

CONTEXT, THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND BEST  
PRACTICES IN INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN  
PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
IRELAND, GERMANY & FRANCE



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## PREFACE

We are experiencing a major change in the world's social order. Because of globalisation, people are no longer restricted by their countries' borders, and their movement has increased for business and tourism. Furthermore, with an increase in natural disasters and conflict, people are forced to leave their homes to seek safety. To date, more than 60 million people across the world have been forced to leave their homes and to find shelter in another part of their country or abroad. It is estimated that about 6% of refugees have made their way to Europe (East, 2018). As a result of this movement, a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic Europe is struggling to deal with social and cultural differences within its heterogeneous populations. With more cultures living together within countries, there is also an increasing need for better communication. Not only do people need to interact through the same language, they also need to be aware of cultural differences. They need to become interculturally competent.

This e-book explores the topic of intercultural education within a primary school setting in three countries: France, Germany and Ireland. It represents one of several resources being developed as part of an Erasmus Plus funded project called "Grow from Seeds" Intercultural Education in Primary Schools. The main objective of the Grow from Seeds project is to design an education programme that will provide new learning opportunities for teachers of primary schools and their pupils in the field of Intercultural Education. Six organisations have come together to develop this project: the Gaiety School of Acting (National Theatre School of Ireland), Gilden-Grundschule (Primary School, Germany), Kildare Town Educate Together National School (Primary School, Ireland), La Transplanishère (Theatre Company, France), Ecole Primaire Les Fougères, Le Raincy (Primary School, France) and Plan International Ireland (International Development Organisation, Ireland). The "Context and Theory" provides an overview of intercultural education in primary education from the perspective of three countries: France, Germany and Ireland.

It is important to note that this e-book has been written for an intended audience of educators and facilitators working with children of primary school age. It has been designed to form part of a programme for integration into national curricula and to support Intercultural Education in the Primary School – Guidelines for Schools, and the Yellow Flag Programme. It is not intended to provide a fully comprehensive exploration of all issues relating to intercultural education. For that reason, we use UNESCO terminology with a focused scope of application. We acknowledge the necessary limitations of this resource, but trust that will serve its purpose of guiding you through the main relevant concepts.

In Chapter 1, we explore how changing demographics across our three partner countries result in more multicultural societies, which often leads to new challenges within the societies. These challenges, namely racism and exclusion, can be tackled by increased knowledge and awareness. Therefore, Chapter 2 focuses on the importance of awareness rising in schools and its practical implementation through the means of Intercultural Education. Finally, in Chapter 3, we explore fun and interactive ways to address social issues with primary school children, using creative methodologies such as storytelling, creative drama and performing arts. The purpose of the book is to set the context and inform the development of the Grow from Seeds Training Handbook. The Grow from Seeds Training Handbook consists of a step-by-step guide of ten workshops that will provide teachers with the tools to apply intercultural education into their teaching. The first seven workshops will focus on experiential learning that investigates themes

of social inclusion, active citizenship, social cohesion and empowerment. The subsequent three workshops will provide tools for students to create their own stories and combine their favourite elements of each individual story to co-create a communal play. Overall the Grow from Seeds project provides a programme designed to foster intercultural dialogue in Primary Schools, addressing European Parliament priorities to challenge extremism through social cohesion and inclusion, active citizenship, empowerment and participation of pupils.

## CHAPTER 1

### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The promotion of equality and respect for human rights is a core element of the European Union's goals, legislation and institutions. The principle of equality has been a cornerstone of the EU's policy making from its early days; and was first introduced in EU legislation in the context of gender equality. The Treaty of Rome of 1957 required equal pay between men and women, and provided the competence to develop the first Equality Directives: The Equal Pay Directive of 1975 and the Equal Treatment Directive of 1976, which proscribed discrimination on grounds of gender in access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions.

Yet it was not until the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997 that the European Union introduced the legal competence to combat discrimination on a wide range of grounds of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. This competence was set out in Article 13 of the Treaty of the European Community and had a significant impact on European policy making, as well as the lives of many Europeans. It led both to the introduction of a series of new Equality Directives, and to the revision of the existing Gender Equality Directives.

In recent years, there have been two further major developments promoting anti-discrimination laws in the EU. Firstly, the capacities and competencies of the EU in relation to equality and human rights were recently amended and enhanced by the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1 December 2009 and made significant changes to the constitutional framework of the EU. Secondly, as a result of the Lisbon Treaty and other key decisions by the EU institutions, there is a growing convergence between the EU Human Rights Frameworks and other intergovernmental human rights frameworks (e.g. of the Council of Europe and the United Nations).

The EU's objectives in fighting discrimination are to:

- improve knowledge about discrimination by raising awareness among the population of their rights and obligations, and also of the benefits of diversity;
- support intermediary actors such as NGOs, social partners and equality bodies to improve their capacity to combat discrimination;
- support the development of equality policies at the national level and encourage the exchange of good practices between EU countries;
- achieve real change in the field of anti-discrimination through training activities;
- push for business-oriented diversity management as part of a strategic response to a more diversified society, customer base, market structure and workforce (Academy of European Law, 2018).



## THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS OF EUROPE

Europe is facing an era of vast social change. While the continent has never had a homogenous population, and European countries have a long history of diverse co-existence and welcoming migrants, in recent years two significant trends have emerged. Migrants are arriving from less economically developed countries and they are coming in large numbers. Today, the European Union is a highly populated, culturally diverse union of 28 member states. As of 1 January 2018, the population of the EU is about 512.6 million people (Michaels, 2018). In 2017 alone, it was estimated that 2 million people from non-EU Member states immigrated to one of the 28 EU countries. The most recent research in 2017 found that foreign citizens make up 7.5% of people living in EU member states (Michaels, 2018). Europe's cultural, ethnic and religious diversity will continue to develop over the coming years and decades. The EU is struggling to adjust to these changes, and to become a multicultural and multi-ethnic region. Therefore, it is important that educators are equipped with the skills and resources they require to allow the children they work with to navigate this landscape.

## DISCRIMINATION IN EUROPE – THE FIGURES

Discrimination can be defined as 'the prejudicial or distinguishing treatment of an individual based on his or her (perceived) membership in a certain group or category. Discrimination restricts members of one group from opportunities or privileges that are available to another group, leading to the exclusion of the individual or entities based on illogical or irrational decision making' (Esu-online.org, 2018).

A Eurobarometer survey conducted in 2015 sought to examine perceptions, attitudes, knowledge and awareness of discrimination among all 28 Member States of the European Union (Special Eurobarometer 437, Discrimination in the EU Report, 2015). The survey sought to build upon previous surveys to determine if there has been a change in people's attitudes, by including the same questions that were asked in similar surveys in 2006, 2009 and 2012. As part of the latest survey, 27,718 respondents representing different social and demographic groups were interviewed face-to-face at home and in their mother tongue.

The results are alarming. Discrimination in general is seen to be more widespread than in 2012. Discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin continues to be regarded as the most widespread form of discrimination in the EU (64%), and it is more likely to be seen as widespread than was the case in 2012 (+8 percentage points). More than half of the respondents say that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (58%; +12) and gender identity (56%; +11) is widespread in their country, both showing substantial increases from the 2012 survey. The proportion of respondents regarding discrimination on the basis of religion or belief to be widespread has also increased substantially, from 39% in 2012 up to 50% in 2015, while there has been a smaller increase in relation to discrimination on the basis of disability (50%; +4). With regard to legal rights, 45% of respondents would know their legal rights if they were a victim to discrimination or harassment; however, they are quite critical of national efforts to fight discrimination. The majority of respondents (62%) think that new measures need to be introduced to raise the level of protection for groups at risk of discrimination. The majority of respondents are most in favour of providing information on their ethnic origin (72%) and on their religious beliefs (71%). Respondents equally emphasised the importance of information on diversity being provided at school.

## DISCRIMINATION WITHIN AN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Institutional discrimination refers to discrimination caused by institutions and public authorities through policies, regulations and/or practices. A study carried out in 2004 identified five types of educational institutional discrimination (Esu-online.org., 2018)

- **Segregation in school classes:** Placing students in “minority classes” has been criticised to interfere with the process of inclusion and may lead to “racialised groups”, that is, ascribing unequal value to sets of individuals along perceived racial lines, in the future.
- **Assignment to special education for reasons other than disability:** Evidence suggests that pupils from migrant families and minority groups are often wrongfully assigned to classes specifically designed for students with disabilities or special needs. This in turn limits their advancement within education and employment.
- **Exclusion from schools for cultural reasons:** Some cultural practices are considered incompatible with customs of the majority population, such as the exclusion of Muslim female students wearing the headscarf at school or participating in swimming classes with male peers. These practices can lead to exclusion and harassment.
- **Admittance to more prestigious institutions or private institutions:** Discrepancies between admittance to public and private schools, as well as between prestigious and ordinary educational institutions limit equal access and chances in education, therefore having implications on future opportunities. For example, some companies do not recruit from schools or universities in which ethnic minorities are concentrated.
- **Lack, or low quality of compensatory or support programmes:** There is often a lack of effective compensatory language programmes, second language teaching undertaken by teachers who are not specifically trained, lack of native language instruction, lack of intercultural curricula approaches in school programmes to foster diversity and/or lack of religious pluralism.

Moreover, an OECD study found that immigrants in the EU have lower educational attainment levels on average than their EU-born peers. About 36% have a low level of educational attainment, compared with 25% of non-migrants ([www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)).

The EU has recognised increased diversity is opportunity to make schools more inclusive, creative and open minded. To capture this opportunity, they have established a Sirius Network which consists of policy makers, researchers and NGO's whose aim is to improve policy implementation on migration and education across the EU. In addition, the Commission is regularly monitoring and collecting data on the gap between migrant and local children in the EU educational system (European Commission, 2018).

## TAKING A CLOSER LOOK

The preceding paragraphs provide an overview of discrimination at the European level; but are these figures representative of our partner countries France, Germany and Ireland?

