the sense of belonging and sharing of common values, promote social inclusion and also developing intercultural dialogue within Europe and beyond.

Afterwards, the challenges emerged from the financial crisis of the decade 2008–2018 are discussed, and the effects of digitalization are analyzed. Surveys, data and statistics collected in 2017 show that in the fast-changing European settings, there is an intensive need to manage risks by bringing Europeans together through culture. In this spectrum, the New European Agenda for Culture is grounded on the basis of three main strategic objectives, with social, economic and external dimensions as follows:

1. Social dimension – harnessing the power of culture and cultural diversity for social cohesion and wellbeing.
2. Economic dimension – supporting culture-based creativity in education and innovation, and for jobs and growth.
3. External dimension – strengthening international cultural relations.

Specific and targeted policy actions are designed and planned per strategic objective in order to secure its fulfilment and therefore contribute to the overall goal of the Agenda. However, there are also two cross-cutting areas of policy actions at EU level – cultural heritage and digital – which are spotlighted because they serve all the three above objectives.

Last but not least, the implementation of the New European Agenda for Culture is designed in two levels: a. Cooperation with Member States and b. Structured dialogue with civil society, while is being supported by the Creative Europe and other EU programmes in the Multiannual Financial Framework.

Summary of Policy Recommendations

In the New European Agenda for Culture, a series of sub-goals are presented and discussed under each of the three strategic objectives with social, economic and external dimensions, contextualizing the policy recommendations of the Agenda. These sub-goals could be summarized as follows:

- Foster the cultural capability of all Europeans by making available a wide range of cultural activities and providing opportunities to participate actively.
- Encourage the mobility of professionals in the cultural and creative sectors and remove obstacles to their mobility.
- Protect and promote Europe's cultural heritage as a shared resource, to raise awareness of our common history and values and reinforce a sense of common European identity.
- Promote the arts, culture and creative thinking in formal and non-formal education and training at all levels and in lifelong learning.
- Foster favourable ecosystems for cultural and creative industries, promoting access to finance, innovation capacity, fair remuneration of authors and creators and cross-sectoral cooperation.
- Promote the skills needed by cultural and creative sectors, including digital, entrepreneurial, traditional and specialized skills.
- Support culture as an engine for sustainable social and economic development.
- Promote culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations.
- Reinforce cooperation on cultural heritage.

Additionally, the European Commission highly recommends to implement the New Agenda in Member States, with respect to the principle of subsidiarity and through tailored Work Plans, working methods and joint projects co-funded by EU programmes. Structured dialogue with civil society is also proposed through online collaboration opportunities with organizations which are inside and outside the cultural and creative sector. Finally, the Agenda's approach is proposed within a holistic vision, promoting synergies across cultural sectors and with other policy fields.

Keywords

cultural diversity, international relations, innovation, creativity, cultural capability

Diversity



6. Council conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019 – 2022 (2018/C 460/10)

Author The Council of the European Union

Publication Date 21.12.2018

Title Council conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019 – 2022 (2018/C 460/10)

Government Department The Council of the European Union

URL <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018XG1221%2801%29>

Overview of Content

The “Council Conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022” were published on 21/12/2018 in the Official Journal of the European Union with the aim to establish and implement a concrete series of actions for Culture covering the period from 2019 to 2022. These conclusions acknowledged the New European Agenda for Culture 2018 and its main objectives, the outcomes of the European Year of Cultural Heritage as well as the synergies of relevant EU programmes and funds. The committee thus invited the Commission to adopt a mid-term evaluation of the Work Plan and a final report on its implementation, based on voluntary written contributions from Member States, by June 2022.

The policy document begins with the guiding principles where the Work Plan is based on and proceeds with the priorities set by the Council in the view of their contribution to cultural diversity, their European added value and the need for joint action. Particularly, (a) the sustainability in cultural heritage, (b) cohesion and well-being, (c) an ecosystem supporting artists, cultural and creative professionals and European content, (d) gender equality and (e) international cultural relations are the five priorities of the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022. In addition, digitalization and cultural statistics are regarded as fundamental horizontal issues on the ground that they foster innovation and evidence-based policy making for art and culture, respectively.

Afterward, the implementation of the Work Plan is discussed and in this light, the Council invites the Member States and the Commission to work collaboratively on the dynamic agenda of actions that follows. The actions presented in this policy document are distributed among the five different priority areas which they address. The structure of each concrete action consists of the topic it aims to cover, the working method which is recommended, the rationale behind the action and the outputs it targets. The working methods which are proposed are the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), ad hoc or Commission-led expert groups, peer-learning activities, studies, conferences, stocktaking seminars, the European CultureForum, dialogue with civil society, pilot projects, joint initiatives with international organizations, Council conclusions and informal meetings of officials from Ministries of Culture and, if appropriate from other ministries.

Finally, the policy document ends with an indicative timetable of the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022, accompanied with the principles relating to OMC groups established by the Member States in the framework of this Work Plan.

Summary of Policy Recommendations

The actions of the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022 are grounded on five different priorities which the Council has established as follows:

- A. Sustainability in cultural heritage
- B. Cohesion and well-being
- C. An ecosystem supporting artists, cultural and creative professionals and European content
- D. Gender equality
- E. International cultural relations.

Each priority is further discussed and relevant recommendations are given accordingly. Particularly is it recommended that:

- Follow-up measures and mainstreaming activities need to be developed in order to ensure the legacy of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, which gave rise to a large number of diverse activities all across Europe. The work of the European Year's national coordinators should be taken into account as well.
- A stronger orientation towards the interests and needs of specific groups, such as young people, older people, people with disabilities, people with a migrant background and people living in poverty or material deprivation, is necessary. Digital technologies are an asset for audience development and innovative methods of participation. Cross-sectoral cooperation with other areas, such as education, social care, healthcare, science and technology, and regional and urban development, has a significant effect on cohesion and well-being. Special attention should be paid to the role of culture at local level, to the quality of architecture and the living environment and to culture-led social innovations contributing to the development of cities and regions across the EU.
- The mobility of artists and cultural and creative professionals, the circulation and translation of European content, training and talent development, fair pay and working conditions, access to finance and cross-border cooperation should be issues of specific interest for research and exchange at European level.
- Gender inequalities should be acknowledged and tackled by specific policies and measures. In order to raise awareness at political and administrative levels and within the different sectors, there is a need for comprehensive data and an exchange of good practice.
- A strategic step-by-step approach to international cultural relations followed by concrete actions for its implementation is necessary. Such an approach should entail a bottom-up perspective, encourage people-to-people contacts and promote intercultural dialogue. Full complementarity with Member States' actions and actions carried out by the Council of Europe and UNESCO has to be ensured.

Last but not least, The Member States and the Commission are encouraged to disseminate the outputs of the Work Plan for Culture widely and to take them into account where appropriate when developing policies at European and national level.

Keywords

Cultural heritage, sustainability, European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018

We are
STRONGER TOGETHER!



Conclusions

The interest of international organizations such as the European Commission, Council of Europe, United Nations, etc. for the value of intercultural dialogue has been in a continuous growing process during the last decade. In the EU policies and strategies, cultural heritage, as cultural diversity, is tied up with Intercultural Dialogue and is mostly described as enrichment and as a tool to an inclusive society.

The reviewed EU policies and strategies are showing the chronological development of the ICD and its increasing convergence in integration policies. All the presented documents are exploring how ICD is developed as a model to handle cultural diversity in different areas. Intercultural Dialogue came as a response to globalization that increased both diversity and insecurity. ICD has been chosen as the new model to deal with cultural diversity. For example, the storyline of the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue is that assimilation and multiculturalism belong to the past and that ICD will solve the problems that these two approaches failed (Agustin, 2012).

When analyzing the documents, a few key concepts are drawn to the attention, such as social problems, cultural diversity, cultural heritage, human values, globalization, identity, human rights, democratic citizenship, digitization, peace, and solidarity.

The EU policies and strategies recommendations could be categorized into four key dimensions:

- Social: harnessing the power of culture and cultural diversity for social cohesion and wellbeing
- Economic: supporting culture-based creativity in education and innovation, such as digitization, jobs, and growth
- Knowledge and education: covering awareness-raising actions, training, and research
- External: strengthening international cultural relations

But talking about the present, the actual global health, social, political, and economic crisis, called the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to a rise in discrimination, inequality, and vulnerability, putting pressure on the capacities of societies for intercultural understanding at a time where solidarity and cooperation were needed the most.

To this end, ICD has a big role to play in developing a brand new socio-cultural compact that will shape the way we live, work, connect and engage across nations, ethnic and civilizational lines. So, we must focus on maintaining intercultural exchange during times of crisis and act to the lessons of the pandemic, including strengthening human rights protections, supporting civic exchange, and deliberation, addressing social inequalities that are a catalyzation to discrimination, and marginalization. This pandemic has brought to availability the online platforms as key tools through which governments, practitioners, and communities have created effective solutions through which to continue intercultural learning and exchange during times of crisis (UNESCO, 2020).



“The pandemic has demonstrated the fragility of our world. But it has also confirmed that among our growing diversity, we remain fundamentally interconnected and unavoidably interdependent. (...) The need for a culture of peace, the need for UNESCO, is more pronounced today than ever before. Peace is as an essential enabler, and an ultimate outcome of a fairer, sustainable world” - Gabriela Ramos, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences.



References

- European Parliament, Council OF Europe, & European Commission. (2016). CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION. *Official Journal of the European Union*.
- Deardorff, D. K. (2020). *Manual for Developing Intercultural Competences*. Paris, France: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization .
- European Commission. (2020). *Regional Challenges in the Perspective of 2020*. European Commission. Ανάκτηση από https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/region2020_phase2/challenge2020_report.pdf
- Lähdesmäki, T. (2020). Introduction: What Is Intercultural Dialogue and Why It Is Needed in Europe Today? In T. L. al., *Intercultural Dialogue in the European Education Policies* (pp. 1-19). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Spivak, D. (2017, Dec 04). Dialogue and Heritage in the Cultural Strategy of Unesco A Brief Overview. *Culture and Dialogue*, 5, σσ. 242–252. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1163/24683949-12340035>
- Tilbury, D., & Mulà, I. (2009). *A Review of Education for Sustainable Development Policies from a Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue Perspective*. UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- UNESCO. (2020). *The socio-cultural impact of Covid-19: Exploring the role of intercultural dialogue in emerging responses*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Wilk-Woś, Z. (2010, March). The Role of Intercultural Dialogue in the EU Policy. *Journal of Intercultural Management*, σσ. p.78-88. Ανάκτηση από <http://31.186.81.235:8080/api/files/view/7174.pdf>
- Council of Europe. (2008). *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue. Living Together as Equals in Dignity*.
- Emerson, M. (ed.) (2011). *Interculturalism. Europe and Its Muslims in Search of Sound Societal Models*, Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies.
- European Commission. (2005a). *Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council Concerning the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008)*. COM(2005) 467 final.
- UNESCO (2020). COVID-19 intercultural dialogue is essential for building back better. Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/news/covid-19-intercultural-dialogue-essential-building-back-better> (Accessed: 18 March 2021)
- Wilk-Woś, Z. (2010). The role of intercultural dialogue in the EU policy. *Journal of Intercultural Management*, 2 (1), 78-88.



Part 2 - Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: The Case Studies of Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Georgia and Lebanon

by



The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: CYPRUS -Antonios Moras

1. Introduction

About TOGETHER

The TOGETHER Project (“TOwards a cultural Understanding of thE oTHER) aims to promote greater co-operation between countries of the European Union and their neighbors in the Middle East and the Black Sea region based upon common European values and the cultures and traditions of participating countries. The project aims to encourage sustainable development and address various challenges by embedding processes of intercultural dialogue in the agendas of local communities. TOGETHER will contribute to empowering local actors, enhancing their intercultural skills and competences and making them ‘ambassadors’ of cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding.

Innovative training materials, digital tools and content methodologies will be developed to successfully meet the needs of local actors and their communities. More information about this can be found at <http://thetogetherproject.eu>.

TOGETHER is funded by the European Union’s ‘Erasmus+’ Programme and brings together 6 partner institutions from 5 different countries:

CulturePolis	Greece
EWORX S.A.	Greece
A.B. Institute of Entrepreneurship Development Ltd	Cyprus
Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa	Italy
Georgian Arts and Culture Center	Georgia
Lebanese Development Network	Lebanon

About the report

The purpose of the report is to outline the state of the art in intercultural dialogue awareness and development in TOGETHER countries, and to identify the factors that underpin cross-cultural communication and a dynamic space for dialogue in local community settings. More specifically, we seek to provide insights into how intercultural dialogue is understood, identify its main challenges and needs, and understand how it is defined, planned and presented in policy and in practice. It further describes the learning and training needs of local community members.

The report begins with a brief overview of the country’s background and its historical context with regard to intercultural dialogue. The next section outlines the methodology used to collect and analyze data, and is followed by findings according to the three main themes of research:

- 1) Intercultural Dialogue: General Understanding;
- 2) Policy & Practice;
- 3) The Needs of Local Actors. The last section contains concluding remarks and recommendations covering all three themes.

2. Executive Summary

The aim of this national report is to transfer and describe the situation in the country of Cyprus, by collecting data from the southern part of the country which is the Greek Republic of Cyprus. Stakeholders and beneficiaries living in Cyprus were approached to compile information and data regarding the Intercultural Culture in the country, its implementation, promotion and its impact on society and culture overall. Along with results, recommendations will also be offered after the conclusions of the research on what can be conducted further for the advancement of ICD in the country and whether relevant actions and activities can benefit ICD implementation globally.

There is growing recognition of the capacity of intercultural dialogue (ICD) to address the main development and security issues such as conflict prevention, social inequalities and to contribute to building more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable societies. The principles of intercultural dialogue are embedded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in 2015.

A first step in measuring the ICD is defining and understanding what ICD means in different country contexts, what is considered successful ICD and on how it helps in achieving more peaceful and inclusive societies. Therefore, need to evaluate local context, identify who are the stakeholders and what are their needs in advancing the ICD competences are of utmost importance.

Keywords Intercultural Dialogue, practices, local actors, needs, Cyprus

3. Country Background

Cyprus is located in the Eastern Mediterranean, being the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. The Republic of Cyprus is a member of the European Union with 800,000 inhabitants, of whom approximately 84% are Greek Cypriots, 12% Turkish Cypriots and the remaining 4% belonging to minority ethnic groups (e.g. Maronites, Armenians, Latins). The Republic of Cyprus has been divided into two main parts since 1974: the southern area controlled by the Republic and the northern side of the island remains under Turkish control. Nicosia, also known as Lefkoşia, is the capital of Cyprus. It is divided by the 'Green Line', which divides both the city and the country in two. The Turkish occupation of Northern Cyprus is not officially recognised as legitimate by the international community, yet, the Turks are introduced as citizens of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus'. Religious freedom is guaranteed by the Constitution, but most Cypriots are Christian (Greek – Orthodox). The main language of Cypriots is Greek, but English is widely spoken, too. Politics and the division of the island are considered sensitive discussion topics, both for the Greeks and Turkish.

The culture of Cyprus is also divided between the northern Turkish and the southern Greek, as it happens with the two different parts of the country. Turkish and Islamic culture has been promoted by the Turkish community in Northern Cyprus, through their own cultural traditions and elements and by changing many place-names to Turkish. However, Greek culture is promoted on the southern part of the island, especially by Greek Cypriots who go to Greece for studies, work etc. This promotion of Greek culture takes place despite the civil conflict between Cyprus and Greece in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, because Greek Cypriots have been raised in a peaceful and prosperous society that tries to combine traditional culture with global trends. Private enterprises and government sponsorships, especially the Cultural Services office of the Republic of Cyprus's Ministry of Education and Culture, make great efforts to maintain the ancient cultural traditions of Cyprus.

According to the Cyprus National Commission for UNESCO, an important aspect of their actions is the promotion of cultural issues through policies, agreements and other legal tools, along with the development of program for nations' awareness and mobility on issues such as World Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Cultural Diversity.

Information from the Annual Report of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth of Cyprus in 2019 show that the Cultural Department promoted a large number of activities in the section of Traditional Culture. There have been Grants and Calls for the new program 'POLITISMOS' (the Greek word for culture), there have been collaborations with institutions and networks in EE, also, in 2019, there was a plan for "Funding Cultural Institutions for their operational costs" to cover parts of their annual operational expenses. Other cultural initiatives in Cyprus were the Program of Cultural Decentralisation and the Plan of Support to Cultural Activities by Religious Groups.

Cyprus has received major waves of migration for years since it is seen as a gateway due to its location. In 2017, it was the third European country in terms of emigration rate and the second in terms of immigration rate. In 2019, it was the country with the highest number of asylum seekers in relation to its population.

According to data from the Migration Data Portal, in mid-2019, the State recorded 191,900 international migrants. According to data provided by the Cyprus Institute of Statistics, in 2018 there were 23,442 long-term immigrants, while there were about 15,340 emigrants that year (compared to 15,105 in 2017). The main destination country for these emigrants is Greece, due to its strong cultural and linguistic links with Cyprus; emigrants also go to the United Kingdom, Sri Lanka and Russia. Numbers are constantly increasing, with a year-over-year 50% increase in the migratory flow in 2017 compared to 2016 and 69% in 2018.

The political division of the country also increases migratory flows. The occupation of the northern part of the island Turkish troops caused 40% of the population to displace from that area to the southern part. Moreover, asylum seekers arrive on national territory through the north. Also, Turkey's visa-free regime allows asylum seekers to cross Turkey and proceed by sea to Cyprus.

According to EUROSTAT data for 2017, the Presidential Republic of Cyprus ranked second in the European Union with an average of 18 emigrants per 1,000 inhabitants that year. Moreover, in 2018, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, the number of emigrants (Cypriots or foreigners who had spent at least one year on the island state) increased slightly to 15,340 from 15,105 in 2017. Of these, 4,859 were migrants with citizenship of another European state, 9,089 were non-EU citizens and only 1,157 were Cypriots, most of them young migrants faced with a youth unemployment rate of 22.4%.

In 2018, Cyprus, with a 70% increase in political asylum applications compared to 2017, ranked first among the European countries for the highest number of applicants per capita. These numbers almost doubled in 2019, with 13,259 applications for political asylum (of which 2,870 were from unaccompanied minors). Finally, according to data provided by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, in December 2019 there were 228,000 internally displaced people caused by conflict and violence in the island state.



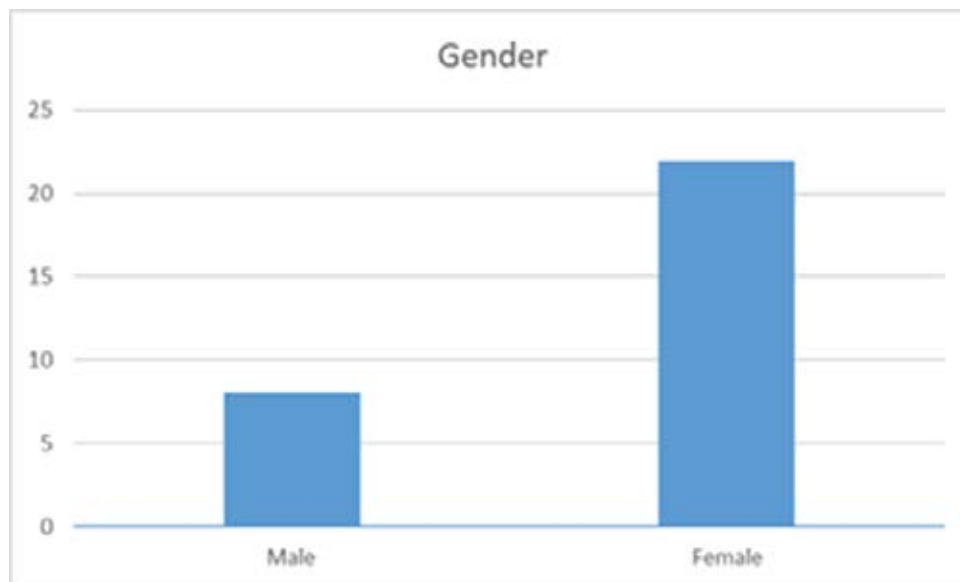
4. The Study Methodology

In the present research, the mixed-method approach was selected as the most appropriate for the collection, analysis, and validation of data. The research was designed through three main sections: Understanding ICD, Policy and Practice, and Needs of Local Actors. The data were collected in two phases, firstly through questionnaires and secondly through interviews. The questionnaires and interviews were answered by professionals occupied in the ICD field working either on a policy or a practice level. Desk-based research was also required for the survey to include general information for specific parts.

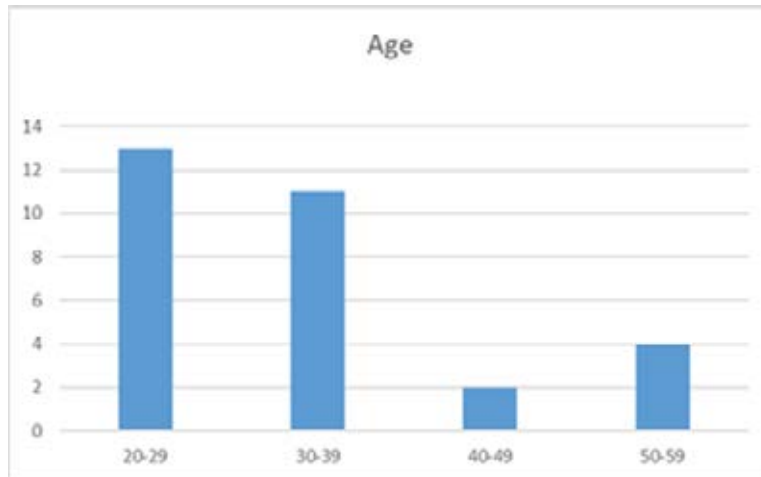
a) Questionnaires

At this phase of the research, we gathered 30 online answers to the questionnaire developed by using Microsoft forms. Apart from questions regarding participants' personal information, the other 3 parts of the questionnaire addressed the issues of: "Understanding Intercultural Dialogue – General Awareness", "Policy and Practice" and "Identifying Needs of Local Actors for Promoting Intercultural Dialogue". The participants in the survey had to be: a) representatives of key public and civil society institutions working on issues of intercultural dialogue on a policy level and b) representatives of organization working on issues of intercultural dialogue on a political level.

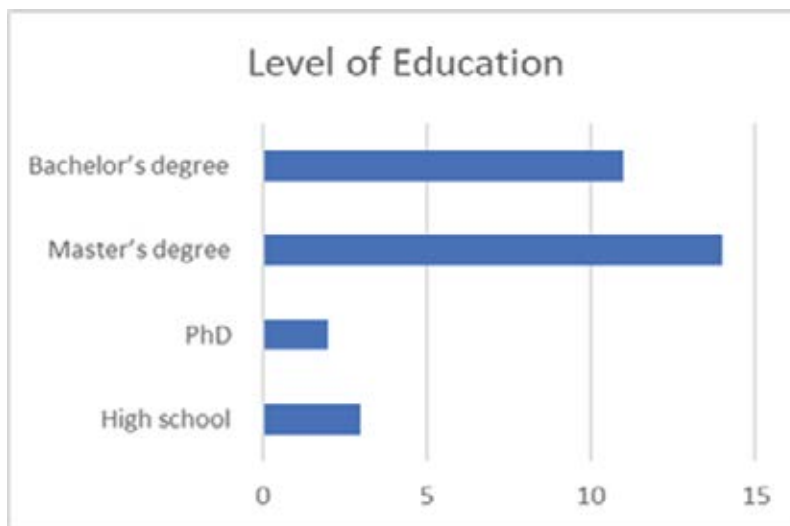
To begin with the demographic characteristics of the participants in the survey, the biggest percentage of answers comes from women. 22 women took part in the survey by answering the questionnaire and only 8 men.



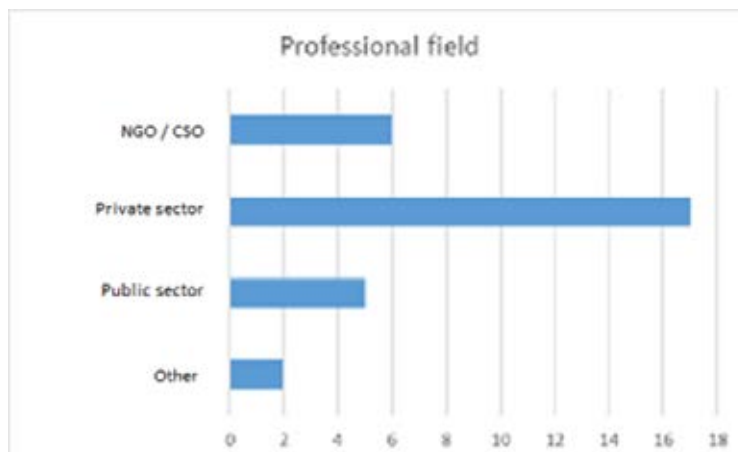
More than 30% of the people who answered were 20-29 years old. The same number applies for the people who participated in this stage of the survey and were between 30-39 years old. The remaining 8 answers come from people aged 40-49 years old and 50-59 years old.



It is shown that most of them are of higher education, having at least a bachelor's degree or a master's degree, too, and the minority of participants have a PhD (2 answers) and 3 of the them have completed only the basic education (high school graduates).



More than half of the people who answered to the questionnaires work on the private sector (17 answers). One third of the participants represent the public sector (5 answers) along with professionals in an NGO or Civil Society (6 answers). The last 2 answers were of people who did not clarify their field of occupation.



b) Interviews

The second phase of the data collection was accomplished with interviews. An interview guide was also structured according to the three above-mentioned sections of the research methodology. The interviewees had to be: a) representatives of state and NGOs/SCOs who work on ICD issues on a policy level (5 interviews), and b) representatives of local-community organizations working on ICD practice level (5 interviews). The interviews were conducted via the online platforms ZOOM, SKYPE and GOOGLE MEET due to COVID19 restrictions. Unfortunately, we were not able to conduct any interview via face-to-face.

The process of interviews and their analysis followed all the recommended steps for the creation of an objective, unbiased, complete, more personalized analysis on behalf of beneficiaries on ICD field.

c) Ethical Considerations

This study has been conducted in accordance with the Data protection Act of Regulation (EU) No 2016/679 of the European Parliament and the council of 27 April on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of the data.

d) Restrictions

The survey questionnaire and the interview guide were delivered to partners in the English language, therefore we considered as necessary to translate them in Greek before sharing them with the interested parts. In this way, answering them would be easier for both sides. Also, the interviews were conducted in Greek. We began with the translation of the offered documents, which was peer reviewed and refined before using them for the data collection.

The major restriction we encountered for the conduct of the interviews was not being able to meet the interviewees in person, due to the present situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic. In fear of distance limits that might create difficulties or blur points in the interview, we decided to deliver the questions of the interview to the beneficiaries in advance using Microsoft forms. In this way, the interviewee was able to go through the interview and discuss thoroughly every aspect of it when discussing online.



5. Key findings

Understanding Intercultural Dialogue

Continuing with the questions regarding the understanding and the general awareness on Intercultural Dialogue, many interesting answers were given to the question of how people comprehend the concept of ICD on their own.

With a first scanning throughout the answers, it is observed that Intercultural Dialogue is mostly understood as an exchange, and in many cases as a discussion which entails exchange of opinions. It is a means of discussion among everyone; an ongoing discussion, approach, communication, without prerequisites among different countries, cultures, nations, cultural groups; it is the dialogue between people from different cultural backgrounds, usually with different morals and customs, or with totally different opinions to exchange views and experiences, develop ways of communication and find solutions to various problems. It is also a discussion among several nations for the exchange and promotion of their cultures or the exchange of religious, linguistic, national elements within the cultures. ICD as a means of communication aims at the recognition of human rights and the improvement of the standards of living, at the cooperation of cultural groups to achieve acceptance, understanding and respect, at the utilization of multiculturalism.

Other descriptions offered for ICD put it as the understanding and focus on different cultural groups' common characteristics so that social cohesion and diversity acceptance will be achieved in the majority of population. It was also expressed as all the countries having an opinion and respecting the Constitution of each other in order to find direct solutions to problems regardless of their religion. Another explanation of ICD gives it as the systematic and complete interaction on local and national level for the emergence and promotion of intercultural approach. This interaction among people who belong to different cultural groups could have as an impact the presentation and discussion of their individualized perspectives.

In the question concerning the participants' opinion on the main aspects of intercultural dialogue, almost everybody chose the option of "Inter-state dialogue" and the option of a "Dialogue between people of different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds", which shows that ICD is perceived as including interaction between different countries and different national backgrounds. The "Interreligious dialogue" is the main aspect of ICD coming next followed by the options "Dialogue between people with different education backgrounds" and "Dialogue between people with different socio-economic backgrounds".

Moving on, 80% of the participants agree with the idea that Intercultural Dialogue can support achieving the UN sustainable development goals while the remaining 20% do not know the answer. Perhaps, if there was the possibility to ask them, it would be clarified if the lack of knowledge comes from not being aware of the UN SDGs or they just are not able to see the correlation.

Exploring other opportunities that Intercultural Dialogue can provide to a country and/or a community, almost all participants agreed that it can enhance respect for human rights, another big percentage believes that it can enhance social reconciliation and improve social inclusion, followed by a slightly lower percentage of answers that indicate ensuring integration of refugees and migrants, enhancing respect for democracy, overcoming prejudices and stereotypes, preventing violent extremism and promoting tolerance and

openness as important opportunities offered by ICD. Last but not least, Intercultural Dialogue is believed that can enhance rule of law, increase the well-being of citizens, and generate economic growth.

