Citizenship, Interculturality, Dialogue

European Guide

Contents

I. Introduction to the Guide

This guide is the result of the work carried out in the framework of the CID project, co-funded by the Community Action Programme "Europe for Citizens" and more specifically by the Measure 3 of the Action 2 supporting joint concrete projects between civil society organisations from different EU Member countries acting at the regional, national or European level.

This work does not intend to bring exhaustive information on the concept and practices of intercultural dialogue in the different EU Member States. It reflects the experience of the citizens (partners and participants to the consultations together) involved in the project and is based on the conclusions drawn by the consultations, which took place between September 2008 and June 2009 in five countries.

CID, for Citizenship, Interculturality, Dialogue, the name chosen by the partners to call this project, equally focused on the promotion of active European citizenship and intercultural dialogue. For one year, these stakeholders of the CID project have carried out a reflection on the key concepts. In Belgium, Spain, France, Romania and the United-Kingdom, foundations and associations working at the local and national levels created free meeting spaces in order to invite citizens of their territory to bring their point of view and to debate on some matters such as discrimination, deconstruction of prejudice, intercultural exchange, lack of knowledge on the *Other*, relations majority/ minority, natives/ foreign-born...

Intercultural dialogue was certainly considered as an aim but also as a methodology on its own, or even a skill to be acquired. The partners linked these two aspects by implementing, on the one hand, a framework that would favour the exchange between people from different origins and experiences. This way, they listened to everyone and learned to respect the way of thinking of the different stakeholders. On the other hand, these debates on intercultural issues related to the different national contexts also made it possible to settle the conditions to be implemented in order to guarantee a dialogue and a closer cooperation between the different groups which make a society and not only people living in the same space with indifference.

First, the guide will describe the framework of this project, namely the emergence of the intercultural dialogue concept at the European level and the citizenship policy of the European Commission. Then, it will introduce the project activities, the partners and will analyse the work carried out in Belgium, Spain, France, Romania and the United-Kingdom. Finally, it will expose the different cross-cutting recommendations coming from national consultations and transnational meetings.

II. Concept of Intercultural Dialogue

The Emergence of Intercultural Dialogue

The sustainability of a culture comes from its ability to exchange and communicate with other cultures. The multicultural aspect of Europe made it necessary to strengthen intercultural dialogue in order to maintain unity within the European Union. In the study carried out for the European Commission in anticipation of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research[1] shows how important this topic is:

> "*Since the arrival of the new millennium, a number of developments have given intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and social cohesion a more prominent place on political agendas such as: migration flows that have significantly changed the population diversity of some European countries; EU enlargement; globalisation and geopolitical changes; new means of communication and a related expansion of media content; an increase in controversies and debates on value systems; a reported rise of incidents of discrimination, racism, and populism.*"

The idea of a European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008), was launched in 2004 by the European Commissioner for Culture, Ján Figel. He considered that strengthening the European identity and citizenship would be the objective of the year 2008, through a widened debate developed between the different European cultures.

Definition of the Concept

The concept of intercultural dialogue first appeared in international policies, promoted by organisations as the Council of Europe or the UNESCO. The Council of Europe policy influenced greatly the creation of this concept. It is based on some values such as universality and indivisibility of the human rights, democracy and the rule of law and can, as a result, be the means to guarantee the economic, political and social stability of international policies.

It is to be acknowledged that the notion of intercultural dialogue is defined

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1. Sharing diversity, National Approaches to Intercultural Dialogue in Europe, study prepared for the European Commission by ERICarts, the European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research, March 2008. [http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/fileadmin/downloads/resources/sharing_diversity_exec_summary_en.pdf]

in a quite vague way in international European policies. The Council of Europe proposed a definition used in the consultation process for the "White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue" published at the beginning of the year 2008.

"*Intercultural dialogue is understood as an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals, groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage on the basis of mutual understanding and respect.*"

From a general point of view, the essence of intercultural dialogue was recognised as being to learn to deal with the *Other* who is different, to live together harmoniously and to cooperate in a society where different cultures meet.

To implement a coherent policy aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue, the Council favours intercultural dialogue within European societies between majority and minority cultures, between the different cultures beyond national borders and between Europe and the neighbouring regions in order to foster international cooperation with other organisations working actively in this field.

In any case, the notion of intercultural dialogue includes some constant principles and values: "*A public space for dialogue and cultural expression, Reciprocal respect and recognition, Respect for cultural identities and practices and for human rights, Promotion of cultural diversity, cultural democracy and citizenship, Sharing responsibility, The free expression of different forms of cultural, social, religious and philosophical practice, Tolerance and equality in all aspects of social interaction, Relations between the culturally diverse groups, A common language for understanding* the Other."[2]

The Competence of the European Community Related to Culture

The existence of cultural diversity in Europe gave birth to new challenges the European Union has to face. Intercultural dialogue can be a tool used to manage this diversity and can also contribute to achieve the strategic priorities of the EU, among others the promotion of active citizenship in the Member States, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, or social cohesion and implementation of efficient partnerships with the neighbouring countries. The development of intercultural diversity in Europe made it

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2. Final Report of the Working Group on the follow-up to the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID), Rapporteur Guido Orlandini – The Intercultural Communication and Leadership School – ICLS, 11 June 2009.

necessary to hold a more in-depth and structured intercultural dialogue in European policies, in order to involve not only public authorities but also all the groups, majority or not, of the society, in this process of dialogue.

By having a look at the European legislation, it appears that the European Community, established by the Treaty of Rome in 1958 as an economic union, only integrated culture-related competences from 1993. The Maastricht Treaty brought new fields of competence in the EU policies, as culture for example, and introduced the idea of European citizenship.[3]

Article 128 of the Treaty enounces that "*the Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore*". It also says that the Community action aims at encouraging cooperation between Member States and third countries in the different fields related to culture and takes cultural aspects into account in its action. Through this article, intercultural dialogue became a horizontal priority compelling the European institutions to consider it in the Community policies.

The Amsterdam Treaty (1997) took up the Treaty on European Union (TEU) article on culture, adding: "*The Community shall take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of this Treaty, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures.*"[4]

Specific articles of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights[5] (2000), incorporated in the Treaty of Lisbon, are of particular importance to intercultural dialogue by addressing: equality (e.g. non-discrimination and cultural, religious and linguistic diversity); freedoms (e.g. of expression, of thought, conscience and religion); and citizens rights (e.g. of movement and residence, to vote).

This EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is accompanied with several directives that address equality, two of which include: the Racial Equality Directive (2000), and the Employment Equality Directive (2000). These principles and rights are reaffirmed in the Commission's Social Agenda (2005), Culture Agenda (2007) as well as in the December 2007 EU Treaty of Lisbon.

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3. Treaty establishing the European Union, II. Art. 8.
[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/11992M/htm/11992M.html#0001000001]

4. Amsterdam Treaty modifying the Treaty on European Union, the treaties establishing the European Communities and some other acts, Art.151.
[http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/fr/treaties/dat/11997E/htm/11997E.html#0001010001]

5. Ibid., Art. II-82.

Intercultural Dialogue : a Priority for the EU

Intercultural dialogue gradually became a priority within the European Union, going through three different implementation steps as far as Community action is concerned:

> To strengthen the Community action in this field, it was first of all necessary to identify, promote and exchange experiences and good practices that could illustrate the relevance and efficiency of intercultural dialogue. The Commission launched this promotion process by organizing the conference on intercultural dialogue on 22 and 23 November 2006, in order to ensure exchange of experiences and good practices. It launched a Eurobarometer study to measure the behaviours of the European citizens as far as cultural diversity, the different values and traditions as well as the events of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue were concerned.[6]

> The following step was to set intercultural dialogue as a horizontal priority in all the relevant Community programmes, more specifically in the new generation of programmes of the Directorate General for Education, Audiovisual and Culture, as far as culture, education, youth and citizenship were concerned.

> The implementation of Community actions in the field of intercultural dialogue ended with the year 2008, appointed as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, established by the Decision Nº 1983/006/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU on 18 December 2006.

Intercultural Dialogue : a Tool for Fighting Against Intolerance in Europe

Intercultural Dialogue was recognised as a possible answer to conflicts, to confrontations and hatred, to ignorance and narrow-mindedness, as an appropriate way to prevent and fight against intolerance, discrimination, xenophobia, racism, prejudices and stereotypes, and as an essential element for democracy and human rights, mutual understanding and social cohesion. The promotion of intercultural dialogue has been identified in

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6. In 2007, the DG Education, Audiovisual and Culture of the European Commission funded a Eurobarometer quantitative survey to poll public opinion on intercultural dialogue in Europe. Within the framework of this study, carried out by TNS Opinion & Social, 26,755 citizens from the 27 Union Member States were interviewed between 14 February and 18 March 2007. According to the survey, most of the European citizens think that people with different roots make the cultural life of their country richer. It was also seen that the interaction with people of different cultures are part of their daily lives. 83% of the people interviewed think that intercultural dialogue is beneficial, and most of them showed an interest concerning the events of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. To know more about it:
[http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/sources_info/studies/studies_en.html]

the European Commission's Agenda for Culture in a Globalising World (2007) as a tool contributing to the governance of cultural diversity within European societies, trans-nationally across European countries and internationally with other world regions.

The Implementation of Intercultural Dialogue at EU Level

The European Agenda for Culture[7] seeks to encourage cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. Openness and exchanges between different cultures should be promoted and intercultural competences strengthened, by developing the capacities included among the key competences[8] for lifelong learning such as cultural awareness and expression, and communication in foreign languages. Support for this agenda was extended through, for example, the Culture Programme 2007 – 2013, the Programme "Europe for Citizens" and the Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.

The Programme "Europe for Citizens" 2007 – 2013 wants to provide tools to promote a more active citizenship amongst Europeans. It is aimed at developing a greater tolerance and a better mutual understanding between European citizens, as well as respect and promotion of the linguistic and cultural diversity, while contributing to intercultural dialogue. The intercultural dialogue was incorporated in the permanent thematic priorities of this programme because it represents an efficient way of stimulating citizens' participation.

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7. [http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/culture/l29019_fr.htm]

8. [http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm]

III. Actions of the European Commission Related to Citizenship

The programme "Europe for Citizens" includes some key priorities, their aim is to give the citizen an active role in the development of European Union policies. Its purpose is to contribute to the global following objectives:

> Give the citizens the opportunity to interact and play a role in the process of construction of another Europe, closer, democratic and focused on the world, united in its cultural diversity and enriched from this diversity, thus developing the European Union citizenship.

> Create a feeling of European identity, based on common values, history and culture.

> Favour the feeling of ownership and support of the European citizens towards European Union.

> Improve tolerance and mutual understanding of the European citizens, respecting and celebrating cultural and linguistic diversity while contributing to intercultural dialogue at the same time.

The programme plans to achieve the following specific objectives that will be implemented at the transnational level:

> Bring the individuals from local communities all over Europe together, share and exchange their experiences, opinions and values, learning from History and building the future.

> Favour action, debates and reflection on European citizenship and on joint democracy, values, history and culture thanks to the cooperation of civil society organisations at the European level.

> Make the European notion more tangible for the citizens, promote and celebrate European values and achievements, while preserving the memory of its past.

> Encourage interaction between citizens and civil society organisations of all the participant countries, contributing to intercultural dialogue and highlighting European diversity and unity, a particular attention being given to the activities aimed at strengthening the links between the citizens from the Member States which entered the EU before 30 April 2004 and the ones which entered after this date.

More precisely, the priority fields of the programme are the following: promotion of participation and democracy at the European level; the future of the Union and its fundamental values; intercultural dialogue, employment, social cohesion and sustainable development; citizen awareness rising on the impact of the EU policies on the society.