This next section will focus on discrimination in relation to migrants by looking at each country individually; with regards to their demographics, religious dominance and institutional discrimination. As this e-book explores Intercultural Education, the focus will lay on educational policies and systems. In terms of institutional discrimination, we focus on educational policies that deny migrants the access to their fundamental rights and freedoms.



## DISCRIMINATION

One way to measure discrimination in a society is looking at the incidence of its most extreme expression – hate crimes. On average, the police and gendarmerie in France open about 750 procedures per month related to racism (excluding current and judicial reports). There has been a general rising trend in the incidence of hate crimes, with a peak in 2015 in response to terror attacks from Muslim extremists. While this declined in 2016 onwards, the trend is still of an upward trajectory.

In 2017, for the first time since 2008, the number of attacks on religious sites decreased. Christian sites were the most heavily targeted with 878 reported incidents. Attacks on Jewish sites are at a relatively low level of 28 reported incidents, which can possibly be explained with the government's Sentinelle anti-terror campaign that placed soldiers outside synagogues and other Jewish community sites (Hatecrime.osce.org, 2018).

## DISCRIMINATION WITHIN AN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

According to the French constitution, the state “assures equality in front of the law for all citizens, regardless of origins, race or religion.” While this understanding is sound in principle, it has been argued that this approach, combined with the fact that the French government does not collect data on racial origin, leads to a failure to recognise the existence of ethnic minority groups. At the same time, since ethnic minorities are not recognised, their special needs are not identified and protection of these groups is not granted by the state. While other states have legislation in place to, for example, offer students the right to receive education in their native language, this is not the case in France.

Furthermore, the National Education Administration contributes to the lack of ethnic diversity within institutions. French authorities (and education authorities in particular) take decisions which prioritise socially and academically privileged families, which tends to reinforce segregation. The 2012 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study showed that in France, 15-year-old immigrant students largely underperform compared to their peers, even when the effect of socio-economic position is controlled. Moreover, this disadvantage is largely maintained in the second generation; especially for North and Sub-Saharan African immigrants whose academic performance is significantly lower than their French counterparts. It has been argued that the causes of these differences lay in the different cultural backgrounds of students – teachers largely misunderstand the needs of students from different backgrounds and the causes for their underperformance.

There are a set of behaviours and attitudes that are commonly expected of all schoolgoers. If students with immigration backgrounds do not have these attributes, they are considered ‘not hard working’ or simply ‘incompetent’. Negative assumptions are then made about the students and their families, which creates significant obstacles to their academic performance which other students do not experience. This reveals an inherent bias against immigrants within the education system (Cncdh.fr, 2017).

# FRANCE

## DEMOGRAPHICS

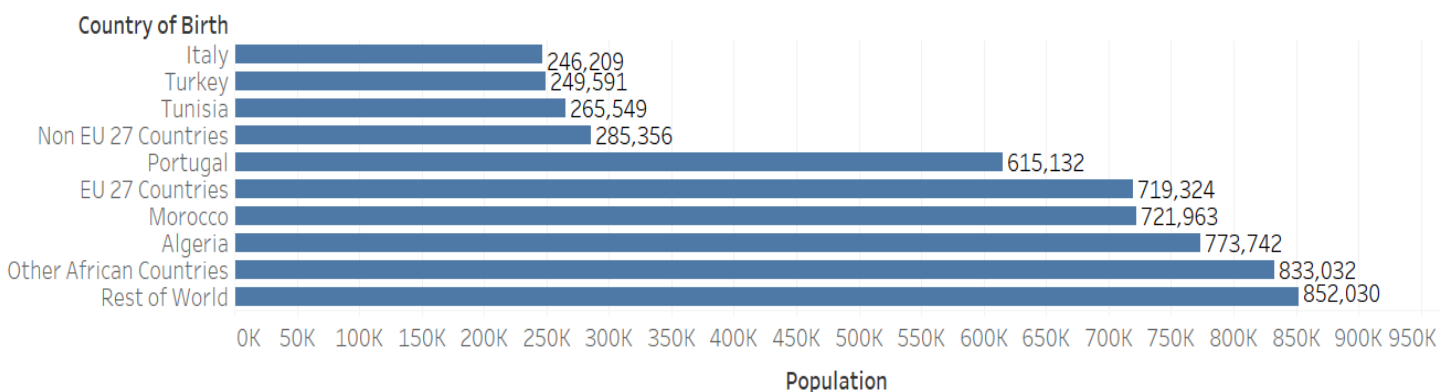
Being a former colonial empire, France has a long history of the migration of people with a loyalty to the state structure. France still holds overseas territories and dependencies across the world. These will not be included in this chapter, as their reality differs largely across regions, and is not comparable to Metropolitan France in terms of the composition of their population.

French legislation prohibits the processing of personal data revealing political and religious beliefs, affiliation with trade unions, sexual orientation, state of health or ethnic and racial origins. Since exceptions can only be granted on a case-by-case basis to public institutions and polling institutes, all available data used in this chapter stems from individual polls, rather than a nationwide census.

In 2018, the population of France was estimated as 65.9 million. As of 2014, 11.6% of the French population was foreign-born (Eurostat, 2015). 20.6% of France’s population has at least one parent who did not receive the French nationality through birth (Insee.fr., 2012). Today, it is estimated that two out of five people in France are immigrants in first, second or third generation (La Croix, 2018).

In 2011, it was estimated that of all immigrants, the majority (43.6%) came from African countries, followed by other European countries (37.8%) and Asia (14.6%) (Tribalat, 2018). The area with the largest proportion of immigrants is Greater Paris, where almost 40% of immigrants lived in 2012 (Insee.fr, 2018).

The graph below provides an overview of migrants by country of birth in 2014, which allows for some insight into the demographics of the population in France.



## RELIGION

France is a secular state and has one of the lowest rates of people practising religion in the world. According to a 2016 survey conducted by the Institute Montaigne, 39.6% of the French population claimed to be atheists. Slightly more than half (51.1%) of those surveyed identified as Christians, 5.6% as Muslims, and 0.8% as Jewish.

These numbers are in sharp contrast to data collected in 1986, when only 15.5% of the population were atheists, and only a small percentage of the population was Muslim. A Pew Research Study of Islam in Europe estimates the number of Muslims in France to be higher than the numbers provided by Institute Montaigne (at 8.8%). If these numbers are accurate, they represent the highest percentage of Muslims in Europe. The percentage of the Muslim population in France is expected to increase further due to immigration and conversion (Institute Montaigne, 2016).

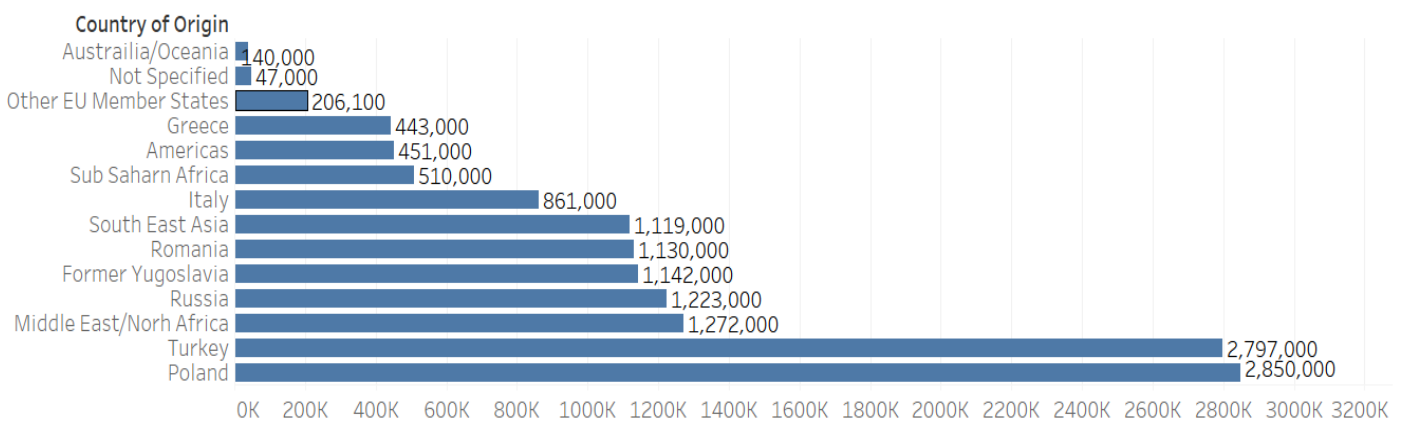


# GERMANY

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Germany has historically been a country with a significant amount of immigration. Since 2005, the country has experienced a demographic decline, which has been counterbalanced by increased immigration since 2012. Despite a drop in the country's growth rate, Germany's population is now estimated at 82.52 million (Statista, 2018a). Today, more people immigrate than emigrate. In 2015 for example, 2.14 million people moved to Germany (2.02 million people without German citizenship), while 997.500 people left Germany (857.500 non-nationals) (Statista, 2018b). Statistics differentiate between foreigners living in Germany and 'people with a migration background' meaning that they, or at least one of their parents, did not receive their German citizenship through birth. In 2016, an estimated 10 million foreigners (12% of the population) and 18.6 million people with migration background lived in Germany (22.5% of the population) (Statista, 2018c). The German Government has been keen to encourage immigration over the past fifty years partly to address longer term demographic problems in Germany, such as its low birth rate, and partly to address shorter term labour shortages.

The graph below captures the diversity of Germany's migrant population, also highlighting that most immigrants come from other (mainly eastern) European countries.



## RELIGION

Germany is a secular state. According to the fundamental rights laid out in the Constitution, the state needs to guarantee the freedom of religion, which includes the freedom of worshipping and the right to lead a life according to the rules of one's personal beliefs.

About 34% of the population today are atheists and agnostics, and their percentage is far higher in Eastern Germany than in Western Germany. This is largely because of the former Communist East German state's policy of discouraging religious belief (Worldpopulationreview.com, 2018). The majority of Germans are Christian; either Roman Catholic (29.9%) or Protestant (29.8%), although 1.3% of the population are also Orthodox Christians. Islam is the second largest religion in Germany, with an estimated 6.1% of the population according to a 2017 Pew Research Survey. Germany has the second largest Muslim population in Europe, at nearly 5 million, and is expected to grow significantly in the coming decades due to migration and conversion.