About the ways in which cultural heritage contributes to the development of intercultural dialogue in the context of local communities, most participants answered that “it represents universal values which are usually common among people and communities of different backgrounds”, only a few participants answered that “it embodies the identity of a specific community and therefore it is an opportunity to learn about its history and culture”, while many of them also answered that it can do both of the above. Other contributions of cultural heritage to the development of ICD are the enhancement of universal and sincere consciousness which is the basis for the progress of concepts such as self-determination, solidarity, understanding, acceptance, the integration of a specific community’s identity to broaden its history and culture, and the respect towards the culture of every cultural group that might exist in the same location with another one.

The same opinions and beliefs regarding Understanding of Intercultural Dialogue come from the participants in the interviews, as well. ICD is perceived as an international discussion most of the times or as an exchange among stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds (national, cultural linguistic, religious etc.). Solidarity, respect to human rights and mutual understanding are among the most important elements for ICD to be developed and promoted as required globally. The main challenges that need to be addressed for its promotion is the lack of funding and/or the insufficient grants, the not educated audience and population on cultural issues, and the existing conservative or discrimination behaviors. The Covid19 pandemic was also mentioned as an unexpected challenge that has set many problems and difficulties in the field of culture. Moreover, all interviewees could identify a connection between SDGs proposed by UN and ICD and for this reason they agreed that they can contribute to each other’s implementation and promotion. Finally, they answered that Cultural Heritage is deeply rooted in every place’s culture, both local and national, and for this reason it can contribute to the promotion of ICD by offering practices, tools, techniques, cultural elements, and anything needed for the promotion of every culture.

Policy & Practice

In the Policy & Practice section of the questionnaire, the results were not very encouraging on the knowledge and awareness of the participants. Half of them did not know any policy, legislation or state strategies that promote Intercultural Dialogue in their country, and only 6 of them knew a policy or some policies, another 6 were aware of legislation on that field, and 9 knew one or more state strategies. The topics of the policies, legislation, and/or state strategies that were known among participants were about Roma people, the integration of refugees and immigrants, intercultural events, projects, and programs developed by NGOs, about external politics, education, and educational programs for social inclusion of minority groups, equal rights to education and health care, etc.

In the same level, 22 participants had no knowledge on activities, projects and programs that have favored the promotion of Intercultural Dialogue in their country, and from the 8 that had some knowledge, that was on private initiatives and events for ICD, or activities from universities, European projects and programs or funded by EU, such as Erasmus, and finally the TOGETHER project itself. Finally, the only funding opportunities available for ICD related activities that were known only by 3 participants were



through Erasmus+ program and by the European Union. All the others had no knowledge on such funding opportunities.

Almost the same situation applies for the interviewees that answered about Policies and Practices on Intercultural Dialogue and its promotion. Most of the answers did not include specific names and suggestions for national practices, strategies, legislation, policy changes, special actions, and programs regarding the development of ICD on a national level or for its promotion. The majority of the samples offered regarded policies and practices for refugees and asylum seekers, actions against racism and to promote multiculturalism, collaborations with UNESCO and other public or international organizations, programs funded by European Union, and smaller scale activities organized by Ministries, universities, and local authorities. The lack of information and update on these issues do not provide stakeholders with the ability to recognize which institutions can organize and implement relevant actions and evaluate their efficiency.

Along with the challenges that need to be faced for the effective development and promotion of ICD, the challenges and needs of policymakers must also be addressed. They are quite similar, and they mostly come from insufficient sources of funding and information, from lack of communication between local actors and national/international organizations, and from the lack of support of contribution of several actors. The interviewees also pointed out that some national issues, such as refugee crisis, gender violence and racism, politics, and fragile international relationships, might need special attention for the correct and effective promotion of ICD. Taking all these factors into consideration, decisions will be made through which institutions and activities programs and relevant initiatives will take place successfully for the promotion of ICD.

Needs of Local Actors

The last part of the questionnaires concerns the identifying of local actors' needs for promoting ICD in their area of interest. The main challenges encountered for promoting ICD in their country was the insufficient knowledge and awareness of ICD with 25 answers, followed by the lack of political will with 19 answers, difficulties the Policy & Legislation and inadequate funding opportunities, with 17 and 14 answers, respectively.

Among the stakeholders that can take measures to effectively address these challenges, the national government, schools and universities, the Civil society and international organizations are those that are considered to be most effective to deal with this issue. The religious authorities, the media and local community organizations come next with a slight difference in the number of answers. A very interesting suggestion was offered by a participant who thinks that artists can also be stakeholders who facilitate the procedure of ICD.

In the question of what organizations and stakeholders need for advancing their work on ICD, many suggestions were raised, and it is not a coincidence that most of them regarded specific aspects of their work. The majority of the answers included the better information and training on the topic of ICD for its better promotion. Through personal research, examples and practices from other countries or other initiatives, successful case studies, effective actions for communication and dissemination, with the use

of right tools, the relevant skills for ICD will be strengthened and add up to its promotion. Very important factors for the advancing of the work done on ICD are the funding from various sources, especially the government, the free promotion on the media, the cooperation with responsive stakeholders, such as the government, the local authorities, educational institutions, and other countries with strong presence on ICD procedures, and the deep knowledge of legislation around cultural issues and ICD. Education was pointed out as an important sector that great attention must be paid because awareness on ICD can be raised through educational material, activities and sources, through the integration of ICD in primary schools or through activities in kindergarten. Last but not least, participation in events that bring together people from different cultural backgrounds, environments where volunteerism can be practiced, opportunities for intercultural collaboration, and a strong impact for ICD promoters can enhance stakeholders' work on ICD. Among the activities that can contribute best to promoting intercultural dialogue those that were selected mostly were Cultural programs and activities, campaign and outreach activities, and workshops and trainings. A good number of answers were also given to targeted vocational programs, media programs, educational e-resources, and e-learning platforms as useful activities for ICD promotion. Recurrent training of educators and teachers in all levels, arts, films, music and literature can also be used to raise awareness on ICD and thus promote it.

At the end of the questionnaire, various ways were proposed for the enhancement of the process of promoting Intercultural Dialogue, such as students exchange programs, open spaces for expression and creativity or occupation spaces, intercultural education programs, seminars and workshops organized in higher education for its promotion in universities, the use of social media and social networks, Erasmus programs, youth programs, experiential activities, practice in contact with nature etc. Also, open dialogues taking place face-to-face or online that raise social issues and demonstrate different perspectives along with the upgrading of Civil Society and local authorities will contribute to the promotion of Intercultural Dialogue.

The same needs for local actors (and not only) were raised by the participants in the procedure of interviews. Improvements in education and educational programs, citizens' awareness on cultural issues and demands, funding, more targeted training and practice, the creation of national frameworks, enhanced knowledge are the basic steps that need to be taken before any specialized initiatives are scheduled. Furthermore, the interviewees highlighted the importance of personal development to approach and address the matter of ICD. Support to the involved professionals through training, lifelong learning, sustainability efforts, informative materials by other organizations and collaborations with experts can add up to the beneficiaries' involvement and advancement of their work on the field. Online learning, with online tools, platforms, lessons, online training, and communication can be very beneficial for the development of skills, such as digital, linguistic, organizational skills, teamwork, innovation, which are of paramount importance for stakeholders engaged in the development and promotion of Intercultural Dialogue.

6. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, both from the questionnaires and the interviews, it is observed that all stakeholders that took part in the survey pointed out the same elements regarding Intercultural Dialogue, in terms of Understanding, Policy & Practice, and the Needs of Local Actors.

First of all, it is hopeful that all parts have a common understanding of Intercultural Dialogue and its concepts. They know what it means to discuss on an intercultural level, they recognize the several aspects of it, what is usually transferred through such interactions, and from what backgrounds interested parts usually come from. They were even at the position of expressing their opinion on the connection between ICD and SDGs, but their knowledge on practical issues was not so advanced as their theoretical knowledge. Regarding policies and practices, they were able to answer and give their opinion through multiple choice questions, but they were not very well informed on legislation, national policies and strategies, practices, special actions, programs organized by government and/or other activities or actions conducted throughout their local community or country, as it is seen from open questions, both in questionnaires and in the interviews where participants had to deliver more thorough answers.

This can be translated as a superficial approach of the topic. It indicates that participants and the target groups represented by them know only general information about Intercultural Dialogue and its policies and practices. For this reason, an insight and a deeper understanding of these materials should be a main goal for all actors that are committed to it. Active participation and involvement of bigger parts of society will be accomplished if they are fully aware of all practical aspects of ICD and what is targeted through them. Furthermore, public actors are the institutions that are considered as most important for the dissemination of policies and practices in order to update all communities and the society, since most of the times policymakers are occupied in the public sector and most of these materials have public sources. The needs of local actors for an effective implementation of Intercultural Dialogue and its promotion could be categorized as financial and support, in terms of knowledge acquisition and dissemination of the actors' work. No matter what the type of local actor is, it is considered that there is a lack of sufficient funding to cultural institutions, either public or private. Perhaps due to the recent economic crisis and the more recent Covid19 pandemic, more attention was paid to finance other departments in every country, such as health sector, education, entrepreneurship etc., for this reason, the field of culture might have been excluded or neglected from national grants and other sources of funding.

Moreover, apart from effective funding, all actors need support to communicate their work. Networks, channels, advertising, raising awareness of a country's population are necessary for the promotion of ICD, and any actions and activities organized for promotion should have in mind the above-mentioned target groups because these are the professionals who interact with other groups and even countries. Thus, the support to ICD promotion should be based and organized like any other professional activity by which profit is gained and people are benefited. A more active involvement of local actors and collaborations among different type of institutions and among different countries and backgrounds is also required for this goal because a common ground will be set for a fruitful development of Intercultural Dialogue.



7. Recommendations

Within every country's and stakeholder's reach, many actions can be taken, either immediately or step-by-step, for the enhancement and promotion of Intercultural Dialogue nationally and contribute to its dissemination internationally, if possible. These actions should be conducted on multiple levels, regional, local, and national, because various factors can contribute to the development of ICD. Some recommendations to be conducted are the following:

Education:

- best practices from other countries,
- access to databases created by organizations that promote ICD,
- online educational platforms, websites, and e-forums,
- educational programs (e.g., Erasmus program),
- physical space for workshops,
- knowledge on best practices from other countries,
- access to arts and culture,
- specialized seminars and programs by educational institutions and training organizations,
- student exchange initiatives,
- knowledge of ice breaking techniques and educational tools (polling, multiple choice questions, share screen, group work, interactive whiteboard),
- introduction of new scientific theories,
- academic conferences, workshops, seminars, trainings, etc.

Involvement of organizations:

- interaction with Youth Councils,
- better co-operation and increased interaction among institutions, such as EE, national governments, Civil Societies, NGOs,
- business grants,
- engagement of cultural operators, cultural organizations and groups, ministries.

Dissemination:

- peaceful coexistence,
- absorption of different cultural elements,
- good English knowledge and other foreign languages,
- advertisement,
- awareness methods and techniques to preserve and disseminate their unique cultural characteristics,
- exchange of opinions and experiences.

National contribution:

- creation of a national framework,

- financial funding,
- public institutions' networks,
- collaborations and support by other local authorities and municipalities,
- cultural heritage development and promotion.

Skills:

- communication,
- innovative way of thinking,
- openness,
- research skills,
- teamwork,
- digital competences,
- language skills.

Every side, beneficiary or stakeholder can conduct a survey for materials that should be preserved and shared with others and when delivering them, they should also describe how they worked to choose them among others, what is done to preserve them, and suggest any further actions through other paths, too. Some examples are offered in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, where a Cultural Heritage example and a Best Practice from the country of Cyprus are described. After thorough research in the culture of this country, we decided to share these cultural elements because they are important representatives of the cultural production and they are considered to be unique in their kind. Last but not least, TOGETHER will be a great factor for the best possible exploitation of such cultural samples.

8. References

<https://businessculture.org/southern-europe/business-culture-in-cyprus/>

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Cyprus/Cultural-life>

<http://www.unesco.org.cy/Programmes-Culture,EN-PROGRAMMES-04,EN>

http://www.moec.gov.cy/etisia-ekthesi/pdf/annual_report_2019_gr.pdf

<https://migrants-refugees.va/country-profile/cyprus/>



9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Best Practice Example

Country Cyprus

Implementing Institution Erasmus+ programme

Program/Project name “SOME CALL IT EUROPE, WE CALL IT HOME”

Year and duration 01/08/2017 – 31/05/2018
27 April – 6 May 2018

URL For more information <http://abroadship.org/youth-exchange-some-call-it-europe-we-call-it-home-cyprus/>

General Description / Overview The project “Some call it Europe, we call it Home” was a multilateral youth exchange with 50 participants, 4 from EU countries (Germany, Greece, UK, Cyprus) and 6 from neighbouring countries (Armenia, Egypt, Belarus, Ukraine, Russian Federation and Jordan) countries. The exchange was organised in Agros village, Cyprus, between the 27th of April and 6th of May 2018. Its aims were the cultural diversity, inter-religious dialogue, and empowerment of youth from various social, religious, cultural and ethno-racial backgrounds. Specifically, it referred to marginalised youth with fewer possibilities, particularly refugees and asylum seekers or those coming from low-income families or rural areas. The participants were mainly newcomers with small experience in youth work, but a strong willingness to develop. The project provided them with social tools and skills and helped to raise awareness for their culturally diverse surroundings, to find out and understand the differences, as well as to be proud of accepting their cultural and personal identity. By doing so, they developed respect and understanding towards other groups and nations. The project led also to achieving personal, social and professional development.

The main objectives of this project were to promote inter-religious dialogue, raise awareness of one’s own identity and culture and to cross borders to other traditions, languages and mentalities by involving actively with participants from other countries. One important part of the project was dedicated to prejudices of all kinds and how to fight them. Cooperation was developed among different cultures, religions and civilizations, by working on same tasks and creating new projects. Participants got to know each other better and got profound knowledge on culture, history and religion of others. During the project they additionally exchanged cultural information through music, dance, songs and cuisine. This was done in an interactive way in an intercultural learning environment.

Main Activities

The activities included group work, outdoor activities, interactive lectures, quizzes, role games and workshops, the participants found out more about the factors that might separate them (such as nationality, religion, mentality, sexual orientation, background, etc.) and learned how to benefit from this diversity, instead of seeing it as an obstacle. By getting in touch with the other participants, they broadened their horizons and improved mutual understanding. Also, during the project, intercultural nights were organized where all the partner groups presented their country, their culture, traditional foods, drinks, music and dances.

Summary of Results

This project in Cyprus contributed to the process of building a tolerant integrated society, based on respect to gender equality, religious freedom and cultural diversity. It was based on active intercultural cooperation and dialogue through raising awareness of youngsters on issues of European citizenship, cultural diversity and through supporting their development as youth workers and peer educators in this field in their communities.

The participants deepened their knowledge on the subject of intercultural and non- formal learning, drew a map of existing attitudes towards non-formal intercultural learning as achieved through cross-border volunteering. They also explored the values and the impact of intercultural non-formal learning and volunteering and shared best practices of promoting and increasing visibility of intercultural learning and volunteering as well as developed new practices. By working, creating and cooperating the participants have become more aware of cultural diversity in Europe. The working programme used informal learning in form of discussions, games, group activities. Through this, they experienced a new way of discovering their own history. In turn, these young people acted as multipliers among their cohorts who, in the long run, will become better citizens.

Obstacles

There were difficulties in the field of cultural diversity and communication barriers based on intercultural differences. There were situations where new and different people came in contact with each other, so they had to deal with new impressions and unknown cultural elements.

Success Criteria

The main purpose of the project was the active participation to achieve everybody's integration. They tried to find ways to eliminate conflicts, to overcome difficulties and communication barriers by stimulating conversation about intercultural differences, discussions on situations and sharing of views. This project gave a great opportunity to understand that youth shares the same values and vision for this world, regardless of the country of origin. It was a small world that created a society with cultural diversity and with a lot of new discoveries. The number of participants and their active participation, the plurality of ideas and beliefs expressed and the sustainability of the project are its success criteria.

How TOGETHER Program could use this information

One of the best things about youth exchanges is meeting new people. Youth exchange is what makes people around the world a real team, motivates youth to be active citizens in our world. It was really interesting to find out more about the countries and cultures of the participants. The project aimed at intercultural dialogue, as well as on the topics of discrimination, integration and human rights.

Youth exchange is an action where uniqueness can be understood, where everyone is learning something new from each other. This is the place where all stereotypes disappear, where people are proud of their countries, cultures and traditions. Intercultural and international dialogue with other participants has helped to understand better how to deal with stereotypes and prejudice in society nowadays. Moreover, new practices can be learned about how to spread tolerance and peace among young people and encourage them to participate in civic society.

Based on the best practice, different and similar actions could be organized through the program. Language, tradition, religion are the pillars of a civilization. During implementation, each partner country will be interested in and informed about the culture of other countries. There will be events, seminars, lectures to help people assimilate the mentality and the customs of other countries. Through the actions they will mix and exchange views, seek out their causes of differences and ways of resolving the problems arising from their daily contact.



Appendix 2: Cultural Heritage Example

Country Cyprus

Name of Given Cultural Heritage Site / Practice / Tradition Lefkaritika or Lefkara Lace

Years (If applicable) From 14th century

Field, Subject, Genre, Form Intangible, Cypriot traditional embroidery
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/lefkara-laces-or-lefkaritika-00255>

URL For more information <http://nationalclothing.org/europe/94-cyprus/323-lefkaritika-or-lefkara-lace-%E2%80%93-handmade-lace-traditionally-made-on-cyprus.html>

General Description / Overview Lefkaritika or Lefkara Lace is a handmade lace from the village Pano Lefkara, Cyprus. Its notable characteristics are the hemstitch, satin stitch fillings, needlepoint edgings, white, brown, ecru colours and geometric intricate patterns. In 2009, this traditional craft of lacemaking was inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Lefkaritika is the characteristic type of embroidery art in Cyprus, dating back to at least the fourteenth century. The art was taught to women from Lefkara by Cyprus's former Venetian rulers when they vacationed in the village. It falls under the category of white embroidery art of Cyprus. It is the evolution of an older type, called "asproploumia". The main stitches of "asproploumia" survived in the newest type of Lefkaritika. New stitches and motifs are added depending on the skill and creativity of the embroideress. According to the Cyprus Handicraft Service, the different motifs for Lefkara Lace add to more than 650.

The first Lefkara Lace was made from the local white cotton fabric produced in Cyprus. A combination of stitches and cuts is used. The large embroideries called "tagiades" are added to "dantela venis" ("Venice Lace"), "pittota", "gyroulota", "liminota" patterns. The most characteristic pattern in Lefkara Lace is "potamoi" ("rivers"). They are formed with triangular zig-zags, called "kamares" ("arcs").

In the past years, Lefkaritika reached a higher level of quality, because of the competition among women, since they were considered to be a centre piece of a dowry. Each girl had to have an extended collection ready for exhibition on her wedding day. In this way, a lot of the traditional elements were passed on from mother to daughter. Many women practiced embroidery as a profession, too. Women embroideresses in Pano Lefkara, called "ploumarisses", organised their production from home. Men from Lefkara, called "kentitarides", were merchants and they travelled across Europe and Scandinavia. According to tradition, in the 15th century Leonardo da Vinci visited Cyprus and took a Lefkara Lace back to Italy with him, which today decorates Duomo Cathedral in Milan.

The greatest centres of production used to be Pano Lefkara and Kato Lefkara villages. Today these embroideries are manufactured all over Cyprus, especially in villages, Kato Drys, Vavla, Vavatsinia, Ora, Choirokoitia, Skarinou, Dali and Athienou.

But this centuries-old tradition is under threat now, falling prey to more modern trends – tourists with an eye for a bargain souvenir and local workers looking for ways to make a better living. In an effort to keep the craft alive, embroiderers are updating the traditional look with different coloured threads and they use it to adorn fashionable handbags to entice a new clientele.

The Lefkaritika Lace is produced with a great deal of difficulty because the women embroiders are getting old. They are into their 80s and no longer want to embroider while young women do not want to embroider at all because they are searching elsewhere for work. Fewer and fewer local women are learning the craft because it is no longer lucrative. There is no future in this and there is a fear that in 10-15 years, there will be anyone else to carry on creating Lefkaritika.

WHY THIS HERITAGE/TRADITION COULD BE PERCEIVED AS A FACILITATOR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AMONG COUNTRIES?

Lefkaritika or Lefkara Lace is an exceptional work of art, a centuries-old tradition that continues in the village of Lefkara from the 14th century. It is one of the most famous expressions of the living cultural heritage of Cyprus and it is passed down from generation to generation. The works authentically represent the Cypriot culture and traditions that continue through centuries. It has given the people of Lefkara a unique sense of identity and continuity, which remains alive to this day. According to Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the craft of Elkerite is sustained by its aesthetic and socio-economic values. Its inscription would contribute to raising awareness of the significance of traditional handicraft skills and the successful integration of diverse cultural influences and modern techniques. Efforts to safeguard the element will be carried out by governmental bodies and the communities concerned and will include measures such as creating an archive, organizing contests, establishing scholarships, research projects, a lacemaking school and a foundation.

A project was designed called Lefkaritiko Embroidery Lace – Modi and Modulations II. This project was developed with the aim to provide Cypriot artists, educators, archaeologists, fashion designers and other professionals with the opportunity to live and study for a week with the renowned local embroidery lace makers in the village of Lefkara. Providing on-site accommodation and focusing on the importance of community involvement in the design and implementation, the project's goal was to present the 'voices' of all those involved in the safeguarding of this handicraft tradition: the embroidery lace makers, the scholars, the experts, the local community and authorities, and the students. Among the project's various aims was the exploration of innovative and sustainable ways of studying, interpreting, protecting and transmitting oral traditions and traditional practices and the creation of favourable conditions for the reconceptualization of elements of the intangible cultural heritage as new artistic and cultural products. Recognized for its originality and cultural value, the project was selected to be part of the cultural activities that took place in Strasbourg during the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of Europe ministerial committee (24 April – 14 May 2017). An exhibition of the artworks was inaugurated and presented the works by 20 Cypriot creators who participated in the Lefkara embroidery lace apprenticeship programme.

Also, Lefkaritika are included in the Heritage Archives of the Municipality of Lefkara and in the Archives of Oral Tradition of the Scientific Research Centre of Cyprus as well as at the National Heritage Index being created by experts at the Cyprus Research Centre.

Through the program, the partner countries will have the opportunity to learn the traditional elements of each country. Each country has its own folklore tradition, its own culture. The embroidery technique is unique and must be promoted and disseminated throughout the world. Each embroidery and its elements are a story. The embroidery can be introduced into different sectors of production abroad. Transnational meetings will be held in each country during the implementation of the program. There will be on-the-spot visits to introduce this specific technique to the partners. There will be an exchange of views, ideas and know-how. There will be a series of seminars, lectures with different institutions such as museums, crafts and clothing industries, universities, art schools. Exhibitions could be realized with representative samples of traditional embroidery from all countries. Finally, knowing that this technique must be safeguarded, it is advisable to carry out courses aimed at training young women and their integration into the labour market. Based on the work done for the safeguarding and dissemination of this cultural piece, methodologies, tools, techniques and best practices can emerge that will be used for the same reason for other cultural elements worldwide, too.



Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: GEORGIA -Irine Surmanidze

1. Introduction

About TOGETHER

The TOGETHER Project (“TOwards a cultural Understanding of thE oTHER) aims to promote greater co-operation between countries of the European Union and their neighbors in the Middle East and the Black Sea region based upon common European values and the cultures and traditions of participating countries. The project aims to encourage sustainable development and address various challenges by embedding processes of intercultural dialogue in the agendas of local communities. TOGETHER will contribute to empowering local actors, enhancing their intercultural skills and competences and making them ‘ambassadors’ of cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding.

Innovative training materials, digital tools and content methodologies will be developed to successfully meet the needs of local actors and their communities. More information about this can be found at <http://thetogetherproject.eu>.

TOGETHER is funded by the European Union’s ‘Erasmus+’ Programme and brings together 6 partner institutions from 5 different countries:

CulturePolis	Greece
EWORX S.A.	Greece
A.B. Institute of Entrepreneurship Development Ltd	Cyprus
Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa	Italy
Georgian Arts and Culture Center	Georgia
Lebanese Development Network	Lebanon

About the report

The purpose of the report is to outline the state of the art in intercultural dialogue awareness and development in TOGETHER countries, and to identify the factors that underpin cross-cultural communication and a dynamic space for dialogue in local community settings. More specifically, we seek to provide insights into how intercultural dialogue is understood, identify its main challenges and needs, and understand how it is defined, planned and presented in policy and in practice. It further describes the learning and training needs of local community members.

The report begins with a brief overview of the country’s background and its historical context with regard to intercultural dialogue. The next section outlines the methodology used to collect and analyze data, and is followed by findings according to the three main themes of research:

- 1) Intercultural Dialogue: General Understanding;
- 2) Policy & Practice;
- 3) The Needs of Local Actors. The last section contains concluding remarks and recommendations covering all three themes.

2. Executive Summary

This report presents an overview of the current state of awareness and development of intercultural dialogue (ICD) in Georgia, and gives insights into how ICD is understood, defined, planned and presented both in policy and in practice. It also provides some examples of best practices and identifies some of the needs of local actors involved in ICD.

Research—which included desk-based research, a survey and in-depth interviews with various professionals—focused on the following themes: general awareness of ICD; policy and practice; and the needs of local actors. The desk-based component involved reviewing national legislation, official strategies and action plans as well as reports prepared by independent international organisations. Combined with the findings of the survey and in-depth interviews, the research offers a very comprehensive insight into ICD in Georgia.

This study revealed that ICD in Georgia needs to be strengthened and that spaces for constructive dialogue based upon tolerance and respect for difference need to be created. Most of the survey's respondents see ICD as vital to the construction and development of peaceful and sustainable societies, particularly in multicultural countries such as Georgia.

With regard to challenges encountered by those seeking to promote ICD in Georgia, most respondents blamed an insufficient knowledge of ICD and a low awareness of its importance as well as inadequate funding and opportunities, poor levels of inclusion in policy and implementation practice, and a lack of political will.

While ICD is not officially defined in Georgian legislation or recognised as a specific policy issue, a broad commitment to cultural and social tolerance and supporting diversity is reflected in a range of policies and programmes that primarily seek to define cultural diversity as a driver of social inclusion. However, ICD is mainly restricted to the issue of national minorities and to efforts to help them integrate into Georgian society while preserving their identity and culture.

Although Georgian legislation calls for high standards of protection of human rights and cultural diversity, the study revealed a number of challenges to their implementation in practice: the misinterpretation of certain policies; a lack of political will; a lack of intercultural competences among teachers, educators, community members and policy actors; and a lack of both opportunities for the development of new programmes and supportive mechanisms for strengthening awareness-raising efforts among the general public.

3. Country Background

Historically, Georgia is a multicultural country with a relatively large number of ethnic and religious minorities. According to the 2014 official census, ethnic minorities represent 13.2 per cent of the country's total population (excluding the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and the South Ossetia/Tskhinvali region). Among the largest groups are Azerbaijanis (6.2 per cent) and Armenians (4.5 per cent), followed by Russians, (0.71%), Ossetians (0.39%), Yazidis (0.33%), Kurds (0.04%) and others. As for religion, the Georgian Orthodox Church has the largest number of followers (83.4 per cent of the population), followed by Islam (10.7 per cent) and the Armenian Apostolic Church (2.9 per cent); other religions represent less than one per cent. This diversity is reflected in the linguistic canvas, with Azerbaijani, Armenian, Ossetian, Abkhaz and many other languages being spoken in the country.

Georgia is obviously a place whose ethnic and religious diversity is rooted in history, and Georgians like to emphasize the multicultural composition of their society and the centuries of peaceful co-existence with diverse cultural groups. However, a series of ethno-political conflicts and wars since the late 90s, current hostilities between different social groups and incidents of hate crime and hate speech towards minority and vulnerable groups are eliminating the integration and core values of Georgian society, polarising and dividing groups across lines of 'us' and 'the others'.

There is therefore a prevailing need to promote ICD and create dynamic spaces for dialogue in Georgian society, and studying and discussing the needs of and opportunities for ICD are vitally important to creating an inclusive society built on solidarity in which everyone's rights are respected.

The Council of Europe argues that 'our common future depends on our ability to safeguard and develop human rights, as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, democracy and the rule of law and to promote mutual understanding.' It portrays an intercultural approach as 'a forward-looking model for managing cultural diversity' which allows us 'to deal with our different identities constructively and democratically on the basis of shared universal values' (White Paper, 2000, p. 4).

However, several preconditions need to be met in order for ICD to thrive: democratic citizenship and participation must be strengthened; intercultural qualifications and competences must be trained and enhanced; and spaces for dialogue need to be created and widened within local communities. In the following sections, we will look at how these preconditions can be met in Georgia and what the main needs are for the promotion of intercultural dialogue.

4. The Study Methodology

A mixed-method research was carried out to define the needs of intercultural dialogue in Georgia and understand how it is planned and presented in policy and practice. Our research instruments encompassed: 1) desk-based research; 2) a survey and 3) in-depth interviews. Our target group for the survey and in-depth interviews, was limited to professionals working in the field, including governmental and non-governmental organisations and educational and cultural institutions.

Desk-based research

For the desk-based research we analysed various legislative acts, policy documents and reports by civil society and international organisations. These included Georgia’s State Strategy and Action Plan 2015–2020 for Civic Equality and Integration; Georgia’s Culture Strategy 2025; Georgia’s State Constitution; the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (2014); the country’s Educational Policy; Media policy; and National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights (2014). Also studied were the ‘Third Opinion on Georgia’ (7 March 2019) of the Council of Europe’s Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities; the U.S. Department of State’s 2019 report on ‘International Religious Freedom in Georgia’; CRRC Georgia’s 2018 report on ‘Hate Crime, Hate Speech, and Discrimination in Georgia: Attitudes and Awareness’; and the Tolerance and Diversity Institute’s 2020 report on ‘Freedom of Religion or Belief in Georgia Report 2010–2019’.