Apart from these key priorities, the programme defines some annual priorities on the shorter term in order to adapt to the evolutions of the European context. In 2007, there was the issue of equal opportunities and the entrance of Romania and Bulgaria in the EU. In 2008, the emphasis was put on intercultural dialogue, the participation of women in political life, the new institutional insights, sports for active citizenship and social inclusion and preparation of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009.

Civil society organisations are a powerful intermediate to involve citizens or represent their interests in the European debate. One of the means to establish strong links throughout Europe is by helping these organisations cooperating on joint issues at the European level. The Measure 3 of the Action 2 of the programme[9] supports joint concrete projects between civil society organisations from different countries participating in the programme[10] acting at the regional, national and European level. These projects have to address questions of European interest and aim at pointing out all the concrete solutions possible through transnational cooperation and coordination.

The funded projects cover joint actions, debates, reflection exercises and networking activities. The funding of such projects requires efficient partnerships in order to commonly plan, implement and make the most of the results of an action, according to the objectives and priorities of the Programme.

This collaboration can be organized through different types of actions, namely seminars, thematic workshops, training seminars, creation and dissemination of publications, information campaigns, artistic workshops, amateur sporting competitions, exhibitions, local initiatives, etc.

The organisations willing to organize debates should, before everything, favour dialogue focused on the priorities of the programme that imply a large amount of stakeholders from different countries, including other civil society organisations, citizens and policy-makers. A special attention has to be paid to the representation of cultural and spiritual diversity of Europe.

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9. For more information on the different actions:
[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programme/programme_guide_en.php]

10. 27 Member countries and Croatia since November 2007.

The CID project was developed in this framework. Partners have chosen to stimulate the participation of citizens resident in their country and to work on the concept of intercultural dialogue.

IV. CID Project - Citizenship, Interculturality, Dialogue

The CID project was lead by the European Pole of Social Economy Foundations and co-funded by the "Europe for Citizens" unit of the DG Education, Audiovisual and Culture of the European Commission. This project started with a kick-off meeting gathering all the partners in September 2008 to determinate the constitution of citizens groups and sub-themes to work on. It ended in June 2009 with the edition of this guide which is the result of numerous debates held in the different countries and of the transnational meetings.

Each partner selected a topic adapted to its national context. Thus, the CSV – Community Service Volunteers, based in England, proposed to address the perception of interculturality by the civil society in order to overcome the obstacles originated in nationalist reflects. The P&V Foundation, from Belgium, wanted to create a meeting space where Belgian French and Dutch speakers could exchange and express their differences, so obvious in the political life of the country, through positive and negative stories and could also explore the possibility of areas where sharing and dialogue were possible. The Spanish foundation, EAES, based in Andalusia, former land of emigration, today welcoming land of multiple migrations, worked on all the elements that could ease integration, always consulting several representatives of the Andalusian civil society, by using the discussion groups, interviews and personal experience telling method. The French MACIF Foundation, which has been taking part for many years in the field of integration through employment, involved its representatives but also young volunteers in a reflection on integration through employment, through the policies of diversity within the enterprise and on citizens' participation. The Romanian PACT Foundation started working on the premise that the continuous marginalization/ self-marginalization and discrimination against the Roma population come from a lack of knowledge of their culture. This motive is often mentioned by the non-Roma as one of the major factors of segregation. To overcome stereotypes and beat ignorance, PACT wished to gather the two communities in panels of discussion.

The partners of the project met on a regular basis to coordinate their activities and share their experiences. After a first meeting in Osuna, Spain, to define the conditions of implementation of the project, two transnational meetings took place, both times gathering the coordinators of the project and participants from groups of citizens. The first one took place in Paris in January 2009 and enabled the partners to present the methodologies

used to create spaces favouring dialogue. On 27 May, in Brussels, the stakeholders of the projects came to expose the results of their consultation and exchange on the elaboration of recommendations introduced at the end of this guide.

The following organisations took part in the project:

The **European Pole of Social Economy Foundations** drove the CID project. Created in 1999, the members of this platform come from mutual insurance companies and cooperatives. Its aim is to promote social economy on the European Union territory by supporting the initiatives of its members through transnational programmes.
[www.pefondes.eu]

The **PACT (Partnership for Community Action and Transformation) Foundation** provides information, offers trainings, consultations and grants at a reduced scale to community groups and organisations. PACT mainly works on the capacity building of marginalized and disadvantaged groups and encourages them to improve their living conditions within their community, stimulating social responsibility, supporting participatory practices and partnerships as well as local and regional socio-economic initiatives.
[www.fundatiapact.ro]

Over 15 years of existence, the **MACIF Foundation** proved to be a major stakeholder in the MACIF strategy, promoting its will of social responsibility. Renewed for the 3rd time in 2009, the MACIF Foundation becomes a corporate foundation of the MACIF group, initiated by its new founders: Macfilia, Mutavie, MACIF – Mutualité, MACIF – Gestion and MACIF. During this new five-year period, the MACIF Foundation, eager to be in phase with the evolution of the society, intends to keep exploring new ideas, initiatives and projects in the field of integration and diverstiy.
[www.fondation-macif.org]

The main aim of the **P&V Foundation** is to fight against the exclusion of the youth, associating them in projects where they can be fully involved. Most of the projects promote training to citizenship, diversity, solidarity and emancipation thanks to the leverage effect of social economy. P&V Insurances, which is originated from the cooperative movement, created the Foundation and is its main sponsor. However, the Fundation is independent from the insurance company.
[www.fondationpv.be]

CSV – Community Service Volunteers is the major training voluntary organisation in the United-Kingdom. The objectives of its founders were to involve young people aged from 16 to 35 in voluntary services in the UK,

in order to enrich the volunteers' lives as well as those of the people helped and thus produce a social change. Over the last year, CSV managed to gather around 250,000 persons in the voluntary sector in the United-Kingdom, trained 12,000 underprivileged young people and helped 29,000 finding new learning opportunities thanks to the links of the organisation with the BBC local radio. The organisation also struggles to enable civil society to act on the front line in the different communities.
[www.csv.org.uk]

Based in Andalusia, the **EAES Foundation** strengthens the importance of the stakeholders promoting the social economy sector in the centre-American and European spaces, in order to develop the possibilities of civil society organisations and universities, introducing a range of opportunities for a balanced participation between men and women, favouring local management, educational processes and the dissemination of social cohesion.
[www.eaes.es]

The **European Think Tank Pour la Solidarité** (PLS) offers a wide range of services related to the solidarity sector. It promotes social economy, sustainable policies and citizens' involvement in the decision-making processes. PLS was in charge of the general follow-up and publication of the newsletters and the guide which detail the consultations carried out by the project partners and their results.
[www.pourlasolidarite.eu]

> The two newsletters and different intermediary documents of the projects are available on the blog of the project:
> [http://progcitoyennete.blogspot.com/].

V. Cross-cutting Views

The focuses on intercultural dialogue, the target publics and the methods of debate used by each partner varied. The objectives remained the same for all: to create a new space for dialogue, give a more complete vision of the concept of intercultural dialogue and start building a joint definition of interculturality from individual points of view for all the citizens involved in the project. These debates between citizens had also similar impacts: they contributed to the formal and informal learning process and helped de-constructing stereotypes.

1. Organisation of the Consultations

Type of Consultation

As far as consultations are concerned, each partner country thought about the most appropriate methods to establish a fruitful and constructive dia-logue. The methods chosen varied, each one of them revealing some strengths and some limits. England and Spain chose a debate pattern, such as, for example, the study & debate circles. The French partner pitched on a more progressive method: first, to inform participants and allow them to exchange their experiences in small groups, and then give them the oppor-tunity to express their "dreams", drafting recommendations during the ple-nary session; all this followed by an evaluation. Romania also decided first to build a joint base of knowledge for all the participants in order to stim-ulate discussions and bring the participants together before giving them the possibility to list the needs for a community and draw up an action plan. Eventually, Belgium tested out the story forums, where the partici-pants could tell the positive or negative stories that happened or were told to them, concerning the relationships between French and Dutch speaking communities.

Places of Consultations

The consultations took place in large cities: Brussels (Belgium), Paris, Metz, Lille (France), London (United-Kingdom) as well as in villages like Osuna (Spain), Valea Corbului and Calinesti (Romania) or small towns like Ingate-stone (UK). Itinerant consultations were organised in France, in England and Romania and others took place in the headquarters of the partner organi-sation, like in Belgium and Spain.

Consulted Public

The composition of the groups was very different from a country to another. As intercultural dialogue cannot only take into account the mere cultural factors (language, territory, religion) the partners selected individuals of different ages, gender and status. The consultations targeted students (United-Kingdom and France), professionals from the sector of social economy (Spain), elected representatives from a mutual insurance company (France) but also inhabitants of a territory representing a specific culture (Belgium and Romania)…

Obstacles or Limits

One of the main obstacles the organisers had to face was scepticism from participants on the possibility to improve intercultural dialogue between groups too far-off: they argued that several initiatives had already been launched in this field. The participants wished their work had a concrete impact. That is why they were more interested in the issues affecting their daily lives.

To overcome these difficulties, the partner organisations adapted their methodology in order to set a framework for the debates, favouring concrete exercises: tell stories on the other linguistic community, list the needs of a village, make concrete recommendations according to the citizens' expectations… Some partners even thought about a follow-up to the meetings organised in the framework of the European project (new meetings, dissemination strategies or action plans).

From a methodological point of view, it was not always easy to give the floor to all the participants in a limited period of time, also taking into account the fact that some were not used to express themselves in front of an assembly or reluctant to share their points of views when other communities were taking part in the debates.

All consultations were organised with the help of experts in participatory processes. They facilitated the debates and proposed a set of rules to be respected so as to ensure the expression of all participants.

2. Migratory History of the Partner Countries

Although Belgium, France, Romania, Spain and the the United-Kingdom all have a different past in terms of migratory flows and coexistence between natives and foreign-born, all have to face the issue of integration.

It was amongst the main matters of concern in France and Spain. Former

land of emigration, Andalusia recently became a welcoming land for wealthy Europeans but also for South Americans and Africans trying to guarantee their subsistence. The EAES Foundation (Spain), questioned its participants on the lessons that the region could learn from its emigration-related experience in order to facilitate the integration of immigrant populations. The MACIF Foundation (France) listed three factors of integration submitted to the participants: integration through employment, through a diversity policy within the enterprise and through citizens' participation.

The PACT Foundation (Romania) focused its work on the exchanges between the non-Roma and Roma communities, the latest suffering from strong discriminations in the country. The Roma are the largest minority in Europe, but also the most vulnerable one. Their situation is particularly worrying in Romania. Hence the objective of the PACT Foundation: to study how intercultural dialogue could help improving interethnic relations in Romania.

In Belgium, the major problem linked to interculturality is multilinguism and the growing distance between the Dutch and French speaking communities. The language barrier is an obstacle to communication and triggers tensions; it accentuates the differences between communities that consider the *Other* as foreigner.

The United-Kingdom is traditionally open to immigration. After the enlargement of 2004, it was, for example, the first country to open its frontiers to the new Member States. CSV decided to question young people of two British high schools, one in London and the other in the Essex County, to address the issue of intercultural dialogue with these new immigrant populations.

3. Synthesis of the Debates

Perception of Intercultural Dialogue

Quote from a Participant

"*Every human being is discriminating a group, a community, a minority, whether he/ she is aware of it or not. And others will inevitably hold prejudice against the group they belong to. Disseminating this message can be more fruitful than talking about the meaning of the concept of intercultural dialogue*".

It was sometimes difficult to introduce and illustrate the concept of intercultural dialogue to the participants. That is why several organisations de-

cided not to use it as an entrance door, favouring instead, for example, topics that were closer to daily life.

The notion of "dialogue" between distant groups : "*contact and discussion between two parts seeking an agreement, a compromise*" was better understood by the citizens.