While the Muslim community in Germany is constantly growing, the Jewish community is in decline. Before the Second World War, there were about 2800 synagogues in Germany, compared to only 99 in 2014 (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014). Most synagogues were destroyed during the November pogroms in 1938 and the War until 1945.

While Germany's Jewish community had about 570,000 members until 1933, this also changed drastically during the Nazi regime. Today, the Central Council of Jews in Germany estimates that the Jewish parish has little under 99,000 members (Zentralrat der Juden, 2018).

## DISCRIMINATION

With the arrival of hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers in Germany in 2015, the number of recorded hate crimes spiked. According to Amnesty International, "16 times as many crimes were reported against asylum shelters in 2015 (1,031) as in 2013 (63). More generally, racist violent crimes against racial, ethnic and religious minorities increased by 87% from 693 crimes in 2013 to 1,295 crimes in 2015" (Amnesty.org, 2018). In Germany, 1031 right-wing motivated crimes targeting asylum accommodation were registered in 2015 and 988 in 2016, a massive increase up from 199 such crimes in 2014 (Enar-eu.org, 2018). In 2017, the number dropped back to 312. Experts estimate that about 90% of all hate crime is not recorded in statistics as it is never reported. There were 1453 anti-Semitic crimes in 2016 (Deutsche Welle, 2018).

## DISCRIMINATION WITHIN AN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

According to a survey conducted by the German Anti-discrimination Office, migrants feel institutionally discriminated against; especially on the housing market (80%) and in Governmental institutions (68%), but also in all other aspects of life such as work (64%), services (52%), health (45) or education (26%) (Antidiskriminierungsstelle.de, 2018). It has been argued that the school system institutionally discriminates against non-German students. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights characterises the German education system as being highly desegregated compared to European counterparts. The main criticism is that it does not provide sufficient language training for children who do not speak German. This has been shown to reinforce social inequality.

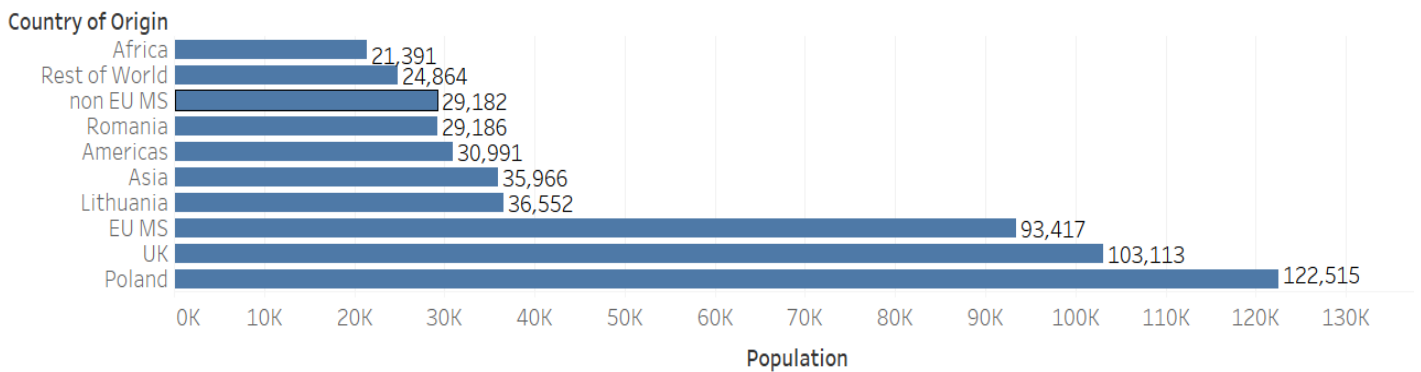
In 2017, a United Nations working group of People of African Descent accused Germany of racism. According to the working group, people of African descent are subjected to racial discrimination by their classmates, teachers, and workmates and by structural racism by the government and criminal justice system. It has been argued that policy makers fail to recognise the exclusionary practices and structures within the German society that make it harder for migrants to integrate. Educational indicators such as the PISA studies clearly indicate that migrants are well below average (Antidiskriminierungsstelle.de, 2018).

# IRELAND

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Multi-ethnicity in Ireland is not a new occurrence, with Irish Travellers, black-Irish and Jewish people having made up a significant proportion of society for decades. However, Ireland’s demographics have also been significantly altered by migration. With a population today of just over 4.7 million people, approximately 10 million people have emigrated from Ireland since the beginning of the 19th century. This tendency changed during the Celtic Tiger – the economic boom Ireland experienced in the mid-1990s to late 2000s. This period was characterised by rapid immigration and has meant that Ireland has become considerably more diverse in terms of national and ethnic origin in recent decades. This was followed by the economic crash of the last decade, during which time it is estimated that around 10% of Irish young people emigrated. In 2016, the largest group of residents was “White Irish”; making up 82.2% of the population. This was followed by “any other White background” (9.5%), non-Chinese Asian (1.7%) and “other incl. mixed background” (1.5%) (CSO, 2017).

The above information suggests that Ireland’s experience of migration has changed radically over recent decades, with a shift from net emigration to net immigration; and there has been an associated increase in national and ethnic diversity. While large parts of the Irish population left the country during economically rough times, Ireland became the new home for a lot of people during its remarkable economic upswing – especially for citizens of the new EU member states, as shown below:



## RELIGION

The Catholic Church historically had significant influence on all elements of public life. In 1922, almost 93% percent of the population identified as Catholic, with the remaining 7% identifying as Protestant. Other religions were practically non-existent in Ireland.

This profile changed dramatically during the latter stages of the 20th Century. There has been a rise in the number of people with no religion, which grew by 73.6% from 269,800 to 468,400 between 2011 and 2016. During the same time period, the number of Muslims increased by 14,200 and the number of Orthodox increased by 17,000. The fastest growing religions between 2011 and 2016 in percentage terms were Orthodox, Hindu and Muslim. According to a study published by the University College of Cork, the Muslim community has grown rapidly in Ireland over the last 20 years, from around 4,000 in the early 1990s to estimates of 40-45,000 today (Irishexaminer.com, 2018).

## DISCRIMINATION

Hate crime data in Ireland is collected by the Central Statistics Office and the National Police Force of Ireland (An Garda Síochána). This data, however, is not made publicly available, which makes it difficult to assess the prevalence of hate crimes in the country. With the end of the economic boom, the government scaled back on its structures to address discrimination and ensure equality, with radical cuts to anti-discrimination action plans and equality bodies. An increase in the prevalence of hate crimes seems to have been the consequence. According to the Irish Times, in 2016, the Irish police recorded one hate crime nearly every day (The Irish Times, 2017). This is a sharp increase from 125 hate crimes being reported in 2013 (Breaking News, 2018). Research suggests that these figures are unrepresentative of the true prevalence of hate crime, and that the real statistics are likely to be much higher. Although these numbers seem to be rather low at a first glance, Ireland's relatively small population gives these numbers a different dimension.

## DISCRIMINATION WITHIN AN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

A study by the University College of Cork of 2012 found that the Irish Police's failure to collect data on hate crime and discrimination, especially against Muslims, constitutes institutional racism (The Irish Examiner, 2012).

Amnesty International and the Irish Centre for Human Rights found that "the Irish Government has failed to tackle the existence of racial discrimination in its laws, policies and practices and recommends that the Government undertake a "human rights audit", starting with the mainstreaming of human rights and anti-discrimination training for all state and institutional personnel" (NUI Galway, 2005).

In Ireland, the majority of State-funded schools are Catholic, and up until October 2018, the Equal Status Act of 2000 and 2004, schools were allowed to refuse to admit a child who was not of the school's religion, and to give preference to children of the school's religion. This Act has since been amended and "non-denominational families will now find that for well over 95% of primary schools they will be treated the same as all other families in primary school

admissions.”(Department of Education and Skills, 2018)

Within schools, there is insufficient language support for children who do not have English as their first language. To account for this lack of qualified teachers, additional support is provided by special needs teachers. This not only takes away resources from another vulnerable group of students, but also poses a danger of stigmatisation for children who do not speak English. It might in addition lead to the devaluation of their native languages.

Current legislation contributes to the marginalisation and disempowerment of asylum seekers, as they are unable to apply for places in third level colleges, or Further Education as third level applicants must be in possession of a student visa or a resident permit. This restriction also has a disproportionate negative impact on children of asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors, who have gone through the secondary system.

Finally, ‘I Just Don’t want to get Picked on by Anybody’, Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion in a Newly Multi-Ethnic Irish Primary School, Children & Society found that children of ethnic minority can often be excluded by Irish children because of the previously mentioned ‘differences’, although this is not always the case as ‘children of different ethnicities do mix’. They also found that this exclusion can have a very negative impact on immigrant children’s development.

Further studies from Devine et al (2008) indicated ‘a general acceptance by children of their refugee/immigrant peers on the surface, but evidence of hostility and racism underneath.’ They also found name calling was the most common form of racism, as most Irish children used name calling impulsively. This study also found that children from ethnic minority’s acceptance hinged on his/her ability to make common ground or connect with Irish children. The study found there were discrepancies between anti-racist policy and practice in Irish schools meaning anti-discrimination policies needed to be implemented to tackle the racism problem in primary schools (Devine & Kelly, 2006).

## CONCLUSION

This first Chapter has illustrated that there is significant diversity across France, Germany and Ireland in terms of demographics and religion. It also shows that an increase in diversity, be it more recent as is the case in Ireland, or historical like France and Germany, the lack of acceptance or tolerance toward new cultures is a common thread in all three countries. Recent years have seen increased migration to all three countries, and thus a growing importance to talk about racism and the vulnerability of minority groups. There is evidence that discrimination against minority groups, particularly migrants, is prevalent in all three countries. This discrimination is reflected in national Education policies and practice; and is contrary to the European Union’s goals, policy and legislation.

France, Germany and Ireland have varying degrees of legislation in place to tackle these issues; however, a special effort must be made in order to fulfil their obligations as EU members.