Survey

The survey was constructed around three main themes: 1) Understanding Intercultural Dialogue; 2) Policy and Practice; and 3) Identifying the Needs of Local Actors for the Promotion of ICD. The survey was developed through an online platform and distributed to government, civil society and local community organisations. The sample size achieved consisted of 67 responses. Respondents were 92.5% female vs 7.5% male, most of whom (70.1%) had a master’s degree and whose age ranged between 20 and 60+ (see figures 1 & 2). The survey took place in December 2020.



In-depth interviews

Ten in-depth interviews were conducted online right after the survey to obtain deeper insights into the needs of and possibilities for ICD in Georgia. These interviews lasted around 50 minutes and were summarized afterwards. Selection criteria aimed to cover a wide range of sectors and to further elaborate on the needs identified during the survey and desk-based research.

A total of 10 experts were selected: Experts 1 and 2 are senior staff members of Georgia’s Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (MoESCS); Expert 3 represents the higher education institution developing academic programs on ICD; Expert 4 is responsible for the State language learning programmes for ethnic minority groups; Experts 5 and 6 are senior members of the Tolerance and Diversity Institute (TDI); Expert 7 represents one of the small ethnic minority groups and is a member of an NGO working to protect minority rights; Expert 8 oversees one of the largest NGO initiatives in Georgia that tackles ICD-related challenges; Expert 9 is a women’s rights activist and a bishop; and Expert 10 represents the State Agency for Cultural Heritage Protection.

Limitations

The research focus was defined according to the scope, goals and anticipated results of the TOGETHER programme; findings with regard to understanding ICD therefore represent the views of professionals working in related sectors, but various reports and studies were reviewed and incorporated into the report in order to provide a more comprehensive overview.

Data collection took place from December 2020 to February 2021, but the second Covid-19 lockdown hampered both the survey's distribution as well as the in-depth interviewing process, leading for example to the cancellation of some of the interviews with government organisations.

5. Key Findings

Intercultural Dialogue: General Understanding

The overwhelming majority of our respondents and interviewees view intercultural dialogue as a prerequisite to building a united and prosperous society. This was especially emphasised in the context of Georgia, with its diverse ethno-linguistic and cultural society. According to one of our respondents, 'intercultural dialogue promotes unity and peaceful coexistence among different ethnicities, religions, genders and cultural identities in a single state or in an international space, in which the interests of all these groups are protected and all doors are open for co-operation. This can lead to a nation's integration and overall prosperity.' (Expert 7).

The study indicates that ICD is seen in two main ways: 1) as a preventive measure to avoid conflicts and societal division, and 2) as a tool for the promotion of social integration and co-operation between divided groups. 'Tolerance of, respect for and acceptance of the "other" in Georgia is not a choice but a need. Every time this unity was challenged in Georgia's history, the country fell victim to conflicts and deep societal alienation. The only way forward is to embrace and value our differences in order to overcome our most entrenched problems and move towards reintegration and social cohesiveness.' (Expert 3)

Concerning the main aspects of ICD, most respondents indicated four components as most applicable: dialogue between people of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds (88.1%); inter-state dialogue (61.2); interreligious dialogue (53.7%); and intra-state dialogue (49.3%). Most of our respondents recognize the opportunities that ICD creates in society: it promotes tolerance and openness; enhances respect for human rights and democratic values; and improves social inclusion (figure 3).

8. What opportunities does intercultural dialogue provide to your country/community?

67 responses

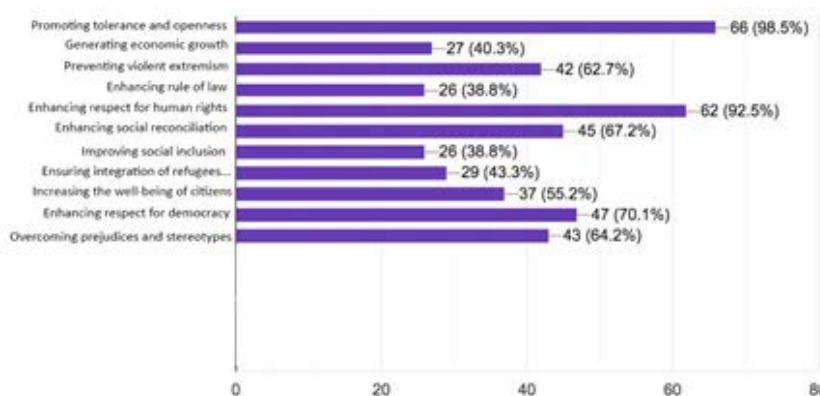


Figure 3

The survey also indicated that around 94% of respondents believe that ICD can contribute to achieving the UN sustainable development goals (figure 4).

7. Do you think intercultural dialogue can support achievement of the sustainable development goals?

67 responses

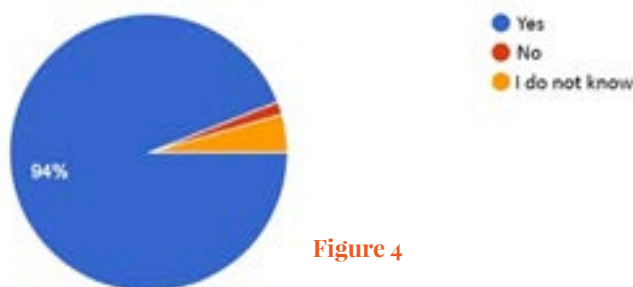


Figure 4

As for the challenges, 74.6% pointed to an ‘insufficient knowledge and low level of public awareness of the importance of ICD’. Other problems included inadequate funding (56.7%), policy & legislation (23.9%) and a lack of political will (19.4%). In terms of responsibility for effectively overcoming these challenges, most respondents (83.6%) saw this as the government’s role, followed by international organisations and civil society (77.6%) and educational institutions and media outlets (c. 70%) (figure 5).

13. What are the main challenges encountered by promoting ICD in your country?

67 responses

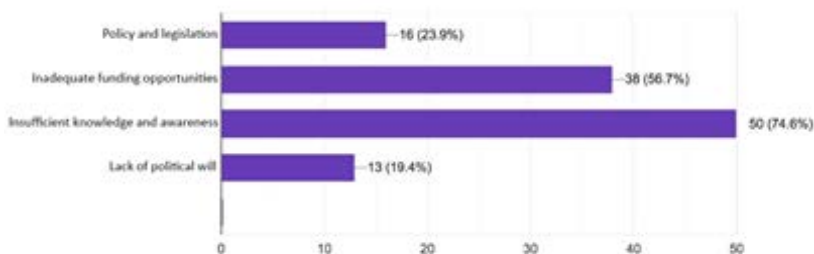


Figure 5

Policy & Practice

- Legislative Framework

While Georgia has no official definition of Intercultural Dialogue, several policy and strategy documents share ICD’s basic principles. Around half (50.7%) of the respondents stated that they have heard about a state strategy or policy document in this regard, and both the interviewees and the survey respondents mentioned three main documents that create a basis for intercultural dialogue in Georgian society: the country’s Constitution; State Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2020 for Civic Equality and Integration; and ‘Culture Strategy 2025’.

Other policy documents include: the National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights in Georgia (2014); the Law of Georgia ‘On the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination’ (2014); the Law of Georgia ‘On General

Education’ (whose Articles 9 and 3.2.a guarantee equal rights and access to education for all); the Law of Georgia ‘On Higher Education’ (whose Art. 3.2 prohibits any forms of discrimination based on ethnicity and religious beliefs); and the Law of Georgia ‘On Broadcasting’, which forbids discriminatory approaches and requires the Public Broadcaster to reflect Georgia’s diversity of ethnicity, culture, language, religion, age and gender in its programmes.

The Georgian Constitution grants equal rights to all and prohibits discrimination on ethnic or religious grounds:

The State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration and its 2015-2020 Action Plan support the full participation of ethnic and religious minorities in civic and political life; advocate for equal social and economic conditions and equal access to high quality educational (including improved opportunities for learning the state language), vocational and other programmes. ‘Preserving the culture of ethnic minorities and establishing a tolerant environment’ is defined as one of the main strategic objectives, which include protecting and promoting minority languages, traditions, art and cultural heritage with enhanced museum and theatrical activities as well as library services as a means for ‘inter-cultural and educational integration’ (goal 4). It is, however, worth noting that intercultural dialogue is only mentioned in relation to library policy.

The ‘Culture Strategy 2025’ adopted in 2016 is the main document providing a long-term and holistic approach to cultural policy making in Georgia, and is also the first to mention ‘inter-cultural dialogue’ and to officially define the term ‘cultural diversity’. It envisages Georgia ‘as a creative country and regional hub for innovation and creativity, along with safeguarding and revitalization of national heritage and cultural diversity, as the fundamental pillars of social wellbeing and sustainable development’ (p. 3). Access to culture and cultural diversity is one of the main strategic goals. The emphasis is on improving public awareness of the importance of cultural diversity and supporting public and private initiatives in artistic, cultural, educational (formal and non-formal) and media programmes. Inter-cultural camps and other exchange programmes are mentioned as tools for empowering ICD and social cohesion. Preserving the cultural heritage of ethnic minorities and facilitating linguistic diversity through media channels are also on the agenda (p. 12).

Many of our interviewees noted that Georgian legislation generally meets international human rights standards and maintains the requisite criteria for pluralism, diversity support and development. However, the study shows that multiple structural and systemic problems prevail in policy implementation across many sectors, including culture, education and law enforcement. This hinders efforts to maintain cultural diversity and results in current problems such as the rise of hate groups and hate crime, discrimination against non-Georgian Orthodox Church communities, etc.

- Policy Implementation Practices

The Civic Equality Strategy and Action Plan deals with ethnic minority rights and their engagement in civic, political and economic life, and was developed by the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality. Its implementation is monitored by the State Inter-Agency Commission, which issues annual performance reports. The Action Plan outlines numerous activities under each strategic objective, encompasses cross-sectorial collaboration of different governmental stakeholders, and provides time-frames and indicators for each activity. However, as our interviewees noted, the impact

and success of these activities and strategic objectives are less evident. In its ‘Third Opinion on Georgia’, the Council of Europe’s Advisory Committee notes that ‘the Action Plan is not sufficiently evidence-based and, in particular, indicators are not structured around key ethnic data that could serve as starting points, means of comparison and of evaluation of the Strategy.’ (2019, p.13).

Another important document for pluralism and cultural diversity support is the ‘Culture Strategy 2025’, followed by numerous creative initiatives that the Ministry oversees. Yet, as the study shows, the main problem with the implementation of both strategies is the planning process, which lacks sufficient research and study of needs and impact. For instance, under ‘promoting cultural diversity’, hundreds of cultural projects take place each year, e.g. festivals, exhibitions, music and arts events. ‘Some of these events are funded annually, but when it comes to understanding their impact, the only indicators the Ministry receives are numbers of events and attendance rates where applicable’ (Expert 1), which is clearly not enough to understand whether projects succeeded in fulfilling the objectives listed above. As Expert 2 notes, when they develop projects in response to strategic goals, in most cases they adapt already existing projects to those goals without much study or analysis: ‘Unfortunately, we do not have the resources for proper needs assessments or evaluations of impact within our projects, nor do we have relevant data or instruments. Also, the funding of projects and artistic initiatives for ethnic minorities is quite limited.’

Far from being limited to one ministry, these problems unfortunately also concern other governmental sectors, whose planning and work generally lacks research and study. Without complementing strategy with a comprehensive study and evaluation of the needs and interests of minority groups, the development of resources and relevant instruments, training programmes and other learning opportunities—all the strategies’ general promises seem relatively superficial. In its Third Opinion on Georgia, the Council of Europe’s Advisory Committee recommends that the Georgian authorities monitor and evaluate the implementation of both the ‘Cultural Strategy 2025’ and the ‘State Strategy on Civic Equality and Integration’ on a regular basis, and not only in terms of inputs but also in terms of their mid and long-term impact, in consultation with members of national minorities (2019, p. 16).

- Religious Tolerance

The next problem that the study revealed relates to the unequal treatment by the state of minority religious groups during the implementation of policy, resulting in unequal conditions for non-dominant religious communities. These inequalities include the acquisition of property, tax regulations, state subsidies and the funding practices of religious entities.

While Georgia’s Constitution guarantees equal rights to all regardless of religious affiliation, the Tax Code exempts only the Georgian Orthodox Church (GOC) from paying taxes on property or land used for non-profit purposes and from import tax and VAT on imported items. These exemptions were granted by Georgia’s 2002 Constitutional Agreement (‘Concordat’) with the GOC, which also gave the GOC the right to reclaim property confiscated during the Soviet era. Yet this latter right inserts another systemic injustice which denies the country’s other religious communities the equivalent right to reclaim their own Soviet-era confiscations. No restitution policy exists for their claims. Moreover, there have been cases when the GOC has claimed and received from the state properties which formerly belonged to other religious communities (Gavtadze et al., 2020, pp. 106-118).

Georgia’s state policy for funding religious entities also raises the question of unequal treatment and of a

violation of the main constitutional principle of secularism and religious neutrality. Since 2014, five religious groups have been receiving financial compensation for ‘material and moral damages’ sustained during the Soviet period. This initiative was, however, widely criticised by civil society for being discriminatory (it excludes other religious groups) and for being a subsidy rather than a one-off compensation for material or moral damage. It should be noted that the Georgian government has never assessed material damage sustained during the Soviet era, and therefore lacks the scientific or legal basis for determining the scope of damage and compensation (Expert 5).

The inequality of the government’s attitudes to different religious denominations was particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, when lock-down restrictions were only lifted during Orthodox religious celebrations. According to Expert 5, the reasons for these systemic problems lie not in legislation but rather in the current political establishment’s lack of political will or bias in favour of the GOC.

In recent years, so-called ALN (Anti-liberal Nativist) groups have been rising in Georgia, targeting ethnic, religious and other minority groups with hate speech and fake news containing homophobic, xenophobic and racist statements. In 2018, Vitali Safarov, a 25-year-old human rights activist, was stabbed to death in Tbilisi by a so-called neo-Nazi group (staff, 2018): two men were jailed for 15 years each on charges of group murder, but the court ruled that Safarov’s killing was not ethnically motivated despite witnesses testifying that he had been killed by neo-Nazis because of his Jewish background.

According to Expert 8, the Georgian government’s response to the risk that these hate groups pose is inadequate: ‘The current Georgian government does not make full use of existing legislation and does not properly punish violence, threats of violence, or calls to violence coming from ALN groups. Changing this policy would be the shortest and, at the same time, an indispensable way towards alleviating the existing problems.’ (Nodia, 2020)

All these problems limit the available space for positive intercultural developments in Georgian society and encourage clashes of interest, hostilities and further division between different groups. According to a 2018 study conducted by CRRC-Georgia, 36% of Georgian nationals view ethnic diversity as something negative and 46% see religious diversity in the same light: ‘diversity threatens culture and traditions’ (47%), ‘diversity weakens national unity’ (17%) and ‘exposes Georgia to security issues’ (13%).

- Education

The Georgian education system reflects the country’s overall ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity. There are 207 non-Georgian language schools and a total of around 52146 students in those schools as of 2020.

The principles of intercultural education and intercultural dialogue are reflected in the overall educational policy, which protects students from any form of discrimination based on ethnicity or religion and prohibits the use of religious indoctrination and proselytism in schools (Article 13). The development of intercultural competences and ‘raising a tolerant person’ who appreciates cultural diversity is incorporated into the curriculum of many subjects, but religious indoctrination, proselytism and discriminatory attitudes in schools continue to be a problem.

The Public Defender and various civil society organizations are constantly pointing to instances of discrimination and bias on ethnic or religious grounds in schools and to violations of religious neutrality

by the GOC (e.g. the use of religious symbols, the participation of teachers and pupils in prayers, etc.). The government's response to these issues is, however, seen as ambiguous: on the one hand, it promotes tolerance and diversity through its policies, but on the other it does not really try to tackle such problems through proper investigations and adequate preventive measures (Expert 9).

The content of current textbooks in public schools has also been under major scrutiny by human rights experts. Literature, history and civic education textbooks do not reflect the national goals of Georgia's general education policy. As Expert 8 notes, the content of these textbooks is developed from the majority (ethnic and religious) perspective—especially the Georgian history textbook, whose perspective is mono-religious and ethnocentric, and which sometimes articulates ethnic Georgians and ethnic minorities as 'us' and 'the others'.

That said, overall Georgian educational policy embodies the values of intercultural education, and all declared policies share aspects of pluralism and cultural diversity. In practice, however, we see problems that mainly derive from a lack of intercultural sensitivity among teachers, a misinterpretation of policies, a lack of training and professional development opportunities for enhancing intercultural competences, and a lack of adult educational programmes that would help to raise general public awareness of the value of ICD.

- Cultural Heritage

In terms of promoting ICD, most respondents agreed that cultural heritage is pivotal to building trust and creating a positive environment for dialogue: 76.1% agreed with the statement 'Cultural heritage embodies the identity of a specific community and is therefore an opportunity to learn about its history and culture.' Yet the preservation and maintenance of non-GOC religious buildings was stated as one of the main challenges, particularly as most of these buildings are of historical significance and sites of cultural heritage. Their state of disrepair threatens further damage or demolition, and this problem is common to every non-GOC religious community (i.e. Catholic, Evangelical-Lutheran, Armenian, Jewish and Muslim).

For instance, the Armenian church of Surb Nshan in Tbilisi, which is owned by the state, is in a very poor state of repair. Tbilisi City Council once even granted a neighbouring landowner permission to begin a new construction which caused further damage to the building—a decision which 'violated the interests of the Armenian Apostolic Church in preserving the authentic appearance of historical cult buildings and protecting a cultural heritage monument' (Gavtadze et al., 2020, p.138). For the government, a lack of funding, the insufficient study and examination of such cultural heritage sites and ineffective and rigid management practices were named as challenges that prevent it from taking timely and effective measures. During the study, interviewees were asked to name a cultural heritage site that could be seen as an example of intercultural dialogue in our country. Among others, many named the Enguri Dam—a Soviet-era industrial heritage site and a functional hydroelectric power station in north-western Georgia. This dam remains the largest hydroelectric power plant in the Caucasus and is one of the world's tallest and most significant concrete arch dams, distinguished for its technological achievement as well as history and culture.

The Enguri Hydroelectric Power Station consists of two major parts: the dam itself and the power station, which are connected by a 15 km. tunnel that carries water from the dam to the station. These two parts are located across the conflict border line between Georgia and its breakaway region of Abkhazia. Despite being across the dividing conflict line, the power station is mutually managed by ethnic Georgians and

ethnic Abkhazians, who share the electricity it generates. The Enguri Hydroelectric Power Station is the only space in which Georgians and Abkhazians currently meet and interact with each other. Therefore, as Expert 10 emphasised, it is an example of dialogue, constructive communication and joint work despite being trapped in a deeply entrenched conflict (Appendix 1).

- Best Practice Examples

Most (73.1%) of the respondents stated that they have heard of activities, projects and programmes that promote intercultural dialogue in Georgia, but only 44.8% knew of funding opportunities available for such projects (Figure 6).

Among these activities, respondents highlighted various government-supported or independent initiatives. Among the government programmes, these included bilingual education in schools, the ‘1 + 4’ programme for higher education access for national minorities, the State Language and Integration Programme and the Creative Activity Support Programme for Ethnic Minorities.

Independent initiatives included various educational and artistic projects such as: 1) ‘Civic Hall’, a cultural, ethnic and religious diversity support programme; 2) ‘Images of Diversity’ by the Tolerance and Diversity Institute; 3) ‘Cultural Routes of Georgia’; 4) the 2021 ‘Diversity Calendar’; 5) a publication on German settlements and architectural heritage in Georgia; and 6) ‘Promoting Integration, Tolerance and Awareness in Georgia’ (PITA). (Appendix 2).

12. Do you know about any funding opportunities available for intercultural dialogue related activities?

67 responses

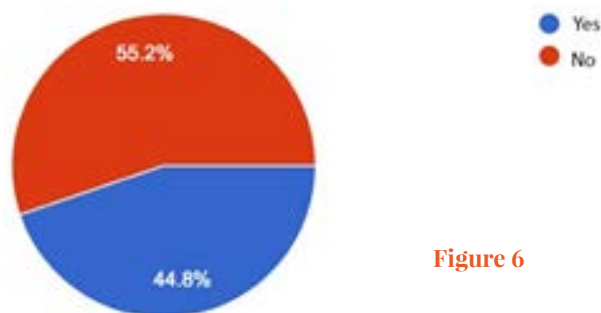


Figure 6

- Needs of Local Actors

During the last part of the study, respondents and interviewees were asked to identify what they need to progress with work on ICD as well as the competencies they need to improve their work. These are:

1. A comprehensive study of existing gaps and the needs of minority groups in order to identify major opportunities for ICD promotion and to plan and implement subsequent projects accordingly, along with the development of evaluation and assessment instruments for programmes implemented by the MoESCS and other entities;

2. Awareness raising campaigns; educational, cultural and media programmes representing our diverse cultural heritage; and stories of our citizens belonging to various groups, emphasizing their merits and achievements in the history, arts, culture and science of Georgia;
3. Short and long-term educational courses, training programmes and other non-formal educational initiatives for the development of the intercultural competencies of educators, students, local community members and cultural centres (videos, printed resources, toolkits, interactive lessons and innovative learning methodologies, etc.);
4. Exchange programmes and ‘exchange camps’ for pupils and students of diverse groups, including majority and minority national communities;
5. Increased opportunities for the joint participation of ethnic, religious and cultural communities in Georgia’s social and economic life—e.g. multi-ethnic sports teams, theatre performances, etc. Such joint co-productions, events and programmes should be supported in order to increase healthy and equal participation;
6. University courses for future teachers in order to enhance their intercultural sensitivity;
7. A clear action plan and increased financial resources for the maintenance, restoration and conservation, etc. of religious buildings belonging to non-dominant religious groups;
8. Workshops and training courses for media representatives on avoiding stereotypes (social, cultural, ethnic, gender, etc.) and biased language.

6. Conclusion

The study overviewed the needs of and opportunities for intercultural dialogue in Georgia; provided insights into how ICD is understood, defined and presented in policy and in practice; and identified the learning and training needs of local community members in this regard. As its findings show, there is a great need for efforts to support intercultural dialogue in our ethnically, religiously and linguistically diverse society. Yet public awareness and knowledge of these needs seems to be quite low, and there is a need for more funding opportunities and supportive programmes in this regard. Policy implementation and practice was also underlined among the challenges that our society currently faces.

While Georgian legislation calls for high standards of human rights protection and diversity support, we see problems that mainly derive from a misinterpretation of policies; a lack of professional development and training opportunities for intercultural competence building; a lack of relevant cultural, educational and media programmes that would strengthen awareness raising efforts among the general public; a lack of political will; and official ambivalence. On the one hand, the government describes diversity as ‘a valuable asset and a resource for the country’s democratic and stable development’, but on the other it lacks adequate measures to eliminate threats coming from hate groups or to create an equal and secure environment for the self-realization and self-expression of all groups of our society, ‘where diversity and respect for difference are acknowledged and encouraged as normal’ (p.18).

7. Recommendations

Based on these findings, our recommendations are:

1. Increase competence-building opportunities for educators, teachers and professionals working on ICD issues through training courses, workshops and the development of sufficient educational and teaching materials such as toolkits, guides, videos and other interactive lessons;
2. A policy focus for the reintegration of national minorities should be shifted from minorities to both minorities and majorities alike, and all subsequent efforts, programmes, projects and activities should be developed accordingly;
3. Qualitative measurement instruments should be developed for the monitoring of Georgia's cultural and civic integration strategies and their respective action plans in order to ensure their effective implementation and the achievement of their anticipated results;
4. The protection and proper maintenance of state-owned religious buildings that are cultural heritage sites should be on the priority list for immediate action;
5. Increased opportunities and resources should be made available for cultural, educational and other programmes and projects that 1) focus on showcasing our cultural diversity; 2) aim to reinforce joint participation by all groups of our society; and 3) enhance the promotion of intercultural dialogue;
6. Awareness-raising campaigns and related activities should be launched across Georgia in order to inform the general public of the values of intercultural dialogue. Government, civil society, local communities and media outlets should be equally involved in this process. The role of the Public Broadcaster is paramount in this regard;
7. School textbooks and all teaching materials should be developed in close co-operation with human rights experts, and their content should be adapted to support pluralism and respect for difference.

8. References

- Constitutional Agreement between the State of Georgia and Georgian Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church (2002). Resolution 1697-1b of the Parliament of Georgia. Available in Georgian at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/41626?publication=0>.
- Constitution of Georgia (1995). Available at: <http://parliament.ge/uploads/other/28/28803.pdf> (Accessed: 2 March 2021).
- Council of Europe (2008) 'White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "Living Together As Equals in Dignity"'. Council of Europe. Available at: https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf (Accessed: 25 February 2021).
- 'Culture Strategy - 2025' (2016). The Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia. Available at: <http://culturepolicy.gov.ge>.
- Gavtadze, M. et al. (2020) Freedom of Religion or Belief in Georgia Report 2010-2019. Tolerance and Diversity Institute (TDI). Available at: http://tdi.ge/sites/default/files/tdi-report-freedom_of_religion_in_georgia_2010-2019.pdf (Accessed: 12 March 2021).
- HATE CRIME, HATE SPEECH, AND DISCRIMINATION IN GEORGIA: ATTITUDES AND AWARENESS (2018). Council of Europe; CRRC-Georgia, p. 53. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/hate-crime-hate-speech-and-discrimination-in-attitudes-and-awareness-e/16808ef62a> (Accessed: 27 February 2021).
- LAW OF GEORGIA ON BROADCASTING (2004). Available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/32866/39/en/pdf> (Accessed: 12 March 2021).
- LAW OF GEORGIA ON GENERAL EDUCATION (2005). Available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/29248/56/en/pdf> (Accessed: 12 March 2021).
- LAW OF GEORGIA ON HIGHER EDUCATION (2004). Available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ru/document/download/32830/53/en/pdf> (Accessed: 12 March 2021).
- LAW OF GEORGIA 'ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION' (2014). Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_361984.pdf (Accessed: 12 March 2021).
- National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights in Georgia 2014-2020 (2014). Available at: http://myrights.gov.ge/uploads/file-manager/HR_STRATEGYENG.pdf (Accessed: 3 March 2021).
- Nodia, G. (2020) 'Anti-liberal Nativist Challenge to Georgia', p. 24.
- Third Opinion on Georgia (2019). ACFC/OP/III(2019)002. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/3rd-op-georgia-en/1680969b56> (Accessed: 26 February 2021).
- Staff, D. (2018) 'Groups say 25-year old's fatal stabbing in Tbilisi was motivated by xenophobia', Democracy & Freedom Watch, 11 October. Available at: <https://dfwatch.net/groups-say-25-year-olds-fatal-stabbing-in-tbilisi-was-motivated-by-xenophobia-52383> (Accessed: 9 March 2021).
- State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration (2015). Available at: https://smr.gov.ge/uploads/prev/esen_55b90432.pdf (Accessed: 27 February 2021).
- Statistical data about the non-Georgian language schools and students belonging to ethnic minority communities are obtained via <https://www.mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=212&lang=geo>

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Best Practice Example

Country Georgia

Implementing Institution UN Association of Georgia (UNAG); Donor organization USAID.

Program/Project name 'PROMOTING INTEGRATION, TOLERANCE AND AWARENESS IN GEORGIA' (PITA)

Year and duration June 2015 – May 2021

URL For more information <http://www.una.ge/page/88/eng>

General Description / Overview

PITA is a diversity and grassroots-driven program that brings together relevant stakeholders from government, civil society, minority communities and media to join efforts towards building a more informed and inclusive society that rejects discrimination and embraces diversity.

Program aims to: enhance interaction between minorities and the Government of Georgia (GOG); increase levels of civic engagement and integration among and between youth of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds; and increase public awareness and education on diversity.

PITA oversees work in following directions:

- Enhances government institutions' performance to effectively manage and implement civic integration policy, and supports establishment of direct communication between the Government of Georgia and minority groups.
- Reinforces local NGOs with advance capacities to manage diversity and civic participation more effectively;
- Creates spaces for youth civic engagement – ensures functioning of 14 youth hubs (Youth Centers) to provide youngsters with open access to the learning and practice of civic activism;
- Strengthens civil monitoring and feedback mechanisms on civic integration programs through the support of Tolerance Center under Public Defender.
- Supports monitoring of hate speech and discrimination in media and political discourse, thus combating hate rhetoric and xenophobia.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

PITA activities fall under following directions:

Advancing Policies, Practice & Discourse

- Provides grant opportunities for ethnic minority organisations to stimulate better civil engagement and communication between the civil society and the Government;
- Provides technical support to **1.** government entities working on civic integration policy implementation; **2.** the Public Defender, its Tolerance Center and the Councils of Religions and National Minorities (prime stakeholders for monitoring and advocacy of minority rights and civic integration agenda).

Instigating Youth Activism & Connections

- introduces 14 youth centers countrywide and provides professional training, seminars and conferences, micro grants for local activism, community and volunteer exchange projects, internships and other youth, integration and civic activism-centered activities.

Enhancing Awareness & Discussion

- promotes integration and encourages civic activism across different age groups and ethnic communities of Georgia using all available and efficient discussion platforms and avenues to enhance its reach to target audiences and deliver the message of tolerance.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Human Rights, Policies and Capacities Advanced

PITA and SMR has resulted in major policy change, which had a continuous impact on tens of ethnic minorities and their employability - 117 ethnic minorities had an opportunity to undergo internship at state institutions in 2018. PITA helped civil society organisations to contribute to the policy development process and bring policy implications, including preventing Parliament of Georgia from adopting a law on religion that could jeopardize and limit freedom of religion and belief.