Recurrent Concepts and Questions

Some concepts were regularly coming back in the centre of the debates and were therefore given more importance. Amongst them was the notion of interculturality, defined by a citizen participating in the MACIF debates as "*a meeting and exchange between at least two people getting to know each other and bringing down the representations and prejudices of one another*", as well as integration explained by the EAES Foundation as "*an experience of personal, social, cultural and economic growth for immigrants and for the natives.*" Integration is a process, a voluntary and intentional action and not just a result, a spontaneous phenomenon.

As far as the issue of integration is concerned, several concepts emerged. Some were related to the kind of persons who need to be integrated, like the "immigrants", the "foreigners" or even those who are "different". Referring to these groups, "stereotypes" or even "prejudices" were established. Native populations or the non-discriminated against do not know properly the situation of these individuals and feel "mistrust" against them. The solutions put forward to overcome these attitudes were most often "openness", "dialogue", "active citizenship" and "integration through economic activity".

The Role of Economics in Intercultural Exchanges

Quote from a Participant

"We have to differentiate between the stereotype (triteness, cliché) and the prejudice (opinion, preconceived judgement, received idea) on racism that is an acting out."

Relations to foreign-born persons, discriminated persons can not be reduced to the cultural sphere. A dialogue also has to be established on the labour market.

In Spain, the participants noted that it is not the outsider who is discriminated against but the poor immigrant, suffering from negative stereotypes especially in relation to employment: "he's stealing the natives' jobs" and

his integration within the host society is costly; this prejudice is even stronger in times of economic crisis.

Contrary to this negative prejudice, the actors of social economy are acknowledged as providers offering services adapted to the needs of immigrant and / or disadvantaged populations. Furthermore, they often implement diversity policies within their organisation in order to facilitate the access to labour market of these populations.

For many participants, integration through economic activity is essential but has also to be completed by the acknowledgement of the individual's role at the level of his neighbourhood and town, as a citizen of right who is taking part in the public decision making.

Role of Active Citizenship in Intercultural Exchanges

The participants think that involvement within an NGO or a political organisation can be a good means of integration, as it feels like being part of a collective project. Integration cannot be limited to the sector of the enterprises; it also develops through citizen's participation. "*Integration is the lack of exclusion, which means the feeling to be involved in all the sectors of society.*"[11] To feel that he is a full citizen, an individual has to be able to express himself and assert his rights.

4. Commitment and skills acquired by participants

Rationale for Participating in the Debates

The five consultations were based on voluntary and unpaid participation of the citizens. In fact, the participants turned out to be curious and motivated: they wanted to learn more on the topics presented, eager to be active and to propose solutions.

Acquired Knowledge and Skills

For the participants, these consultations were an opportunity to acquire knowledge and know-how.

They taught them more about the recent history of their country and its different migratory flows, on Europe and its enlargements, on the management of a project cofunded by European institutions, on the accessibility of the Community Action Programme for civil society organisations. Some

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11. Quote from the French report.

of the participants became aware of the scope of their rights, like the Roma community with the lessons on the Roma culture in schools programme.

As far as know-how is concerned, all the partners imposed the respect of the debate rules, as careful listening and tolerance for example. The participants were able to interpret stereotypes and consider fighting against prejudice. They discovered the *Other* thanks to dialogue.

VI. Citizens' Consultations

From September 2008 to June 2009, civil society organisations from five EU Member States worked closely with laymen who usually had no "academic" knowledges on intercultural matters. The consultation methods, the information delivered to participants by organisers, the experience of participants and the professional facilitation of the discussions helped identifying preconcieved ideas that circulate about some national communities and make an inventory of common discriminations. From these observations, the citizens involved in the project could draw relevant recommandations to the attention of political and socio-economic deviders that have the ability to legislate or act in this field.

Despite the diversity of experiments carried out, the results of the partners are presented below according to the similar categories so as to make the comparisons easier: working theme selection, target public and method for building the group, methodology adopted for consultations, synthesis of the debates, obstacles or limits, unplanned results, recommendations at national level. The contact names indicated at the bottom of each report are those of the national coordinators.

Respective websites also complement this guide and bring more detailed pieces of information on the different consultations.

> **Quote from a Participant**
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> "*A law cannot prevent the existence and spread of prejudice but the proliferation of meetings bringing citizens from different origins and statutes together is a relevant method to deconstruct them. The best way to deconstruct prejudice is to meet the Other, the one against whom we have created a prejudice. It is impossible to make prejudice disappear; we can only try to get out of them. Projects aimed at creating meeting and dialogue spaces should be supported*".

Take Part – Making Participatory Democracy a Reality, United-Kingdom

Working Theme Selection

CSV, as the UK partner in the transnational CID Project, has adopted the theme of the perception of interculturality by civil society. It is often assumed that people in the UK are not interested in politics. As a Member State of the EU, UK is also considered to be one of the most sceptical EU members. This is a generalised view, although when it comes to European issues, it is partly true that there is generally a lesser interest in what is happening in the EU than in other, continental, Member States.Besides, the UK has one of the most diverse populations in the Union. In the context of the different EU cultures living one next to another, this became particularly visible following the EU's biggest enlargement to date, on 1st May 2004. Citizens of all new Member States, including eight former communist countries, gained the freedom and right to live, work and study in the UK. Large numbers of people from Central and Eastern Europe countries such as Poland – moved to the UK in search of employment and fresh start to their lives.

The citizens of the "new" EU added to the already great diversity of the UK population and brought with them their own cultures, backgrounds, skills, language and customs. With such a major social and demographic change, numerous new stereotypes and tensions also arose, particularly in the context of the current economic crisis. National clichés became stronger and in some created a fear of the new immigration.

During study and debate circles, the chosen methodology for consultation, the range of questions was diverse, but some of them included: How can diverse communities get along together better? What is the role of intercultural dialogue in creating awareness and achieving more tolerance? How can the voice of young people be better heard in Europe? What is the willingness to shape the future of the EU by participating in the June 2009 elections?

Target Public and Constitution of the Group

The target public was chosen to consist of young secondary school students, aged 15–18 years old. The young participants have become very enthusiastic about their involvement, particularly since coming from different

backgrounds and interacting in such diverse communities, the issue of intercultural dialogue is of great importance to them. They also realised that they are truly interested in finding out what the EU is "all about".

Methodology Adopted

The method chosen for tackling the theme of perception of interculturality by civil society was to create platforms for exchange and reflection on ways in which individuals can make their voice heard on European policy affecting them and offer citizens means of direct involved with their local MEPs and policy-makers. From the outset of the project it was envisaged that the initiative will create local study and debate circles[12] for reflection on intercultural dialogue, participation, policies, and how this all impacts on those taking part in the debate sessions. This was deemed to be the most appropriate platform for the delivery of the consultations, as it offered a dynamic environment in which young people are free to express their views, listen to others and openly debate issues, both those that they agree with and those they object to. The active participation element of these democratic debates became the leading theme of the consultation.

Another important advantage of the methodology used in the approach chosen for UK participants is that study circles are a very effective mechanism for promoting local democracy and a way of facilitating grass-roots dialogue to address pressing issues. Study circles are very effective: "*(If) you talk about something that people care about, you can get them to the table.*"[13] The study circles have thus created a dedicated space for intercultural dialogue between young people of different backgrounds. The consultation spaces have also been a platform for knowledge-building about European issues, policies which affect young citizens' lives, ways they can interact with the EU processes, as well as means of expression that participants can use to debate issues, thereby actively engaging in the democratic European project and informing their elected European representatives and policy-makers. "Take Part" has also explored citizens' willingness to get involved in democratic processes, such as voting in elections, particularly the European elections which took place in the UK on 4 June 2009.

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12. The Los Angeles-inspired guide (*Facing the Challenge of Racism and Race Relations: Democratic Dialogue and Action for Stronger Communities*), SCRC has published numerous discussion guides, with topics including bridging the 'achievement gap' in schools, improving police-community relations, building stronger neighbourhoods, bringing youth into public life, and helping communities meet the challenges of growth and development.

13. *What Democracy Feels Like*, Julie Faneslow, 2002 A quote from Carolyne Miller Abdullah, a senior associate at SCRC.

Synthesis of the Debates

The first debate that involved a large group of students at Alperton School, Brent, London, (on 17 December 2008) discussed with the students the whole concept of the CID Project, and its particular focus in the UK. The young people became very interested in the initiative particularly once they discovered that their debates on the perception of interculturality and the need for intercultural dialogue in the UK would be taken onboard at the European level, through the feeding-back process to the coordinators of the CID project. The December session also introduced a number of issues focusing around Active Citizenship, how it links to European Citizenship, as well as how the EU, its policies, activities and initiatives are communicated to young people. The outcome of this first consultation was that, while young people involved in the debate were extremely active in political life of their communities (for example, through school council, the Youth Parliament) in London, their communication on European issues was limited. At the same time the young people expressed a strong willingness to find out more on European issues and become involved in debates that would be fed back to the other partners of the CID project, as well as to other stakeholders benefiting from the final dissemination of the results of this transnational initiative.

The subsequent two meetings of young citizens, which took place at Alperton School on 19 January 2009 and Anglo European School, Ingatestone, Essex, on 13 February 2009, focussed on the perceptions of interculturality, specifically linked to stereotypes, how they are created, how they can and should be overcome, and, in addition, adding to the debate the roles of the EU institutions and the intercultural characteristic of the Union, resulting from a membership of 27 different Member States. In addition, students at Anglo European School also reflected on the types of resources that should be used to successfully teach about citizenship and sustainable communities, with particular focus on European issues. In these two consultations, the participants listed stereotypes that they were aware of about different nationalities of the EU. Each stereotype was recorded and placed next to a given nationality. The consultation circles then debated the responses to each of the nationalities in turn, discussing them in categories of negative, neutral and positive. The participants were then consulted about their own experiences of coming in contact with different nationalities and reflected on whether any of the stereotypes mentioned were actually the same as the person they met, or different. Through the debate it emerged that stereotypes are based on categorising people according to perceptions that are very often not linked to realities, but are a result of common clichés and prejudices. It was also clearly stated that even those stereotypes which can be categorised as "positive" are not necessarily representative of the

whole population of a country and therefore once again are just clichés not necessarily based on reality. The study circles then moved on to the issue of how stereotypes impact on individuals' and whole community feelings and proposed a range of reflections, all of them stating that stereotypes can be very hurtful and untrue and that stereotyping is a barrier to people with different backgrounds getting along with one another and becoming involved in an intercultural dialogue. The participants also came to a conclusion that one way of overcoming stereotypes is to openly present them, as by revealing them and talking about them openly it is possible to show that prejudice is hurtful, untrue and needs to be destroyed.

The discussion of how stereotypes can be broken and generalised perceptions can be overcome led the students to debate another important issue, namely of the participants' own experiences of resolving disputes and conflicts in the setting of their own school, local area, community. They reflected on this theme by giving concrete examples of events in which disputes arose due to stereotyping, wrong perceptions, and what was done to overcome them. Through the analysis of the responses it emerged that the common solution to any such problems was the use of dialogue between those on the opposite side of an argument. The students also pointed out that in circumstances where problems existed between people of different backgrounds, ethnicities, religions or traditions, the dialogue was absolutely necessary in order for people of different cultures to overcome problems and arguments. Having debated the need for such dialogue, participants then moved on to debating how important they perceive intercultural dialogue to be in the context of larger communities – multicultural cities such as London, as well as countries and the wider EU. The young citizens discussed a number of examples from European history – those dating back to the World Wars as well as the Balkan conflict – and pointed out that the breakdown of dialogue and the lack of intercultural dialogue can ultimately lead to extreme consequences.

