

The role of intercultural competence in learning mobility

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o Green Paper Promoting the learning mobility of young people:

“learning mobility adds to human capital, as students access new knowledge and develop new linguistic skills and intercultural competences”.

- Linguistic skills and intercultural competence do not develop automatically
- If certain criteria are not met, people may come back with more stereotypes and prejudices

Intercultural Competence in youth work

“qualities needed for a young person to live in contemporary and **pluralistic** Europe. It enables her/him to take an active role in **confronting social injustice and discrimination** and **promote and protect human rights**” (SALTO).

- o culture = dynamic multifaceted process
- o counter-productive tools – limited in their concept of ICC

Intercultural learning

- o Intercultural learning means going beyond celebrating diversity to creating learning environments in a **human rights-based approach**, in order to stimulate **meaningful interactions, social transformation** and **access to social rights**.
- o Intercultural learning is more than knowledge about different cultures

Intercultural learning

Educational approach

Solidarity and social cohesion

Multi-perspectivity, empathy and tolerance of ambiguity

Confronting prejudice, discrimination and intolerance

Critical thinking

Alternative to multiculturalism

Equal opportunities

Political and structural implications

Conflict transformation

Social transformation

In order to ensure quality of the learning process...

- o ...how prepared are the organisers of learning mobilities to ensure these criteria?
- o ...how prepared are they to include members of disadvantaged groups?
- o ...how aware are they about more in-depth intercultural aspects when:
 - o promoting opportunities for participation
 - o preparing learners before departure
 - o mentoring and monitoring them
 - o supporting them in re-integrating in their home environment, using their new skills and sharing their learning experience

Do the means fit the purpose?

- o The purpose is to develop intercultural competence
- o But the tools and approaches are rarely suited for this complex goal
- o The need for tools for quality assurance in educational activities, in order to support grass-root organizations

Indicators for intercultural learning

- o A guide for trainers/facilitators/organisers of non-formal education activities
 - o Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth
- o A list of criteria for each of the three phases of the project:
 - Preparation
 - Implementation
 - Follow-up
- o For each criteria there are indicators referring to:
 - People
 - Process
 - Content

The tool will be tested this Spring/Summer

Project example: Romanimation

- o A group of young people from different European countries spent 3 weeks in Romania as follows:
 - o One week in a village with a Roma community
 - o One week in a seminar for debriefing and preparation for the following week
 - o One week in another village with a Roma community

Key elements that led to the success of the project

- o Trainers were present with the group the whole time
- o The activities took place in the **natural environment** of the Roma community, not in a seminar room
- o Importance and enough time given to **reflection**
- o The international group had the opportunity to **interact with two groups** and make comparisons
- o **Cooperation for a common purpose**
- o The **status was balanced** through living conditions
- o **Gender balanced**
- o Different **competences** in the international group that were **used in practice**

Key challenges of intercultural learning in mobility projects

- Resources (time, tools, etc.)
- Competences of organisers
 - Institutions
 - NGOs
 - Companies
- Multiplication of the learning outcomes upon return
- Status and power relations between the country of origin and country of destination