## CHAPTER 2: INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN IRELAND, FRANCE AND GERMANY

In the previous chapter, we have shown that discrimination against minority groups, especially migrants, is a recurring problem. This discrimination is also reflected in Education policies and practices; and needs to be tackled if the European Union's goals, policies and legislation are to be fulfilled.

This chapter thus investigates the concept of Intercultural Education; looking at the many benefits as well as some the challenges associated with its delivery. We will then also look into some of the challenges of implementing Intercultural Education in schools. Finally, we will analyse different examples of Intercultural Education and key policies across our three partner countries: France, Germany and Ireland.

### DEFINING INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

There is no one clear definition of intercultural education, and the many perspectives often fail to agree on either the conceptualisation or implementation. However, there are some common understandings of what it means. Chiriac and Panciuc (2017) compiled the most prominent definitions for Intercultural Education to provide an overview of what it entails. They found that Intercultural Education:

1. Refers to the phenomenon of interaction between people, religions, cultures, speakers of different languages who have different opinions and views. This education is fundamental in addressing cultural differences (principles, values, traditions etc.) as well as other differences (gender, social, economic differences, etc.).
2. Implies the presence of members of different cultures, namely interpersonal relationships. The term Intercultural Education is a concept in development, having been approached in scientific researches for some time. The research undertaken to date has related in particular to identification of means of socio-educational integration, due to a growing number of immigrant students.

Overall it can be concluded that Intercultural Education is a methodology of principles and practices related to the entire educational ethos in all its components, aimed at promoting cultural diversity, by increasing knowledge and positive appreciation of cultural differences, promoting equity in education and equalisation of opportunities.

The UNESCO Guidelines for Intercultural Education provide a good framework for getting a first understanding of the topic. UNESCO is convinced that Intercultural Education plays an important role in schooling. It can help to facilitate understating between students from different beliefs, cultures, and religions; contributing to more "sustainable and tolerant" societies. The principles of Intercultural Education, as identified by UNESCO are:

Principle I - Intercultural Education respects the cultural identity of the learner through the provision of culturally appropriate and responsive quality education for all.

Principle II - Intercultural Education provides every learner with the cultural knowledge, attitudes

Principle III - Intercultural Education provides all learners with cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable them to contribute to respect, understanding and solidarity among individuals, ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and nations (UNESCO, 2004).

A report on the education of children from ethnic minority groups in the UK, known as the Rampton Report (1981), has stated that “a ‘good’ education cannot be based on one culture only, and where ethnic minorities form a permanent and integral part of the population, we do not believe that education should seek to iron out the differences between cultures, nor attempt to draw everyone into the dominant culture. All children have a culture and ethnicity. Learning to value their own culture and ethnicity is central to their self-esteem and sense of identity. Intercultural education facilitates all children in coming to value their own heritage and the heritage of others.”

**The benefits of Intercultural Education** for all children include, but are not limited to the following:

- It encourages the child’s curiosity about cultural and social difference.
- It helps to develop and support the child’s imagination by normalising difference.
- It helps to develop the child’s critical thinking by enabling the child to gain perspectives on, and to question, his/her own cultural practices.
- It helps to develop sensitivity in the child.
- It helps to prevent racism (Rampton Report 1981).

### **The value of Intercultural Education in the European Union**

Intercultural education as an aspect of education policy in Europe has been undergoing significant change in recent years. There is broad acceptance that Intercultural Education has an important contribution to make to the concepts of citizenship and democracy; and individual countries and international institutions tend to develop their policies on that assumption. Most European states have launched the corresponding policy steps, and most of them at least proclaim the importance of intercultural competences and skills among citizens. Education at all levels is a key part of the integration process for migrants: from pre-school education, adult learning, as migrants may require different skills from those that they used in their countries of origin for their new careers. The EU authorities play an important role in initiating or encouraging reforms in intercultural education across national education systems in order to help children, young people and adults become capable of intercultural dialogue. It is obvious that transnational and national education policies are becoming more interdependent, although how this is manifested in the different national and local arenas remains an open question and a subject for research (Wahlstrom 2016).

Increasing concerns for intercultural learning began to be incorporated into official discourses and political legislation in Europe only in the 1990s, encouraged by the policies major international authorities, like UNESCO, the World Bank Institute and Organisation for Security and Cooperation (OCSE). In the field of education, the Council of Europe has drafted and adopted many recommendations aimed at the development and implementation of intercultural education in the member states (Batelaan, & Coomans 1995). In January 2016, the EU adopted a resolution on “Intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education” emphasising the importance of teaching intercultural dialogue which is an essential tool of conflict management and to

develop a deeper sense of belonging. Teachers, parents, NGOs and Human Rights Organizations are key players in the Intercultural Education process (European Parliament, 2016).

## BARRIERS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

At present, many teachers do not know how to promote diversity in their classrooms. There are many guidelines and recommendations on 'what' to do, but those usually do not include information about 'how' to do it. Teachers therefore have to trust their intuition and own judgement on how to introduce Intercultural Education. As there is no training for teachers regarding this aspect, it is often easier to set the topic aside.

In addition to that, the curriculum is very full and timelines are tight; leaving almost no time for teachers to cover additional topics in class. Talking about culture is often a spontaneous act, initiated, for example, by a student who tells about their own background or about relatives and friends. Often there is no time to go into detail about such experiences, as lessons follow a tight schedule. Furthermore, there are not many migrant teachers who could share their own stories, to bring the topic closer to the students (Chiriac & Panciuc, 2017).

In the following paragraphs, we explore how Intercultural Education is being seen, organised and implemented in our three partner countries: France, Germany and Ireland.

### FRANCE

Cultural diversity has been a relatively contentious topic in France. It was only in the mid-1970s, that Intercultural Education became part of official education guidelines. From 1998 on, the French government stopped using the term 'intercultural' in official papers, stressing that cultural diversity is an enrichment for the community and that there should not be a specific status for minorities. As laid out in the previous chapter, the equality of all citizens is traditionally very important in the self-image of French society.

Within the national curriculum, Intercultural Education is not mentioned for primary and secondary education. The Education Ministry lays out compulsory curricula which are necessary due to the existence of standardised, nation-wide assessments and examinations. Within these curricula, however, the teachers are free to choose the methods they prefer to teach a subject. Even though Intercultural Education is not compulsory, international topics are of increasing importance; especially in the language programmes. Since Intercultural Education is not included in the curriculum, it depends on the knowledge, skills and interest, if and how the topic is included in regular subjects.

The lack of a national policy explains why most programmes take place outside of schools and focus mainly on migrants who have only recently arrived in France. There is confusion about what intercultural education is or ought to be. Many teachers and even researchers identify it solely as special measures to facilitate the integration of migrant pupils. There are only very few projects for migrants who have lived in France for several years, or who were even born in France and thus have French citizenship (European Parliament, 2008).

## INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN PRACTICE

Intercultural education is not part of the official policy, most education programmes take place outside of schools and focuses primarily on migrants who have recently arrived in France. Migrants who arrive in France are expected to learn French at the CASNAV (Centre Académique pour Nouveaux Arrivants et Enfants du Voyage). The CASNAV initiated a project in which migrant students are sent to primary schools to tell stories about their lives. This way, students get to interact with new cultures, while the migrants are encouraged to use their new language skills and engage with French people. Another project of CASNAV is based on the notion that migrant students who have a good knowledge of their surroundings have a higher self-esteem and feel at home earlier. Students are therefore instructed to discover their suburb and its cultural and environmental structure. They write down their experiences in French to improve their French. These self-made books are then handed over to their families in order to also involve them into their local community and introduce them to the education system (European Parliament 2008).

Inspired by the EU funded PluriMobil, a teaching tool that fosters plurilingual and intercultural education, two French teachers developed the "Culture Box". Students are encouraged to pack boxes with items related to a certain theme, e.g. My country, Christmas, Holidays, My City. These boxes can include items such as maps, postcards, public transport tickets, restaurant menus, household items and alike. The boxes are then sent to twinning schools, where the students use the items to explore the culture and language of another country. In their foreign language classes, questions about the items can be asked, such as 'What city is this?', 'Does it look different to ours?', 'What restaurant is the menu from?' and 'What food would you order'.

## GERMANY

Because of its Federal structure, Germany does not have a centralised education system. The country is divided into 16 States; each having their own legislation and being responsible for their educational system. To still make school systems across Germany comparable and to align them to some extent, the Standing Conference of Education Ministers (KMK) was founded. This non-governmental institution is an informal assembly of the Ministers for Education in each of the 16 German states.

The KMK recognized in 1996 that migration and globalisation are increasingly important in Germany; especially in the light of the xenophobic movements in the early 1990s. Following this notion, the KMK issued 'suggestions for intercultural education in schools'. These recommendations were updated in 2013, taking into account the changing environment. The new document includes 5 principles on diversity in schools; with the first and most important one being that 'Schools see diversity as normal and recognise its benefits for everyone' (Kmk.org, 2018). The document also contained recommendations on how to fulfil these 5 principles. Mentoring and personal development programmes for students are considered to be important, as well as peer-training. Students are encouraged to advocate democracy and human rights, and to stand up against any form of discrimination. Schools also are required to re-evaluate their approaches on intercultural education on a regular basis.

Despite this framework, the implementation depends on the individual school, as they are encouraged to develop their own intercultural education plans depending on the circumstances



they are facing (e.g. number and type of students from marginalised groups). In the 'National Action Plan Integration' of 2012, all States committed to ensuring equal access to education, further education and apprenticeship for everyone. States are also committed to continuously train teachers and educational assistants to enhance intercultural competency; to increase the number of teachers and education workers with migration background; and to facilitate the cooperation and the dialogue with parents to provide support outside of school.

All states recognise intercultural education as a responsibility of schools and include it in their planning and the design of curricula. Heterogeneity is recognized as an important aspect of teachers' training; and all states offer advanced training programmes to enhance intercultural competencies. Schools across all states have measures for language development in place, especially for children with German as a second language. The German government makes available an extensive list of resources for all subjects and themes on their Education Server. A comprehensive list of materials, pre-designed lessons and projects on Intercultural Education can be found there (Deutscher Bildungsserver, 2018).

## INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN PRACTICE - GERMANY

The project 'Vielfalt nutzen' (Drawing on diversity) constitutes a good example of how diverse Intercultural Education can be. It initiates and facilitates cooperation between migration organisations and primary schools in Germany. It aims at enhancing intercultural learning, opening schools to new encounters, and motivating students to assume social responsibility within their communities. Each of the projects is unique in scope and nature, ranging from music projects to joint cooking; from storytelling to sports projects (Vielfalt Nutzen, 2014).

In one cooperation, students and their parents met with members of the Jewish Sociocultural Centre, getting to know each other's traditions through cooking and baking of German and Russian food. In another cooperation, students in their 3rd and 4th year met on a weekly basis with different representatives of the Migration Council. Each week, they thus learnt about a new culture and were able to discuss topics related to democratic values with them. In a third cooperation, students met once a month with members of the Association of Traditional Chinese Culture, having the chance to experience Chinese customs and traditions. This way, students were also encouraged to think about their own culture. In a fourth cooperation, the focus laid on religious encounters. Students, as well as their parents were encouraged to a discovery tour of the religions in their city. Information on the religious life, as well as the local school system was translated for and by migrant parents. Between 2011 and 2015, there were a total of 15 cooperations established between primary schools and migration organisations.

Another project is Come together! – International School Twinning ([www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net)) This Comenius-funded project brings together primary schools from Germany, Austria, Italy and Spain through eTwinning.

Students discuss topics like 'our daily life', 'our school' and 'our city' by exchanging stories, plays, songs, dances and poetry. At the same time, they are introduced to electronic means of communication like email, chat and video. All information is collected on a website the students develop themselves. develop themselves.

One of the partner organisations in this project Gilden-Grundschule, provides an example of how it has implemented good Intercultural practice into its school. Since 2010 there has been a class at Gilden-Grundschule for pupils who had just arrived in Germany with their parents. These students rarely speak German and often have not attended any school or are missing the educational basics needed for success in the German system. The pupils in this special class find their safety in learning and speaking German in a small group, but also – after learning a few German phrases – they attend the regular class so they are included. Once their German language skills have improved, and with the agreement of their teachers, pupils transfer into the regular classroom.

Due to the students' background, the education authority allows the school to employ an additional teacher. These extra hours are used to teach one class with two teachers at a time, or to divide classes into different learning groups to teach German, Mathematics and other subjects in smaller groups. Furthermore, the school works with a social worker who is a migrant herself. This staff member left Turkey and arrived in Germany when she was eight years old and knows how to help newcomer children get familiarity with both German culture and language. Often, she explains differences in the cultures or religions, and translates for parents/children who do not speak German but Turkish. She also started the "parents' café" where the parents whose children go to Gilden-Grundschule can come together and meet while their children attend school. There, they have the chance to talk to each other, clarify questions about school and education, or consult with the school social worker.

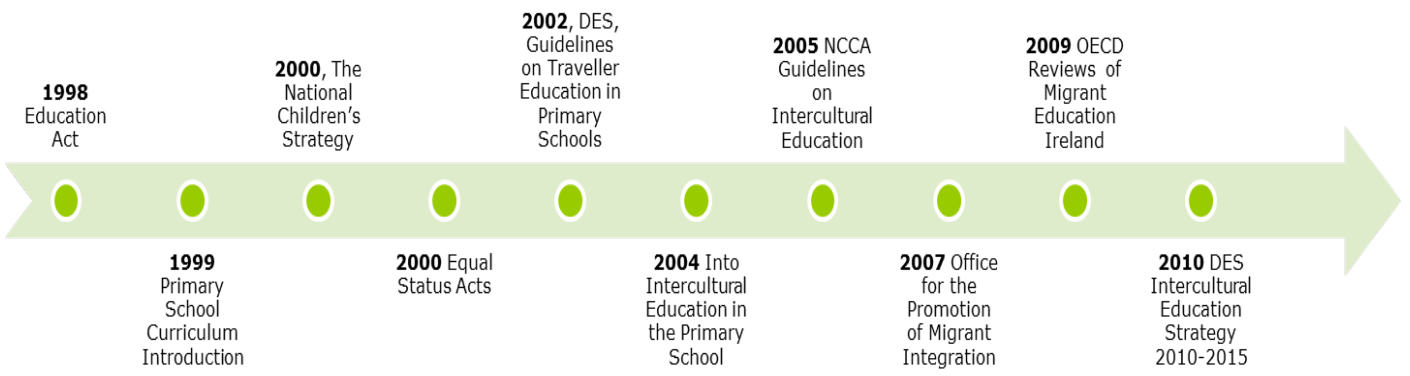
Gilden-Grundschule also applied in 2011 to become "a school of Europe" which means that the school talks about Europe and what it means to be a citizen of Europe in every grade. Almost every year, the school conducts an awareness raising project about the meaning of Europe and the meaning of multiculturalism in Europe. During one of these projects, for example, the students visited churches and the nearby mosque that many of the pupils attend.



# IRELAND

In Chapter 1, we examined how Ireland’s cultural and ethnic landscape changed in recent years due to an increase in immigration. This change can also be observed within schools which had to ensure the integration of children from many different nationalities. This created the demand for schools with other than an exclusively Catholic patronage.

In recent years, the Irish Government has worked to promote intercultural practices and challenge discrimination. This has resulted in the introduction of new initiatives and legislation in the area. The graphic below gives an overview of the steps the Irish Government has taken to promote inclusive education (Report of the Forum on Pluralism and Patronage in Primary Schools):



Recognising the importance of Intercultural Education in schools, the Irish National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) issued two key documents: Intercultural Education in the Primary School (2005) and Intercultural Education in the Post-Primary School (2006). Both of these documents are guided by the following ideals:

- the promotion of equality, human rights, and the elimination of discrimination
- the recognition, respect and celebration of diversity (NCCA, 2005 and NCCA, 2006)

The government also set out its Intercultural Education Strategy (2010-2015) based on these guidance documents. It aims to ensure that:

1. all students experience an education that “respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership”.
2. all education providers are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm (DES, 2010).

Unfortunately, the recommendations of the strategy were not ultimately implemented, and the review which was planned for 2015 did not take place, highlighting the ongoing challenges with implementing policy and strategy into practice.

It is important to acknowledge the experience of Irish Travellers in this context, as historically they have been subject to racism and discrimination. The Intercultural Education Strategy of 2009 faced criticism for centring the experience of migrant pupils, thereby erasing the experience of other minority ethnic groups, such as Irish Travellers from the discourse. In 2017, Irish Travellers gained official recognition as a distinct ethnic group in Ireland, giving further imperative for their consideration in approaches to intercultural education.

“Intercultural education is not confined to a single curriculum area or indeed to areas within the ‘formal curriculum.’ It is embedded in the practices and dispositions that inform both the school and classroom climate and the ‘hidden curriculum.’” (NCCA, 2005). The above extract from the NCCA Intercultural Guidelines gives a good indication of how the whole school environment should address interculturalism. Undeniably, the ethos of a school will determine how effective intercultural practices are in primary schools.

The government recognises that “acquiring competence in English is a key factor in asylum seeking and refugee student’s new lives” (Richards and Armstrong, 2016). The inclusion of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) has had an impact on Intercultural Education in Irish schools. It can be challenging for children with EAL to fully engage with the curriculum, to connect with classmates and teachers, and to contribute to lessons and discussions due to the language barrier. Rapport and connections are much more easily made between pupils with EAL and EAL teachers.

Similar to the language barrier, religious beliefs and customs can be a challenge for a teacher when delivering an intercultural lesson, particularly in one-denominational schools where a particular religious curriculum must be followed and fully taught. However, teachers in Catholic and multi-denominational schools can use the diversity of religious beliefs within their own classes as an effective and enjoyable resource to teach about different religions as they can share their own experiences with their peers.

In addition, the NCCA Intercultural Guidelines recognises that ‘Schools may teach children about respecting other people’s colour, ethnicity and culture but by far the greatest influence on the attitudes of children to other ethnic groups comes from their own parent’s attitudes.’ (INTO, 2004).

## INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN PRACTICE - IRELAND

In the following, we present two different approaches to put Intercultural Education into practice. The first one focuses on upskilling teachers to be well-equipped for their new challenges, while the second one aims at including the wider community in the implementation of Intercultural Education.

The DICE Project is a national education initiative which promotes the integration of development education and intercultural education in Initial Teacher Education at primary level in Ireland. It aims to raise awareness among student teachers of the relevance of human rights, sustainable development, global interdependence and the causes of global inequality to the primary school curriculum. This way, a new generation of teachers is equipped with the pedagogic skills to teach Intercultural Education, while also being able to detect and tackle discrimination in their schools.

The Yellow Flag Programme goes beyond the actual school subjects, by including parents and the wider community in the implementation of the initiative. The school first conducts Anti-Racism and Intercultural Awareness training for all staff and management, before the school reaches out to minority groups within their community, to establish new relationships and have the chance to build onto their unique expertise.



The school then forms a Diversity Committee consisting of students, teachers, parents, other school staff and management of the school. After an 'Intercultural Review' that identifies challenges the school faces, the Diversity Committee sets out an Action Plan with realistic targets to improve the school environment in terms of equality and diversity. The progress is both self-evaluated and externally monitored. A classroom study on diversity, covering race and ethnicity is carried out by all students, before the school produces a Diversity Code and an Anti-Racism Policy to formalise best practice within the school.

Once these steps are completed, the school receives a Yellow Flag Award that recognises the school's commitment to interculturalism. There are currently 56 schools in Ireland who have taken part in this initiative and received their Yellow Flag award. As of April 2018, there are 22 more schools in the process. Co-ordinator Elva O'Callaghan states that the initiative is heavily over-subscribed and have been unable to take on more applications due to lack of funding (Yellow Flag Programme, 2014). The Yellow Flag Programme was initially established as an initiative of the Irish Traveller Movement to promote interculturalism, as well to establish links with local Traveller groups.