As a conclusion to the consultations, young participants analysed the history of the EU debated major developments and changes which occurred. Dialogue between all those involved in the European project is crucial and it is important to make sure that the voices of individual European citizens need to be heard to make this European dialogue truly democratic and representative. The participants in the study circle also pointed out that for the Union of 27 different Member States to get along together there is a continuous need for intercultural dialogue, in order to be able to appreciate the different cultures that the citizens of the EU have. In addition, by reflecting on the EU's motto – "United in Diversity" – the conclusion of the debates was that there is a great need to overcome obstacles caused by stereotypes and prejudice by actively engaging in such dialogue.

In the subsequent debate of 27 April 2009, 20 students aged 17–18 at the Anglo European School, were consulted on the upcoming European Parliament elections. The debate kicked-off with an interactive discussion of a diverse range of issues relating to EU policies that impact on the lives of individual citizens in the EU. The range of policies that were debated included: immigration, international aid, protection of minority languages, policies on consumer protection, and many more. The overwhelming result of this debate was that people are often unaware that such policies originate from EU institutions and they actually affect "everyday" EU citizens. The participants were then consulted on the upcoming European elections and the awareness of these elections.

Obstacles or Limits

Some initial obstacles in the early debates were visible in some participants taking longer time to contribute to the consultations. This, however, is a result of the dynamics of many groups: that some members tend to be more open and outspoken, while others take longer to overcome their initial inhibitions. The great mechanism of the study circles is that it can overcome such obstacles and in each of the debates carried out, eventually all participants became actively involved in them.

Another obstacle – or rather a challenge – that was envisaged prior to the debates, was that it was necessary to make the topics discussed in the consultations relevant to young people. So, when discussing obstacles to intercultural dialogue, the topic of stereotypes was chosen. Likewise, when discussing EU policies, how they affect individual citizens in the EU and how they are communicated to citizens, it was decided to focus on policies that are really relevant to the participants (e.g. education, immigration, animal testing, water safety standards, genetically-modified foods, consumer protection).

Unplanned Results

A number of young people from Alperton School became very interested in the idea of public debated and getting more engaged politically and are now planning to join the Youth Parliament. In addition, in both of the schools, those eligible for voting in elections (European, national and local level elections) have stated that as a result to their participation in the project they will from now on effectively use their right to express themselves politically through voting. The most immediate action will be their participation in the European elections on 4 June 2009.

Recommendations at National Level

Recommendations resulting from the project at the UK level include the following:

> Replication of the model for study circles, on EU issues and other important issues that affect young people, across secondary schools in the UK.

> Using the resource that will be created as a result of the CID Project, firstly in schools involved in the work of CSV's Education department and then, possibly taking it to other schools.

> Introducing the resource to the Secondary Schools Working Group, which is convened by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office of the UK Government and focuses on the communication of EU issues to young people

> Commissioning a research into the most effective tools for consultation to bring people closer to EU institutions; if commissioned, the research will have a pan-European focus and will be launched during a special seminar run by CSV in Stockholm in December 2009 that will bring together an EU-wide audience from the civil society and institutions.

For further information, please contact Piotr Sadowski:
psadowski@csv.org.uk

Intercultural Dialogue and Integration: Views of the Andalusian Society, Spain

Working Theme Selection

Spain and other Southern European countries have considered themselves zones of emigration until not many years ago. In the case of Andalusia, this region has traditionally been a land of emigration.

Despite this situation, the current socio-economic changes faced by societies across the globe are reversing migratory flows: Andalusia, a land of emigration, has now become a hosting country. The number of foreigners living in Andalusia was multiplicated by six over the past decade.

There are several heterogeneous groups of foreigners in Andalusia. They are characterized by different circumstances, which therefore produce multiple and different impacts on different fields of the region, and this situation must be perceived differently.

In Andalusia five out of every ten foreigners are citizens from the European Union, followed by the Americans (23.70% of the immigrant total population) and Africans (20.80%).

The foreign population come to Andalusia following two main patterns: the first ones are trying to improve their quality of life in order to raise the level of their life-style, which is the criterion followed by the majority of the European citizens who come here. The other ones are workers with few qualifications, mostly Africans, Latin Americans and Eastern Europeans, who find a good reason to settle down working in the agricultural sector of Eastern Andalusia.

These new opportunities and challenges, fruit of the immigration process, are similar in other European countries with more experience in welcoming immigrants. As far as this issue is concerned, Spain, and in particular Andalusia, has the advantage of being able to learn from its history as land of emigration, from the successes they enjoyed and the mistakes they made in the integration process of these immigrant population. New challenges have to be tackled. The specific dimensions and characteristics of such challenges depend on the social, economic and political contexts in which foreigners settle down.

The questions raised in these meetings were: What do "intercultural dialogue and integration" mean? Implications of those two terms in Andalusia; Which

factors play an important role in the process of integration of foreign populations within our society? Positive and negative aspects / advantages and difficulties of the process; How does the Andalusian society perceive the foreign population living within its community? What are the performances of the different actors of the society as far as the integration of foreign people is concerned? Questions on general opinions, debate on the situation of the labour market and on the integration of foreign populations in Andalusia.

Target public and Constitution of the Group

The group was constituted of 32 citizens from the Andalusian society; most of them had a special link with social economy. Some of them were working in education-related organisations, indirectly linked to integration. Among them, several were foreign-born.

Methodology Adopted

During the meetings, a coordinator asked general questions and encouraged everybody to participate in order to gather different opinions. The EAES Foundation always wanted these meetings to be dialogue spaces, with active participation. The idea was to trigger an exchange of ideas, through the dynamics of group discussions, debates, brainstorming, etc.

Synthesis of the Debates

> The 1st meeting presented once again the general objectives of the project. All the participants introduced themselves in order to get to know each other and the future questions were exposed.

Some key words, like "exchange", "respect", "empathy", "coexistence", "citizenship", "tolerance", "understanding", were constantly repeated during this meeting.

> The 2nd meeting started with a list of various elements of integration: education, health, employment, language, culture and access to resources that enable the foreign population to acquire a "full citizenship" statute.

Opportunities and challenges of the foreigners' integration in the Andalusian society were discussed. Through a pooling process, integration has been defined as "*an experience of personal, social, cultural and economic growth, both for immigrants and natives.*"

Participants pointed out the difficulties immigrants have to face, such as the language barrier and meeting the legal requirements for foreigners. Moreover, the lack of jobs and the underdevelopment of productivity may ham-

per the coexistence of migrants and natives, and some native Andalusians may think that the presence of immigrants is "unfair competition": they believe they will accept precarious working conditions.

Other difficulties or factors that may affect negatively this process are seen from a cultural and psychological perspective. There are some negative attitudes that prevail in the Andalusian society, like mistrust, fear, contempt and indifference towards the one who is "different" or the *Other*. "*This is the consequence of ignoring (sometimes deliberately) other cultures, resulting in the emergence and consolidation of prejudice and negative stereotypes.*" "*Often, people exclude those who they don't know.*"

Several participants mentioned that the greatest difficulty for the integration of foreigners was that this process involves a high economic cost "*that not everyone is willing to support*". In relation to this matter, when some participants mentioned "*the principles of the foreign population which have to be consistent with the basic principles of contemporary Western society*", they were referring to Muslim culture. Some participants also spoke of "adaptation" of the foreign population, rather than "integration".

> In the 3rd meeting, the overall objective was to further explore the perception of the Andalusian society on the foreign population settling down in this province and see how this influences integration.

> The aim of the 4th meeting was to analyse the actions of several groups within society (mainly the government) in the process of integration of the foreign population and to make proposals in order to improve the process.

> During the last meeting, proposals to improve this situation of foreigners on the Andalusian labour market were designed and the role that the social economy can play in the integration process now and in the future has been emphasized.

As far as the word "integration" is concerned, some participants noted that the features involved were: adaptation, assimilation, understanding, empathy... "*But these are concepts that, from an anthropological point of view, can lead to acculturation and assimilation, producing the loss of reference values of the foreign population. The integration should not only come from the people who come to our society, but also from the people who welcome them. Together with dialogue, it should be a learning process, fostering active listening, empathy and respect.*"

This topic leads to important debates, about the difference between adaptation and integration, "*which is the fundamental respect of our values and culture by the foreign population, we must require adaptation to particular habits in our society, but not to implement them*".

A striking aspect is the distinction between the emigration of Andalusians and today's immigration. In the 60s and 70s, thousands of Andalusians took a train with just their clothes on their back and went to more prosperous cities such as Madrid and Barcelona, to democratic countries or countries facing the emerging economy of those years with a broad demand for workers. They forgot how they came into a completely different world, with an incomprehensible language, barely being able to read and write, with a family thousands of miles away waiting and hoping for some money to survive.

As far as the role of the Government is concerned, there was a lively debate: on the one hand, several participants acknowledged their willingness to act, but insufficient and inadequate resources limited it. As far as the EU and the Spanish government are concerned, they have been criticized for giving priority to exclusion and control their different regulations.

Obstacles or Limits

Integration is good for economic development and trade, it facilitates the creation of new businesses, usually small businesses and enterprises of services related to the initiative or to the presence of foreigners, and it enriches the labour market. The general idea has spread that immigration has a negative impact on labour market, whereas, in fact, most of the immigrant population from Africa and South-America live in precarious conditions.

During the first two meetings, there was a clear duality between the participants who offer services to foreigners seeking entertainment and relaxation (mainly European tourists) and those who come to work. In addition, the states and municipalities in some areas have noted the inadequate features of the services, such as the education system, the health, housing and social services sectors with the arrival of foreigners.

Quotes from participants

"*We live in a world in which people themselves have created barriers that originally didn't exist. Political principles, cultural prejudice, mass media or even the country of origin are some aspects that influence on the integration of foreigners in our society.*" "*We must ensure that our children live with, learn and enjoy one of the few absolute truths that we have, the presence of cultures that are alien to us, unknown languages, faces and skins that we're ignorant to. Ignorance breeds fear, and fear promotes ignorance and, at the same time, the language used strengthens the attitudes.*"

Recommendations at National Level

> Increase the adequate supply of human and material resources that public administrations allocate for the integration of foreign-born citizens in our society.

> Increase the coordination between public administrations and non-profit organisations that offer programmes, services and intervention assessments for migrants. Public administrations must also broadcast all the activities and actions carried out in a more effective manner.

> Secure access to all public services under equal conditions: health, education, social services, housing, etc.

> Incorporate intercultural mediators for the early detection of situations of vulnerability among foreigners in the social and working field.

> Implement various awareness-raising campaigns aimed at the Andalusian population, as well as business managers, concerning the working conditions that apply to immigrants, while encouraging the immigrant population to break barriers, based on a mutual awareness.

> Strengthen the fight against negative stereotypes towards different nationalities and ethnicities as fuelled by the media.

> Develop information-training plans in the countries of origin so that immigrants hired in advance have an increased knowledge of the place they are coming to (laws, administrative processes, rights, culture, language, etc.). Otherwise, if they do not previously receive such information, they will seek the support of other immigrants upon arrival in the destination country (in this case Andalusia), forming ghettos and inhibiting integration as well as communication, due to their inability to speak the language of the destination country.

> Provide more Spanish language courses for foreigners, as most of this training is currently the responsibility of NGOs and other charity organisations.

> It would be appropriate to carry out a more exhaustive study aimed at a larger number of people, thus allowing a more in-depth investigation of all the questions raised by the different groups in the last months and to evaluate the opinions of the population and introduce them in the institutions.

Therefore, the key measure is to increase the aids to the immigrants' countries of origin, thus encouraging and enabling their real development, not through charity, but as a historic debt for what is now an urgent and increasing need.