Youth Centers network created

PITA promoted the culture of tolerance, civic activism and participation among Georgia's youth through facilitating up to 1300 youth-led activities across different issues and areas in 13 cities of Georgia. up to 5000 youth beneficiaries were involved out of which up to 2000 belong to ethnic minorities. PITA partnered with SMR to engage youth as a major source for information sharing across communities about [1] the benefits of EU integration, [2] combating gender-based violence and early marriage, [3] and raising awareness about higher and vocational education opportunities for ethnic minorities.

Disinformation, Hate Speech, Discrimination Monitored and Reported

Provided funding for media research organizations, advocacy groups and activists for monitoring and reporting of hate speech and discriminatory language in Georgian media and politics. Cases of discrimination and hate speech in governance, politics, and media were regularly monitored and actively followed-up through PITA's partnerships-based triple advocacy action-media monitoring through Media Development Foundation, fact-finding through the TC, and the follow-up advocacy through the No-To-Phobia campaign, a coalition of leading advocacy and watchdog organizations in Georgia.

HOW TOGETHER PROGRAM COULD USE THIS INFORMATION

Through knowledge and experience sharing from multifaceted, yet successful program that encompass unique collaboration of grassroots organisations and community members with governmental, civil society, and media representatives; promotes cultural diversity and integration of minority groups through educational, cultural, media, youth, and awareness rising programs/projects.

- Through establishment of networking channels and collaboration opportunities within the planned activities of TOGETHER program. For instance, ambassador curriculum development and/or creating innovative study materials and methodologies for ICD promotion.

Appendix 2: Cultural Heritage Example

Country Georgia

Name of Given Cultural Heritage Site / Practice / Tradition Enguri Arch Dam (Hydro Power Plant)

Years (If applicable) Construction started in 1961 and was completed in 1988

Field, Subject, Genre, Form Soviet-era industrial heritage site and functional hydroelectric Power Plant

URL For more information

General Description / Overview Enguri Dam—a Soviet-era industrial heritage site and a functional hydropower plant is built on the river Enguri, partially located on the territory of breakaway region Abkhazia (Since 1992, Georgia has been struggling with secessionist conflicts resulting in wars and the de-facto independence of two regions - Abkhazia and South Ossetia).

The Enguri Hydropower Plant is the largest hydroelectric power plant in the Caucasus and arch dam remains one of the world's tallest (height 271.5 meters) and most significant concrete arch dams, distinguished for its technological achievement as well as history and culture. It was given a status of Cultural Heritage site in 2015.

The Enguri Hydropower Plant represents a complex structure consisting of several technical and engineering facilities. Two major parts: the dam itself and the power station, are connected by a 15 km. tunnel that carries water from the dam to the station. These two parts are located across the conflict border line between Georgia and Abkhazia. Despite being across the dividing conflict line, the power station is mutually managed by ethnic Georgians and ethnic Abkhazians, who share the electricity it generates. Approximately 1.2 billion kWh has been distributed to Abkhazia annually, which is about 40% of all power generated by the plant.

The main technical indicators include:

- Total capacity - 1300 MW.
- Number of units - 5.
- Annual output - 4300 thousand kWh.
- Maximum pressure - 404 m.
- Date of commissioning - 1978.

WHY THIS HERITAGE COULD BE PERCEIVED AS A FACILITATOR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE?

The Enguri Hydropower Station is the only space in which Georgians and Abkhazians currently meet and interact with each other. Therefore, represents an example of dialogue, communication and joint work despite being trapped in a deeply entrenched conflict. In future, we hope, it can serve as a bridge and ground for constructive dialogue leading to reconciliation and rebuilding of Georgian-Abkhaz relationships.

Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: Greece -Xanthippi Kontogianni

1. Introduction

About TOGETHER

The TOGETHER Project (“TOwards a cultural Understanding of thE oTHER”) aims to promote greater co-operation between countries of the European Union and their neighbors in the Middle East and the Black Sea region based upon common European values and the cultures and traditions of participating countries. The project aims to encourage sustainable development and address various challenges by embedding processes of intercultural dialogue in the agendas of local communities. TOGETHER will contribute to empowering local actors, enhancing their intercultural skills and competences and making them ‘ambassadors’ of cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding.

Innovative training materials, digital tools and content methodologies will be developed to successfully meet the needs of local actors and their communities. More information about this can be found at <http://thetogetherproject.eu>.

TOGETHER is funded by the European Union’s ‘Erasmus+’ Programme and brings together 6 partner institutions from 5 different countries:

CulturePolis	Greece
EWORX S.A.	Greece
A.B. Institute of Entrepreneurship Development Ltd	Cyprus
Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa	Italy
Georgian Arts and Culture Center	Georgia
Lebanese Development Network	Lebanon

About the report

The purpose of the report is to outline the state of the art in intercultural dialogue awareness and development in TOGETHER countries, and to identify the factors that underpin cross-cultural communication and a dynamic space for dialogue in local community settings. More specifically, we seek to provide insights into how intercultural dialogue is understood, identify its main challenges and needs, and understand how it is defined, planned and presented in policy and in practice. It further describes the learning and training needs of local community members.

The report begins with a brief overview of the country’s background and its historical context with regard to intercultural dialogue. The next section outlines the methodology used to collect and analyze data, and is followed by findings according to the three main themes of research:

- 1) Intercultural Dialogue: General Understanding;
- 2) Policy & Practice;
- 3) The Needs of Local Actors. The last section contains concluding remarks and recommendations covering all three themes.

2. Executive Summary

The first intellectual output of the TOGETHER project – the Comparative Analysis Report – recognizes the fundamental need of humans for cultural interaction as well as the necessity of cultural diversity for the benefit of our today's society and explores the position of intercultural dialogue in the project partners' countries within and beyond Europe.

This national report is part of the first intellectual output and presents the state of place in intercultural dialogue awareness and development in Greece, with the overall goal to lead to a deeper appreciation of the factors that underpin cross-cultural communication in the Greek society and foster the development of a dynamic dialogue space in the local community settings of the country. This report spotlights the need of the Greek society to invest into more actions and practices of cross-fertilization between people of diverse background as well as the need for further educational and training opportunities especially for those professional who work in the field of intercultural dialogue. Last but not least, specific recommendations are made in order to inspire further discussions and initiatives for future actions.

The report is organized in 6 sections. The first section offers a general introduction about the TOGETHER project, its goals and its partners, presenting also the aims of this research. In the second section, desktop research produced a review of the country's background concerning the position of intercultural dialogue in the settings of the Greek society. The main focus is given on the identification of the key stakeholders, the policy framework and the fields where intercultural dialogue practices usually take place. In the third section, the research methodology adopted for the realization of this study is presented. The methods used to explore the topic are outlined and briefly discussed. In section four, the findings collected through qualitative and quantitative methods are presented, analyzed and discussed. Section five presents the main conclusions and finally, section 6 discusses how the results of this report could be further expanded in the future, providing relevant proposals and recommendations.

3. Country Background

In Greece, the principle of promoting cultural diversity, mutual respect and intercultural dialogue is expressed in the Constitution of 1975 which grants to everyone within the Greek territory the right to life, honor, and freedom without discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, language, religious or political convictions (Hellenic Parliament, 2008).

The ecosystem of legal bodies which contribute to the protection of these rights in Greece, - promoting at the same time the process of meeting cultures and their mutual interaction - is wide and it expands from local to national level. In the level of Central Governance, the most active institutional structures on designing policies and strategies concerning intercultural dialogue are the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and Sports, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Migration and Asylum. In this level, bodies of Regional Governance are also included. Moving downwards to a more local level of administration, the municipalities of the country take the responsibility to implement programs and actions - supported by national and EU funding- which promote intercultural dialogue and a life without discrimination including the participation of children, youth and vulnerable social groups. Of course except from the Public Sector, there is also the involvement of private sector where social enterprises, CSOs, NGOs, educational institutions, cultural organizations, libraries, museums but also local associations and individuals are the most significant contributors.

In 2006-2007, on the occasion of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the Greek Ministry of Culture presented the National Strategy of Greece for the European Year of Intercultural dialogue 2008. The aim of this strategy was to map the country's background and the national context of intercultural dialogue in Greece, to set smart objectives for the biennium 2007-2008 and the long run, to identify stakeholders and synergies and finally to explore the potentials of education and culture in fostering the understanding of the "other" (Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports, 2008).

In the period 2011-2019, in Greece, the political and social context was determined by two remarkable challenges: the multilevel socioeconomic recession and the increase in refugee arrivals (Leivaditi, et al., 2020). Despite the fact that Greece has been a reception country since 1990s for immigrants coming from the neighboring Balkan countries and the countries of the former USSR, no official integration policy was planned and implemented till then. In 2015, the war in Syria, and the overall adverse conditions prevailing in the other countries, provoked a remarkable refugee flow towards Europe. Refugees mostly from Syria but also from Iraq, Afghanistan, Eritrea and Somalia started to enter the Greece in large numbers. The Migration and Social Integration Code (Law 4251/2014) is currently the basic law that regulated integration, addressing issues related to residence permits and access to the labor market and establishes a protection framework of rights for migrants. Additionally, Law 4375/2016, which mainly determines asylum and protection issues for asylum seekers, also raises some issues related to integration. Furthermore, two national strategies for the integration of third-country nationals were drawn in April 2013 and June 2018 respectively.

In Greece actions have also been taken in the field of intercultural education. Indicatively, the Laws 2910/2001 and 3386/2005 regulate compulsory 9-year education for all, including children of foreigners or minorities, providing also the possibility of enrolling them in public schools, even if there is lack of some necessary official documents (Tasiou, 2020). To support the smooth integration of pupils who come from different sociocultural background, the Greek Ministry of Education has established the operation of

reception and preparatory classes as well as the operation of intercultural schools. From 1996 until today, 26 schools for intercultural education have been installed across Greece, of which 13 are Primary schools, 9 are Secondary schools and 4 of them are High Schools (Tasiou, 2020).

Finally, it is worth mentioning the contribution of Greek and foreign cultural institutions, belonging in the public or private sector, which also creates space for intercultural dialogue processes through their actions and initiatives. Below there are some indicative examples in the field of arts & culture:

- The 7th Thessaloniki Documentary Festival (2005) included a special section called “TRIBUTE & CONFERENCE: IMMIGRATION” dedicated to a screening of Greek and foreign documentaries about immigration and refugees. The tribute was accompanied by a conference with the participation of leading specialists and filmmakers. Five years later, the 12th Thessaloniki Documentary Festival (2010), offered educational scholarships to young people of immigrant background who would like to enter the field of documentary.
- The Athens and Epidaurous Festival has also shown direct response to the phenomenon of immigration and in recent years the program includes a remarkable number of performances and events that focus on it, raising the awareness of the public about intercultural dialogue issues.
- The National Theater has implemented the actions “Theater in Greek” and “Theater in Greek... the sequel”, which concerns theatrical workshops for teenagers refugees, but also adolescents of Greek origin, during which, through theatrical play and learning representational techniques a common code of communication was formed between the participants, which encouraged interaction, exchange of experiences and reflections, intercultural consciousness, but also the use of Greek without stress thus facilitating adaptation to the new cultural environment and integration in the Greek society.
- The International Documentary Festival of Castellorizo «Beyond the Borders” which has been established and produced by the Hellenic History Foundation (ID.IS.ME.) and is taking place in Castellorizo island in Greece every year since 2016. It promotes the most important documentary productions worldwide that focus mainly on history, cultural heritage, politics and other social subjects. It aims to be a meeting point for Greek and foreign documentary filmmakers in order to create new opportunities for intercultural dialogue, partnerships and international co-productions.
- The “Topos Festival” is the first destination festival organized in Greece. It hosts the Europ’raid, a European tour of 10,000 kilometers in 20 countries where young people up to 30 years of age are rediscovering Europe while performing solidarity actions. They end up after their destination journey in the beautiful town of Grevena, in Greece where the “Topos Festival” welcomes them, introducing them elements of the Greek culture and tradition, inviting them to participate in an intercultural dialogue process of meeting and exchange with locals.
- The “Festival of Two Cultures- Greece Italy”, held in 2018 at the Cultural center Tecnopolis in Athens. The event was promoted by Opanda, the department of culture, sport and youth of the City of Athens, Comites-Grecia and the Italian cultural institute in Athens. The festival was organized as part of the “Tempo Forte” event, an initiative created at the first Italy-Greece intergovernmental summit held on September 14, 2017 in Corfu to promote cultural relations between the two countries and takes place under

the patronage of the Italian embassy in Greece and the Greek ministry of tourism.

- The British Council in partnership with the U.S. Consulate General and the Benaki Museum, in collaboration with the Metropolitan Organisation of Museums of Visual Arts of Thessaloniki, the Goethe-Institut Athen and the Organisation of Thessaloniki Concert Hall organized in 2019, the conference “My Museum: The Museum as the Living Room of Society” where professionals from museums and cultural organisations, artists, civil society representatives, educators, activists and students examined how museums can be places of intercultural dialogue, activism and community engagement. The conference took place under the auspices of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports, the Region of Central Macedonia and the Municipality of Thessaloniki.
- Last but not least, in 2020, The Center of Greek And Arabic Literature and Culture was launched By Culturepolis, as an initiative to create opportunities of intercultural dialogue between the Greek and the Arab World. The initiative has been embraced by international authors, artists and creators and several actions of the center has been taken place under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

4. The study methodology

In this chapter, we discuss how the complexity of this report was approached in terms of research methodology. The study was based on a combination of desktop and primary research. The former produced the county’s background, which positions this report in a national policy-development context and also in a historical framework, while the latter leads to the exploration of the country’s background in the practice level.

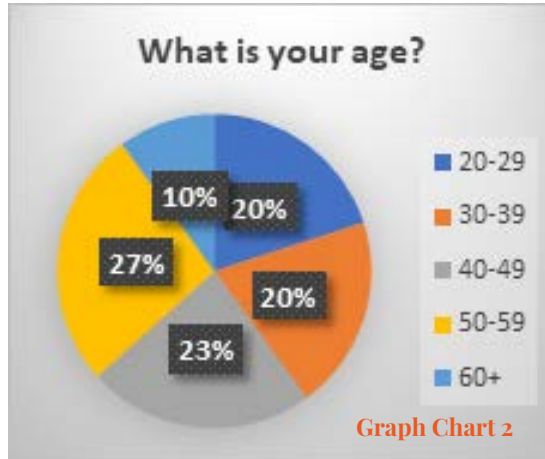
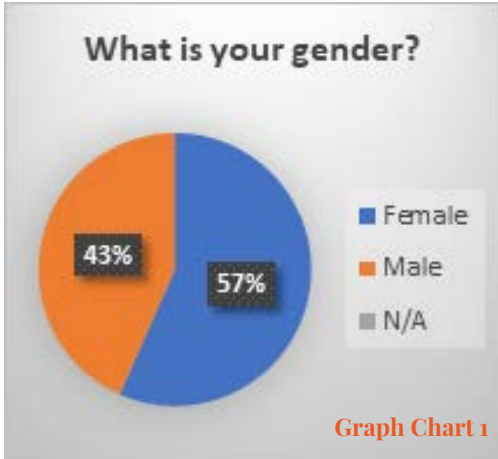
- Desktop Research

The bibliographic research of this National Report was the first step towards the analysis of the position that intercultural dialogue has in the Greek society. Existed bibliography and publications led us to the development of the 3rd chapter of this Report, entitled “Country’s Background”. First of all, research was conducted in order to identify the ecosystem of bodies/stakeholders who play an active role in issues related to intercultural dialogue (ICD). Stakeholders identification was approached regarding both public and private sector in Greece. In the attempt to explore what is the contribution of these stakeholders on the field of ICD, the focus was placed on national strategies, policies, legislations, actions and programs. This policy-making context enabled this research to recognize the framework within both public institutions and civil society organizations implement programs, projects, actions and initiatives for the promotion of intercultural dialogue in Greece.

- Primary Research

In addition to the Desktop Research, a primary research, including both interviews and questionnaires, was conducted. Questionnaires were developed on Google forms and distributed to targeted contacts through e-mail campaigns. Associated partners of the TOGETHER project and members of national networks, where CulturePolis and EWORX are part of (e.g. Greek Network of Anna Lindh Foundation), were involved to support distribution through their channels of communication. As a result, 30 questionnaires were collected in a span of three (3) weeks. The sample consists of 57% of women and 43% of men, 20% of participants are 20-29 years old, the 20% of them are 30-39 years old, 23% are 40-49 years old, 27% are 50-59

years old while the rest are over 60 years old (Graph chart 1 & 2). The majority of participants (58,6%) own a master’s degree and are occupied on the private sector (73%).



Regarding qualitative research, the data collection relied on the technique of in - depth interviews. Furthermore, ten (10) interviews were undertaken in total, using the digital environment of the Zoom platform or the Skype application. Four (4) interviewees were representatives of key public institutions working on issues related to intercultural dialogue at a policy level, and the rest six (6) of them were professionals of civil society organizations active in the field of intercultural dialogue at a practice level. The decision of using the digital space, rather than the interaction in a physical space, concerning the implementation of the interviews was based on the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Greek State’s instructions for keeping social distances. In this research, interviews had an average duration of 40 minutes and followed a written list of questions-to-answer, provided to every interviewee in advance of the interview. Finally, during the analysis and the interpretation of the data, two more telephone calls with interviewees took place to further clarify some blurred points.

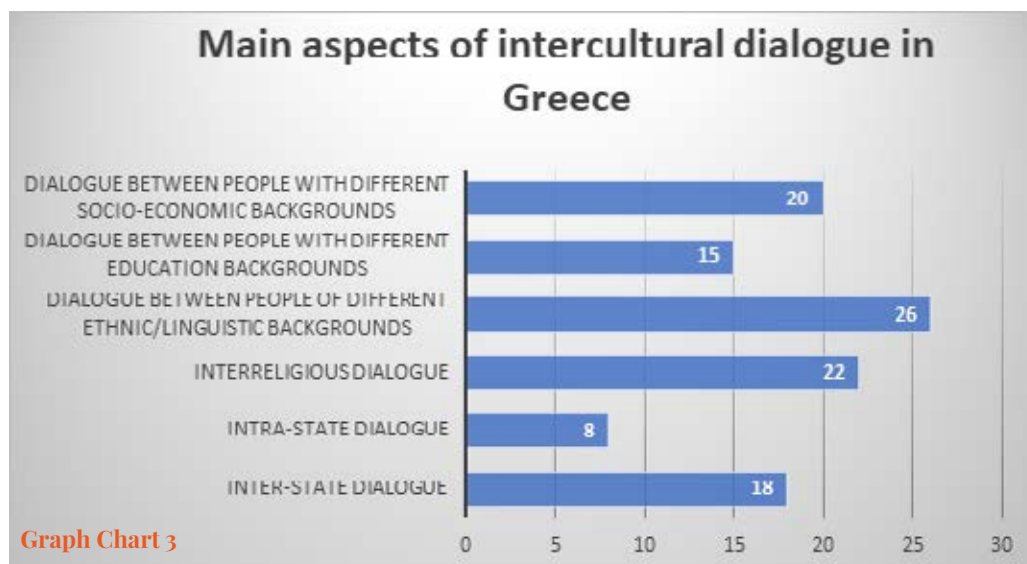
5. Key findings

This section outlines the key findings arising from both questionnaires and interviews with local actors – representatives and professionals from the public and private sector – for the position of intercultural dialogue in the context of the Greek society. Text in quotation marks and italics – extracted from the interviews – accompanies the main text, and graph charts from the survey provide further explanations.

- Intercultural Dialogue: General Understanding

The majority of participants acknowledge, interpret and define the notion of intercultural dialogue as a process of communication between people of different cultural backgrounds. Through this dialogic process, people recognize their distinctness with the aim to discover common ground and cultivate mutual understanding, respect and peace–full coexistence in our globalized and multi–cultural world.

In the light of the above interpretation it is interesting to pay the attention on how different cultural backgrounds are perceived in Greek society. Graph chart 3 replies this question showing that in Greece the main aspects of intercultural dialogue are found on those settings where people or communities differ either because of their ethnic/linguistic identity or due to their socio-economic status or because of their religion beliefs. The existence of groups such as the Muslim minority of Western Thrace, the community of Greek Gypsy, the immigrants and the refugees' populations in Greece, confirms the results of this graph chart and brings to the forefront needs and challenges as generated from the socio–cultural context of the country.

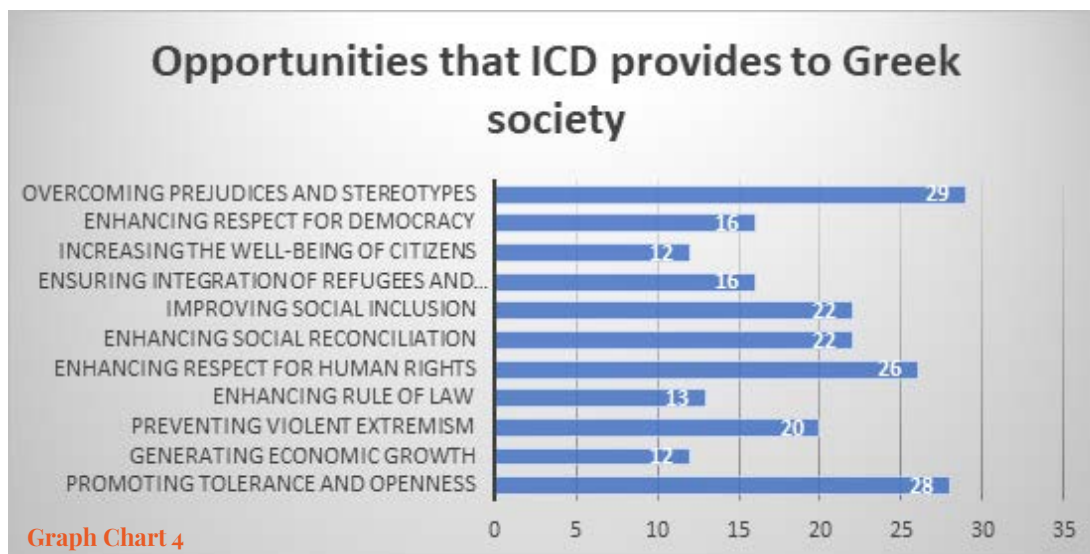


In this regard, interviewee 1 describes:

“Since 2015 there is also a continuing mass movement of refugees to Europe who were forced to leave their home country, Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, due to the civil war. In this Pan-European refugee crisis, Greece, being a crossroad between three continents has become the main entry point for more than 1 million people who sought safety in the European Union”.

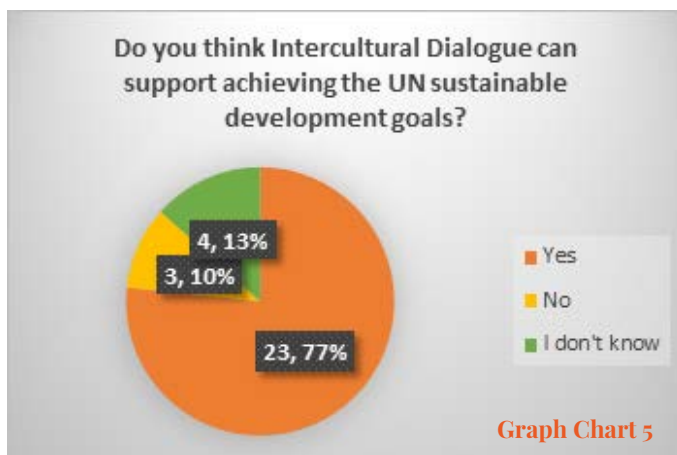
He states that today the need for embedding intercultural dialogue in local communities is much more urgent than it was 30 years ago, when Greece became a host country for immigrants, coming from the neighboring Balkan countries and the countries of the former USSR. In that case, the existence of common cultural references between them and the locals facilitated their smooth integration in the Greek society while the economic situation of that era offered working opportunities for them. Today, the situation differs. Most refugees living in urban settings are unable to find work to support their families as Greece continues to struggle economically in the aftermath of the financial crisis. Afterwards, he argues that the cultural differences between these populations coming from the Arab world and the Greek society are quite rough - grounded mainly on the presence of another religion, beliefs, customs and language. These differences together with the national economic crisis of the decade 2008-2018 which triggered enormous socio-economic divide in society, have led country to insufficient handling.

According to the qualitative and quantitative research, the good impact of promoting intercultural dialogue in Greece and the opportunities gained are well recognized by local actors. Most participants believe that the dialogue between people, communities and groups with different cultural features has the instrumental power to overcome prejudices and stereotypes, promote tolerance and openness and also enhance the respect for human rights (Graph Chart 4).



In this respect, interviewee 10 adds that intercultural dialogue has also the potential to drive the Greek society towards a more sustainable future. He highlights that sustainability is the “healthy” development and in order to explain it further, he draws a parallel between society and a child growing up without prejudices, stereotypes or any compunction about his/her identity.

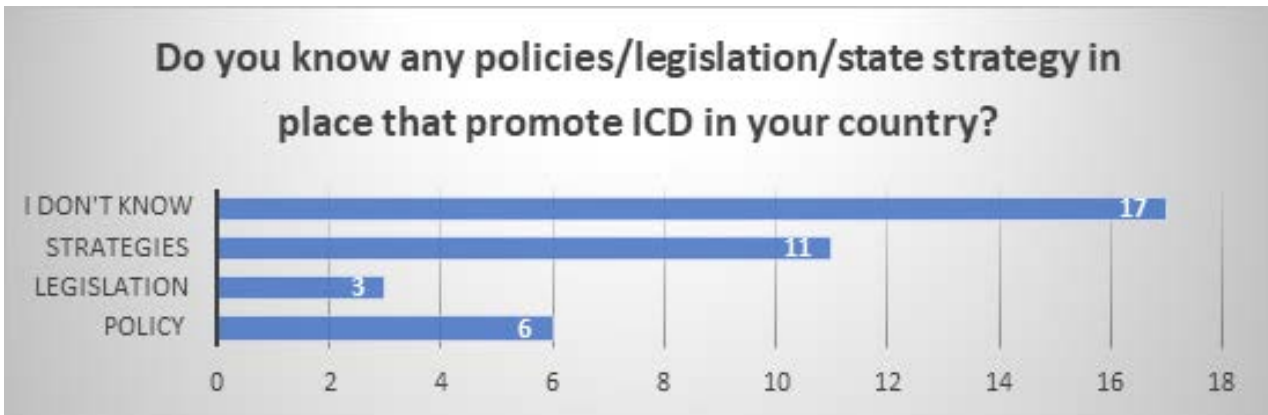
“The child who blossoms in an environment of openness, respect and tolerance will be evolved in nothing less than a responsible, thoughtful and active citizen, ready to offer back to his community all the love and the care he received. In the context of the society, it is intercultural dialogue that lays the foundation for the existence of such a healthy environment”.



Talking about environments where intercultural dialogue takes place, the interviewees 1 and 4 refer to Exarcheia neighborhood, in Athens. It is a place where practices of intercultural dialogue between different communities have been flourished, launched -in their majority- from self-organized initiatives of locals and neighbors. These initiatives have made Exarcheia an “intercultural neighborhood”. Interview 1 explains: “You are walking in the streets and there is a sense that you are traveling around world, you are meeting so many different people, you are tasting their foods, you are listening to their language, you are feeling their pulse...this neighborhood constitutes a mosaic which represents the pure reality of our times. I would say that the existence of these feelings – while walking in a neighborhood – is a good indicator of the quality of life”.

Despite the fact that all participants admit the good impact of intercultural dialogue in the sustainable development of local communities, there is a 23% percentage of local actors (graph chart 5) who do not know or disagree with the statement that intercultural dialogue contributes to the 17 UN sustainable development goals (SDGs). Interviewee 5 discuss that these goals adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, seem to be inconsistent and difficult to quantify, implement and monitor: “In my opinion, they are not well-defined goals and therefore there is the risk of becoming totally meaningless”. In this perspective, interviewee 10 explains that quite often, in politics, abstract notions are used as an umbrella in order to hide deeper social and political processes, interpreting the UN’s developmental goals as the “sweet talking” in place of the existing social challenges such as intolerance, racism, xenophobia and other pathogenesis of our modern world.

Last, but not least participants commended on the role of cultural heritage in promoting intercultural dialogue. Interviewee 5 analyses this topic, explaining that “throughout history, peoples have exchanged cultural experience, ideas, values and goods through art, trade and migrations. These encounters, are human journeys, in which individual travelers or communities have conveyed their ideas and customs across whole continents and oceans. Human history is the tale of such journeys and cultural heritage is what these journeys inherited to us”. To give an example, he refers to the shipwreck of Antikythera which was haphazardly discovered by some sponge divers, in 1901. He explains that this ship, loaded with treasures, marbles, statues, vases, gold jewelry, coins & amphorae from many different cultures, travelled all around the cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. The archaeological findings of this ship’s wreck constitute part of our universal cultural heritage and symbolically integrate the need of human for exploration, the value of cultural exchange and thus stimulate the development of intercultural dialogue.



Graph Chart 6

Policy & Practice

According to the research findings, there is a lack of awareness on policies, legislation and strategies that promote intercultural dialogue in Greece. A possible explanation for this result, is that the sample itself comes mainly from the private sector rather than from public structures. However, a deeper interpretation leads to the hypothesis that there is either an inadequate dissemination of policy making decisions and actions from the part of the state or there is, indeed, a vagueness in the institutional framework regulating issues of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity, social inclusion and integration in the Greek society. This assumption is enhanced by interviewee 3 who observes that “even if there are European policies on intercultural dialogue adapted by Greece, when it comes to the national level, priorities are placed on other spots of the political agenda.”