All in all, the patronage of the schools in Ireland is a huge factor in how intercultural education is promoted. The Intercultural Education Strategy aims to ensure that:

1. all students experience an education that "respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership" (Education Act, 1998).
2. all education providers are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm.







Primary schools under Church of Ireland Patronage deliver a Religious Education provides instruction in which instructs the teachings of the Church of Ireland faith called the “Follow Me” programme. However, one of the aims of this programme is “to develop an awareness of and sensitivity towards those of other faiths and none (Follow Me Series, 2018).” In contrast Educate Together schools provide an extensive curriculum called “Learn Together” which promotes intercultural education within specific lessons, as well as the attitudes and mind-sets that are woven.

Learn Together Curriculum is an ethical education curriculum that is divided into four key areas: moral and spiritual development, equality and justice, belief systems, ethics and the environment (Educate Together).

- There are numerous activities taking place in our Irish project partner school, Kildare Town Educate Together NS, as well as other Educate Together schools that exemplify good practice in the promotion of intercultural education. Here are some examples:
- All pupils are encouraged to share their cultural experiences with each other from all different religious and ethnic backgrounds. Classmates and schoolmates share in celebrations such as Eid, Diwali, Hanukkah, Christmas, Chinese New Year etc.
- In the school, staff strive to provide a physical learning environment that is representative of different ethnic groups and cultures e.g., using images of different races in PowerPoint presentations, story books, posters etc. They exhibit child-friendly posters and displays in the school with information on all the main belief systems as well as flags representing all of the nationalities in the school.
- The school have established a special partnership with an EROC centre (Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre for Refugees) in Monasterevin, Co. Kildare. Children from Syria attend our school from here until housing becomes available around the country. The lessons are differentiated for them by having their work in both Arabic and English here. They also integrate by learning Irish and céili dances which gives them an insight into cultures, traditions and heritage.

## CONCLUSION

It cannot be contested that education plays a pivotal role in the integration process for migrants, and this has been reflected in European policies and initiatives. Becoming proficient in the language of the host country is regarded as the central component of Intercultural Education. While this is of vital importance, it does not encompass the principles of Intercultural Education as identified by UNESCO. Furthermore, schools are lacking the necessary language support for students to start the process of integration. Moreover, the implementation of Intercultural Education is left to the discretion of the school and/or individual teachers.

It has been illustrated in France that there is no national policy for Intercultural Education, Germany do not have a unified education system as it is divided into federal states, and while Ireland has national policies and strategies, it is inadequately resourced. This in turn has led to NGOs facilitating Intercultural Education outside of school. We have seen in some examples of Intercultural Education that in practice the focus is on the migrant; to learn about the host countries' culture, and/or to inform the majority population of the migrant's culture. Interculturalism should be practiced as an exchange of mutual learning, thereby stimulating a deeper understanding of all cultures and promoting integration.

Schools remain the central place to nurture intercultural skills and understanding so that people can live together in diverse societies. It is also important to note that Intercultural Dialogue needs to include cooperation between many stakeholders (schools, family, community, media, and policymakers) in order to provide for more tolerant communities.

The "Grow From Seeds" Project proposes to use creative methodologies to bridge this gap between schools, families and the wider communities: Through storytelling, creative drama and performing arts, students can explore issues around exclusion and discrimination, but also experience empowerment and integration in fun and interactive ways. These new experiences can then be shared within their families or with wider audiences. The next chapter will give an overview of all three proposed methodologies. It will also provide an understanding of how the Grow From Seeds methodology differs from other comparable projects.



## CHAPTER 3:

# THE PERFORMING ARTS, STORYTELLING AND DRAMA APPROACHES IN EDUCATION

Having examined the theoretical aspects of Intercultural Education in Chapter 2, it became evident that a lot of work still needs to be done to ensure quality Intercultural Education across all schools. The “Grow From Seeds” methodology proposes to use creative methodologies to provide primary school teachers with useful tools to include intercultural education in their lessons. This chapter will focus on how creative drama, storytelling and performing arts are used to raise awareness of social issues. Over the last number of years, a significant increase in the number of arts programmes has occurred based on the belief that performing arts and drama can enhance personal development and eliminate social challenges (Petitpas, Cornelius and Van Raalte, 2008).

A number of EU funded programmes use performing arts as a methodology to raise awareness of discrimination and bullying. This chapter will focus on these programmes in detail and look at how the Grow from Seeds project approach is similar and/or different to those programmes. Creative drama as outlined here is a highly proactive and educational tool. It combines both educational methodology and it can activate positive social behaviour. The examples provided in this chapter are used to highlight the approach specifically developed for educational and awareness raising purposes.

## STORYTELLING AS AN INTERCULTURAL PRACTICE

‘Storytelling is a uniquely human act, aiming to create and share a social world. It occurs when a storyteller, a narrative and an audience come together in person, to re-tell and co-create a story’ (Shiponi, 2018). Storytelling is a practice embedded in our culture and is a natural process that each of us does all the time. We tell stories whenever we communicate. Storytelling is often considered a very egalitarian method as people with low self-esteem feel comfortable using storytelling to express their opinions and experiences. Furthermore, it might be said that stories are easier to remember than facts and figures and can be easily interpreted by the learner in order to obtain information that is relevant to their personal experience and their needs (Steixner and Heidegger, 2013).

Stories are the essential way we process information in interpersonal encounters. The “Grow from Seeds” project uses storytelling within an educational setting and as a method for encouraging intercultural dialogue. Margaret Steixner and Manuel Heidegger, intercultural education trainers, strongly advocated for the use of storytelling in intercultural practice. They regarded stories as an effective tool for teaching values in order for people to develop an appreciation of cultural diversity within their society. All cultures have a strong tradition of storytelling and the use of mythical stories were used to make people aware of hidden values and beliefs, and used to highlight the differences and similarities through discussion of values and value systems.



Storytelling is transferable and can be used in a variety of settings from education to knowledge management. Storytelling is a mainstay of educational drama that can be helpful to the teaching of listening to second language learners. It is also a unique way for students to develop an understanding, respect and appreciation for other cultures, and can promote a positive attitude to people from different lands, races and religions.

Storytelling has also been recommended as a methodology for overcoming the "gap" between home and school environments of native children, a gap which can often lead to problems of literacy. Betty Jane Wagner, an internationally recognised author on the educational uses of drama, produced a state of the art article on educational drama that documents the role of drama in developing language skills. Drama particularly has been advocated as a way to develop not only oral language facility but reading and writing as well (McGovern, 2018).

There are a number of ways in which storytelling can enhance intercultural understanding and communication. Storytelling can:

- allow children to explore their own cultural roots
- allow children to experience diverse cultures
- enable children to empathise with unfamiliar people/places/situations
- offer insights into different traditions and values
- help children understand how wisdom is common to all peoples/all cultures
- offer insights into universal life experiences
- help children consider new ideas
- reveal differences and commonalities of cultures around the world (British Council, 2003)

Furthermore, the process of combining storytelling and intercultural dialogue is considered advantageous as it benefits both the storyteller and the listener. The person who has the active role of telling their story experiences a sense of power because they can choose what they want to talk about and what they want to omit from the story. This opportunity may be far removed from the society they live in where they might feel a sense of isolation and appear voiceless. In contrast to this, the listener is not only listening to the story but developing his/her own picture of the story that connects or links to their own lives. This in turn provides an opportunity for them to reflect on how they would react or resolve a situation. The latter illustrates that the listener learns as much as the storyteller.

Documentary Play is a genre that arose in Germany as a result of the recent migration flows. It is an excellent example of how storytelling and performing arts can be used to raise awareness through public performances of human rights narratives. This genre of theatre plays tells the personal stories of refugees, and deals with topics around flight, survival, bureaucratic harassment and the search for protection from persecution. It reaches people through a personal and emotional way, showing the real obstacles migrants need to overcome to find a place in their new society (Sieg, 2016).

Asylum Monologues tells the stories of three refugees in Germany: Safiye from Turkey, Felleke from Ethiopia, and Ali from Togo. Michael Ruf, Theatre director and filmmaker, conducted interviews with the above mentioned people and transformed their life stories into a theatre piece. Their narratives are woven together and offer a multi-faceted look at fate, home, and the obstacles of fleeing and starting over in Germany (Gaiety School of Acting, 2016).

Another initiative worth acknowledging is The Memory Project. Smashing Times Theatre Company implemented this EU funded programme in partnership with Corrymeela Community and High Wire Limited, while working collaboratively with a range of communities including young people and adults. This programme, carried out between 2012 and 2015, was an arts-based outreach project which used drama and storytelling workshops, theatre performances, and the screening of a television documentary to address the conflict in Northern Ireland and the Southern border counties. Storytelling and theatre performances were used effectively throughout The Memory Project in order to generate discussion and debate in relation to issues such as peace, non-violence, gender equality, anti-racism, anti-sectarianism, human rights, remembrance and positive mental health and suicide prevention (The Memory Project Final Report and Evaluation, 2018).

## CREATIVE DRAMA AS A MEANS TO ACTIVATE AND ADDRESS SOCIAL ISSUES THROUGH ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

'Creative drama' is an approach specifically developed for educational and awareness raising purposes. It is an improvisational, non-performance driven and process oriented form of drama (Gaiety School of Acting, 2016). Learner-participants are guided by a facilitator to imagine, enact and reflect on experiences that may be real or hypothetical scenarios designed to raise specific issues in a space where thoughtful engagement with difficult subjects can occur. The common core of basic activities is always improvised. The process leads to an acceptance of self, an awareness of personal resources, and an awareness of the internal and external influences on living (Freeman, 2003). In practice, individuals and groups set out to resolve problems and seek solutions through the medium of exploration and expression.

Creative drama in education provides a unique and irreplaceable educational experience involving both feelings and emotions in a way that results in a more effective form of education. Through role-play, participants are given the chance to explore and discover both themselves and the wider world in a way that protects them from the consequences that would normally follow in the situations they recreate. Creative drama can be used as a powerful method to demonstrate the emotional consequences of bullying and to share thoughts and experiences through the safety of fiction.