For further information, please contact Cristina Molina Molero: cristinamolina@feaes.es

Citizens' and Intercultural Debates on Integration, France

Working Theme Selection

As our society is every time more multicultural, the new challenge is integration and acknowledgement of everyone's differences – cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc. - as integration is not aimed at reducing differences but respecting them in all the sectors of the society. For several years, the MACIF Foundation has been working to face this challenge of integration and commits itself, in collaboration with its partners, in favour of integration through employment, fight against discriminations, promotion of diversity within enterprises, integration of young people of foreign origin, etc. For these citizens' debates, the MACIF Foundation wished to question the different levers or factors of integration. There are many of them, which are widely acknowledged: work, school, language, commitment within associations, trade unions, political organisations…

Three factors of integration have been selected and submitted to the citizens' workshops in order to foster reflections and a European debate:

> Integration through employment, for the MACIF Foundation accepts the idea expressed by the French High Council for Integration[14] that "*in our society, individuals are acknowledged through work, which is the main factor of integration.*"[15]

> Integration through a diversity policy within enterprises, as it is interesting to analyze the entreprise dynamics of integration and fight against discriminations within enterprises.

> Integration through citizens' participation, because integration should also be seen with respect to the citizens' participation in the life of the city.

Target Public and Constitution of the Group

The MACIF Foundation was eager to give the floor to two types of groups: the members of the MACIF company on the one hand, through their representatives, for the debates on integration through employment and in-

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14. [http://www.hci.gouv.fr]

15. French High Council for Integration, *Social promotion of the young people living in disadvantaged areas*, June 2003, p.4.

tegration through the diversity policies within enterprises, and young volunteers from associations on the other hand, for the debates on integration through citizens' participation.

Why did it make this choice? The MACIF Foundation decided to work with citizens involved in the civil society: representatives of the company members, first, who, beyond this mandate also are trade unionists from the five French representative confederations, militants from associations, mutual insurance companies, cooperatives, etc.; also young volunteers, involved in associations through a Voluntary Civil Service.[16] Bringing different experiences and proposals, the participants favoured a cross-cutting fertilization and represented the exchanges initiated within the citizen's debates in these different backgrounds. In the end, 110 citizens were recruited locally, with the support of the MACIF regional Directorates and the Animafac[17] association and participated in these debates.

The citizens' debates were "itinerant", i.e. organized in several regions of France. They helped gather different types of worries, experiences and reflections, in diverse local contexts, building up a very complete package of information for the analysis.

Methodology Adopted

A fundamental principle: promote the participants' peculiar expertise, that goes beyond their commitment within the mutual insurance company, and the organised civil society.

Guarantee conditions for listening and exchange: with the intention of being coherent with the values brought by intercultural dialogue, the debates were animated so that all the participants could express themselves, exchange freely (alternating between whole group and sub-group activities) and benefit from careful and mutual listening.

Four pick moments within each debate:

> A time for information/ training: After the intervention of a resource-person who comes to introduce the elements at stake, the participants are asked to react. This lively and interactive intervention should encourage questions and the first reflections of the participants on the topic and motivate exchanges amongst themselves. This first moment of the debate is a time for deconstructing the topic starting from their representations.

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16. [http://www.lacse.fr/dispatch.do?sid=site/service_civil_volontaire/section_jeune/presentation]

17. [http://www.animafac.net]: network to exchange experiences and resource centre for students' initiatives.

> A time to exchange on their practices, feedbacks: The participants have to identify a significant experience linked to the issue amongst their personal, professional or militant experiences. Divided in sub-groups, they have the possibility to exchange on the experiences, think about their impact, positive and / or negative, and draw lessons from it. Afterwards, the exchanges are brought back to all the participants through the groups' spokespersons.

> A time for working on the proposals: Given the diversity of situations mentioned, often full of emotions or personal commitment, the participants are asked to "dream", i.e. suggest hints of recommendations or proposals to improve the situation in terms of integration.

> A time for evaluation: Crucial moment that helps collecting the individual and collective opinion of the participants regarding the organisation of the debate as well as the topic itself.

Synthesis of the Debates

Five citizens' debates that taught many lessons on the background topic and the shape of the debates

Lesson nº1 or when the questions triggered by integration raise other questions...

At first sight, integration is a complex notion that, even if it is easily recognizable by citizens, sends us back to multiple representations of the reality. What are the criteria that enable us to judge whether a person is integrated or not? Which are the frontiers of integration? Isn't it an endless process, affecting all the fields of the "living together" and all the publics? The problems encountered by the persons who have difficulties to get integrated are reflected in every aspect of our society: social, economic, and cultural. Integration would be a complex process that keeps evolving in time, depending on the contexts and history. However, some groups are more exposed to this issue than others and need specific answers, like the youth, the disabled, the immigrants, the elderly, etc.

Lesson nº2 or when there are multiple places of integration

The participants often widened the words used in the debates on their own, refusing to "limit" their reflection to the integration within the enterprise when they were dealing with integration through employment or through a diversity policy, or to associations, when dealing with integration through citizen participation. Hence, they identified other places which are also important factors of integration, like schools, the neighbourhood, housing... More than places, with their limits as well, it was the process used within

these different places that mattered: the self-esteem, management of a project, meeting the *Other* and his/ her differences.

Lesson nº3 or the richness of individual and collective initiatives

It is hard to select some examples of the proliferation of testimonies and experiences brought by the participants in these debates! All the more so each individual and each territory have their own local specificities and peculiar stories!

However, we can try to identify three kinds of experiences:

> The experiences of men and women who got integrated and whose life was bristled with failures and successes. For example, the story of this woman of Cameroonian origin who, with the same French degree and skills than the others university leavers of the same year, could not find a job due to her origin and her African-sounding name. This kind of testimonies highlights the resources necessary to fight against discriminations.

> The experiences of collective commitment and involvement. Let's take the example of this young woman involved in an integration association for young drug addicts that circumnavigates in the Northern Atlantic Ocean; or of this person of foreign origin who, as she didn't obtain the aid for her professional project, "managed" to create her humanitarian enterprise and managed to build five wells in the Sahel region. These initiatives show the potential for creativity and self-management of human beings when they have to compensate for a situation that is seen as unsatisfactory. There are many of this kind of upward initiatives that depart from the citizens and not from the institutions, which show how rich the initiatives taken from individuals seeking social, professional, cultural integration can be.

> The experiences linked to institutional schemes. Very often, the participants mentioned the initiatives developed within the legislative framework or implemented by public authorities, like integration through economic activity or through alternation between professional experience and academic studies; or even initiatives of enterprises (often in partnerships with public authorities) like the Charter of diversity or the creation of a "school of games" to train young people coming from disadvantaged backgrounds to work in casinos.

Lesson nº4 or the definition of intercultural dialogue by the participants

According to the majority of the participants, the topic of integration itself sends us back to interculturality, through the examples of discrimination of all kind mentioned and to the exchanges on diversity. But very often, the debates are said to be "intercultural" as they enable exchanges between different persons expressing different points of view.

However, the issue of the participants' diversity was addressed: the equal representation of men / women could not always be reached, neither all the ages were represented, nor all the origins in each debate. But some of the participants raised the following questions: What is diversity? How can it be represented? Is it necessary to be Black to represent and talk about the issues of the Black community? Do I have to be a woman to be a feminist? Do I have to be an immigrant to address the problems of integration faced by the immigrants?

The participants seemed to be in favour of a definition of the intercultural dialogue that would answer the following words: meeting or exchange between at least two people, getting to know each other and deconstructing the representations and prejudice on one another.

Quotes from Participants

" Integration cannot be separated from housing, employment and education issues" "Integration is the lack of exclusion, i.e. the feeling to be involved in all the fields of society." "Integration is the ability to live together." "I realized there were even more discrimination than I thought!" "We have to promote the "plus" of the differences." "Integration affects all population categories, not only immigrants."

Obstacles or Limits

Although these itinerant citizens' debates on the French territory enabled around a hundred people to access a space for dialogue and expression of quite a wide range of opinions, the half-day pattern did not make it possible to deepen the reflections and exchanges in order to build genuinely collective points of view on integration and different measures. However, some participants sometimes noted a feeling of *déjà vu* on a topic that unfortunately is still relevant today. And it produced a feeling of frustration *vis-à-vis* these debates which "are quite useless anyway". Nevertheless, the particpants made the most of these spaces of dialogue, as if these moments were too rare.

Unplanned Results

This frustration is also positive, as it reveals a real request for spaces of citizens' participation. The evaluation of the debates shows that the participants wanted to take part in the debate in an active way: "to exchange", "to be a player", "to bring my contribution", "to suggest solutions", "to be an active citizen"… they explained.

Besides, these citizens' debates enabled the participants to acquire formal knowledge – on discrimination, citizen participation and the role of associations towards volunteers and the target publics of their actions, on the diversity policies within enterprises, etc – and also informal – mainly listening to the other and respect.

Eventually, these debates promoted and transposed into words a genuine citizen expertise, drawn from the daily experience of the participants.

Recommendations at National Level

> Promote and strengthen the existing! Whether it is about laws and regulations or initiatives of associations working in the social field or for the citizens' participation, the participants are worried about a race for the invention of a new process, a new law or a new association to answer some issued already perfectly identified. Solutions exist. Networking and sharing initiatives help showing, for example, that some initiatives have already been efficient as far as integration is concerned. No doubt that they can be improved but they should first of all be implemented and/ or made systematic. Some examples of promotion are going in this direction: promote the hiring of disabled persons in the public and private sectors, respect the clause of social integration in public procurements to contribute to the integration of the ones with strong diffculties, strengthen the powers of labour legislation and of the Halde[18], punish and publish breaches.

> Transmit / Train are strong ideas and probably the most recurrent ones mentioned by the participants! The people arriving in an enterprise or taking over a new job have to be promoted, as well as the ones who have experience. The older people, for example: they are resource persons! Support through mentoring and tutoring is an operational proposal! It is necessary to give time for support and training. Eventually, trainings should be organized all life long, specially in terms of discrimination, the sooner the better, at school, through civic education and history lessons; or within enterprises including a course on discrimination in the continuous training programmes.

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18. Halde : Haute Autorité de Lutte contre les Discriminations et pour l'Egalité, The French Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Authority. [www.halde.fr]

> Exchange / Meet! Develop the occasions to exchange, discover the *Other*, go "beyond the fear of the *Other*"… within enterprises but also in and via associations. Meeting is essential in a process of intercultural dialogue and it favours integration. Time should be devoted to sharing moments of conviviality because it opens other doors on the representations people have of each other.

> Improve the labour market! The idea is to improve the match between demand and supply. Some examples of proposals: favour training combining work and academic studies, favour meetings between employers and jobseekers, implement an orientation service towards sustainable jobs, more systematically adapt vocational trainings with job offers…

> Innovate! Develop testing[19], create a commission in charge of diversity within the enterprises, identify new methods to "go towards" the persons in difficulty… so many interesting hints to study in order to face the stakes of integration.

For further information, please contact Serge Bonnet:
sergebonnet@macif.fr

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19. Testing: cf [http://www.observatoiredesdiscriminations.fr/testing]

French-speakers, Dutch-speakers: How to Hold a Dialogue with Each Other? Belgium

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Working Theme Selection

As far as the Belgian project is concerned, the choice was quickly orientated towards a public dialogue related to linguistic diversity. Given the historical and social situation Belgium is facing as a bilingual country, it is important to trigger a constructive dialogue between the two linguistic communities.

It was actually to face these linguistic differences that Belgium was transformed in a Federal State in 1993. The Kingdom is divided in 3 regions (Wallonia, Brussels and Flanders) and 3 linguistic communities (French, Flemish and German). All these communities supported this institutional reform but they all had very different motives.