In any event, three main strategies have been identified by the participants of this research:

- the National Strategy of Greece for the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, set by the Ministry of Culture on the occasion of the celebration for the homonymous thematic year of the European Union. This National Strategy concerned the manner in which the Greek Ministry of Culture was planning to prepare, materialize and develop the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.
- the National Strategy for the Integration of Third Country Nationals (TCN) in 2013. This strategy included specific measures and actions to be implemented in areas such as service provision, introductory courses, employment, health, housing, political participation, anti-discrimination and intercultural dialogue. Most emphasis was put on training and skills development for both TCNs and public employees dealing with migrant issues.
- The National Integration Strategy launched in 2019 by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum. This new strategy contains provisions regarding education, labour market integration, racism and xenophobia, among others.

Apart from these strategies, some participants also referred to relevant educational policies, such as the establishment of intercultural schools and the operation of reception and preparatory classes for immigrants’ and refugees’ children. Interviewee 4 spotlights the evolution of Intercultural Education in Greece, though, being skeptical about its effective implementation:

“Intercultural Education in Greece emerged in the 1980’ s as a response to the arrival of various immigrant populations from Balkans, the countries of the former Soviet Union, Asia and Africa. During 1980 – 1981 the first Reception classes were established by the Greek state and in 1982 Preparatory Classes also started to operate in order to support the smooth integration of groups with different cultural identities. Thereafter, things slipped into the autopilot mode”.

Furthermore, participants identified actions and programs which are implemented mainly by civil society organizations and regional or local public authorities with the support of national or European funding. These actions support social integration and promote the democratic values of dialogue, civil engagement, active participation, and the principles of unity and dignity. The 60% of the sample was aware of specific actions and initiatives and the 73% of participants knew about funding opportunities.

The general knowledge focuses on funding programs of EU such as the Erasmus +, Creative Europe, Europe for citizens, Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, EEA Grants, Europa Nostra funding, Anna Lindh Foundation grants, Horizon 2020 and Interreg Europe.

Some projects which were discussed by participants as worth-mentioned are the followings:

The DeTalks - Creative and Inclusive Non-Verbal Education project which aims to support the linguistic education of newly arrived young immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers by developing an innovative methodology for linguistic education through nonverbal communication, focusing on the attractiveness and effectiveness of non-formal training methods and tools of the performing arts and media. Greek partner in this project is the non-profit organization “Synergy of Music Theatre” from Larissa town.

The Jean Monnet Project EU Vadis Policy Discourses on Intercultural Dialogue, EU Values and Diversity which aims at the stimulation of research, reflection and dialogue in the field of European integration studies, particularly EU values, diversity and intercultural dialogue from a multidisciplinary perspective. This project is coordinated by the Department of International and European Studies of the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki.

The Curing the Limbo, a program aiming to implement a dynamic and innovative model for integration that allows refugees to become socially active. This can be achieved through attending courses in Greek, English, Creative Expression and ICT, gaining access to affordable housing, and receiving professional counseling services tailored to their needs. Refugees are thus integrated in the life of the city, by interacting with active citizen groups and participating in public events held in the neighbourhoods of Athens. In coming together, the refugees and the city exit their “limbo” state, boosting activity, cooperation, and co-existence. The Greek partners here are the City of Athens, the “synAthina” initiative and the Development and Destination Management Agency (ADDMA).

An interesting point that stemmed from the process of the qualitative research is the degree of the success in the implementation of such projects, actions and initiatives. Interviewee 6 supports that it is the endurance of a good practice which creates the potential to impact on social affairs. Otherwise “it turns to be a firework that gets lost in the endlessness of the sky”. Interviewee 3 elaborates on this discussion, highlighting factors that challenge the effectiveness of an action:

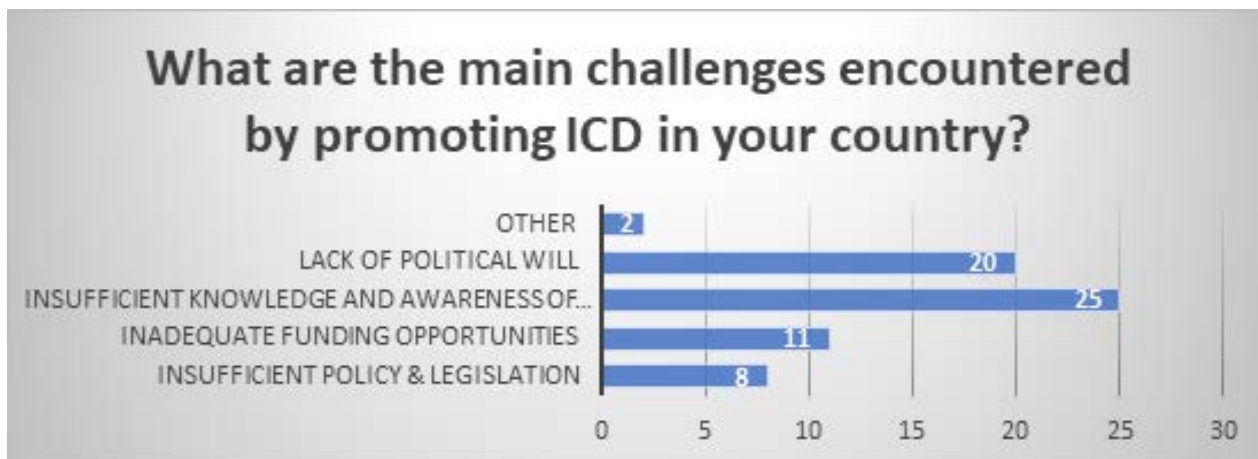
“Piecemeal improvements are not enough to achieve the reform that we need. Greece should develop a well-defined business plan which foresees the integration of intercultural dialogue in the settings of local communities. In this light, civil society organizations need to collaborate with the state for the development of such a business plan, playing, thus, a significant role in achieving a bottom-up approach and conveying the pure pulse of local communities in a policy-making level. However, to move forward this direction, Greek society needs to overcome the extremely complicated bureaucratic system for handling and dispensing funds. It is this bureaucracy which risks the sustainability of civil society organizations”.

Apart from the endurance of a good practice, interviewee 5 spotlights that the quality of transformation and adaptability of a practice in different cultural contexts is also an indicator of success. She gives the example of the Cultural Routes launched by the Council of Europe:

“This programme is constantly reformed by communities and groups in response to their differences and the needs of the era, providing them with a common narrative under which they learn how to share and how to promote their distinctiveness. New routes and stations are constantly generated, making the programme dynamic and inclusive, encouraging thus intercultural dialogue. In Greece, a very good practice of this European programme are the routes of olive tree”.

Needs of Local Actors

Graph Chart 5 shows that the main challenge in the promotion of intercultural dialogue in Greece is the insufficient knowledge of professionals of the field and the lack of the public awareness on issues related to cultural diversity. Local communities’ organizations, civil society bodies and educational institutions, such as schools and universities bear the responsibility to handle the challenge (Graph Chart 6).



Graph Chart 5



Graph Chart 6

According to interviewee 7, the first step to enhance the knowledge of professionals working in the field of intercultural dialogue is to identify these professionals:

“On the one hand, there are those who work in the public sector: they are either political persons or civil servants. Usually, their job environment keeps them in distance from the fields where xenophobia, racism and intolerance really take place. Furthermore, sometimes, the secure of their career in the public sector makes them to rest on their laurels and adopt an individualism in their working. Therefore, fostering their empathy is the big issue in this case. It requires practical exercises which will teach them how to walk in someone else shoes.

On the other hand, there are the professionals who work in the field, mainly through civil society organizations, NGOs, educational or cultural centers, museums, libraries or local associations. In my opinion, these people need to submit themselves in exercises of self-consciousness, in order to work deeply, free themselves from any lurking prejudice, stereotype or racist perception, they may have, and understand what they really like to do and how they want to offer to society when they work in the field”.

The majority of the research’s participants, agree that professionals in the field of intercultural dialogue need to have the ability to sense other people’s emotions, coupled with the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling (empathy), to be tolerant, inclusive, open and receptive. Plus, communication, collaboration and conflict resolution skills are perceived important. Finally, multilingualism supports the work of these professionals, mostly because people who speak several languages are able to understand better and respect a new culture.

Concerning tools and methodologies, the need for life-long learning opportunities, either through formal or informal methodologies, was identified. Participants proposed the implementation of more educational opportunities on the field of intercultural dialogue, such as seminars, conferences, group talks, training, workshops educational platforms and e-learning courses. Moreover, podcasts, videos, films, relevant material on platforms such as YouTube and Netflix, traveling, networking opportunities, role games and simulations identified as the new trend which not only educates professionals but also raise the awareness of the wide public. As referred by interviewee 8 “this is where the big game is played; digital tools should be used to mitigate social challenges and promote cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding”.

Handling the lack of public awareness also needs a carefully designed approach. Except for the use of social media and web-campaigns, participants proposed to invest on two main disciplines:

- **Cultural Heritage.** Interviewee 10 argues that the significance of culture heritage, tangible or intangible, as an integration tool is very important. It embodies the notion of identity and belonging, it is “like a bridge that links ideas and values”. He discusses that professionals of cultural organizations should know how to identify these values, acknowledging that cultural cross-fertilisation is inherent in all societies. “They should promote cultural heritage sites and museums to the general public as interpreter-mediators, recognizing the importance of cultural differences through a range of activities including workshops, conferences, concerts and events, educational activities for children and other dissemination initiatives”.
- **Public Space.** Deploying public space as the place where a diverse but harmonious community can be built and interact, is also a very good methodology. Interviewee 1 explains that simple elements of the urban landscape could be the reference point for developing intercultural dialogue in practice. Using the example of a park bench, he describes the process of gathering around it and how this social process transforms it in a space where social osmosis is generated. He proposes to make more use of parks, squares, public gardens and other places in order to organize open events where people will get aware of intercultural dialogue issues, they will meet different members of society, will exchange viewpoints, will discuss political and social conflicts and finally will learn in a nonformal way how to participate in a social dialogue.

6. Conclusion

Through this report, it has become clear that there is an increasing need for respectful cultural encounter, mutual understanding and constructive dialogue in today's Greece.

In particular, through this report, interesting facts were brought into light. The citizens of Greece are facing the challenge of multiple intercultural approximation with their fellow citizens from different cultural backgrounds, as well as with citizens of third countries – mainly immigrants and refugees. Ethnic, linguistic, social and economic obstacles seem to be the main challenges for the development of such a dialogue. Despite the difficulties, it was emerged that local actors – representatives and professionals from the public and private sector- acknowledge that the cultivation of the dialectic relationship between the culturally diverse groups and the instigation of their substantial contact should be the main parameter in order to overcome prejudices and stereotypes, promoting tolerance and openness and finally consolidate both democracy and social cohesion, which are the necessary conditions for sustainable development and progress.

The main strategies which have been designed by the Greek state in order to promote intercultural dialogue have been identified, though, they are in dispute concerning their development and implementation. In fact, we conclude that there is a distance between the policy – making bodies and the civil society organizations which act in the level of practice, due to the lack of specific prioritization and also because of the extended bureaucracy of the State's mechanism. Thus, civil society organizations turn their attention to programs, supported mainly by EU findings, which facilitate their effort and gives them a chance to take actions and initiatives for the promotion of intercultural dialogue in the context of local communities.

To conclude, the need to foster the knowledge of professionals working on intercultural dialogue issues and to raise the awareness of the general public is apparent in the Greek society's settings. Skills and competences, which are perceived necessary for the local actors working in the field are the ability to be tolerant, inclusive, open and receptive. Fostering empathy, self-consciousness, communication, collaboration and conflict resolution skills are also important to be cultivated.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, this section identifies opportunities and proposes recommendations for mainstreaming cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue principles, issues and challenges in the context of local communities in the Greek Society.

Concerning the general awareness and the needs of local actors for enhancing their knowledge on ICD and improving their intercultural competences, a great opportunity exists for the TOGETHER project. The development of the “Ambassadors Curriculum” (IO2) is addressed to the community of local actors and practitioners in order to develop intercultural skills and competences and educate them on mentoring and guiding their communities in order to participate in intercultural dialogue processes, promoting at the same time the values of culture for tolerance, open-mindedness, mutual understanding and sustainable development.

Other initiatives highlighting the role of local actors in ICD could be envisioned, for example, by forming a network of ‘ICD Ambassadors’.

Another main challenge is updating the thinking of policy-makers and stakeholders such that they have a more comprehensive and relevant view of intercultural dialogue and its relationship to sustainable development. There is an opportunity to build upon materials which already exist. For example, UNESCO’s e-Platform (<https://en.unesco.org/interculturaldialogue/>) about intercultural dialogue concentrates good practices from all over the world, that enable to build bridges between people from diverse background in order to create more inclusive societies through mutual understanding and respect for diversity. Through its broad set of functions, the platform is a one-stop shop for ICD policy makers and stakeholders’ groups searching for resources or inspiration on intercultural dialogue, plus it strengthens the exchange of ideas and thoughts between the many different groups working within this field. This material can inform the writing of a policy brief to assist in addressing needs in this area, when distributed as part of a targeted communication plan.

Recommendations:

- Reinforce capacity building for decision-makers and ICD stakeholders, making better and extensive use of existing resources or other resources, including the results of the TOGETHER project.
- Promote these through ICD forums, workshop, conferences and websites.
- Develop a national web portal on intercultural dialogue issues as an integral part of the ministries' websites (e.g. Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and Sports, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Migration and Asylum). The target audience should be ICD stakeholders who inform and influence development of ICD strategies and programmes. The web portal should include a resource list and further reading.
- Identify innovative ways of expanding the range of resources available for ICD policy-makers in the field of culture and sustainable development.
- Liaise with organisations active in the field and identify good practices on ICD that could generate a thesaurus for practitioners in the field for launching more advanced pilot projects.



8. References

- D. Ziomas, N. B. a. N. S., 2011. Greece- Promoting the Social Inclusion of Roma - A study of national policies, s.l.: Institute of Social Policy & National Centre for Social Research – EKKE .
- Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports, 2008. National Strategy of Greece for the European Year of Intercultural dialogue 2008, Athens: Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Hellenic Republic.
- Hellenic Parliament, 2008. THE CONSTITUTION OF GREECE As revised by the parliamentary resolution of May 27th 2008 of the VIIIth Revisionary Parliament, Athens: Hellenic Parliament's Publication Department.
- Lecca, P. J. Q. I. N. J. V. & G. H. F., 1998. Cultural competency in health, social and human services: Directions for the twenty - firts century.. In: New York: Garland Publishing.
- Leivaditi, N., Papatsani, E., Ilias, A. & Petracou, E., 2020. Integration Policies, Practices and Experiences - Greece Country Report, RESPOND Working Papers, Global Migration: Consequences and Responses, s.l.: University of the Aegean.
- Leko, M. & Brownell, M., 2009. Crafting quality professional development for special educators what school leaders should know. In: Teaching Exceptional Children. s.l.:s.n., pp. 64-70.
- Ministry of Migration and Asylum , 2018 . National Strategy for the Integration , Athens: Hellenic Republic.
- Tasiou, C., 2020. Integration of minorities and Interculturalism. s.l.:s.n.
- Tasiou, C., 2020. Integration of minorities and interculturalism in the Greek Educational System. [Online]
Available at: <https://dspace.lib.uom.gr/handle/2159/23765>
[Accessed Wednesday February 2021].
- Verhás, E., 2019. The Turkish Minority in Western Thrace:, s.l.: Minority Rights Group Europe (MRGE).

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Best-Practice Example – the 1st Corfu Arabian World’s Festival

Country Greece

Implementing Institution CulturePolis

Program/Project name The “1st Corfu Arabian World’s Festival”, in the framework of the project Intercultural Dialogue Festival–Cultural Encounter between East and West.

Year and duration 1-6 of April 2011

URL For more information <https://arabfestivalen.wordpress.com/>

General Description / Overview

The “1st Corfu Arabian World’s Festival” took place in Corfu, Greece, on 1 – 6 of April in 2011. The aim of this festival was to create an intercultural dialogue between the Greek and the Arabic culture, raising the awareness of the general public, through dedicated actions, about the importance and the richness of this neighboring East civilization. The festival involved the participation of local and national actors, such as mayors, members of the Greek parliament, representatives of the UNESCO & the Anna Lindh Foundation, but also remarkable experts and professors of the field, as well as journalists and artists. The festival caught the attention not only of the Corfiot and the Greek society but also of several Arabic embassies in Greece which expressed their will, after the end of the festival, to institutionalize it at the island, characterizing it as a good practice of intercultural dialogue between the Greek and the Arab world.

The 1st Corfu Arabian World’s Festival was implemented in the framework of the international project, named “Intercultural Dialogue Festival–Cultural Encounter between East and West”, and was supported by the “CULTURE 2009–2013 Creative Europe Programme” of the European Commission.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

The main activities of the 1st Corfu Arabian World’s Festival, in Corfu, Greece are divided into four sections: The Arab world READINGS / FAIRY TALES. THIS ACTION INCLUDED readings sessions of Arab literature and philosophy by experts, professors, authors, writers, translators and also provided narration of fairy tales for kids offered by story tellers and actors. These sessions were attended by over 1000 Corfiots, particularly young children, scouts, pupils and their tutors, school teachers, young people, parents and families.

A Transnational Conference with the topic “THE JOURNEY: FROM HOMER’S ODYSSEUS TO SINBAD THE SAILOR”. The scope of the conference was to compare two conceptions of life that are the basis of the nature and the customs of two populations of sailors and travelers, considering also an ideal widening of the natural Mediterranean borders.

Exhibition and Literature Corner: it was an action that included the projection of Arab videos, films and documentaries, as well as the exhibition of Arab and local handicrafts and artistic works generated from

synergies with other EU initiatives.

Finally, books and other documents concerning literature, science, art and mathematics and their development in the Arab world and in Europe, were presented.

The Arab World festival concerts: Arab and Greek music and dance performances were presented by the participating artists, creators, musicians, actors and performers, revealing to the general public the long-lasting and deep linkage of these two cultures.

Many of the above activities took place in public spaces and heritage sites of the Corfu city. There was also a special installment, inspired by the traditional Marocaine tent, Haima, placed in the middle of the Corfu city Piazza, which served as a hosting venue of several activities, becoming also the landmark and the symbol of the festival.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The 1st Corfu Arabian World's Festival promoted the creativity of people in the framework of an intercultural and interreligious dialogue between Greeks and Arabs, Christians and Muslims. This results not only from the high participation of the locals and visitors of the Corfu island but also from the unanimous decision of the local community stakeholders and the Arabic Embassies in Greece to support the idea of repeating the festival, institutionalizing it at Corfu.

Moreover, the festival contributed to the sustainable development of the island. The days of the festival, a rise in the tourist flow of the city was noticed, indicating the attraction of new visitors who desire to discover new worlds besides their own. This, stimulated the interest of local stakeholders for investing in alternative forms of tourism such as the cultural tourism.

OBSTACLES

The initial hesitation of the Arabic Embassies to support the implementation of the festival was a challenge which was overcome through using good public relations and cultural diplomacy techniques.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- The active participation and the involvement of local community.
- The reactions and the feedback of the participants during and after the end of the festival.
- The will of the Arabic Embassies to institutionalize the festival in Corfu island.

HOW TOGETHER PROGRAM COULD USE THIS INFORMATION

- Exploitation of knowledge and experience gained from the involvement of local actors in an intercultural dialogue process in Corfu.
- Networking and establishment of new partnerships with organizations and individuals involved in this festival in order to support the dissemination of the TOGETHER project.

Appendix 2: Cultural Heritage Example – The landscape of the olive grove

Country Greece and other Mediterranean Countries

Name of Given Cultural Heritage Site / Practice / Tradition The landscape of the olive grove

Field, Subject, Genre, Form Cultural Landscape

URL For more information <https://olivetreeroute.gr/en/>

General Description / Overview

A cultural landscape is the memory and identity of the men who created it, is an evolutionary continuum which houses the various tracks of each period to keep the memory of history.

The landscape of the olive grove is a paradigmatic cultural landscape, which perfectly integrates the tangible and intangible. It is an outstanding witness of a form of exploitation that goes back millennia on the calendar of humanity. It is inextricably linked to the Greco-Roman culture that was born around the Mediterranean, and in fact it is its most important identity sign.

Wild olive trees, ancestors of the domesticated ones, can still be seen in the Peloponnese, Crete, North Africa and the Middle East, their places of origin. The relationship between this tree and human civilization has produced an immensely rich, living cultural heritage, embedded in the everyday habits of the Mediterranean people. From gastronomy, with the crucial influence of olive oil, to art and traditions, the social development of these areas has been largely shaped by the olive tree.

WHY THIS HERITAGE/TRADITION COULD BE PERCEIVED AS A FACILITATOR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AMONG COUNTRIES?

The landscape of the olive grove serves as a bridge and link between different countries, marking the everyday lives of the Mediterranean peoples. Since the ancient times, the olive tree is associated with their rites and customs and has influenced their lifestyles. People of Mediterranean have exchanged olive harvest products and also the skills and knowledge about the olive tree which has been a symbol of civilization, peace and reconciliation. Additionally, oil – the liquid gold- has been the fundamental element of the Mediterranean diet, an important intangible heritage which connects cultures. For embedding all the above values, the landscape of the olive grove is an example of cultural heritage which could be perceived as facilitator of intercultural dialogue.

Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: Italy -Evangelista Leuzzi, Iulia Gabriela Badea, Adele Benlahouar

1. Introduction

About TOGETHER

The TOGETHER Project (“TOwards a cultural Understanding of thE oTHER) aims to promote greater co-operation between countries of the European Union and their neighbors in the Middle East and the Black Sea region based upon common European values and the cultures and traditions of participating countries. The project aims to encourage sustainable development and address various challenges by embedding processes of intercultural dialogue in the agendas of local communities. TOGETHER will contribute to empowering local actors, enhancing their intercultural skills and competences and making them ‘ambassadors’ of cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding.

Innovative training materials, digital tools and content methodologies will be developed to successfully meet the needs of local actors and their communities. More information about this can be found at <http://thetogetherproject.eu>.

TOGETHER is funded by the European Union’s ‘Erasmus+’ Programme and brings together 6 partner institutions from 5 different countries:

CulturePolis	Greece
EWORX S.A.	Greece
A.B. Institute of Entrepreneurship Development Ltd	Cyprus
Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa	Italy
Georgian Arts and Culture Center	Georgia
Lebanese Development Network	Lebanon

About the report

The purpose of the report is to outline the state of the art in intercultural dialogue awareness and development in TOGETHER countries, and to identify the factors that underpin cross-cultural communication and a dynamic space for dialogue in local community settings. More specifically, we seek to provide insights into how intercultural dialogue is understood, identify its main challenges and needs, and understand how it is defined, planned and presented in policy and in practice. It further describes the learning and training needs of local community members.

The report begins with a brief overview of the country’s background and its historical context with regard to intercultural dialogue. The next section outlines the methodology used to collect and analyze data, and is followed by findings according to the three main themes of research:

- 1) Intercultural Dialogue: General Understanding;
- 2) Policy & Practice;
- 3) The Needs of Local Actors. The last section contains concluding remarks and recommendations covering all three themes.

2. Executive Summary

The term Intercultural Dialogue (ICD) has been used since 1980 but fewer studies have been conducted. In the last years, the concept has been widely used in international conventions such as United Nations, UNESCO, the European Union, as a policy tool to address social change and justice on an international level. Also, a few concepts were used together with ICD, such as culture, heritage, identity, diversity. These concepts may provide as rhetorical instruments to promote distinct political goals beyond intercultural dialogue as such (Lähdesmäki and Wagener, 2015).

In this spirit, the present research assesses how Italy conceptualizes and operationalizes the intercultural dialogue, what are the main opportunities and issues, the policies and strategies, and the main stakeholders in the promotion of intercultural dialogue. The findings are showing that intercultural dialogue is imperative for peace, promotion of mutual understanding, and respect for human rights. It has been confirmed that the institutional structures and the national policies could support much better the promotion of intercultural dialogue. Moreover, it was highlighted the imperative need for better knowing the concept and the right drivers of an efficient dialogue. The collected data showed also that certain systems and tools such as educational institutions, programmes, and media are the crucial mechanisms in the implementation of intercultural dialogue.

To have a better view of how intercultural dialogue is understood and implemented a mixed methodology design has been used. Both the instruments were administrated to representatives that are working on issues of Intercultural Dialogue on a policy and practice level. The online survey was administrated to 31 Italian representatives. The survey consists of 14 quantitative and qualitative questions, being structured among three dimensions: “Understanding Intercultural Dialogue – General Awareness”, “Policy and Practice” and “Identifying needs of local actors for promoting Intercultural Dialogue”. The in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 Italian representatives. The descriptive data has been collected thanks to the use of a semi-structured interview guide following the three-dimension survey structure. The survey respondents represent the Puglia region, while the interviewees are coming from the following geographic regions: Puglia, Lazio, and Emilia-Romagna.

3. Country Background

Nowadays, the cultural environment is changing extremely fast and is becoming more and more diversified. Europe, and not only, is a diverse continent characterized by a rich diversity of individuals and communities that are living in close proximity. Migration, the influence of social media on culture and communication are making cultural diversity an essential condition of human society. The European societies have suffered some social and political challenges due to the growth of interconnectedness and interdependence. Stereotypes, xenophobia, intolerance, violence, discrimination, racism are the main attitudes that are threatening peace and security. Within this, respect and mutual understanding, constructive dialogue, and tolerance among cultures are imperative (Lähdesmäki, Koistinen and Ylöne, 2020; UNESCO, 2018; Council of Europe, 2008). So, the adoption of a peaceful and inclusive society is the response, and this can be achieved through intercultural dialogue.

As various research points out, immigration in Italy is considered as a structural phenomenon that, far from being exhausted in the short term, will describe the country's future (Sciortino and Colombo, 2005, p.7; Cesareo, 2005, p7; Zanfrini, 2005, 126). According to the Social Services of Puglia Region (2020), on the 1st January 2020, there were registered 133,690 foreign residents in the region, with an incidence of 3.4% of the total population, a value lower than that recorded in the South of Italy (4.5%) and still very far from the national average (8.4%). But, compared to the previous year, there was an increase of 1,598 units.

The transformation of Italy and more generally of southern Europe from an area of origin of large migratory flows to an area of reception of population inflows from other regions of the world has occurred relatively quickly and in a substantially unexpected, unplanned, and scarcely regulated by public authorities. For Italy, the turning point was in the seventies, when the foreign entrances began to exceed the departures. In the same period, internal migrations, which for decades had provided to the more developed regions the needed workforce, began to decline (Pugliese, 2002).

The biggest part of migratory flows is coming from French Africa and are choosing Italy as a second option, with the hope to arrive at the desired destination. The sensational arrivals from Albania, started from the end of the eighties, after the fall of communism and the liberalization of freedom of movement (Ambrosini, 2015).

However, for a long time, the migratory phenomena have been seen in pathological light, which traces remain alive today in public debate, immigration is framed as a new social problem that has hit a country that is already fraught with difficulties (Ambrosini, 2015).

In an interview, Ejaz Ahmad, an Italian-Pakistan citizen, journalist, and intercultural mediator, said that "in Italy, multiculturalism already exists, but what is missing is the interculturalism and mutual integration. In everyday life, different colors and cultures are meeting, colliding, but do not blend. Yet, this blending between two or more cultures is not a threat, it is beautiful, it's an opportunity for growth compared to the immobility of stagnant cultures." The issue of migration and reception are erroneously presented by the political class as complicated when in reality they are complex. The real challenge, therefore, in our time, that of globalization, consists in understanding the complexity of everything, without falling into trivial simplifications (Viriglio, 2019).

The migration numbers represent a challenge for all the European Union states and for the EU itself. The EU is going through a crisis of values where human rights, democracy, and the rule of law need a reliable defence. Day by day, the EU societies become more multicultural and the future depends on our ability as citizens to develop and sustain the intercultural dialogue. Understanding and accepting cultures and customs of other civilizations is an attitude that each person must adopt and not as a matter of “political correctness” (European Union, 2017).



4. The Study Methodology

The research aims to evaluate the needs, enabling factors, and best practices with regard to the state of the art in intercultural dialogue awareness and development in Italy.

The present research uses the mixed-methods design, which is a combination of collecting and analyzing quantitative survey data, conducting qualitative in-depth interviews, and desk-based research as a means of exploring the state of the art of intercultural dialogue awareness. To be eligible for this research, the participants had to meet the following criteria's: a) to be representatives of key public and civil society institutions working on issues of intercultural dialogue on a policy level and b) to be representatives of an organization working on issues of intercultural dialogue on a political level. The study was designed around three main dimensions: "Understanding Intercultural Dialogue – General Awareness", "Policy and Practice" and "Identifying needs of local actors for promoting Intercultural Dialogue".

Desk-based research

The available national statistics, policies, programmes, and publications allowed us to go deeper into the subject of ICD development in Italy and helped us in elaborating the third chapter, entitled "Country's background".

For the desk-based research we analysed various legislative acts,

Questionnaire

During this phase, a sample of 31 people has participated in an online survey (appendix 1) thanks to the use of google forms. Of which 29% of the respondents represent entities from the third sector, 22,6% public and private entities, and organizations from the local community, and only 3,2%, with a small enterprise. In terms of demographics, 58,1% represents females and 49,1% males. In what regards the age, 49,1% is between 30-39 y.o., 25,8% between 20-29 y.o., 19,4% from 50 to 59 y.o., 9,7% from 40 to 49 y.o. and only one respondent is over 60 y.o. The majority of respondents have higher levels of education: university degree (48,4%) and master degree (22,6%) and only 12,9% have their high school diploma.