The Galli Method, developed by Johannes Galli, is a successful conflict prevention and resolution method that applies seven steps to successfully overcome conflicts. It is based upon spontaneous role play, as with spontaneous acting the entire person is moved: body, mind and spirit. Johannes Galli realised that "In acting, the genuine person appears". He used this notion to combine storytelling with creative drama to effectively tackle social issues.



The Galli Theatre, in Berlin, creates plays about societal issues such as AIDS and drugs prevention, integration, obesity and anorexia, healthy lifestyle, waste avoidance, domestic violence, human trafficking. The plays are specifically designed for the audience and include both an interactive part and supporting thematic workshops. Audience are expected to participate in the play and act and react in the most honest and open way throughout play. This way, societal issues can be resolved in a playful manner.

First, we have to distinguish between passive storytelling, and active participation, creative drama and performing arts. Direct involvement is more intense than audience participation, whereas audience participation is more widespread than direct involvement. There is also the so-called Mozart effect showing that children who listen to Mozart show improved performance on visuo-spatial reasoning tests – although the effect may not last. (Chabris 1999). Individuals directly involved in creating or organising artistic activity may learn skills that they did not previously have and may demonstrate greater creativity. Overall, education studies show that children engaged in an arts class will do better in other subjects and that an arts-integrated curriculum improves school performance (Winner and Hetland 2000). The basic reason for this may be that children find learning through creative activity much more enjoyable, and so they will have an easier time engaging with the material.

With the current focus on emotional health, schools are seeking ways to build resilience and combat bullying. "In Their Shoes", from the Gaiety School of Acting Outreach Department, is a drama based anti-bullying workshop for Primary School Teachers emphasising the importance of respect and team building. The workshops look at ways of integrating literacy and numeracy skills into the drama curriculum while maintaining the integrity of the drama itself. The pupils are expected to enter into and engage in a fictional world where the themes of bullying, marginalisation and conflict resolution are explored. The workshops are aimed at encouraging pupils to show understanding and empathy for others, helping pupils to accept and celebrate similarities and differences, while developing pupil's creative, emotional, moral, aesthetic and social behaviours.

It was envisaged that each teacher would be equipped with the skills to deliver the same or similar content with their own students. Teachers are encouraged to plan and develop ideas; how they can use the methodology to support students' learning across the curriculum (Gaiety School of Acting, 2018). The course content for teachers is centred on the learning aims and objectives taken from the Primary school curriculum: Drama (Irish Department of Education and Skills, 1999). The Grow from Seeds project will support the aims of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum.

These aims are:

- to promote the personal development and well-being of the child
- to foster in the child a sense of care and respect for himself/herself and others and an appreciation of the dignity of every human being
- to promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects
- to enable the child to make informed decisions and choices about the social, personal and health dimensions of life both now and in the future
- to develop in the child a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to active and participative citizenship and an appreciation of the democratic way of life
- to enable the child to respect human and cultural diversity and to appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world.

Similar to “In their Shoes”, the project EU BULLY, funded by DG JUSTICE, has been developed to support teachers to address bullying with young people in schools, youth groups and the like. It gives a voice to those affected by bullying who may otherwise have no space to do so; to share their experiences and explore ways of overcoming bullying behaviour. Across 2015, InSite Drama, funded by EU BULLY, a drama in education advocacy and training organisation, delivered workshops to teachers and youth support workers in Romania, Greece, the UK and Ireland, introducing them to the educational application of drama techniques. The two day workshop offered practical examples of using drama methods in creating opportunities for groups to address problems such as bullying. The methods presented during the course could be used in or outside the classroom to create a safe space in which such problems can be confronted (Spectacle Theatre, 2017).

## PERFORMING ARTS AS A METHODOLOGY TO TACKLE DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Performing arts encompasses any and all art forms in which a person conveys artistic expression through their face, body and/or voice. Performing arts is basically arts or skills that require a performance in front of a public audience. Why is it that the child participates in dramatic play for his own, and later his playmates’ enjoyment - It is a fact that through play they learn to express their emotions by enacting the things that disturb them. They vanquish their enemies in their role play. Virginia Glasgow Koste calls dramatic play “a rehearsal for life”. Creative drama may exist for only a matter of minutes or may be repeated numerous times depending on the interest of the players. Details are added, sometimes leading to the evolution of a written script with dialogue that has gelled and a plot. At this point it ceases to be creative drama and becomes performance for a play, performing arts (McCaslin, 2006). In a similar manner, the Grow from Seeds performing arts play is the seed and how it grows is the impact that it has on the community.

“The University Of Arkansas Department Of Education conducted a study on the effects of live performances for students. Emotional benefits that surfaced included an increased ability to comprehend and empathise with other people’s feelings and reactions. When real-life experiences are captured in a play, people can easily relate, displaying their strong emotions and resonance leading to stronger outcomes such as changes in behaviours, attitudes and even solutions to certain personal and social problems. It can also be used for conflict resolution between different community members, channelling the process of understanding and reconciliation by showing the others’ points of view “(Al Kayyim, 2017).

Performing arts is one such platform whereby actors and audience can be “indirect activists,” addressing their own individual and social issues, resolving them and thus contributing to the achievement of a better world. It can go beyond mere entertainment and social gatherings to communicate educational, social, political or religious messages as well.

Forum Theatre is a form of interactive theatre developed by the late Brazilian theatre director, Augusto Boal, as part of his ‘Theatre of the Oppressed’. It was initially developed as a tool to help people learn how to resist oppression in their daily lives and promote social and political change. The audience in such a platform becomes “spect-actors” as they discover, express, analyse and change the reality they are living in. It empowers the audience to actively explore different options for dealing with shared problems and motivates them to make positive changes in their own lives. The theme of the piece will normally be something of immediate relevance to the audience, often based on a shared life experience. When the play has been performed, members of the audience can take to the stage and replace the protagonist, acting out alternative paths and decisions. Boal’s main aim was to change people from passive spectators, passive beings in the theatrical phenomenon, into subjects, into actors or transformers of the dramatic action (Thombu and Balakrishnan, 2014).

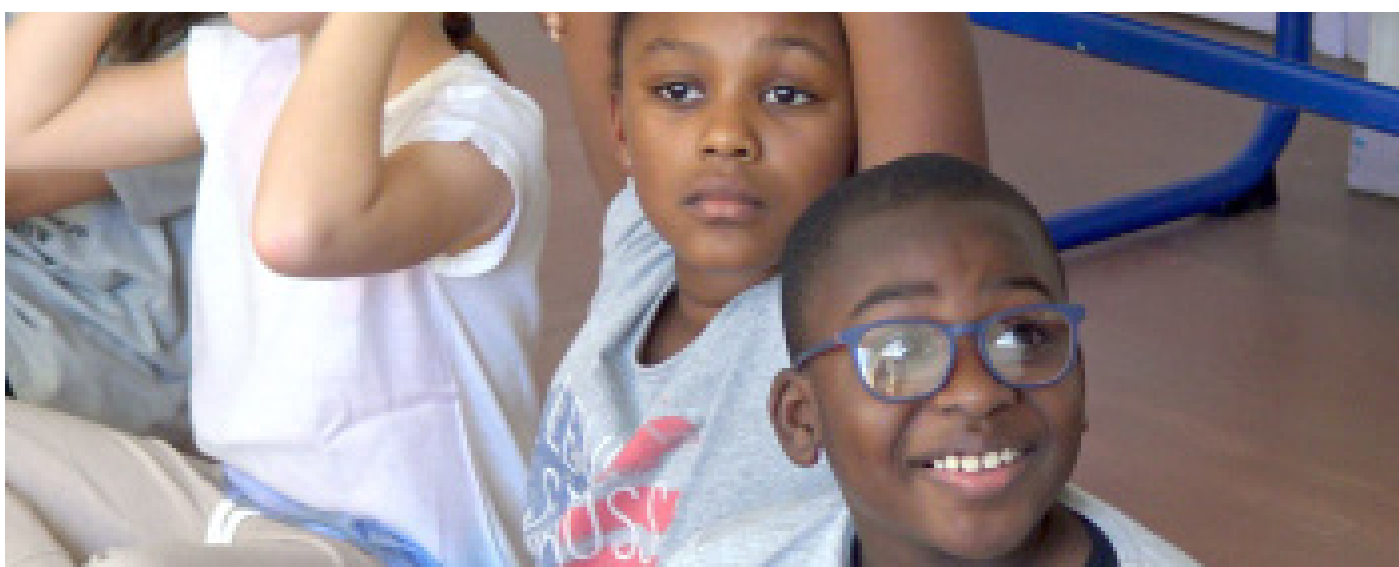
Forum Theatre has successfully been used in different projects led by several entities, including the Irish Sticks & Stones anti-Bullying Programme. Sticks & Stones is an anti-bullying programme for schools based in Dublin, Ireland. They work with students, teachers and families to explore ways in which they can create safer places for children to learn and develop in. They also work to educate parents, guardians, and carers through their "Understanding Bullying" sessions. Their workshops with children use a carefully designed combination of communication exercises, role-play and Forum Theatre. Sticks & Stones anti-Bullying Programme utilises creative methodologies, with storytelling at the heart of the methodology. Children respond positively to the opportunity to tell their own stories, but they don't always have the vocabulary; through drama they can show what's happening (Kennedy, 2011).

In this regard, another successful example of a similar project is ‘Side by Side: Integration through the Arts’. The ‘Side by Side: Integration through the Arts’ project is an initiative of Friars’ Gate Theatre funded by the European Integration Fund, the City of Limerick (Ireland) and Limerick County Council. The project held seminars for teachers, youth workers, academics and drama facilitators to share learning from the project and to promote the use of a drama methodology for individuals and organisations working in the area of intercultural integration.

Since 2011, Side by Side facilitated Anti-Racism workshops in Post Primary Schools with the aim of increasing opportunities for peer and social engagement in intercultural dialogue and to addressing racism within schools. Following a workshop, the students completed reflection forms to measure improved understanding about issues of interculturalism, immigration and racism, and an improved sense of empowerment to take action against incidents of bullying or racism; Teachers involved in the Anti-Racism workshops also provide feedback on the programme and resource pack, through completion of an online questionnaire completed at the end of each workshop. This data is used to measure an improved understanding of non-formal learning methodologies and techniques used to promote intercultural understanding in education and the quality of the resources provided (Gorner and Isard, 2014).