Actually, the history of the country was marked by a linguistic fight because of these different motives. The famous communitarian problem is considered as one of the three failing lines (with the conflict between Catholics and Liberals and between left and right) that regularly triggered conflicts as well as a real political struggle throughout Belgian history. Recently, the communitarian conflict has intensified. It is often described – especially by the media – as a discord between the two main linguistic groups, namely the French and Dutch speakers. As if these two linguistic communities were historical enemies *de facto* and had to fight. The lack of dialogue is characteristic of the situation. Everybody is focused on his/ her own language and autonomy. Such a phenomenon could cause a division and a growing distance between one another.

Although the issue is mostly political, it also seeps in the daily life amongst the rest of the population. This is mainly due to the fact that in Belgium, bilinguism is quite under-developed (appart from the compulsory language courses at school). For example, there are no common media or political representatives, which makes a dialogue between the two communities almost impossible. Given the fact that dialogue and contacts between the communities are disappearing, anyone who speaks another language is considered as a "foreigner". Consequently, the population creates stereotypes and prejudices that will only freeze any form of intercultural life between the different groups of population.

Maybe this phenomenon was a good reason to start by the beginning, gathering parties "at war". They can know and understand the *Other's* his-

tory. And that was one of the objectives of the working groups organized by the P&V Foundation. They were aimed at stimulating the intercultural aspect, putting together citizens coming from the two linguistic communities; and not at debating but at listening to the others. The main questions were the following: what is the best way to know the *Other* and how can I make this a concrete approach?

Target Public and Constitution of the Group

Given that the topic chosen affects all the Belgians, the main objective was to create a group as representative as possible. A campaign had been launched in order to hire people everywhere in the country. It was essential to constitute a panel including Walloons, Brussels inhabitants and Flemish people. In addition, the P&V Foundation also tried to create a veri diverse group in terms of age, gender, level of education and ethnicity.

In view of the relatively high number of answers of the recruitment campaign, it was eventually easy to create a diverse group of around fifty participants, representing the population living in Belgium.

Methodology Adopted

Given the fact that the one who does not speak the same language is almost considered as a "foreigner", it is often difficult to hold a direct dialogue.

It is hard for the human cognition to establish links and, as the "foreigner" is unknown, it is easy to fall into prejudice. From then on, the human being will gather diverse symbols and signs seen in his surroundings or through the media and create a general image enabling him to label this "foreigner". Of course, the advantage of this process is that it enables the human being to take a fast decision concerning the people without having to know them. The inconvenient, however, is that the image created and the history that goes with do not always match reality. In its approach, the P&V Foundation chose to take this reality into account and precisely targeted these prejudices and stereotypes on "foreigners".

Therefore, the starting point is a storytelling forum that will introduce these behaviours towards the foreigner who speaks another language.

To create one's identity, people use stories. They are used to explain their own position and to justify their problems and failures. The society also needs to get organized and, what's more, to justify its social order. Over the centuries, stories were used as a practical tool. From the Epic of Gilgamesh to Hollywood, passing through Greek myths, Humans have always resorted to stories in order to explain their emotions, values and traditions to the

others. They are used to explain – to oneself and the others – the past and present of a society. Taken over by the society and understood by all, they become important, especially when problems arise between groups. A story helps naming, evaluating and interpreting the surroudings elements and what's happening in a familiar way. This also explains the important impact of the media on social developpement and definition of values. Indeed, the media constantly introduce stories that deal with the world in which citizens live and with the problems that surround them.

As far as linguistic diversity is also concerned, each one of us creates stories. This is due to the fact that the "adverse parties" are not always in direct touch. In order to understand the core problem between French and Dutch speakers, it is therefore necessary to know the stories each one of them tell about the *Others*. How is the discord transposed in other structures of stories? Which stereotypes are used for that purpose?

But the reason why the P&V Foundation decided to create a storytelling forum was different. It is related to the group dynamics itself. The recurrent problem of groups conversations is that they very often spill over into scathing discussions. The major inconvenient of public dialogues is that sometimes indeed they demand a lot of efforts from the participants. Not everybody has the ability to put into clear words his / her opinion in front of a public. The main inconvenient is that a silent majority is likely to appear. However, the aim is to know what people think and see what they have really been through. It is not always necessary to know who is right to draft lessons (one from the other) and thus widen the perspectives of the participants.

That is why the P&V Foundation rejected the structure of discussion or debate and decided to create a storytelling forum. Indeed, as it is impossible that everybody start a dialogue without holding any prejudice at all, it was necessary to give the participants the possibility to express the stereotypes without being stopped. In other words, it was necessary to give everyone the opportunity to think about stories or testimonies and be able to tell them to the others during these meetings. Telling stories does not only help us learn to know each other but also help "off-load" and above all, to address some prejudice without directly attacking some persons or offending them. In addition, it is possible to analyze the stories told and analyze some displays, topics and problems of the society.

Synthesis of the Debates

The project was divided into an introductory session, two "round tables" of stories (one negative and the other positive) and two sessions of detailed feedback in relation with these stories. During the meetings, it quickly appeared that there were many common stories. Moreover, these common elements were linked to the language, especially with negative stories. Clearly, the French-speakers already had their stories on the Dutch-speakers and vice-versa.

From the stories told by the Dutch-speakers, it appeared that sometimes some of them have difficulties to accept that all Belgians are "supposed" to know French. During their testimonies, they explained that they feel French is seen as a *lingua franca* in Belgium. In addition, this attitude is often seen as a kind of disdain towards the Dutch language. In other words, many stories showed that the Dutch-speakers consider the lack of linguistic knowledge of the French-speakers – deliberate or not – as an insult. In response, the Dutch-speakers often mentionned the possibility of refering to a "right to speak Dutch". Their stories made it clear that for them it was important to stand for the equality between the two languages.

The stories of the French-speakers were linked to those of the Dutch-speakers but introduced a different point of view. Many stories dealt with the behaviour of Dutch-speakers who sometimes refuse to speak French. In these stories, the Dutch-speakers were often described as stubborn and rude people. The Dutch-speakers can speak French but refuse to do so as a sign of protest. The French-speakers blame the Dutch-speakers for not willing to make efforts. In this context, the participants often refered to the linguistic legislations that sometimes make the communication even more difficult. Moreover, the political world is often blamed for creating this situation.

As far as positive stories were concerned, clearly less differences between the two linguistic groups were seen. In fact, all the stories take place in three main fields. First, sport is often considered as a way to overcome the linguistic barrier. Sport is described as a non-verbal means of communication that almost does not trigger any problem.

Secondly, many positive stories refered to the ability of the youth to deal with linguistic diversity. The foreign world is a third field. It is easier for French and Dutch speakers to overcome their fears when they meet in another country. The joint topic – which is also the message of all these positive stories – is the fact that many problems can be solved if everybody show some good will.

During the evaluation and feedback, it appeared that the stories and topics resulting from the analysis were acknowledged by the majority of the participants. This often triggered discussions on the possible conclusions and concrete measures to implement in order to solve the issue of linguistic diversity. These moments of feedback were very interesting, as they helped to establish a link between the different topics and have them assessed by the panel. The participants were always consulted in order to see how the stories could be interpreted. This sparked off very fruitful discussions.

Obstacles and Limits

In fact, there were few obstacles. However, over the months and meetings, P&V noticed a decrease in the total number of participants (there were 56 persons at the beginning). During the second meeting – the first forum of negative stories – the team was still almost complete. In the last forum – organized five months later – there were only 35 participants left. Nevertheless, this fall is not exceptional. It is a recurrent phenomenon for this kind of forums. Little by little, the enthusiasm of some of the participants dampens. It is also likely that they could not attend the meetings due to unpredictable circumstances. Around 70% of the initial participants kept on coming, which can be considered as a good result given the effort required.

Another comment – even if it is not a real obstacle – is the fact that many participants always wondered about the concrete outcomes of these meetings. They hoped that the project would have some political or social consequences. Which, nevertheless, created some frustration. They often asked "And now what?" In the end (cf the national recommendations point hereunder), a concrete answer could be given to this question.

Unplanned Results

An unplanned but interesting result was obtained after the comparison between positive and negative stories. It appeared that it was much easier for the participants to tell negative stories rather than positive. Not only did they tell much more negative than positive stories but, in addition, these were more coherent and longer than the positive ones. They also triggered a much more lively debate.

When this situation *de facto* was exposed to the participants, they generally agreed at this level. Some explained that it was harder to tell positive stories. On the one hand, because they seem trivial, and on the other because they do not remember them so easily. In addition, some participants said that they had a very positive behaviour but still, it was not easy for them to tell a positive story.

Therefore, it appeared that negative stories, by nature, are easier to tell and to remember than the positive ones. Moreover, these negative stories helped define the sensitive issues related to linguistic diversity, despite the fact that the majority of the participants adopted a positive attitude. In fact, telling negative stories forces us to put tolerance aside for some time and very honestly express one's feelings.

Recommendations at National Level

The use of storytelling forums as a method was mostly explorative and, by consequence, quite experimental. Later on, however, it appeared to be a very productive working mode, that helps triggering a public dialogue with a group of citizens.Therefore, the P&V Foundation recommends a more frequent use of stories instead of the usual debates, discussions or focused groups. Six good reasons explain this choice:

> They represent a very familiar cognitive method. If we compare them to the other rational argumentation requested in the case of other methods, they clearly demand less efforts from the participants. This avoids the silent majority that leaves the debates because they do not know how to argue and think as well as others can.

> They enable the "foreigners" to meet. Which is very important within a multicultural dialogue. Without knowing the other's point of view, there cannot be a genuine dialogue.

> They emphasize the daily life, which is essential for the citizens. Would we wish to have a debate at the theoretical or strategic level, it would probably be better to refer to some experts. We presume that they are in a better position to judge some elements in a rational way, without prejudice.

A citizens' forum has to highlight the life of the citizens themselves.

> The advantage of storytelling forums is that even very tolerant and positive participants can address some issues between different groups of the population, in a completely free way and without offending the others.

> Through the analysis of the different stories it is possible to define social problems and prejudices and link them together.

> It appeared that telling stories almost has a therapeutic function for some participants. For the citizens, it is the perfect way to "off-load".

For further information, please contact Sabine Verhelst:
sabine.verhelst@pv.be

Can Intercultural Dialogue Contribute to the Improvement of Interethnic Relations Between the Roma and non-Roma in Romanian Local Communities? Romania

Working Theme Selection

The Roma population is "*Europe's largest and most vulnerable minority; they are poorer than other groups, more likely to fall into poverty and more likely to remain poor*".[20] Among the CEE countries, Romania holds the highest absolute number of Roma citizens – between 1 and 2 millions (according to the World Bank). Although there is a lack of consistent and recent data collection on Roma–related issues, the Roma population in Romania is considered to range between 4,65% and 11,52% of the total population (OSI report, 2006).

There are some generally acknowledged preconditions of Roma poverty, such as: unfavorable starting point, low education levels, over–representation among low–skilled jobs, discrimination, *de facto* segregation in schools, lack of documentation (birth certificates and unclear property ownership), low representation in local and national politics. All these breed mistrust and reinforce discrimination of Roma population, which determines a very strong lack of dialogue between the Roma and non–Roma.

Despite the Government's actions, as well as the civil society's attempts to redress the social exclusion of the Roma community, a wide range of problems are still recorded mainly by national and international non–governmental organisations. Self–marginalization, especially among Roma youth in small communities, is a pressuring problem, which resides in the lack of trust and denial of their own identity, in tight relation to Roma traditions and culture, which are generally rejected by the larger society. Ultimately, in most communities, Roma integration means that Roma citizens are being assimilated by the rest of the community, and this usually happens when Roma people adhere to local traditions. Continuous self marginalization and discrimination towards the Roma population stems from lack of knowledge of the Roma culture (even by the Roma themselves), which is often invoked by the non–Roma as one of the main factors of segregation.