Interviews

Ten interviews were conducted face-to-face and via the online platform ZOOM as so:

Group A - five representatives of key public and civil society institutions working on issues of Intercultural Dialogue on a policy level, such as:

expert 1- mayor, teacher, and lawyer;

expert 2-philosophy and history of ideas university teacher and part of the steering committee of the "Italian Association of Humanistic IT and digital culture";

expert 3- priest, executive director of the national pastoral, executive director of the "CdL De Finibus Terrae" foundation;

expert 4- elementary music and special needs teacher; expert 5- Italian and literature high school teacher.

Group B - five representatives of organizations working on issues of Intercultural Dialogue on a practice level, such as

expert 1- founder of a folk music group from Salento;

expert 2- president of an international association that works for the social promotion;

expert 3- film director, theater teacher, and actor, born in Buenos Aires and for the last 15 years he lived in Bologna;

expert 4- theater actor and social worker in an Immigration Reception Center and

expert 5- president of an association that has the aim to valorize the traditions from Salento.

The mean age of the interviewed participants is 48 years old, from 28 to 75 y.o. The experts are coming from Puglia (n=7), Lazio (n=1), Emilia-Romagna (n=2).

Ethical Considerations

This study has been conducted following the recommendations for ethical research, respecting the anonymity, and with the Data Protection Act of Regulation (EU) No 2016/679 of the European Parliament and the council of 27 April on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of the data.

Translation

Since both the survey and the interview guide were in English, a translation in the Italian language was necessary.

Limits

The present research has a few limits. A first limit regards the translation of the administration tools. Even if it was provided an equivalent translation, it does not guarantee that all the items have a metric equivalence to the other cultures. A second limit consists in the fact that the majority of the respondents are coming from the Puglia region, and so the conclusions are hard to be generalized to all of Italy.

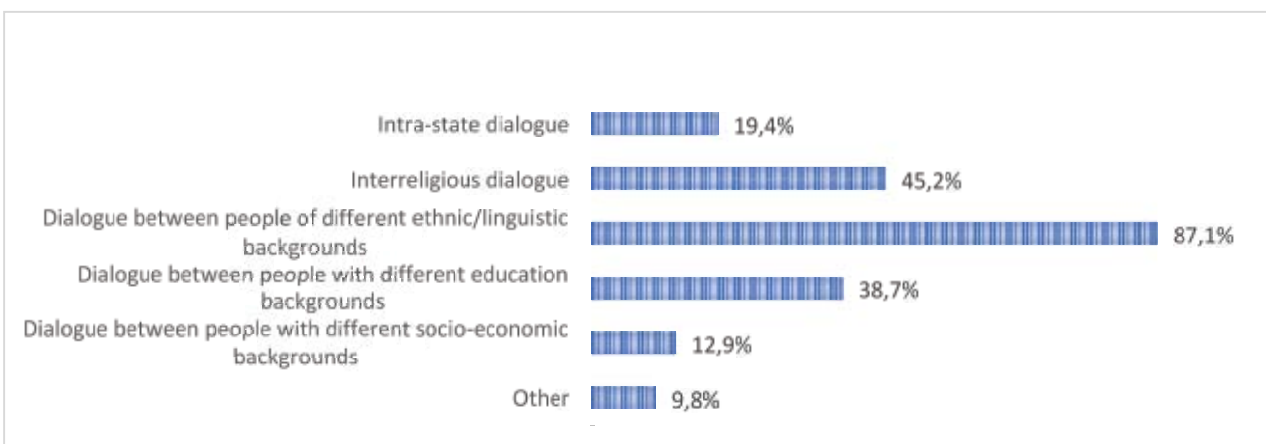
The present situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic created some issues in the process of survey distribution and interview implementation. So that, the survey had to be administrated online and the interview administration imposed some distance limits that created some communication barriers, such as the body language that couldn't be expressed in the virtual space as in face-to-face and it is well known, that Italians have an innate passion for communicating through the body language.

5. Key Findings

Intercultural Dialogue: General Understanding

The responses are presenting two states of understanding intercultural dialogue. First, as a communication tool, “listening and understanding exercise”; “intercultural dialogue is the ability between two cultures (both as ethnicities and as social dialogue and intergenerational dialogue) to dialogue by mediating conflicts to reach a meeting point or, in any case, a peaceful confrontation”. This understanding points out that ICD means listening truly to a person, being empathic with its thoughts and feelings, showing respect, and understanding better its perspective, motivation, and interest. Active listening means having an understanding attitude by not judging, accusing, or bringing criticism. Another stream of understanding intercultural dialogue shows its links with the concept of diversity: “relationship between people of different linguistic, cultural, ethnic and religious origins and heritages”, “discovery the ‘worlds’ of others for knowing and welcoming them”, “a reality that brings new perspectives”.

According to the interviewees, ICD is understood through three dimensions: listening, interest and, sharing. It can be observed that both survey respondents and interviewees, agreed with the dimension of listening. The majority of our interviewees understand ICD as an achievement, a useful tool for gaining results, an enrichment and, an exchange of knowledge as long as we let ourselves be amazed by the “Other”. According to both groups, open-mindedness is the basis of the dialogue. It could happen between two different persons, modest and curious that get closer, being aware of their own cultures and limits. Talking about limits, “defining who you are” is the first step toward the dialogue, that’s one of the points that all the experts have highlighted; conversing with different cultures implies first of all-knowing yourself and your heritage. If we know our identity, with all our natural qualities and flaws, we’ll be able to know the Other, generating so, a worthy ICD based on exchanges, contacts, meetings, and, not contaminations. Identity, uniqueness, special features are fundamental characteristics that both groups underlined. Here we have to point out a slightly different opinion from one of GROUP A’s components, expert no.2 who has a philosophical education and is sensitive toward racism issues. To expert no.2, cultures are networks, relational threads, a jumble of histories. What expert no. 2 wanted to highlight is that we do not need to make differences between cultures because humanity’s nature is made of multiculturalism so that’s actually why ICD is possible not through an effort but in a very natural way because it’s part of our congenital identity. Problems are coming if the dialogue is understood as an effort between different parts. “Multiculturalism is a fact” has asserted expert no. 2, so becoming conscious of this fact ICD should be a spontaneous process.



Graphic. 1. The main aspects of intercultural dialogue

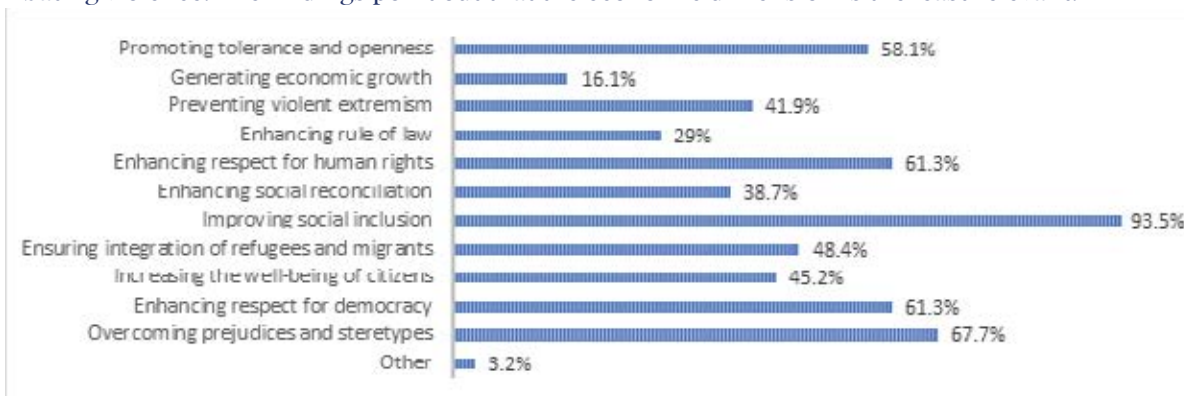
The overwhelming majority of respondents strongly agree that the main aspect of intercultural dialogue (graphic 1) is “dialogue between people of different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds” (87,1%), being followed by the “interreligious dialogue” (45,2%) and “dialogue between people with different education background” (38,7%). While the socio-economical background (12,9%) is not considered such an essential component of intercultural dialogue. About 9,8% of the respondents consider that all the listed components are of big importance and not one in particular.

Intercultural dialogue and Sustainable Development

All the interlocutors have unanimously considered obvious and redundant the focus on the sustainable development related to the intercultural dialogue. For example, the impact of the ICD on the ONU’s 2030 Agenda, is essentially fundamental. Both interviewed groups have found inopportune the need to specify it because that question shouldn’t exist. The same response came from the survey, where all the participants agreed with the fact that ICD supports achieving UN sustainable development goals. None of the interviewees separated the importance of the ICD from the perspective of sustainable development.

It would be a contradiction: defining sustainability through intercultural is a tautology. Being aware of the “other” culture implies itself a sensitive gaze at the environment, at the body, at the intelligence. The Agenda’s targets lean exactly on topics and feelings that an open-minded, pacific, and curious dialogue would have already internalized. Making concrete and honest intercultural dialogue come true would already be sufficient. Achieving this, all the international communities wouldn’t by now be forced to fulfill such a difficult but crucial. 2030 Agenda is interconnected. It would be a mistake thinking to separate tiles of a fundamental puzzle. To solve racism, we need to care about ecological problems, and to solve gender equality, we should fully understand how jobs and territory are conceived in the world. We always give a name to perspectives, but we never name their real components. From this point of view, we’ll be talking about the total development of the individual more than sustainable development. From particularity to universality and so “we’ll have to start from those models of improvement realized by local communities that are the only ones that can sincerely tell about their needs and their hopes” as expert no.6 declared.

The majority of respondents consider that Intercultural Dialogue brings Italy’s and its communities a range of opportunities (graphic 2). For example, 93,5% consider that intercultural dialogue improves social inclusion and over 60% of the respondents states that some of the provided opportunities are: overcoming prejudice and stereotypes (67,7%), enhancing respect for democracy and human rights (61,3%). They also highlight the importance of enhancing social reconciliation, enriching cultural and social life, and combating violence. The findings point out that the economic dimension is the least relevant.



Graphic. 2. Intercultural dialogue opportunities provided in Italy/ Italian communities

So, it can be said that intercultural dialogue is recognized as an important key in living in peace and as a tool to overcome prejudices, enhance equality, and improve the well-being of citizens.

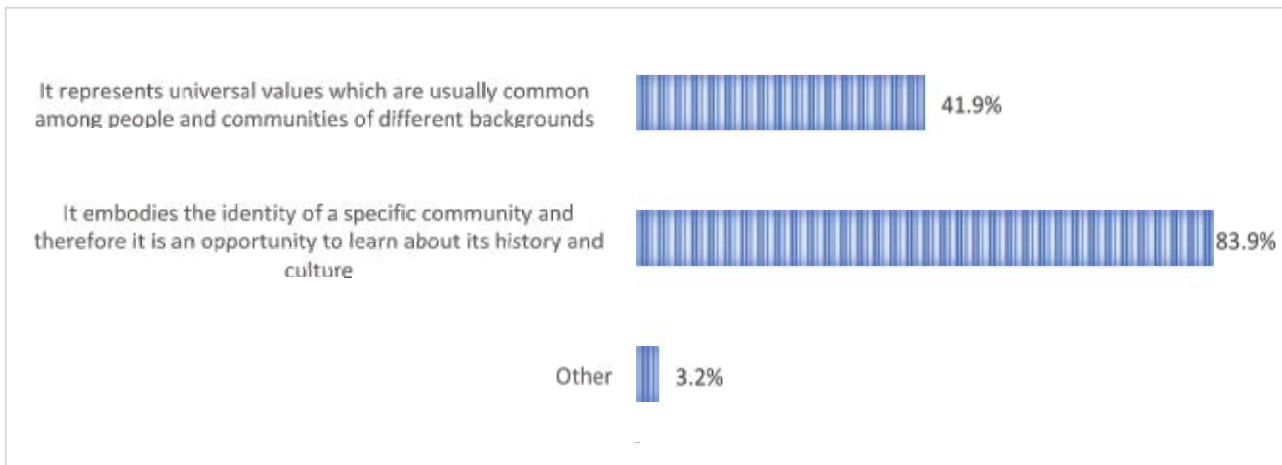
Cultural heritage: relevant or relative?

The respondents emphasize the role that cultural heritage has on the development of intercultural dialogue, 83,9% of them stating that “it embodies the identity of a specific community and therefore it is an opportunity to learn about its history and culture”. A wider perspective towards this topic in Italy and particularly in the South of Italy is offered by the interviews.

It was clear right from the beginning that both interviewed groups were sharing the same idea on cultural heritage: something to protect, to cherish, to share. It was observed that exactly through this heritage, it's possible to access the temple of cultures. A recurring opinion highlights the importance of defending each cultural heritage because it would be a real loss from a human point of view; it would be rather appropriate to guarantee the renewing and the transmission of each heritage to share. So, summing up the opinions, it can be said that cultural heritage is much more than relevant since defending it means constantly learning.

On the back of this educational aspect, we highlight another point of view shared by the interviewees: cultural heritage is history that could make emerge a feeling of astonishment in those who are interested in discovering it; the experts have defined history as none other than people of the past dialoguing with us through the heritage they left. Here, the issue has assumed, let's say, a genetic sense; the heritage answers to the question “Who I belong to?” and so finding and defining our identity we can meet the world and that culture that we have inside will be nothing more than the beauty of a community or of the communities that we've met and that have generated that heritage.

On this point too, it has to be reported the relevant opinion of two experts of both groups. Expert no.2 from GROUP A has defined the cultural heritage, concerning the intercultural dialogue, as a false problem. What he wanted to clarify is that there isn't an immense or a limited culture, what exists is culture, that's it. Expert no.2 doesn't find right the hierarchical approach that sometimes we have towards cultures, this reflects a capitalistic way of thinking. Culture means being together, sharing, without falling into the vortex of egocentricity. Expert no.7, from GROUP B, has expressed an analogous awareness. Here too, cultural heritage was intended as a limiting reality, something that could generate misunderstandings made of ethnic claims and a fierce sense of identity. The expert, who's socially operative in the intercultural promotion of Mediterranean harbors and of the sea as existential style, has declared that saying the word “typical” is nonsense. Mediterranean Europe, according to expert no.7, could be the pioneer in the advance of the communities' interrelation. The more we'll insist on the concept of typical identity, of tradition, creating also a difference between the countryside and the seaside, the more we'll withdraw into ourselves. So, no culture hierarchy or typical identities for these two experts; for them, cultural heritage is a fact that we don't need to define but to share.



Graphic 3. The contribution of Cultural Heritage to the development of intercultural dialogue in the context of local communities

Main Challenges and Needs

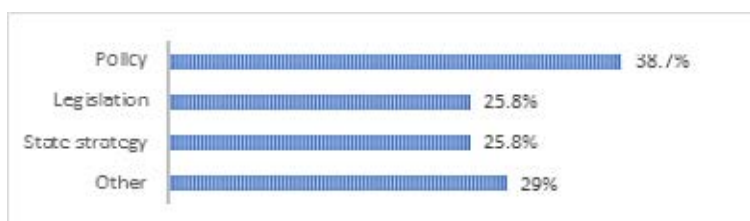
Regarding the challenges and the needs related to the promotion of the intercultural dialogue, GROUP A's point of view is slightly different from that of GROUP B's that works directly in the private and associative field.

GROUP A which is composed of political, catholic, educational, and academic institutions, has nearly always called on the “low dimension”, the individual, the community; while GROUP B has expressed a much more cynical and disillusioned idea toward the individual, this group's representatives trust in the strong action of politics toward the associations, social initiatives, school which is too often left to their destiny. So, we see a group calling on the individual dimension while the other asking for more commitment from the institutions. Examining GROUP A's point of view, we've noticed that there are three words that they've used the most during this topic: lifestyle, ethics, and awareness. According to them, the key to an authentic ICD is inside of us, inside the choices, the way of living, the way we look at the world every single day. This group believes in the action of each singular person independently from a national or international political feedback; they believe in the idea of each person who joins his/her counterpart gives birth to an educational mechanism and a source of consciousness, because as expert no.3 recalled, quoting Pope Francis “To educate a child we need an entire community”.

GROUP B, instead, as we've already specified in the introduction, thinks that real changes can be made by institutions because, as they've declared, nowadays the individual is too much involved in logics made of capitalism, of style, of frivolous thoughts; individuals need a guide that could positively encourage and support their everyday activities. Institutions, from political organisms to schools, are the first educators of feelings and awareness. Without this huge support, it would be difficult to create something concrete, trying only to delimit the damages or providing for what lacks. According to this group the society, nowadays, appears archaic. Prejudice's an enormous shade and the individual needs real support to face it.

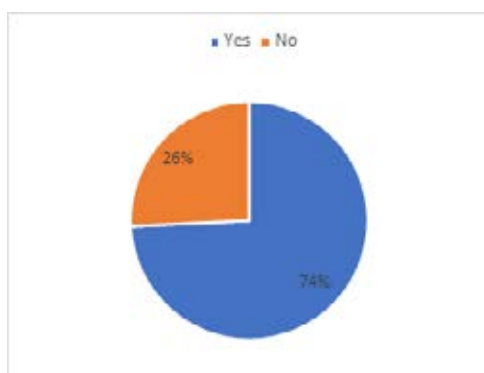
Policy & Practice

The findings are showing that most of the instruments are not so well known (graphic 4). It can be seen that only 38,7% of the respondents are stating that policies are the most known tool to promote intercultural dialogue in Italy, while 25,8% are stating that legislation or state strategy is the adopted instrument in promoting ICD. A relatively high percentage (29%) shows that 22,6% of the respondents do not know any strategy, while 3,2% are listing non-governmental strategies and the other 3,2% tools as cultural programmes and exchanges.

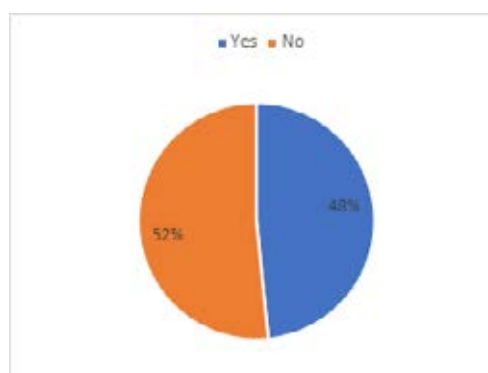


Graphic 4. Policies/legislation/state strategy that promote intercultural dialogue in Italy?

The most common examples given by the respondents are welcoming strategies of immigrants, the action plan on the integration of third-country nationals, cultural mediator, discussion forum, “Muslim Friendly” project launched by Puglia region, intercultural exchanges, the “White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue” and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Graphic 5. Activities, projects and programmes that have favoured the promotion of intercultural dialogue in Italy



Graphic 6. Funding opportunities available for intercultural dialogue related activities?

In graphic 5, it can be seen that a vast majority of the respondents (74,2%) are aware of programmes that promote ICD in Italy. The European Union programmes that are offering exchange opportunities and intercultural activities, such as Erasmus+, have been the most common answer, being followed by the Italian SPRAR Programme, Carta di Leuca (appendix 2), European Volunteering Service, and other intercultural exchanges realized in schools/universities/theaters, etc.

Almost half of the respondents (51,6%) have any knowledge about funding opportunities (graphic 6) related to ICD activities and most of them recognize the European Union Programmes as the main funding institution. A few respondents mentioned national grants such as “Fondo Asilo Migrazione e Integrazione” (FAMI) and some local school actions.

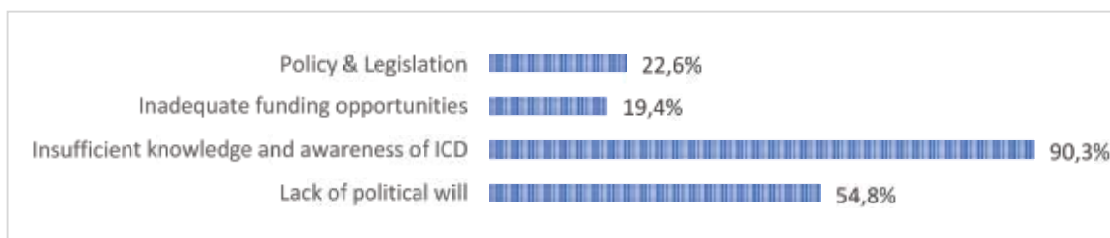
For this section, the qualitative methodology highlighted that both groups have concordant opinions. All the interlocutors had a similar line of reasoning and contemporarily they feel frustrated by the complexity of finding clear political features that could satisfy the main question. Sometimes they have admitted their lack of information related to political issues but at the same time, they've noticed how much difficult it was to answer because that political overview related to the ICD promotion is opalescent, silent or maybe it is so absent that it can't leave any traces. It was noticed a real ignorance and confusion related to these ongoing political issues. Anyway, there was a fil rouge among the interlocutors about the main challenges that politicians should face to encourage the ICD: searching for civil rules oriented to a common and shared cohabitation in a world that is tighter and tighter and always evolving. Talking concretely our experts have enunciated different points that could lead to the realization of an efficient ICD:

- Enduring the sensitizing of different age categories. Institutions should encourage and support. The associations and the individuals should work being sure that there is political support. Where there is an insensitive field, the local municipality should begin programs that encourage and excite the individuals.
- Real and convenient welcoming. Open-mindedness is the keyword both for institutions and so for the individual. Globalization leads us to evolution and receptiveness so it's really important to prepare ourselves to live it in the right way. "If you welcome there won't be a problem, if you create conflicts there will be problems" declared expert no.1.
- Hearty tourism. It is important to create meeting opportunities, that is the only way we have to solve intercultural and peace problems. "Only the confrontation creates knowledge. Knowledge disarms gazes and these disarmed gazes will be able to look toward a shared horizon", said expert no.3. A really good idea is that of walking paths. Let's think about the Via Francigena or the Camino de Santiago and so on. It's fundamental to make the new generations walk.
- Dialogic school. In these institutional contexts, the dialogue is not promoted. Some of the ideas emerged during the interviews, such as creative writing and cultural debates between young people with the mediation of experts. Italian school, unfortunately, has a too Eurocentric approach. It would be fundamental dialoguing with the foreigner. Narrating about Dante but at the same time discovering the Bhagavadgītā since the primary school; discovering the oriental and Greek philosophy; with the other culture we could talk about Petrarca, and with all the classroom we could know more about One thousand and one nights, Borges, Pinter, Mahmood Darwish, and Mandela. It's not useful to keep focusing on the Latin culture, that was essential only when we knew just 20% of the whole world. Nowadays we're aware of the real globe dimension and it could be a missed opportunity that of non-dialoguing with the different cultures that share the same space.
- Operative school. Focused and structured trips with a seasonal frequency; integrating to history the geography and let this one having much more space during the didactic calendar. "Geography, geo-history, geopolitics, I would say that a geography of cultures is an honest perception of our world, an awareness of the unity of different colors and of the freedom that could give an early study of astronomy because it's important to realize the immensity since we're children, the human limit compared to heavens. Astronomy and a seriously-taught geography will remind us that we're all the same" affirmed expert no. 9.

- Always promoting arts and sport. Arts have a fundamental role during the growth and for the enrichment of the individual just like sciences and foreign languages in schools. Theatre “with its healthy intimacy, sometimes conflictual, creates a little utopia among that group of persons that works on the stage; a utopia that is strictly connected with brotherhood because what theatre teaches to you is that if something goes wrong to you well it will go wrong to your colleague too. It has to go right to both, to everybody, to make the thing works. That is dialogue” declared expert no.8. Similarly, sport is a reality where a sense of unity and brotherhood reigns. “Sport, culture, and arts are a dialogue in name of integration; they beat exclusion and bad habits related to the demonization of the “other” that is different from me.” said expert no.10.

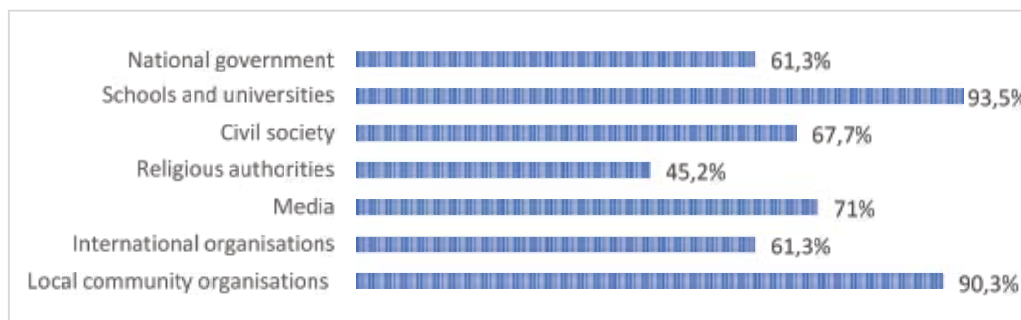
Needs of Local Actors

Country respondents stressed two main challenges to ensure the promotion of ICD in Italy (graphic 7): 1) insufficient knowledge and awareness of Intercultural Dialogue (90,3%) and 2) lack of political will (54,8%). Also, it is visible that the absence of a national policy and legislation (22,6%) and the inadequate funding opportunities (19,4%) are common challenges that weaken intercultural dialogue implementation. This direction could be linked to the lack of political will. So, further research could address this topic. Respondents encourage greater awareness of ICD.



Graphic 7. The main challenges encountered by promoting intercultural dialogue in Italy

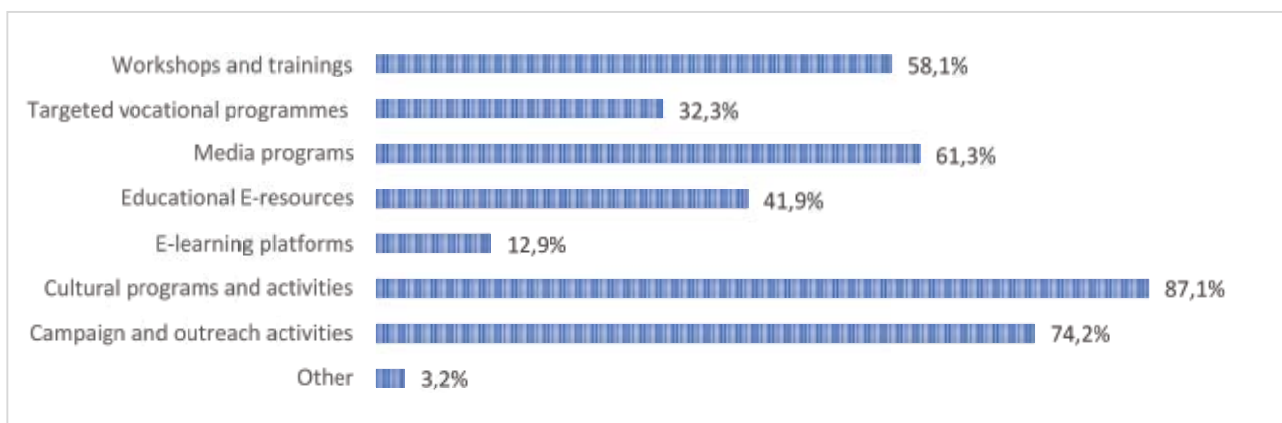
The responses highlight the relevance of educational institutions (93,5%) and local community organizations as key stakeholders in the implementation of intercultural dialogue (graphic 8), which reaffirms the relevant contribution of educational activities in promoting ICD. Also, the role of media (71%) and civil society (67,7%) is highly rated. Lower importance is attributed to the religious authorities (45,2%).



Graphic 8. Stakeholders that can take measures to effectively address these challenges

For a better implementation of the intercultural dialogue in Italy, the vast majority of respondents affirmed that financial and specialized human resources are the most important factors to move on and develop more promoting actions. Also, the responses stress out the participatory issue, so that, better promotion of the ICD could be done if citizens, local actors, and institutions would bring its involvement. So, the responses demonstrate that intercultural dialogue imposes varied factors, actors, and institutions for ensuring its implementation.

Respondents highlight certain activities as effective for promoting ICD (graphic 9). In particular, the cultural programmes (87,1%) and the communication campaigns (74,2%) comprising the media programmes (61,3%) are the crucial promotion mechanisms. The findings are showing that the educational programmes bring a smaller, but yet important contribution, e.g.: workshops and training (58,1%) and targeted vocational programmes (32,3%) are the next mechanisms chosen by the Italian respondents in promoting intercultural dialogue.



Graphic 9. Activities that can contribute best to promoting intercultural dialogue in Italy

The wide range of the investigation conducted allows tracing challenges and needs on a vast social immersion. It has been involved in politics, school, religious institutions, theatre, immigration context, show business, and associationism. All these aspects support the biggest inclusion of voices that constitute a community. These voices, the local actors, push for the following actions:

- For the associationism: Listening and openness from local administrations. Announcing reasonable and accessible competitions limiting all the bureaucratic barriers. Little realities are subjected to inexperience related to bureaucracy, so they always risk being excluded even though the good effort of their intercultural initiatives.
- For the workers of the first reception center. Openness and immediate determination from the school and the religious communities affiliated with the UE.
- For tourism. Believing more in Southern Europe. European South and Mediterranean countries are, moreover, bridled in dishonesty, clientelism, and corruption prejudices. “Let’s say that in general the south, due to a certain scarcity of sources and technologies, remains the last reservoir of humanity. I think

that we should start from this horizon to create a dialogue with the human being. Not by chance, TOGETHER project is coordinated by 5 countries located on the “sea between the lands” of South” said expert no.9.