Performing arts often involves engagement with the community's sense of themselves and their connection (or lack of it) with their own past, and can even involve drawing on narratives or artefacts from that heritage in preparing the performance or artworks. This strand thus straddles the effects which will be felt by individual participants and the wider community (Thomson et al., n.d.). The presence of the arts and/or participation by community members may have an impact on community norms or the "opinion climate." For example, the presences and performances of a multicultural theatre may reinforce norms about multiculturalism and diversity or free expression.

Community can be defined in a variety of ways; there are many different types of communities and communities of interest. Some communities are fixed, others are fluid, a community can be a specific group of people, family, friends, it can be a community of interests or experiences, and it can be local, national or international (Moynihan, 2005). According to Joshua Guetzkow's table in "How the Arts Impact Communities" community increases a sense of collective identity and efficacy while leading to positive community norms, such as diversity, tolerance and free expression while improving the community image and status. Arts events may be a source of pride for residents (participants and non-participants alike) in their community, increasing their sense of connection to that community. To the extent that arts organisations serve as a catalyst in the creation of ties between dispersed individuals and organisations (who would not otherwise establish ties), these networks, may then be used to accomplish other community goals. It also points to the kinds of value potentially produced for audiences, and the community beyond the individual people involved in a performance (Guetzkow, 2002).



## CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have investigated the potential of storytelling, creative drama and performing arts as vehicles for educational and awareness raising purposes. Multi-faceted projects have enormous potential in opening up a mutually beneficial and creative dialogue and promoting social change. Storytelling, creative drama and performing arts support changes in attitudes, shared experiences and feelings, ultimately developing forms of interaction, that every individual takes action towards social emancipation and cohesion.

The “Grow from Seeds” project focuses on creative approaches to interculturalism in Primary Education by embracing a diverse population, developing social cohesion, promoting inclusion and improving intercultural skills among pupils through storytelling, creative drama and performing arts. This multi-faceted approach opens up potential for communication on a more personal level and increases a sense of integration within the broader community.

This project aims to support the Irish Department of Education and Skills “Intercultural Education in Primary Schools”, European Parliament Education and Culture – strategic plan 2016-2020 and UNESCO “Guidelines on Intercultural Education”. The Grow From Seeds programme will offer Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training for Primary School Teachers and implementation of the programme (which consists of year round programme and the production of the play).

The educational programme uses creative drama, storytelling and performing arts. The aim of the programme is to support the empowerment of pupils through the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of diversity and building understanding and empathy and in this way to increase their capacity to create an environment of mutual respect, and social cohesion. Stories can link not only between the world of the classroom and the home, but also between the classroom and beyond. Stories provide a common thread that can help unite cultures and provide a bridge across the cultural gap (British Council, 2003).

The programme provides bespoke toolkits tailored with care to individual situations in order to assess the cultural traditions and understanding of a project’s audience to clearly and sensitively address areas of social challenges for communities or age groups. It is an exploratory tool used with other multi-disciplinary methods to understand, promote and achieve social change. Our project promotes ‘learning to participate by participating’ and assists in development of ‘curricula and making better use of schools’ (Fass et al., 2013). According to Dr Stafford Hood from the Dublin City University, “an equally important consideration is effective training of teachers for this diverse student population. This training must include instructional strategies and techniques that are culturally responsive in order to more effectively meet the educational needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds” (Hood, 2015). Addressing the priority, developing basic and transversal skills using innovative methods, is also part of the project. The innovative method proposed crosses into the area of equality, social inclusion, awareness raising and SPHE curriculum.



These aims can be closely linked with the “Grow from Seeds” project values. Through the Grow From Seeds programme for primary schools, children are encouraged to be positive and put in the effort to take part in a respectful and empowering environment to develop a sense of belonging and enjoyment which reflects many of the objectives within the SPHE Strand units and National Council for Curriculum and Assessment ([https://www.ncca.ie/en/resources/interc\\_guide\\_pp\\_eng](https://www.ncca.ie/en/resources/interc_guide_pp_eng).) including developing self-awareness and self-confidence, exploring the notion of being a friend and belonging to a group, communicating, resolving conflict and enabling the child to recognise and understand the role of the individual and various groups in the community.

The primary SPHE curriculum is presented in three strands: Myself, Myself and others and Myself and the wider world which are consistent from Junior Infants to 6th class and provide a basis for the SPHE curriculum at post-primary level. The curriculum is spiral in nature. Similar content is revisited at each level but the processes, approaches and information are reflective of the developmental stage of the child:

- Myself is concerned with the personal development.
- Myself and others focuses on developing a sense of care and respect for other people and enabling children to relate to and communicate effectively with others.
- Myself and the wider world offers opportunities for children to explore the various communities in which they live, leading to an understanding of how to operate competently in society and fostering a sense of what it means to belong and to share a sense of purpose with others.

These three strands act as a framework to develop and enhance the “Grow From Seeds” project values. Children learn about themselves as individuals and how their actions, effort and decisions can impact on others and the wider community to which they belong.

The “Grow From Seeds” workshops encompass kinaesthetic learning, creating an environment for focused inquiry, critical thinking and cooperative learning, ultimately linking the intercultural themes of the “Grow from Seeds” programme with personal, community and curriculum development. Drama-based pedagogy (DBP) uses active dramatic approaches to engage students in academic, affective and aesthetic learning, through dialogic meaning-making in all areas of the curriculum.



## CONCLUSION

The recent arrival of hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants to Europe has posed a challenge to the Union. While this is widely recognised, we should not forget that we have seen large waves of (forced) migration before; for example following the two World Wars, or the arrival of migrant workers in the 1950s and 60s. What is different is the unprecedented speed at which migrants are arriving to Europe due to conflict, climate change and poverty. The biggest test for Europe is ensuring the smooth integration of newly arrived migrants to host countries, and dismantling the “fear” that the majority population sometimes has. In the spirit of Angela Merkel’s message ‘Wir Schaffen das’ (we can do it) the Grow from Seeds project aims to contribute towards this process by providing a programme that fosters intercultural dialogue in primary schools and addresses European Parliament priorities to challenge extremism through social cohesion, inclusion, active citizenship, empowerment and participation of pupils.



It is anticipated that intercultural dialogue stimulated through the project will contribute to the EU’s objectives of fighting discrimination by providing the necessary tools for teachers thereby improving their capacity to combat discrimination, provide information on best practice across EU countries, and achieve real change and sustainability through teacher training.

Chapter 1 has shown that diversity has been approached with in many different ways across the three partner countries. German and Irish ‘multicultural models’ can be contrasted with the French ‘assimilationist’ approach, but either way problems still persist. Despite the French Constitution promoting equality regardless of an individual’s origin, race and religion its inability to collect data on racial origin means that the needs of minority groups are not identified or recognised. In Germany most hate crimes committed are against ethnic and religious minorities. Moreover, the national police force have been criticised for underreporting on racist crimes and in particular toward Muslims.

There is strong evidence to support the existence of direct and institutional discrimination toward migrant groups in all three countries. As long as the above discrimination continues to exist, prejudice and stereotyping will continue to grow, reinforcing social inequality and thus hampering the contribution migrants can make to host countries. It is not enough to rely on protection enshrined in national and European policies, civil society needs to become more involved in ensuring the rights of migrants are respected and supported to the same extent that the rights of the majority population are respected and supported.

Chapter 2 sought to provide an overview of the concept of Intercultural Education. The European Union regards Intercultural Dialogue as essential to avoiding conflict and the marginalisation of minority groups as a result of their cultural identity. It recognises that education plays a pivotal role in the integration process for migrants and this has been reflected in many of its policies and initiatives going back as far as the 1990's.

In France, there is no mention of Intercultural Education in the national curriculum; in Germany, Federal State Education Ministers have made suggestions for implementing Intercultural Education in schools and developing a framework of recommendations as a point of guidance; while in Ireland the Department of Education and Skills has developed an Intercultural Education Strategy. There are varying degrees of implementation across all three countries however two commonalities have been identified. Firstly, it should be noted that there are numerous examples of creative and innovative initiatives across all three countries however they are all dependent on individual school ethos and teachers. This has resulted in many initiatives being facilitated outside of the school which has limited impact on target groups. Secondly, Intercultural Education is associated with additional language support for students and while learning the national language is vitally important for integration it is often under resourced and does not provide space for an exchange of intercultural dialogue.

Arising from the findings of Chapter 2, the following gaps were identified that would strengthen the integration of Intercultural Education into national education systems:

- Intercultural Education should not be regarded as a standalone subject but should be embedded as a methodology into everyday teaching.
- There needs to be a unified national strategy/ policy for Intercultural Education to ensure it is an integral part of national curricula.
- Schools need to take a holistic approach to ensuring that its school ethos embraces diversity and that this is linked to the wider community.
- To ensure its sustainability, the whole process of intercultural education needs to be appropriately resourced and those delivering it need to be appropriately trained.

The principal aim of Chapter 3 was to draw attention to the importance of teaching by using storytelling and creative drama techniques and to suggest ways of consolidating drama methodologies in many areas of intercultural education. The chapter discussed the educational potential of creative drama and theatre, provided examples of programmes designed to tackle social issues and identified its associated advantages. Drama in education refers to the process of planning activities and workshops by creating imaginary worlds using theatre techniques but is very different from traditional theatre practises. It enhances self-expression, knowledge of one's self and promotes cooperation. Through drama we can examine how people and children are integrated into society and how they interact with others. Our initial research has shown that the modern classroom, which has and will become increasingly diverse in terms of pupil profiles, sets the stage for understanding our changing society. We conclude that an interdisciplinary educational approach would especially be useful for primary school education. The Grow from Seeds project intends to provide a programme designed to foster intercultural dialogue and will address knowledge gaps, by using innovative methods and ways of outreach and delivery, to provide both pupils and teachers with new learning opportunities.

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