Hence, for Romania, the necessity to focus on intercultural dialogue and integration emerges from all these many issues that the Roma population

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20. Pogany, Istvan (2006) – *Minority Rights and the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Human Rights Law Review, 6:1, 2006, pp.1-25.

is still facing, especially in rural communities. PACT Foundation considers that a good understanding of cultures and a direct collaboration between the majority and the minority population would determine better and more stable inter-community relations and would create a basis of support for the development of the community addressed.

In the given context, the main question was: can intercultural dialogue contribute to the improvement of interethnic relations? Aspects of this issue were:

> How well do we know our and the *Other's* culture? (with focus on the Roma culture)

> What defines the Roma and Romanian culture/identity?

> How well do we understand and how willing are we to accept the specifics of other ethnics?

> What can we do (which would be the means) so that through intercultural dialogue there may be better relations between the Roma and Romanians?

> How could the two communities which are geographically segregated participate in intercultural dialogue and community development?

Target Public and Constitution of the Group

As an active actor in the community development field in the Southern part of Romania since 2002, PACT Foundation's team has been able to identify a very diverse situation of Roma communities. While working in Arges County on a project specifically dedicated to the inclusion of Roma persons on the labor market, PACT team has become increasingly aware of the issues that the Roma are facing in the region and especially of the fact that there is a major lack of contact between most of the Roma communities and the Romanian ones – even within the same localities (territorial-administrative units).

In one particular commune of Arges County – Călineşti, PACT Foundation has observed that the people belonging to the Roma and the Romanian communities are not only physically segregated, but they are also reluctant to collaborate with each other. The consulted group was made out of inhabitants belonging to the two communities of Călineşti. Every interested person was invited to join the group.

Methodology Adopted

The 5 local meetings along the CID project in this commune, gathering Roma and Romanians in one place, were meant to identify and enable discussions regarding efficient and effective means through which intercultural dialogue may improve the relations between the Roma and Romanians in this locality. Given the local realities of segregation, PACT Foundation deemed that the strategy required would not only focus on the inter-cultural dialogue per se, but would further aim to move beyond the five meetings, in order to bring the two communities together.

Various discussions and work themes were sustained by PACT Foundation with the support of experts in interethnic communities in Romania. The team sought that the five meetings would take place alternatively in the Roma and Romanian villages to ensure a fair and wide representation of both groups. This was an opportunity for the Romanians to perceive first-hand the life conditions in the segregated Roma community.

Synthesis of the Debates

1st meeting – 13 December 2008

The initial meeting focused on raising cultural awareness, endorsing self-esteem for the Roma and motivating both groups to interact through future meetings. The debate was stirred by presenting information related to the Roma history and culture[21], as well as by clarifying key terms (ţigani, gypsy, Roma) and by showcasing Roma role models and key elements related to the Roma identity. This helped to underline that, although heterogeneous, Roma people do share symbols that unite them under a similar form of identity and triggered discussions about the identity of the Roma community. Although they belong to the Rudari – a widely acknowledged Roma people – the community tended to deny that they were Roma – mostly due to the segregation and the discrimination they had been facing.

PACT Foundation used the feature documentary *Gypsy Caravan*[22] directed by Jasmine Delal, as it depicts the musical talent of Roma from various countries (including Romania). The film, an excellent portrayal of Roma culture from four countries, helped to showcase the wide variety of Roma

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21. Although an intercultural dialogue requires a focus on the Romanian culture as well, the team would specifically focus on the Roma culture, as the former is thoroughly taught in schools, while the latter is widely unknown even to the Roma themselves.

22. The feature documentary *Gypsy Caravan* was lent to PACT Foundation by the US Embassy in Romania specifically for this meeting.

communities across the world in a manner that excellently conveyed the idea of "unity in diversity" to the two groups present at the meeting.

2ⁿᵈ meeting – 16 January 2009

The aim of the meeting was to underline the importance of knowing each other's culture; the debate between the two groups helped define to what degree there is an assimilation of Romanian traditions on behalf of the Roma and to what extent the two groups know, understand and wish to accept each other's identity. The moderator introduced some key elements about Roma traditions of various Roma people followed by a short documentary[23] about the Rudari tradition of wood crafting in a community in Valea County. This triggered discussions about the traditions in the Roma Rudari community from Valea Corbului and the Romanian community. The Roma Rudari representatives recognized the craftsmanship presented in the documentary. However, they noticed that these traditions are about to be lost, as only old people in the community still know wood craft.

Hence forward, the groups had the opportunity to discuss about their own traditions and their perception on how much is shared, kept or lost. The debate revealed that the traditions are quite similar, yet most of them are unfortunately on the verge of being lost. The Roma talked about their gatherings on 15 August, 8 September (Saint Mary's passing away and birth celebrations), 27 July (Pantelimon – a Roma celebration), which are increasingly frequented by local Romanians. Both groups shared opinions on celebrations such as Easter, Christmas, baptisms, weddings or funerals, which are mostly similar, with some minor differences.

3ʳᵈ meeting – 8 April 2009

Especially set on 8 April – the celebration of the International Day of Roma, the meeting was a good occasion to reiterate the significance of celebrating Roma culture; the meeting kicked off by listing most important events that took place during this day around the country – as an incentive for the local community to organize celebrations in the future.

In an attempt to generate genuine community development in Valea Corbului, the meeting unfolded as an interactive exercise to determine in a participatory manner the needs that the Roma in Valea Corbului face. Within a previous project of PACT Foundation, focused on the improvement of the local development strategy in Calinesti, none of the Roma was involved. This meeting offered a favorable opportunity to update the strategy by including issues that the Roma face through the direct participation of the citizens from Valea Corbului.

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23. The documentary was edited by the Resources Centre for Roma Communities, Cluj, Romania [http://www.romacenter.ro]

While the Roma citizens had to list their needs, the Romanian citizens had to describe the problems that they believe the Roma community has to confront with. Interestingly, the two lists of identified needs covered more or less the same issues (infrastructure, education, services, health and pre-serving traditions). This reflected a good understanding by the Romanian citizens of the disadvantages that the Roma face and triggered discussions on sensitive issues such as education. This subject was of main interest for the Roma citizens as well as for Romanian citizens (most of them teachers), at the end of the meeting, all the participants decided to have the next (4th) meeting in Valea Corbului to focus on the issues that appeared to affect the children and hence the whole community.

4th meeting – 22 April 2009

The fourth meeting took place at the primary school from Valea Corbului village, focusing on raising awareness on the significance of the inclusive community education and aiming to reach out to both Romanian teachers and Roma parents from Valea Corbului to aid improve the educational sit-uation in the village.

With the help of participants from previous meetings (teachers and repre-sentatives from a public education local institution focused on continuous, professional formation of teachers and professors), the moderators raised and explained the subject of inclusive community school and its signifi-cance especially in a segregated and disadvantaged environment. Among the subjects tackled were how to stimulate the involvement of a disadvan-taged community in the educational process; the optimal ways to involve parents were debated, as well as ways to develop the school as an agent of community development. The meeting was an opportunity for both groups to discuss on educational problems in the local school both from the teach-ers' perspective as well as parents and children.

As a way to engage citizens in an intercultural project that was also meant to reflect the realities of the villages that belong to the same commune, a photography exhibition was suggested. Children from Valea Corbului and Vranesti villages took photos which were later selected and displayed at the Cultural Centre in Calinesti along with texts presenting relevant socio-economical–cultural information from Valea Corbului.

The 5th meeting – 15 May 2009

The final meeting took place at the Local Council in Calinesti Commune and was mainly focused on establishing an action plan together with the Roma and Romanian citizens on possible ways of local development of Valea Corbului. Based on the needs' assessment undertaken in the third

meeting, the Roma and Romanian citizens debated over the main aspects that needed to be tackled within Valea Corbului, such as the lack of asphalted road, the lack of water, lack of a sanitary point, lack of telephone signal which is extremely important in case of emergencies (i.e. for calling an ambulance). The meeting was also attended by a representative from the Local Council, along with a Commune Hall representative, who contributed to the discussions by providing possible solutions for resolving the issues.

As a follow up to the previous meetings some ideas have been also suggested and discussed: including the local development measures discussed within the meetings in the Local Development Strategy Calinesti followed by a discussion on this topic within the Local Council Meeting in Calinesti; implementing a common action plan for initiative groups from Valea Corbului and Vranesti villages; a common action for students in Valea Corbului and students from other villages in Calinesti; participation of teachers from Valea Corbului in programs focused on inclusive education, active participation methods; exhibiting the photographs taken within the project in public spaces such as the local Cultural Centre and the schools.

Obstacles or Limits

Before starting the project, PACT Foundation anticipated a various hindrances that might have had impact on the unfolding of the five meetings. Among these, also reflected in some of the participants' testimonials, was the lack of trust on behalf of citizens from Valea Corbului in the possibility of things changing for the better in their community. An obstacle that PACT Foundation attempted to tackle even from the beginning was the lack of knowledge of the Roma history and culture which can only add to misunderstandings, misconceptions and reluctance on behalf of Romanians towards collaboration with Roma. The precarious social and economic conditions that Roma citizens from Valea Corbului community face determined, especially at the beginning of the project, a general reluctance towards participating in meetings focused only on discussions on intercultural dialogue. Solving "practical" issues affecting their daily life proved to be of more immediate interest.

Unplanned Results

The five meetings that engaged the Roma community from Valea Corbului along with the Romanian citizens from other villages in Calinesti triggered a series of outcomes: it improved chances of collaboration between the citizens from Valea Corbului and Vranesti villages; Roma and Romanian citizens have improved their knowledge on Roma history and traditions,

inclusive education, involving community in school life; increased self-esteem of Valea Corbului community, increased visibility of Valea Corbului at local and county level.

One of the results was the visible interest and involvement of some of the Romanian citizens (most of them teachers) who participated and contributed regularly to meetings. Also, the activity of the needs' assessment from the third meeting proved to be far more successful than anticipated, as citizens felt more engaged in practical matters which they found noteworthy. The final meeting was more focused on the attempt to generate ideas and possible plans of action for tackling some problems that Valea Corbului community faces. The Romanian citizens that have had previous experiences with community development offered to help Valea Corbului community in solving some of the issues.

> **Quotes from Participants**
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> "*The idea that the project take place in Valea Corbului is very good, but the involvement of the Roma people in public decision making is quite difficult, both from the point of view of distance from the commune centre and of the fact that the mentality of both parties (Romanian-Roma and Romanian) cannot be changed overnight. It is easy to demand without giving anything in return.*" "*It would be even more interesting and useful if what has been discussed in this meeting was also put into practice. I think (sceptical) that all that is discussed will not be achieved, especially because of mentality and lack of interest.*"

The five meetings have represented a significant step in getting the two communities together and stimulate a dialogue for better future collaboration for community development. However, it is important to note that the two communities attended the meetings mostly due to the fact that PACT Foundation acted as a mediator and that each of the two communities have had a previous experience in other projects of the Foundation. Therefore, it would be difficult to assess to what extent the same results would have been possible in a different community with a similar segregation situation, where PACT Foundation was completely unknown by the citizens.

This experience prompted PACT Foundation to deem that dealing with intercultural dialogue and integration in mixed Roma and Romanian communities affected by issues of discrimination and/or segregation would require far more complex instruments, resources and methodology.

Recommendations at National Level

> Intercultural dialogue should become a priority for the local public authorities within interethnic communities and the local development strategies should reflect actions aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue.

> Although the Romanian educational system contains optional courses in the curricula regarding the Roma history and culture (and of other minorities as well), this and Romani language would only be included in school at parents' request. Yet, this opportunity is widely unknown among parents; therefore, parents should be informed with regard to the educational public policies that are in place. Also, this should be complementary to an active promotion of an intercultural perspective aiming at the improvement of inter-cultural knowledge and communication of all ethnic groups.