- For the school. There is an absolute need for a school reform related to the management of the educational offer and the presence of new professional figures. “It is necessary to invest in new figures that should be associated with the existing ones. We need experts specialized in linguistic and cultural mediation; theatre experts, educators specialized in laboratory activities, so we’ll be able to face the educational poverty, the alienation of some guys, the cultural and social awareness. We need professional figures from a sociological, philosophical, and psychological profile in each school.” declared expert no.4. The educational offer should be multifaceted. The didactic calendar should be optimized to guarantee practical activities such as debate, trips, and arts.

- For the theatre- Promoting it with constant subsidies without thinking that it is a hobby, a non-athletic people’s pastime but rather a place where you can develop your mind and your character, a place where empathy and problem solving are constantly stimulated.

Building on the findings, the educational programs are considered the key element in the implementation of the ICD, and this reaffirms the respondents’ high estimation for the contribution of educational actions to promoting intercultural dialogue.



6. Conclusions

The present research evaluated the needs, enabling factors, and best practices with regard to the state of the art in intercultural dialogue awareness and development in Italy.

Intercultural dialogue has a precise definition in strategic documents such as the “White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue”, “UNESCO Convention on cultural diversity”, so instead of offering a clear definition of the concept, the survey and interview respondents related to aspects such as: active listening; mutual understanding; sharing; diversity; open-mindedness; exchange, contact, meeting, and not a contamination; openness towards the Other; respect; direct interaction with people coming from a diverse culture, etc. Intercultural Dialogue has been seen by the respondents as an achievement, a useful moment of gaining results, an enrichment and an exchange of knowledge as long as we let ourselves being amazed by the “Other”.

Dialogue, as an interlocutory act between two or more persons, an exchange of ideas and opinions which aims to create a shared understanding, can't be imposed by a decree, or be a formal compliance. Dialogue is the curiosity and desire to describe and understand both identities (yours and the unknown one). Dialogue is a personal attitude, a habitus that should be acquired according to a specific willing act. Who does it it's not institutions but persons in the flash. The present research has brought into attention that institutions should create the opportunity to guarantee to people the freedom of expression, a linguistic and behaviour code that could connect interlocutors but moreover a “functional horizon”, that is a reasonable answer to all the questions that are at the base of each dialogue (Why dialoguing? Who needs it? When we will see the benefits?). Institutions, from the family dimension to the political organisms, should commit themselves to not hindering all the little seeds that could lead to a will of dialoguing, a dialogue that could oppose closure, indifference, unrestrained ignorance. In a century where populism, nationalism, neo-racism are growing more and more, if we really want to avoid possible conflicts that could be even worse, ICD has to impose itself as the only source capable of imagining and creating a civil cohabitation based on peace and justice for everybody.

It was noticed a real insensibility, ignorance and confusion related to the ongoing political issues. It seemed that there's skepticism regarding their existence or, at any rate, regarding a political commitment. Most of the strategic tools such as policies, legislations, are not so well known (graphic 4). The vast majority of respondents stated that the European Union is always the first step toward something universal and worthy: a pacific, official and institutional intercultural dialogue. The most common answer of actions and funding institutions are the European Union programs and grants.

All the interlocutors had a similar line of reasoning and contemporarily they feel frustrated by the complexity of finding clear political features that could satisfy the main question. Sometimes they have admitted their lack of information related to political issues but at the same time they've noticed how difficult it was to answer, because that political overview related to the ICD promotion is opalescent, silent or maybe it is so absent that it can't leave any traces.

Findings highlight that there is still a lot to do, a high need to raise awareness of the concept, spread the criticality of ICD and open people's minds. What's crystal clear is that education is one of the most powerful instruments. Educational learning and knowing surely has not an immediate effect but it can dig up deep

down, form consciences, create conditions for eyes that could look over their own identity. ICD passes through open-minded consciousness and education could be the key.

The wide range of the investigation conducted, allows to trace challenges and needs on a vast social immersion. It has involved politics, school, religious institution, theatre, immigration context, show business and associationism. All these aspects support the biggest inclusion of voices that constitute a community.



7. Recommendations

As already highlighted, intercultural dialogue needs a synergic commitment fed by all the actors of a community and oriented toward the concrete realization of a dialogue that goes beyond cultural aspects, generating so, a communicative connection that links the human being all over the world. So, according to the three main areas related to the project, the following aspects needs to be improved:

- Growing the general awareness of intercultural dialogue among people; sensitizing more and more all the age categories, supporting all the minimum everyday occasions of intercultural dialogue. A conscious mind is generated by concrete and constant consciousness-raising;
- Recommendations on policy and practices: encourage and support from institutions; all the local actors that invest their forces and time in the promotion of the intercultural dialogue, should work be sure that there'll always be political support, that there'll always be a helpful hand for those individuals that want to spread the concept of intercultural dialogue; creating meeting opportunities that allow people from all over the world to confront themselves, to know each other and so to build a shared vision of the world they want; enhancing the school program trying to involve concepts that give to the students an international overview that could stimulate them a selfless look; arts and sports promotion are fundamental sources for the improvement of intercultural dialogue, as highlighted during the interviews, “sport, culture and arts are a dialogue in name of integration; they beat the exclusion and the bad habit of demonizing the “other” that is different from me”;
- Recommendations on needs of local actors: strategies that could facilitate the promotion of the intercultural dialogue, so talking practically:
 1. More listening and openness from local administrations, ministries, and international organisms toward all the associations, realities, that work on the intercultural dialogue; more easily accessible funds for their projects;
 2. Working on school reform; investing in new professional figures such a linguistic and cultural mediator, theatre expert, figures specialized in laboratory activities so it will be possible to face the educational poverty and to increase the feeling of cultural and social sharing; expanding the geographic horizon of the school program, creating an intellectual connection with the typology of literature, languages, traditions that are completely different from those that the student is used to;
 3. All the institutions, from family to international organisms, should never lose sight of the relevance of intercultural dialogue; they should always find the time to dedicate themselves to this theme, creating opportunities that go from the “intercultural words” of a mother to his son, to the intercultural meeting organized by an international organism.

8. References

- Ambrosini, M. (2015) L'inserimento degli immigrati sul territorio). *TRECCANI*. Available at: https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/l-inserimento-degli-immigrati-sul-territorio_%28L%27Italia-e-le-sue-Regioni%29/ (Accessed 5 February 2021)
- Cesareo V. (2005) *Dopo l'emergenza, verso l'integrazione*, in Ismu (Iniziativa e Studi sulla Multietnicità), *Decimo rapporto sulle migrazioni 2004*. Milano: Franco Angeli. pp. 7-32.
- Council of Europe. (no date) *The concept of Intercultural Dialogue*. Available at: https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/concept_EN.asp#P12_1420 (Accessed: 2 February 2021)
- European Union. (2017) How culture and the arts can promote intercultural dialogue in the context of migratory and refugee crisis. *Vivere e lavorare in Italia*. Available at: <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Documenti-e-ricerche/How%20culture%20and%20the%20arts%20can%20promote%20intercultural%20dialogue%20in%20the%20context%20of%20the%20migratory%20and%20refugee%20crisis.pdf> (Accessed: 2 February 2021)
- Lähdesmäki T., Koistinen AK., Ylönen S.C. (2020) "Introduction: What Is Intercultural Dialogue and Why It Is Needed in Europe Today?". *Intercultural Dialogue in the European Education Policies*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-41517-4_1
- Poglia, E., Mauri-Brusa, M., & Fumasoli, T. (2009) Intercultural dialogue in higher education in Europe. In S. Bergan & J.-P. Restoueix (eds.) *Intercultural dialogue on campus*. France: Council of Europe Publishing. pp. 17–70;
- Puglia, S. S. d. R. (2020). In Evidenza. *Vivere e lavorare in Italia*. January. Available at: <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/leregioni/puglia/Pagine/default.aspx> (Accessed: 5 February 2021);
- Sciortino, G., Colombo, A. (2005) *Un'immigrazione normale*. Bologna: il Mulino, p. 7.
- UNESCO (2018) UNESCO survey on intercultural dialogue, 2017: analysis of findings. *UNESCO Institute of Statistics*. Available at: uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/unesco-survey-intercultural-dialogue-2017-analysis-findings-2018-en.pdf (Accessed: 2 February 2021)
- Viriglio, V. (2019). Per un'Italia interculturale , è già ora. *Avanguardie Migranti*. Available at: <https://www.avanguardiemigranti.it/2019/10/03/per-unitalia-interculturale-e-gia-ora/> (Accessed: 2 February 2021)
- Zanfrini L. (2005), *Il lavoro*, in Ismu (Iniziativa e Studi sulla Multietnicità), *Decimo rapporto sulle migrazioni 2004*, Milano: Franco Angeli. pp. 117-144.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Best Practice Example “Carta di Leuca”

Country ITALY

Implementing Institution De FinibusTerae – Parco Culturale Ecclesiale

Program/Project name Carta di Leuca

Year and duration 2016 until present

URL For more information <https://www.camminidileuca.it/carta-di-leuca/>

General Description / Overview

Carta di Leuca is promoted by the “De Finibus Terrae Foundation” which was created to promote the Salento area (Southern Puglia), located in the center of the Mediterranean Sea. Carta di Leuca is a permanent, intercultural and interreligious laboratory of young people who live on the different shores of the Mediterranean and who mutually commit themselves to build a better future, having at heart the care of the planet, the centrality of the person, and the construction of paths of conviviality, respecting differences. The meaning of Carta di Leuca is in the “conviviality of differences”: the prophecy of Don Tonino Bello indicates a commitment to combat poverty, Mafia, and any other form of illegality and abuse.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

In the heart of summer, Carta di Leuca becomes an international meeting that - through volunteer experiences and walks along the ancient streets - is proposed as a great opportunity to urge everyone’s greater commitment towards Peace.

Days of encounter, reflection, and journey, which are articulated through interventions, testimonies, and common work. The final document becomes an appeal to political decision-makers and governments, to build a future of peace in the Mediterranean.

The call is proclaimed after a silent night march - “Towards dawn of Peace” - which runs from the grave of Don Tonino Bello to Leuca Sanctuary of Saint Mary “De Finibus Terrae”.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Since the first edition, hundreds of young people from the different sides of the Mediterranean have come to Leuca to participate at the Meeting, drafting and proclaiming the “Charter”, but also attending in the various moments of celebration, conviviality, and culture. Days of encounter, reflection, and journey, which are articulated through interventions, testimonies, and common work. The final document - a synthesis of the different cultures, the different sensitivities, and also the different religious faiths to which young people belong - becomes an appeal to political decision-makers and governments, to build a future of peace in the Mediterranean.

OBSTACLES

- Geographical obstacles and poor infrastructures: the public transport services are inadequate and therefore there are many organizational and economic difficulties.
 - Complexity in the management of the event: it is a large event that involves about 30 Mediterranean countries and often with few economic resources.
- Covid-19- In the last year, it has been very difficult to carry out the planned activities. Therefore, online sharing moments have been created, but they are not as effective as the event in presence.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

Since the first edition, in 2016, young people from the different shores of the Mediterranean have come to Leuca and participate in the international meeting. During this event, people are drafting and proclaiming the Peace “Charter”. At the last in presence event, 800 kindergarten kids launched a message of Peace on the Mediterranean by realizing a flashmob called “PeaceMob”.

HOW TOGETHER PROGRAM COULD USE THIS INFORMATION

Carta di Leuca unifies different cultures by bringing together a diversity of Mediterranean people. As expert no.9 said in the interview, the North, which is always more industrialized, tends undeniably toward a growing alienation. So, “Let’s say that in general the south, due to a certain scarcity of sources and technologies remains the last reservoir of humanity. I think that we should start from this horizon to create a dialogue with the human being. Not by chance, TOGETHER project is coordinated by 5 countries located on the “sea between the lands” of South”.

Carta di Leuca is an example of intercultural dialogue and highlights the diversity of Europe.

Appendix 2: Cultural Heritage Example – Language and literature

Country Italy

Name of Given Cultural Heritage Site / Practice / Tradition Language and literature

Field, Subject, Genre, Form Language and literature

URL For more information N/A

General Description / Overview

Multiculturalism is one of the principal characteristics of nowadays classrooms. Students, from different parts of the world and with different backgrounds, found themselves sharing cultural concepts based on the school programme realized by the Education Ministry of the country where they live in. Through the interviews, it was noticed that the Italian educational programme has Eurocentric planning. This doesn't mean that we're in front of a wrong educational approach but, from a content point of view, this could limit the catch-all experience that schools should give to their students. Examining in-depth the concept, the focus could be on one of the subjects that stimulate poetic thoughts and helps to strengthen the relationship between words and human beings. Literature is one of the most important cultural heritage of a country. Poets and novelists of the past are the definers of the linguistic present. Italians feel the influence of their poetry because it represents who they are. The way of being, of talking, is partly closely related to the way of how they are conceptualizing things. Italians, for example, are deeply attached to words made by verbose sentimentalism where things are described up to their soul, sentences, often, are melodious harmonies embellished with sound associations, rhymes, and charming metaphors. The research of beauty and the excessive attention to detail are at the base of the Italian language.

Languages are a relevant component of a community's heritage; they're strictly connected to our identity.

WHY THIS HERITAGE/TRADITION COULD BE PERCEIVED AS A FACILITATOR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AMONG COUNTRIES?

Language allows communication and communication means sharing, that's why studying language and its literature, not only as a subject that is part of the school program but also as a way to learn and share a heritage, could be a facilitator of intercultural dialogue among students that come from different countries. Discovering lesson after lesson what are the main characteristics of the Italian language, learning who are its most important representatives, the Italian student is introduced to a part of his / her heritage while the foreign student is concretely coming into contact with a heritage that is different from his / her. This could be the first relevant step toward the actualization of intercultural dialogue. At this point, what could be decisive, would be introducing to the classroom, the language and the literature that belongs to the foreign students. For example: if a classroom has students coming from Egypt, the teacher should prepare (letting herself be helped by the Egyptian students too) lessons focused on the fundamental characteristics of the Egyptian language, on the principal differences between the Italian and the Egyptian language, on the exponents and the poetry and the prose of the Egyptian language. The foreign students could be

the “language expert” during the lesson, helping the teacher in the explanation and the pronunciation of words or sentences. This linguistic exchange between the students could help to create a real intercultural dialogue strengthened by linguistic sharing. In this way, it is created a dimension where all the cultures are involved and have the opportunity to express their peculiarities. What is remarkable, is that this type of intercultural dialogue is realized in a place where education and instruction are the main goals so the results of the ICD will be even more incisive and effective.



Identifying Intercultural Dialogue Awareness: Lebanon -Dr. Guita Hourani

List of Acronyms

ALF	Anna Lindh Foundation
ASESEM	Association for Social Empowerment & Sustainable Environment in the Mediterranean
CIEL	Euro-Lebanese Intercultural Center
EU	European Union
ICD	Intercultural Dialogue
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LCRN	Lebanon Conflict Resolution Network
LDI	Lebanon Dialogue Initiative
MoC	Ministry of Culture
NDU	Notre Dame University
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USJ	Université St. Joseph

1. Introduction

About TOGETHER

The TOGETHER Project ('TOwards a cultural Understanding of thE oTHER) aims to promote greater co-operation between countries of the European Union and their neighbors in the Middle East and the Black Sea region based upon common European values and the cultures and traditions of participating countries. The project aims to encourage sustainable development and address various challenges by embedding processes of intercultural dialogue in the agendas of local communities. TOGETHER will contribute to empowering local actors, enhancing their intercultural skills and competences and making them 'ambassadors' of cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding.

Innovative training materials, digital tools and content methodologies will be developed to successfully meet the needs of local actors and their communities. More information about this can be found at <http://thetogetherproject.eu>.

TOGETHER is funded by the European Union's 'Erasmus+' Programme and brings together 6 partner institutions from 5 different countries:

CulturePolis	Greece
EWORX S.A.	Greece
A.B. Institute of Entrepreneurship Development Ltd	Cyprus
Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa	Italy
Georgian Arts and Culture Center	Georgia
Lebanese Development Network	Lebanon

About the report

The purpose of the report is to outline the state of the art in intercultural dialogue awareness and development in TOGETHER countries, and to identify the factors that underpin cross-cultural communication and a dynamic space for dialogue in local community settings. More specifically, we seek to provide insights into how intercultural dialogue is understood, identify its main challenges and needs, and understand how it is defined, planned and presented in policy and in practice. It further describes the learning and training needs of local community members.

The report begins with a brief overview of the country's background and its historical context with regard to intercultural dialogue. The next section outlines the methodology used to collect and analyze data, and is followed by findings according to the three main themes of research:

- 1) Intercultural Dialogue: General Understanding;
- 2) Policy & Practice;
- 3) The Needs of Local Actors. The last section contains concluding remarks and recommendations covering all three themes.

2. Executive Summary

There is growing recognition that intercultural dialogue is of imperative to conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and sustainable development. This report sets out the key findings of the first report on ICD in Lebanon. The survey and the in-depth interviews took stock of the current understanding, policies, and activities of ICD in Lebanon. The resulting information permits an initial inventory of country-specific ICD situation that will function as a point of departure for future ICD programs in Lebanon.

Here are summaries of the findings:

- ICD is important to communal peace.
- There is a great deficiency in ICD policies in Lebanon.
- The government is not a main player in ICD.
- NGOs and the CS institutions are concerned with inter-religious dialogue and with de-confessionalizing the system.
- There is no political will to support dialogue in general and ICD in particular.
- Policies are highly politicized in Lebanon due to contentious viewpoints between Muslims and Christians regarding Lebanon's identity, foreign affairs, secularism, women's rights, the rights of the persons with disabilities, among many others. However, these contentions cause frequent sectarian bickering in the political leadership, resulting in political stalemate, inefficiency, and stalled reforms.
- There is a deficiency in ICD competencies even within the NGO/CS sector.

- There is lack of funding and lack of partnerships to enhance ICD in Lebanon.
- Lebanon's constitution protects freedoms of belief, expression, and association, which are good enablers for ICD activities.
- Lebanon is rich in its diversity, cultural heritage, and experience of co-existence among various ethno-religious groups, which can positively contribute to ICD.

3. Country Background

The current republic of Lebanon emerged following the demise of the Ottoman Empire. It became an independent state due to the Versailles Convention in 1919 as a democratic nation-state, a model of freedom and religious coexistence. Its residents are formed of Christians and Muslims of various ethnic identities and religious affiliations. This multi-ethnic and pluri-religious composed society has eighteen officially recognized sects. Each sect is represented in the government's legislative, executive, and judicial authorities based on a quota system. Each sect has its own personal status laws and courts. Although Arabic is the official language of the republic, Armenian, Syriac, Assyrian, Chaldean, Kurmanji, Turkish, Greek, and Hebrew languages are spoken by the Lebanese descendants of these ancient people. French and English are common languages of education and communication.

Lebanon is a founding and active member of the League of Arab States and abides by its pacts and covenants. Lebanon is also a founding and active member of the United Nations Organization and abides by its covenants and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is a parliamentary democratic republic based on respect for public liberties, especially the freedom of opinion and belief, and respect for social justice and equality of rights and duties among all citizens without discrimination.

The predominant culture, which was fundamentally conservative and long-standing Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions remain deeply ingrained in social norms. However, many practices and lifestyles also reflect Western influences, particularly European due to proximity, historical relations, and trade and cultural exchange. Inherently, the Lebanese have a marked degree of adaptability to pluralistic and multicultural societies stemming from historical experiences, as well as the diversity of its own composition. This diversity, however, has been a source of richness and a cause for conflicts.

Although, the Lebanese political system is founded on a secular constitution that emphasizes principles of freedoms particularly that of belief, equality, fairness, and neutrality, the governing system is based on a power-sharing arrangement in which the country's major ethno-religious communities are formally represented in the official power structure and are prerequisites for ensuring the proper functioning of state institutions. However, the constitution equally obliges the state to surrender key jurisdiction in the realm of personal status laws and education to the country's eighteen confessions.... As such, secularization taken as the differentiation of the legislative framework from religious institutions and norms- remains incomplete in Lebanon" (Farha, 2015). This system is labelled "political confessionalism" that produces a dual governance that to function it requires incessant bargaining among members of the country's political elite through what has been termed "confessional consociationalism." Consociational democracy "is a classification applied to those countries with deep ethnic, class, religious, linguistic and/or ideological divides" (Bordenkircher, 2015).

Lebanese are and continue to be “collectivistic” in their loyalty; they perceive themselves to be members of ‘groups.’ Their strongest loyalty is for their family, then religion or ethnic group, political party or political leader, and finally Lebanon as a nation. In other words, Lebanese identify themselves on the basis of their sects/communal identity and not on the basis of a common Lebanese identity. This distinction is critical. Within the Lebanese political structure, religion plays an important role, not primarily as a spiritual force, but as a basic structure of society (Haddad, 2002). These “collectivistic” loyalty and communal identity have “prevented these ethno-religious groups from becoming ‘a people’ and consequently from establishing a viable state” which results in protracted conflicts that bring the state to the verge of collapse and sparks “existential questions about its viability” (Khashan, 1992).

At each conflict’s conjuncture, a new agreement is devised through negotiation and compromise sponsored by foreign powers. However, these agreements failed to: i) prevent future conflicts; ii) secure economic and social justice; iii) bring about national reconciliation and peace, and iii) produce consensual narrative about Lebanon’s identity and role. This failure was the result of dodging dialogue on the fundamental differences for the social conflicts and polarizations between the Muslims and Christians that are inherently related to their opposing views on Lebanon (e.g. its identity, neutrality, role in the Middle East and the world, and its international relations’ policies). Consequently, Lebanon continues to experience protracted conflicts that plague every aspect of its and its populations’ being.

Following the 1975–989 civil war, a plethora of civil society groups for reconciliation emerged, such as the Lebanon Conflict Resolution Network (LCRN), the Permanent Peace Movement, the Institute for Islamic-Christian Studies, and UMAM Documentation and Research, The Islamic-Christian National Dialogue Committee, among others. An important initiative was also formed entitled “La rencontre Islamo-Chrétienne autour de Marie” which includes the Lebanese Committee for the Feast of the Annunciation of Mary (2002) that gathered Christians and Muslims around the Feast through various prayer events and other celebrations (Fahed 2020) (See best practice in Appendix B).

On the national political level, between 2008 and 2014 President Michel Suleiman led the National Dialogue Conference, which made public in 2012 the adoption of the Baabda Declaration by the participants including Hezbollah. The Baabda Declaration called for disassociating Lebanon from the turmoil in Syria and of keeping Lebanon away from “regional and international conflicts and sparing it the negative repercussions of regional tensions and crises.” (Wählich 2017). In 2013, Hezbollah officials renounced the declaration and all national dialogue ceased.

These various inter-faith dialogues, which are part of “Intercultural Dialogue,” were addressing one of the conflicts in Lebanon, neglecting other equally important conflicts such as the intra-faith dialogue between disputed Shiites and Sunnis, or inter-ethnic dialogue between Lebanese particularly the Sunnis and the Lebanese Sunni Kurds and the Sunnis and the Lebanese Sunni Turkmens, among others.

Despite the aforementioned, most Lebanese believe that interreligious dialogue and reconciliation as a “vocation of Lebanon” and Lebanon as an “interreligious laboratory of the Mediterranean,” and echo the words of Pope John Paul II that Lebanon is “Lebanon is more than a country, it is a message of freedom and an example of pluralism for East and West alike” (Noun 2011).

4. The Study Methodology

A mixed-method research was conducted to define the needs of intercultural dialogue in Lebanon and understand how it is planned and presented in policy and practice. Our research instruments encompassed

- 1) desk-based research;
- 2) a survey and
- 3) in-depth interviews.

Our target group for the survey and in-depth interviews, was limited to professionals working in the field, including governmental and non-governmental organizations and educational and cultural institutions.

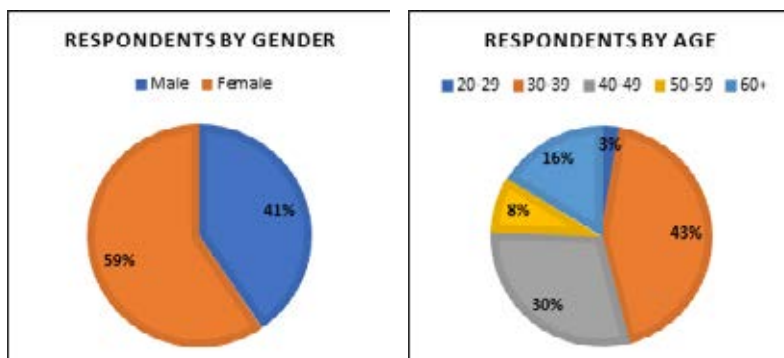
Desk-based research

For the desk-based research we analysed various legislative acts, policy documents and reports by civil society and international organizations. These included Culture in Lebanon by 2020 (2016), Lebanon; Martin Wählisch, The Lebanese National Dialogue (2017), “What Cultural Policies?” (2017); Multiculturalism and Democracy: Lebanon a Case Study (2010); John Paul II, the “saviour” of Lebanon’s unity (2011); Cultural diversity and sectarian attitudes in post-war Lebanon (2002); Lebanon in Cultural Policies in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia (2010; and Lebanon Models Interreligious Dialogue through the Feast of the Annunciation (2020) (for full list see Reference).

Survey

The survey was constructed around three main themes: 1) Understanding Intercultural Dialogue; 2) Policy and Practice; and 3) Identifying the Needs of Local Actors for Promoting ICD. The survey was developed through an online platform and distributed to the government, civil society and local community organizations. The survey included single select multiple choices, multi select multiple choices, and close ended questions, was keyed in Microsoft Forms and the link was distributed via LDN online platform, as well as sent via email to a sample of more than 600 local and international organizations operating in Lebanon. The 600 organizations were selected using the following keywords to identify their intervention sectors: Intercultural dialogue, citizenship, human rights, conflict resolution, democracy and civic rights, youth, culture, gender, advocacy and awareness, refugees, peace, ethics, and social and cultural development.

A total of 37 respondents filled out the on-line questionnaire. The respondents were mainly presidents or officials of various NGOs as well as activists in the field of ICD. The data were then analysed through Excel and presented in a visual format. Respondents were 60% female vs 40% male, most of whom (62.1%) had a master’s degree and whose age ranged between 20 and 60+ (see figures 1 & 2). The survey occurred in December 2020.



In-depth interviews

Ten in-depth interviews were completed with government officials, INGOs, NGOs, policy analysts, and beneficiaries (See list in Appendix A). In most cases, technology has made it easier for us to conduct our in-depth interviews through video-calling tools (e.g., Skype, Zoom, and WhatsApp). Some interviewees requested to answer the questions in writing their own convenience, a request that was accorded to them

Limitations

Much qualitative research habitually depends on face-to-face interaction for data collection through interviews and field work. However, this limitation, which has become a “new normal,” i.e., conducting research during COVID-19 pandemic, made us realize that going to the field ourselves is not a feasible option, consequently we had to rely on online interviews which, although a good substitute, have prevented us from contextualizing the interviewees through subtle visual and non-verbal clues that are possible through a face-to-face scenario. Another limitation was the lack of replies of many of the targeted groups due to long lockdown, travel, or infection with COVID-19. A third limitation was the lack of response of some public officials or requesting official letters to be sent through the bureaucratic channels. The latter is a known tactic to veteran researchers that mean that the public official does not want to be interviewed nor want to delegate someone else to replace him/her.

Although we were faced with these limitations, we feel confident that, given the timeframe to accomplish the fieldwork, the issues were addressed professionally and alternatives were found with minimum impact on the quality of the data collection.



5. Key Findings

This report sets out the key findings of a survey and of in-depth interviews on intercultural dialogue conducted in Lebanon. The survey and the in-depth interviews take stock of the current General Understanding, Policy & Practice, and Needs of Local Actors of main stakeholders in this field. The resulting information permits an initial inventory of country-specific intercultural dialogue environment and policies that will function as a point of analysis to inform future projects and activities as well as policymaking.

The questionnaire for the survey was distributed to more than 600 NGOs and practitioners to obtain 30 answers. The targeted group resulted in 37 answers (30 answers were from NGOs and civil society organizations, three from private institutions, two from INGOs, one from government agency, and one from local community organization) within the time-frame set for the survey.

The survey consisted of 18 quantitative and qualitative questions. The in-depth interviews were conducted with two government officials, two INGOs, two policy/academics experts, and four local NGOs. The interviews were based on semi-structured questionnaire.

General Knowledge/Awareness of Intercultural Dialogue: Key Findings

ICD is perceived as essential tool for building peaceful and cohesive societies. Vast majority of our respondents and interviews understood ICD as exchange between people from different cultures, leading to also mutual understanding and conflict resolution.

- ICD helps widen our site of vision, our way of thinking, our mindset, our know-how, our knowledge and our discoveries of the other.
- ICD starts with the will to understand others' perspectives and to engage in active listening to avoid misconception and to promote peace.
- ICD whether inter or intra-groups, whether it is about politics, religion, nationality, or ethnicity reveals gaps in practices, needs and aspirations and aid in finding ways and means of reconciliation among people.
- ICD attempts to find common ground, to foster understanding and respect among various groups.
- ICD is a space and a process of decreasing conflict and increase understanding and empathy between groups internationally and intra-nationally.
- ICD helps people discover each other's cultures, respect their differences and appreciate what these differences bring to their societies and humanity.
- ICD is an open dialogue between diverse groups who are willing to discover each other, understand each other's differences without judgment or discrimination and to achieve social cohesion, stability, positively, and peace.
- ICD is an exchange between people of different cultures that leads to mutual understanding and conflict resolution.

The in-depth interviews yielded several definitions of ICD, including the following:

- Expert 1
 - Intercultural dialogue “is an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that lead to a deeper understanding of the other’s global perception.”

- Expert 2
 - Intercultural dialogue is a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange or interaction between individuals, groups, and organizations with different cultural backgrounds or world views. Its aims are to develop a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices; to increase participation and the freedom and ability to make choices; to foster equality, and to enhance creative processes.

- Expert 3
 - Intercultural dialogue is a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange or interaction between individuals, groups, and organizations with different cultural backgrounds or world views. Its aims are to develop a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices; to increase participation and the freedom and ability to make choices; to foster equality, and to enhance creative processes.

- Expert 4
 - Intercultural Dialogue is a simple concept about the how to understand the other, how do you accept the other, how do you build the lineation with the “other.”

Main challenges: Key findings

Insufficient knowledge was indicated as the main challenge of ICD in Lebanon followed by inadequate funding, lack of political will, challenges related to policy and legislation, and lack of intercultural skills without which the simplest communication sometimes proves impossible.



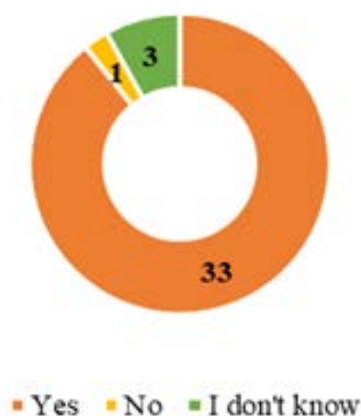
Correspondingly, the interviewees indicated more fundamental challenges to ICD in Lebanon including the following:

- Expert 1
 - The main challenge is agreeing on the identity of Lebanon and the country’s commitment to the signed conventions of the United Nations and the Arab League agreements, particularly the International Charter of Human Rights.
- Expert 2
 - There exist many challenges for ICD in Lebanon mainly lack of engagement and mindless disciples of religious and clannish affiliations.
- Expert 3
 - Religious affiliation, particularly concerning personal status laws.
- Expert 4
 - One of the challenges is the propaganda promoted in the media that says the “other” is an enemy and that we should protect ourselves from that enemy and that there is no reality outside our own sectarian community. Another challenge is finding ways to understand who is the “other.”
- Expert 5
 - The main challenge is first to recognize the “others” particularly our diverse compatriots in the country.
- Expert 6
 - The main challenges are Enable people to step out of their comfort zone, increasing solidarity, and securing funding.
- Expert 7
 - The main challenges are external and internal political games and the use of communitarianism in national political affairs.

Expected impact of ICD on the country’s sustainable development goals (SDG): Key findings

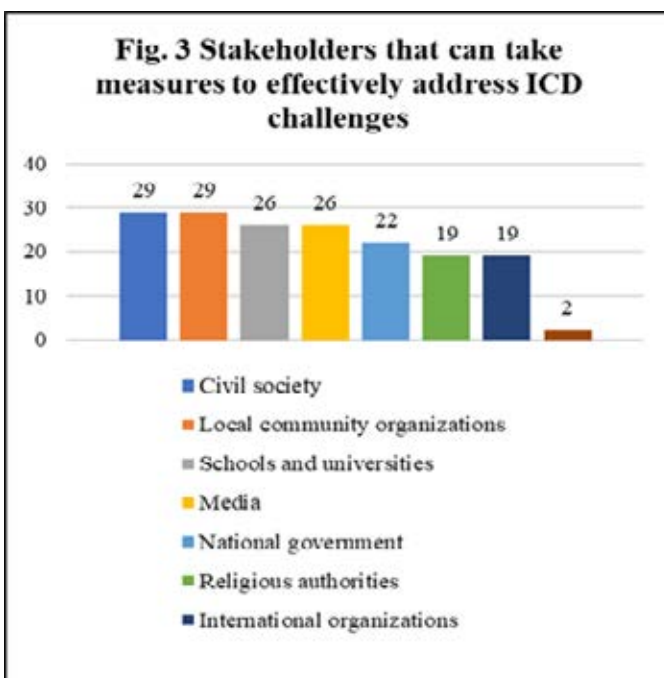
Ninety percent of the respondents (90%) believe that ICD will have a positive impact on the country’s sustainable development. Only 1% believe that ICD will not have any impact on the country’s sustainable development, while 3% did not know.

Fig. 2 Impact of ICD on SDGs



Respectively, the interviewees addressed this question from various perspectives as shown here:

- Expert 1
 - ICD will positively impact the country’s SDGs if there is an agreement on a social contract, respect of the rule of law, enactment and implementation of policies, and the development of Human security framework.
- Expert 2
 - ICD will facilitate cooperation between various people and strengthen their solidarity to achieve sustainable developmental goals that would benefit all.
- Expert 3
 - ICD will bring in sustainable peace and consequently.
- Expert 4
 - ICD is key to considering diversity and richness as a tool for achieving sustainable development. ICD can help through enhancing networking among civil society organizations and in empowering young people with critical thinking and debating skills.
- Expert 5
 - ICD and sustainable development are codependent. There will be no sustainable development without ICD to achieve peace and stability and no durable ICD without equitable development.

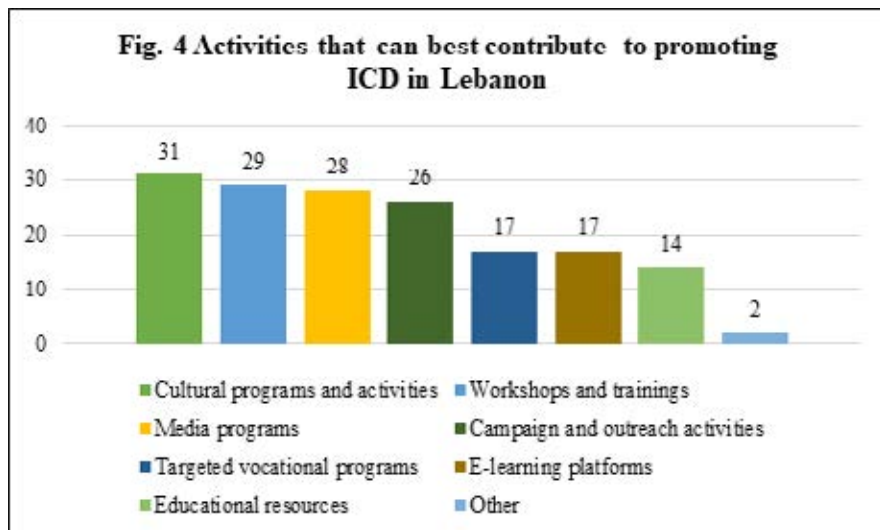


Stakeholders that can take measures to effectively address ICD challenges: Key findings

The majority of the respondents selected civil society institutions and local community organizations as the main stakeholders that can take measures to effectively address ICD challenges followed by schools and universities and the media. Interestingly enough the national government and the religious authorities were ranked fifth and sixth although both have fundamental roles in ICD, the former in terms of policies and the latter in terms of promoting tolerance.

Activities that can best contribute to promoting ICD in Lebanon: Key findings

The Lebanese respondents indicated that cultural programs and activities, workshops and training, media program, and campaign and outreach activities are the most suitable approaches to best contribute to promoting ICD in Lebanon.



Opportunities that ICD provide for Lebanon: Key findings

The majority of the Lebanese respondents designated the promotion of tolerance and openness as the most important opportunity that ICD can provide for Lebanon followed by enhancing respect for human rights, enhancing social reconciliation, improving social inclusion, ensuring integration of refugees and migrants, and preventing violent extremism.

The role of cultural heritage in promoting intercultural dialogue: Key findings

Twenty-two percent (22%) of the respondents agreed that cultural heritage embodies the identity of a specific community and therefore it is an opportunity to learn about its history and culture. Only 11% consented that cultural heritage represents universal values common among people and communities of different backgrounds.

In the same vein, some interviewees conveyed the following views on the role of cultural heritage in promoting ICD:

- Expert 1
 - Cultural heritage is the basis for difference, consequently it is the gateway to reaching peace, accepting the other and interacting with him.
- Expert 2
 - Cultural heritage can be a source and occasion to promote contact, exchange, and reciprocity between different stakeholders and the public. This occasion is particularly true when people engaging with heritage are not considered passive consumers but as creators, distributors, and decision-makers.
- Expert 3
 - Using the arts and media as tools to reach out to large audiences, easily communicate messages with a great impact, communicate beyond language barriers and across different sectors with people from different countries, and involving artists and media professionals in the conversation about intercultural dialogue.

Policies and Practices: Key findings

There is no intercultural dialogue policy, nor an actual cultural policy in Lebanon if one refers to state laws, regulations, and strategies, although culture constitutes an undisputable rich reality in the country. All 37 respondents to our survey said that they do not know of any ICD policies in Lebanon. One of the survey respondents wrote that “Lebanon does not have any plan, spaces or attempts to foster intercultural dialogue within its borders [except] for the infrequent summits to discuss religious tolerance and unity which seen mostly as futile [exercise] at best or manipulative [one] at worst. Certainly, some attempts are present within civil society but virtually none exist on the government level in any meaningful capacity.”

Since IDC is not mentioned anywhere, the report addresses cultural life in the country which is “a product of diversity, immigration, conflicts and the aptitude of the Lebanese people for the initiation, adaptation, openness, home economics and adjustment” (Hamadi and Azar 2010).

The lack of policies is rooted in disagreement between the two major groups in Lebanon, i.e. the Christians and the Muslims concerning “the dimensions of the Lebanese civilization and its sources as well as the Lebanese history and its components” (Hamadi and Azar 2010). Consequently, formulating cultural policies, be it inter-cultural or cultural, in Lebanon is a complicated process as it is a source of contention among the two main constituents of Lebanon.

Jeremy Ahearne indicates that, in cultural policy research, researchers “explore those areas where policies (strategic courses of action) and cultures (embodied systems of attitudes and values) collide and intersect” (Ahearne 2009). He distinguishes between explicit and implicit cultural policies (Ahearne 2009) – explicit policies do not only include cultural policies designated as such by the state, but also those created by civil society actors, and implicit policies do not only include political strategies, but also practices. Here the actors involved are related to the state, the economy/the market, civil society, and foreign cultural policies or cultural diplomacy.

The conventional organ for explicit cultural policies is the Ministry of Culture (MOC) which became independent of the Ministry of Higher Education in 2000. Its main responsibility is to devise a general cultural policy and to manage its implementation. In effect, there is neither an all-encompassing cultural policy nor a vision or a detailed plan or action by this ministry (Maltzahn 2017). MOC receives scarcely 2 million US dollars, of which a major part is devoted to the payroll, thus MOC lacks funding to attain its mandate.

Lebanon joined UNESCO in 1946 as a member and has currently a permanent delegation that operates as the regional office. UNESCO cooperates with the Ministry of Culture in its efforts to define overall cultural policies based on the concepts of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and related statistics, as well as in further enhancing tangible and intangible heritage safeguarding and protection and promoting cultural industries.

UNESCO has supported various institutions and activities including but not limited to the “Chaire UNESCO d’études comparées des religions, de la médiation et du dialogue” at the Université St. Joseph (USJ) in Beirut. Created in 2003, with the support of the regional office of UNESCO (Beirut) and the division of cultural policies and intercultural dialogue of UNESCO (Paris). Two centres are attached to the Chaire i)

the Euro-Lebanese Intercultural Center (CIEL) which includes Modules in intercultural mediation and an observatory of intercultural dialogue and Professional Mediation Center.

The International Center for Human Sciences which was founded in 2000 under the auspices of UNESCO aims to study the contemporary man and his relationship with nature and society, in addition to a series of questions, related to development, dialogue, and the culture of peace in the world.

As mentioned previously, international and local actors secure local and international funding to promote their objectives through various programs and activities despite the absence of policies or strategies. Arcenciel, for, example partnered with the European Union (EU) in 2016 under the name of “Sawa: together for a better future” to promote intercultural dialogue between 400 Lebanese and Syrian youths in Beirut, the Beqaa, and North Lebanon. Lebanon Dialogue Initiative (LDI) was founded as a civil society movement supported by various academic, business, and civil society organizations, in particular, by Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU). LDI calls for the designation of Lebanon as a universal Land of Dialogue and to establish an international center for dialogue in Lebanon in response to contemporary local, national and international disputes by contributing to conflict reduction, reconciliation, social justice, and peacebuilding. It held several international forums on the dispute between Serbia and Kosovo and the conflict in Northern Ireland. Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) encourages intercultural dialogue through various activities and initiatives including the Association for Social Empowerment & Sustainable Environment in the Mediterranean (ASESEM) which works towards a more engaged society and a sustainable environment. ALF organizes Euro-Mediterranean Forum on Intercultural Dialogue where civil society organizations from tens of countries tackle the unprecedented challenges in the Mediterranean region, particularly those affecting youth – unemployment, radicalization, migration – by fostering dialogue among the younger generations and improving intercultural relations.

As underscored, inter-religious dialogue is the component of inter-cultural dialogue that is most prevalent in Lebanon. It takes place on the level of communities and the level of trans-religious organizations. The commitment to interreligious dialogue among non-governmental actors takes place in several ways. In her Ph.D. dissertation, Pamela Chrabieh (2015) identified three dialogues: spiritual dialogue, the dialogue of works/cooperation, and dialogue of life or natural dialogue.

1. The spiritual dialogue, including the experience of interfaith prayer, meditation, and spiritual sharing. This is embodied in the common prayer annual meeting between Christians and Muslims at the Notre-Dame de Jamhour college every March 25 on the Feast of the Annunciation. This day became officially the national Islamic-Christian day in Lebanon and a symbol of reconciliation and conviviality.

2. The dialogue of works or cooperation, that is to say, the social and ethical dialogue which is an opportunity to ask how to act together in various ethical issues and how to think about issues society of globalization, genetics, ecology, freedom of expression, human rights, the status of women, etc. This dialogue is transformative because it consists of working with people from other traditions religious to make Lebanon a place where one can live in justice and peace. Islamo-Christian associations were thus founded in Lebanon such as the Union for the Protection of Childhood, the Arab Group for Dialogue between Christians and Muslims, Nahwa al-Muwatiniya, Amamo5, Laique Pride, Nasawiya, Helem, Offer-Joy, KAFA, and Women in Front among many others.

3. **The dialogue of life or the natural dialogue** is the one that takes place between Lebanese people, in communities, neighbourhoods, schools, and universities, in workplaces, friendships, interfaith marriages, and the like. It is more than just coexistence, it is developing rich and multiple relationships.

Although these non-governmental actors are achieving the goals of their programs and activities, the complicated and unstable political climate in the country harms its public life and intercultural dialogue. This climate is fuelled by

- i) some politicians use religion, sectarianism, ethnicity, regionalism, or nationality to instigate acrimonious feelings,
- ii) some religious figures incite hatred, hostility, and violence,
- and iii) deteriorated economy that makes people easy preys to fundamentalist ideologies, envy, and hostility.

Needs of local actors to advance ICD in Lebanon: Key findings

The participants in the survey and the in-depth interviews with local actors have identified many internal and external needs to advance ICD in Lebanon. The needs are outlined below:

Internal Aspect of Institutions

- Institutions need training/capacity building in ICD.
- Institutions need training in outcome assessment.
- Institutions need training in media and social media tools for ICD.
- Lack of professionals and experts in ICD is needed.
- Need support in curriculum development
- Assistance in developing awareness campaigns.
- Help in developing internal ICD policies
- Assistance for developing training material & concepts to apply.
- Employees are in ICD need interaction with foreign counterparts to share experience and to learn about best practices.

External Aspect of Institutions

- National ICD policy is needed.
- Increased funding opportunities for ICD related programs and projects to funding.
- Difficulty in finding partners.
- Increase media coverage on ICD and related issues.
- Online dialogues.
- Assistance in developing and implementing a national ICD road map
- Making available neutral and safe spaces to hold dialogue.
- Effectively engage the youth in ICD through various means (e.g. policies, training, activities, programs, etc.).
- Involve the communities in ICD through various means (e.g. policies, training, programs, developmental projects, etc.).

Coordination and cooperation among stakeholders (e.g. between governmental, civil society, and local community members.

- An easily-accessible data bank of information and statistics relating to intercultural dialogue

- Attract volunteers to work in ICD by creating programs to involve them in social media, offer them internships, and leverage young influencers, among others.
- Coordination and cooperation from other stakeholders in the community.

6. Conclusions

This report is the first attempt at assessing ICD in Lebanon. Although it is not an exhaustive work, the following conclusion can be drawn:

- ICD was valued by professionals, activists, and academics especially in a complex environment such as the one of Lebanon which suffers from protracted social conflicts fuelled by sectarianism.
- ICD was not fully understood by professionals, activists, academics, and the public in terms of its breadth, components, tools, techniques, etc.
- ICD was underscored as a means to promote tolerance and enhance respect among others.
- ICD policies are non-existing in Lebanon although the constitution of the country protects freedoms and diversity.
- ICD is being superficially addressed by non-state actors (e.g. NGOs, INGOs, CSs).
- ICD in Lebanon is limited to inter-religious dialogue with minimal activities involving dialogue between citizens and refugees.
- There is a lack of ICD competencies in the country.
- Politicians use sectarianism and regionalism to fuel conflicts between the diverse groups of the Lebanese population.
- There is an absence of any political will to create an enabling environment for effective ICD to contribute to communal peace, equality, prosperity.
- Scarcity in funding for ICD projects leads to a lack of sustainability of such projects to achieve their key outcomes.
- Very few activities concentrate on ICD, while the majority of the activities are concerned with either changing the sectarian system in Lebanon or with Islamo-Christian dialogue.

7. Recommendations

The findings underscore the importance of supporting ICD in Lebanon through four tracks:

Track I: Developing training programs to create a body of competent people in ICD, particularly at the level of NGOs and CSs.

Track II: Work with the government to develop ICD policies.

Track III: Provide funding for effective programs and projects that can make fundamental changes in regions where ICD is most needed.

Track IV: Use the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) as a model to create similar in-country programs, where two or more classrooms work together to promote ICD. Although COIL links the classrooms of two or more educational institutions in two countries to promote students' cultural understanding and collaboration it could be emulated to promote ICD inside a country.

8. References

Agenda Culturel (2016) Culture In Lebanon By 2020, Lebanon.

Eric Bordenkircher (2015) Kings, Queens, Rooks and Pawns: Deciphering Lebanon's Political Chessboard, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.

Fady Noun (2011) John Paul II, the "saviour" of Lebanon's unity, AsiaNew.it.

Hans G. Niemeyer (2004) The Phoenicians and the Birth of a Multinational Mediterranean Society," in Commerce and Monetary Systems in the Ancient World, ed. Robert Rollinger and Christoph Ulf (Stuttgart: Franz Stienen Verlag, 2004), 246, 250.

Hilal Khashan (1992) Inside The Lebanese Confessional Mind. Lanham: University of America Press.

Jeremy Ahearne (2009) Cultural Policy Explicit and Implicit: A Distinction and Some Uses, International Journal of Cultural Policy 15.2 (2009): 141-53.

John C. Scot (2018) The Phoenicians and the Formation of the Western World, Comparative Civilizations Review, Vol. 78, Issue 78.

Khalil Gebara (2018) Pluralism in Lebanese Politics: Formalizing the Informal Senate, Issue Brief, Baker Institute for Public Policy, Rice University, USA.

Mark Farha (2015) Stumbling Blocks to the Secularization of Personal Status Laws in the Lebanese Republic (1926-2013), Arab Law Quarterly, Volume 29, Issue 1, 31-55.

Martin Wählisch (2017) The Lebanese National Dialogue, Berghof Foundation.

Nadia von Maltzahn (2017) "What Cultural Policies?" Explicit and Implicit Cultural Policies in Lebanon, Middle East - Topics & Arguments, Bd. 7, January 2017, S. 75-84.

Nizar Abdel-Kader (20210) Multiculturalism and Democracy: Lebanon a Case Study, Lebanese Army, Lebanon.

Nour Farra Haddad (2014) Dismantling Religious Boundaries by Sharing the Baraka through Pilgrimages in Lebanon, Journal of the British Association for the Study of Religion, Diskus 15 (2013): 54-73.

Simon Haddad (2002) Cultural diversity and sectarian attitudes in post-war Lebanon, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, Vol. 28, No. 2: 291-306.

Wafaa Hamadi and Rita Azar (2010) Lebanon in Cultural Policies in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia, Amsterdam: Boekmanstudies, Culture Resource (Al Mawred Al Thaqafy) and European Cultural Foundation.

Ziad Fahed (2020) Lebanon Models Interreligious Dialogue through the Feast of the Annunciation, Journal of Ecumenical Studies, Volume 55, Number 3, Summer.

9. Appendices

Appendix A: List of in-depth interview participants

Organization

Expert and Advisor on Public Policies
Lebanese Foundation for Permanent Civil Peace (LFPCP)
Tammuz Centre for studies and citizenship Training
Ministry of Labour
Leadership for Sustainable Development (LSD)
Center for Educational Research & Development (CRDP)
Arcenciel
Anna Lindh Foundation.
Civil Society Table of Dialogue
La rencontre Islamo-Chrétienne autour de Marie

Types

Public Policy Analyst
Local NGO
Local NGO
Government
Local NGO
Government
Beneficiary NGO
INGO
Civil society
Activist

Appendix B: Best Practice Example

Country Lebanon

Implementing Institution “La rencontre Islamo-Chrétienne autour de Marie” is an initiative

Program/Project name The Lebanese Committee for the Feast of the Annunciation of Mary gather Christians and Muslims around the Feast through various prayer events and other celebrations.

Year and duration One day per year

URL For more information N/A

General Description / Overview

This unique status given to Mary in the Qur’an/Koran was considered by some Muslim scholars to be a well-founded theological principle to promote the Feast of the Annunciation as a Muslim-Christian celebration.

Summary of Results

This celebration has led Prime Minister Saad Hariri to declare in 2010 March 25 as a national holiday for Christian-Muslim celebration. The event was replicated in different cities outside Lebanon (Poland, France, etc.)

Obstacles

Other Muslim scholars are not as positive regarding the equality of the People of the Book (i.e. the Jews and the Christians) with Muslims in their worship and beliefs and, therefore, do not adhere to this celebration and reject it. Threats come from radical Muslims for the involvement of the moderate Muslim religious leaders in this celebration. In parallel, some radical Christians have also accused this celebration of “stealing their Annunciation” holiday and diverting it.

Success Criteria

Moderate Muslims to continue to celebrate the feast along with their Christian compatriots.

HOW TOGETHER PROGRAM COULD USE THIS INFORMATION

Having this celebration become universal.

Appendix C: Cultural Heritage Example

Country Lebanon

Name of Given Cultural Heritage Site / Practice / Tradition Our Lady of Lebanon

Field, Subject, Genre, Form National religious-cultural site: Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine

URL For more information <http://ololb.org/>

General Description / Overview

The Shrine for Our Lady of Lebanon – Harissa is located 26 kilometers from the capital, Beirut, Mount Harissa overlooks the Bay of Jounieh, where a small church was built. The shrine’s origins trace to 1904 when Maronite Patriarch Elias El-Hoyek and the Vatican nuncio to Lebanon decided to commission a token of devotion to Mary on the 50th anniversary of the dogmatic proclamation of the Immaculate Conception. The statue, which was cast in France, was consecrated in May 1908. The idea to build the shrine was a product of the celebration of the jubilee of the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Pope Pius IX’s Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, expressing the love of Lebanon by the Virgin Mary.

Since then the small town of Harissa has become one of the most important Christian pilgrimage sites in the East. It is the destination of approximately two million visitors each year, representing different sects (Druze, Shiites, Sunnis, Maronites, etc.), faiths (Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhist, Hindu, etc.), and nationalities (Lebanese, Iranians, Sri Lankans, Indians, Philippino/a, Ethiopian, Bengalese, Americans, Brazilians, etc.).

Some Muslims come to Harissa for tourism to enjoy the spectacular views from the Shrine’s 575-meter summit overlooking the Bay of Jounieh on the Mediterranean Sea, and others come on individual votive visits.

Harissa, among others, is a site of ethno-religious devotion to Christians and some Muslims. To Muslims, Mary is known in Arabic as “Seidtna Maryam”, Our Lady Mary as she is the most mentioned woman in the Holy Quran.

Haddad relates that “Popular pilgrimages have spread beyond their conventional Christian and Muslim forms, demonstrating the people’s piety and their need to reconcile their temporal life with their spiritual one. In contrast with the codified religiosity of the mosque and the church, believers have developed a far less constrained religiosity, which some characterize as “popular” through the “ziyârât” (visits to religious sites, to saints) (Haddad, 2013).

During the Marian month of May, the shrine receives about one million visitors.

WHY THIS HERITAGE/TRADITION COULD BE PERCEIVED AS A FACILITATOR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AMONG COUNTRIES?

According to Haddad, “Saint worship and shared pilgrimages seem to have contributed to maintaining a “dialogue of the faithful”, even between different religious groups, which is based upon shared figures of sainthood” (Haddad, 2013).

Such dialogue was still observed, to the extent possible, even during the Civil War (1975-1990). Despite intermittent episodes of violence between Muslims and Christians, Lebanese of both faiths share cultural traits and continue to believe in co-existence.

Consequently, these religious sites, which offer spiritual, relaxed, and serene atmosphere for encounter, exposure, and silent dialogue, can be utilized for effective intercultural dialogue.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED HERE THAT THERE ARE MANY SITES IN LEBANON THAT CAN BE SITES FOR INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE SUCH AS BYBLOS WHERE THE FIRST ALPHABET WAS CREATED AND FROM WHICH IT WAS DISSEMINATED TO THE ANCIENT WORLD OR THE CEDARS OF GOD AS MENTIONED MANY TIMES IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, AMONG MANY OTHERS.



Appendices of the Comparative Analysis Report

Online Survey: Defining Needs, Opportunities and Best Practices of Intercultural Dialogue

The present survey was prepared as a part of the Comparative Analysis Report, which aims to evaluate the needs, enabling factors and the best practices of intercultural dialogue (ICD) in the following countries: Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Italy, and Lebanon. It is conducted in the framework of the project “TOGETHER - Towards a cultural understandinG of thEoTHER”, funded by the Erasmus + Programme of the European Union. The consortium of the project consists of 6 organizations from 5 different countries: CulturePolis – Greece, A.B. Institute of Entrepreneurship Development LTD (IED) – Cyprus, Eworx Ypiresies Ilektronikou Epicheirein Anonymos Etaireia (EWORX) – Greece, Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa APS (FPD) – Italy, Georgian Arts & Culture Center (GACC) – Georgia and the Lebanese Development Network (LDN) – Lebanon.

Your participation will help to understand the challenges and opportunities in promoting the Intercultural Dialogue in your country. Participation in this survey is confidential and anonymous.

The information you provide will be treated in strict confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act of Regulation (EU) No 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

Thank you for your participation and please answer as honestly as possible.

I have read the information provided and fully understand my role within this research.

YES NO

I agree to take part in this research.

YES NO

General Information

What is your gender?

Female Male N/A

What is your age?

- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60+

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Some High School
- High School
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Ph.D. or higher

Which sector do you represent?

- Public
- Private
- NGO/Civil Society
- Local Community Organisation
- International Organisation
- Other

Understanding Intercultural Dialogue: General Awareness

1. Please describe in your own words how do you understand intercultural dialogue?

2. In your opinion what are the main aspects of intercultural dialogue? Please select

- Inter-state dialogue
- Intra-state dialogue
- Interreligious dialogue
- Dialogue between people of different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds
- Dialogue between people with different education backgrounds
- Dialogue between people with different socio-economic backgrounds
- Other – Please write

3. Do you think Intercultural Dialogue can support achieving the UN sustainable development goals?

- YES
- No
- I do not know

4. What opportunities does Intercultural Dialogue provide to your country/community? Please select
- Promoting tolerance and openness
 - Generating economic growth
 - Preventing violent extremism
 - Enhancing rule of law
 - Enhancing respect for human rights
 - Enhancing social reconciliation
 - Improving social inclusion
 - Ensuring integration of refugees and migrants
 - Increasing the well-being of citizens
 - Enhancing respect for democracy
 - Overcoming prejudices and stereotypes
 - Please indicate other contributions of intercultural dialogue, if any
5. How do you believe cultural heritage contributes to the development of intercultural dialogue in the context of local communities?
- It represents universal values which are usually common among people and communities of different backgrounds.
 - It embodies the identity of a specific community and therefore it is an opportunity to learn about its history and culture.
 - Other- Please specify

Policy & Practice

6. Do you know any policies/legislation/state strategy in place that promote ICD in your country?
- Policy
 - Legislation
 - State strategy
 - Other Please specify
- 6.1. Please specify which policy, legislation, state strategy, etc. you know.
7. Do you know about any activities, projects and programmes that have favoured the promotion of intercultural dialogue in your country?
- YES NO
- If yes, Please specify

8. Do you know about any funding opportunities available for ICD related activities?
 YES NO
If yes, Please specify

Identifying Needs of Local Actors For Promoting ICD

9. What are the main challenges encountered by promoting ICD in your country?

- Policy & Legislation
- Inadequate funding opportunities
- Insufficient knowledge and awareness of ICD
- Lack of political will
- Other please specify

10. Which stakeholders can take measures to effectively address these challenges?

- National government
- Schools and universities
- Civil society
- Religious authorities
- The media
- International organisations
- Local community organisations
- Please list other organisations/stakeholders that you believe can help the promotion of intercultural dialogue in our country

11. What do you need for advancing your work on ICD? Please list up to three

12. Please select which of the following activities can contribute best to promoting intercultural dialogue in your country:

- Workshops and trainings
- Targeted vocational programmes
- Media programs
- Educational E-resources
- E-learning platforms
- Cultural programs and activities
- Campaign and outreach activities

13. Please list other activities, if any, that you think will help the promotion of intercultural dialogue in your country

14 Please indicate other ways to strengthen the process of promoting Intercultural Dialogue in our country.

Thank you for participating in the survey!

For any further information about the project please contact the organization