> The ordinance nº 1529/18.07.2007 issued by the Ministry of Education regarding the development of cultural diversity within the national curricula should be known in all schools especially within the ones in interethnic communities; also, it is extremely important that its implementation should be monitored by the Ministry of Education, the County Educational Inspectorate, the civil society etc.

> Another action would be the organisation of exchange experiences between communities where intercultural dialogue is present (such as the ones in Transylvania where 3 different ethnic communities Roma, Romanians and Hungarians are living side by side) with the different interethnic communities in the South of the country. It would be important to disseminate good practices regarding intercultural dialogue through various channels.

> Donors should have a significant contribution by including among selection criteria the existence of activities promoting intercultural dialogue, regardless of the project theme.

> Romania has registered significant progress with regard to legislative and policy measures; however, what consistently lacks is an efficient process of implementation in order to achieve de facto integration of Roma communities and a genuine intercultural dialogue. Main actors such as the government as well as the civil society need to adopt a "holistic approach" in order to tackle various forms of discrimination and also to have a better implementation system of the programs.

> PACT Foundation's community development approach focuses on genuine participation and empowerment towards ensuring sustainability and continuity. Hence, it would be most desirable that further actions be

taken to support the acknowledgement and collaboration of the Roma and the Romanians towards joint community action for the benefit and well-being of their entire community.

For further information, please contact Georgiana Dragu: georgiana.dragu@fundatiapact.ro

VII. Cross-cutting Recommendations

1. Methodological Recommendations

The Concept of Intercultural Dialogue

> Understand intercultural dialogue, not only as a topic itself, linked to interculturality, but also as a practice of cooperation with the one who is different, as an educational process, a way to learn how to live in a multi-cultural society.

> Widen the concept and use it for any forms of xenophobia, segregation, communautarism and discrimination.

> Work on prejudice and deconstruct collective and individual representations in order to initiate a dialogue. Carry out this work with the discriminating majority groups and minority persons seen as discriminated against.

The Principle of Intercultural Citizens' Consultations

> List the most adapted methodologies to consult citizens[24] and also the processes enabling the excluded[25] and absent[26] ones to take part in the consultations so that the panels would be as representative as possible.

> Make the most of the different methods of consultation that can collect citizen expertise, upstream but also downstream from the decisions and policies, in order to take wise and appropriate decisions.

> Clarify the aim of the consultations and their intrinsic value-added, as they are a kind of informal learning and an opening to the *Other* for the participants to consultations who thus develop new skills.

> Make sure that public authorities abide by the consultation criteria in terms of transparency, timeframes and obligation of communication in the

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24. Citizens jury and panel, world cafe, study & debate circles, forums, storytelling…

25. The persons excluded from participation are people who suffer from real impossibilities: wether because they are more worried about their economic survival; because they get have access to the spaces of participation or because they auto-expel themselves thinking they are not capable enough.

26. The absent ones do not suffer from any major difficulty to attend, but they have chosen not to do so. They have the possibility to participate in other modes of participation, like voting, involvement in NGOs, direct contacts with elected representatives… See *The absent ones, how to make their voice heard in the participation process?*, Territoires, no 482, November 2007.

different steps of the public decision making process[27].

> Widden the consultation process, especially in the preparation phase, in order to guarantee the accessibility and relevance of the grant.

> Give preference to the diagnosis shared by different stakeholders, enabling cross-cutting views and a greatest understanding of a problem.

> Give preference to interventions at the individual level: face-to-face meetings of people from different origins, focusing on the identity, the learning process from and on each other, analyzing conflicts between the people and building mutual trust. Gathering people in the same place at the same time makes it easier to hold a constructive debate on their differences.

> Delegate the responsibility of project development to local groups, so that the projects will include the specificities of the target territory and population.

> Progress from simple dialogue to cooperation; settle a framework favouring dialogue between the different communities before starting any collaborative work.

> Accompany any process of consultation by a neutral professional mediator who organises and facilitates the debates.

Communication and Dissemination

> Disseminate, as widely as possible, the good practices and methodologies of prejudice deconstruction in order to foster new citizen initiatives. Encourage networking, meetings and exchanges, trainings…

> Carefully define the terminology used when dealing with intercultural dialogue, in order to avoid misunderstandings or even reproduce prejudice.

Evaluation

> Invest in impact evaluation procedures in order to define the practices to be reproduced and the ones to be improved. In this evaluation, include the participants and not only the project developers.

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27. Identify a problem, draft a solution, implement, evaluate.

2. Political Recommendations

To the Attention of the EU Institutions

> Systematically promote intercultural dialogue in Community Action Programmes, beyond the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

> Create occasions and spaces to meet and hold dialogues. Allocate more means to the framework programme "Lifelong Education and Training" and to the "Europe for Citizens" and "Youth in Action" Programmes for the 2014–2020 period in order to provide the young Europeans with more opportunities to take part in intercultural exchanges and formal or informal learning projects. Mobility enables people from different backgrounds and origins to meet, and the linguistic skills are of utmost importance as they help in-depth interpersonal exchanges.

To the Attention of National and European Policy-makers

Legislation

> Define legislations through dialogue, making sure that a good governance is in place as far as diversity is concerned. Resort to intercultural communication and integrate the intercultural dimension as a structural element of the policies.

> Make sure that not only the directives and EU regulations are implemented but also the national legislations that defend equality, non-discrimination and diversity within enterprises.

Economy

> Force the enterprises to implement a diversity charter and develop methods that could make sure diversity is respected during recruitment and within the enterprise (testing, labels for the deserving enterprises...).

> Favour social and solidarity economy, which values and initiatives in terms of social innovation promote integration and empowerment of populations who are discriminated against on the labour market.

Active Citizenship

> Acknowledge the volunteers' commitment, which develop useful skills for social cohesion and the economic dynamics of a territory.

> Adapt the format of the CV and other certificates that can testify for other kind of less traditional experiences, like active citizen participation.

> Explore the media momentum of the European Year of Volunteering (2011) to encourage innovative initiatives in this field.

> In the definition of integration, include not only the access to an economic activity but also integration factors such as education and training, participation in the life of the neighbourhood, access to decent housing, acquisition of national languages and of course associated with a non-discriminatory process and an integration policy.

Education & Training

> Integrate intercultural education in the civic education courses through a pedagogy teaching how to live together in a diverse society.

> Create a toolbox for a pedagogy of diversity dedicated to teachers and educators and train them on how to use it.

> Encourage diversity in the youth movements and centers, sporting clubs…

> Develop training programmes that will provide intercultural skills on the working place in particular for civil servants such as local authorities employees, prison warders… or even elected representatives.

> Allocate more financial and human resources to educate and offer further training to foreign-born people.

VIII. Conclusions

The definition of intercultural dialogue given by the CBAI[28] was quite helpful for the implementation of the CID project. "*It is in line with space and time, as the concept evolves depending on the historical, geographical and political contexts. It can be analyzed as a sociological or political phenomenon (kind of fight against xenophobia, segregation, communautarism and discrimination) but also as an educative process, questioning our way of thinking, our way of dealing with the intercultural.*"

Indeed, after these debates and the project's transnational meetings, the participants acquire a skill for active listening, a wider tolerance towards the *Other*, a better knowledge of the discriminations some groups are facing... All these citizens will now consider their society and the elements making it with new eyes. They will be more able to delay their judgment and enter into dialogue before. Always, the consultations organisers were swinging between intercultural dialogue as a simple knowledge of the others culture and as the perception of the others world.

Projects are conceived and developed by organisations, but throughout their implementation they quickly created their own dynamics, all the more if they refer to the active commitment of citizens for a proper achievement of the activities. Indeed, the partners were able to check that when one participation offer is made, citizens catch it and take over the space that was proposed. There is a genuine demand for spaces of citizens' participation. The evaluation of the debates shows that the participants are eager to participate in these debates within an active process. For example, the French participants wished to "exchange", "bring their own contribution", "suggest solutions". Many of them will repeat the experience and have already decided to get voluntarily involved in consultation bodies such as the Youth Parliament...

The project partners are implementing plans in order to disseminate the information collected and capitalise the dynamics launched with the citizens. In December 2009, CSV will launch a study focused on the consultation methods that bring citizens closer to the European Institutions. P&V wants to draw the attention of national media on the Belgian consultation, the methodology used and the results achieved. PACT will try to implement the action plan that was established with the participants.

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28. Christine Kulakowski, Director of the Brussels Centre for Intercultural Action, Midi de la Solidarité, 21 April 2008.

IX. Project Synthesis

Contribution of the CID Project in the Promotion of Citizen's Participation

The partners of the CID project tried to gather the necessary elements to establish a real participation of the citizens.

The CID Project helped creating spaces for exchange, participation, where the floor was given to everyone and not only speakers bringing in information, according to the tradition of representative democracy. The consultations were focused on the intercultural dialogue topic. Even if the focuses on intercultural dialogue, target publics and methods of debate varied depending on national contexts, the objectives remained the same for all. The idea was to create a new space for dialogue, separated from any professional or political stake in order to get to know the *Other*, the one we do not meet on a daily basis and hold prejudice against. In each country, the project created a contact, a discussion between two parties looking for an agreement, a compromise, suggesting that there could be a disagreement. This concept was not only addressed as a topic itself – kind of fight against xenophobia, segregation, communautarism, discrimination – but as an educative process, questioning our way of thinking, our way of dealing with the intercultural.

The five consultation processes were based on voluntary and unpaid participation of (often active) citizens. The project partners questioned the participants on their motivations in order to understand why citizens preferred to dedicate some of their free time to a collective work that will not have an immediate impact on their daily lives instead of one of their numerous activities. Some were convinced that citizens can forestall some conflicts often fuelled by politicians, others were interested in the theme and the methodology. Often, the participants just wanted to make their contribution, exchange, be a player, suggest solutions.

The citizens acquired some key skills to learn how to exchange, like for example active listening and tolerance. For most of them, the CID project will be an experience of informal learning that could be promoted at professional level but also in future participatory processes.

The partners used this experience to create a toolbox of the most appropriate methods that help establishing a rich and constructive dialogue. The methods chosen vary; each one of them has its value-added and its limits. The citizens' jury, the study and debate circles and storytelling are some of the methods tested by partners. They all tried to organise one or two

sessions to level up the knowledges of participants on the subject, sessions of exchange of experiences and a final session or drafting recommendatins. Consultations were usually followed by a systematic evaluation in order to collect individual opinions.[29] All these methods were referring to the participants' own experience, under the guise of heard of lived stories, anecdotes or testimonies. The active participation of citizens was a key element of the five consultations.

The partners talk to involved citizens but also made sure that the consultation processes enabled the inclusion of the people excluded and absent from the participation process in order to have genuine representative panels. The citizens from rural areas or from the provinces were equally represented with the inhabitants of capital cities where some of the partner association were based. People who had immigrated, recently or not, foreign-born, national majorities and minorities and linguistic communities were present in all the consultations. Pupils and students becoming aware of their political citizenship and of the deadline of the European parliamentary elections, but also those already involved in their school's representative bodies, in student federations or the youth Parliament were active participants in the debates.

Active citizenship was at the centre of the debates. The integration of the discriminated cannot be limited to the mere sector of economic activity. Involvement within NGOs, neighbourhood associations or political organisations was considered as an efficient means of integration. Integration is the lack of exclusion, the feeling to be involved in all the sectors of the society. This European project gave people the opportunity to take part in a collective enterprise and to get to know their rights, in particular concerning the participation to the local or European decision-making process.

The partners are now thinking about the capitalisation of the gathered information and the evaluation of the impact of participation. The closing seminar of 27 May 2009 already enabled them to notice that the project made the citizens want to get involved in the improvement of the society and public policies. Given the value-added brought by this experience to local communities, the partners are considering the human and material means that would be necessary to extend it and increase the number of this kind of initiatives.

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