Attitude and political support in European intercultural communication and dialogue

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Abstract: This study presents a structured analysis of intercultural dialogue, by connecting cultural studies, education and policy making decisions in contemporary Europe. Political influence plays a significant role in defining and establishing intercultural dynamics, including the way individuals from different cultures interact and communicate with each other Political support in intercultural communication refers to the ways in which ideologies, policies or movements influence interactions between people from different cultural backgrounds. Immigration policies and international relations dictate the movement of people across borders, which influences intercultural exchanges. Countries with more inclusive immigration policies use have citizens who are more open and adaptable to intercultural communication, while countries with more restrictive policies may have individuals who are less experienced or less open to interacting with people from other cultures. Political leaders and governments use intercultural communication to foster diplomatic relations between countries and a very important aspect is that cultural exchange programs, educational partnerships and international summits are examples of how political support can promote mutual understanding across cultures. All these activities may help reduce prejudices and stereotypes, allowing a more effective communication between individuals or nations

Keywords: concept of dialogue; inclusive immigration; intercultural dialogue; political support; migration policies

Methodological framework

Our research aims to assess how European institutions, including the European Union, the Council of Europe and national governments, foster and contribute to intercultural dialogue across Europe. Given the increasing importance of intercultural understanding in a diverse European landscape, this paper will explore the role that these institutions play in promoting dialogue through policies, initiatives and support for cultural exchange.

To effectively analyze how European institutions contribute to intercultural dialogue, this study will employ a mixed-methods approach. A qualitative analysis will be used to examine EU and Council of Europe policy documents, intercultural programs and government initiatives, and the research will additionally examine EU-level initiatives, such as the *Intercultural Cities* project (Council of Europe), *European Year of Intercultural Dialogue* (European Commission) or *Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme* and *Horizon Europe 2021-2027* (European Commission). The study will also include national-level policies in selected EU member states, focusing on their role in promoting intercultural exchange. Strategic policy reports and documents from the European Union, the Council of Europe and national governments will be analyzed to evaluate the scope and intent of intercultural dialogue initiatives.

This methodological approach allows a thorough analysis of European institutional efforts to foster intercultural dialogue, by combining policy explorations, which will provide a nuanced view of how effectively these institutions are contributing to a more interconnected and culturally inclusive Europe. The goal is for findings to provide a broader perspective and to offer valuable insights for policymakers and cultural leaders seeking to enhance intercultural dialogue across the continent, at the end of our study suggesting proposals for improving mostly European educational policies.

Ancient and modern concepts of intercultural dialogue

Dialogue as a concept, in its ancient context, was not exclusively a conversation or exchange of words, as it is often understood today, but it expressed a deeper idea of meaning and understanding arising through the interaction of reason or speech between individuals or within a group, implying a dynamic process where ideas were examined and clarified through thoughtful exchange, often with the aim of uncovering truth or reaching a higher understanding.

The term comes from the Greek *dialogos*, deriving from the word *dialegethai* which means to become involved in a conversation with another. The parts of Dialegethai are *dia* meaning *through, across* and *legein,* in English - to speak. Philosophers such as Plato used the term dialogue to describe a method of inquiry and teaching. Plato's works take the form of dialogues where Socrates engages with others to explore philosophical questions. The dialogues of Socrates, as recreated by Xenophon and Plato, are the best-known representations of such conversations, but Plato's dialogues in particular depict Socrates participating in an extant intellectual culture[1]. These were not just conversations but structured explorations of ideas, aiming to reach a clearer understanding of concepts like justice, virtue or knowledge. Originating from the works of Plato, it involves a method of cooperative argumentative discussion to stimulate critical thinking and illuminate ideas.

Later on, the meaning of this concept was considered, according to J. Tarnowski, as a social attitude, technique and practice of mutual understanding and cooperation. Dialogue is considered a social relation not so much a specific communicative form of question and answer, 'but at heart a kind of social relation that engages its participants which entails certain virtues and emotions such as concern, trust, respect, appreciation, affection and hope[2]. So, dialogue is considered as a rational conversation between two or more individuals.

For Burbules, who emphasizes a Platonic rational argumentative (true justified belief) model of dialogue, the assertion of belief involves an obligation to provide evidence or statement of reasons. All understanding takes place in language; all understanding is interpretative and implies the active translation between the familiar and the strange. We can also use Gadamer's notion to describe the dialogical structure of understanding, which "is a process of two people understanding each other. Thus it is a characteristic of every true conversation that each opens himself to the other person, truly accepts his point of view as worthy of consideration and gets inside the other to such an extent that he understands not a particular individual, but what he says.

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[1] James, Jesse (2024), "Indicting the Athenians in the Melian dialogue", in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 144, p. 178

[2] Burbules, N. C. (1993), *Dialogue in Teaching. Theory and practice*, New York: Teachers College Press.

The thing that has to be grasped is the objective rightness or otherwise of his opinion, so that they can agree with each other on a subject"[3].

Dialogue is about a diverse group of people finding a common sense or understanding about things. This leads to moving forward together in a common direction, each understanding their part in what is being done, and contributing to what may be needed in a willing and intelligent way. Individual and collective identity is formed and maintained by the stories people tell repeatedly about themselves, about each other and about the organisation in which they live or work. As these stories change, the identity changes, too. Stories authored in isolation fragment the identity and lead to a divisive culture, whilst co-authored stories integrate the identity. Dialogue enables people to talk and think together that reveals the inter-dependent needs and interests of people, and these co-authored stories integrate the identity[4].

Intercultural dialogue refers to the process of open and respectful exchange between individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds and its purpose is to promote mutual understanding, reduce cultural biases and foster peaceful coexistence in increasingly diverse societies. This type of dialogue often involves sharing ideas, values, traditions and experiences to bridge cultural divides and find common ground. Or, as Amartya Kumar Sen (an Indian philosopher who made significant scholarly contributions to social choice theory and to well-being of countries) defines it: The person has multiple and significant attachment with other groups and associations including with religion, ethnicity and culture. The illusion of singularity undermines and hides the common plight and situation of persons. [...] The illusion of singularity that relates person only with one group membership and category obliterating other multiple attachments and associations cultivate and promote the violence[5].

Among many thinkers who have contributed to the field of intercultural dialogue, each offering different definitions and unique perspectives, we would also mention Edward Wadie Said (a Palestinian-American academic, literary critic and political activist), best known for his book, *Orientalism* (1978), a landmark work that examines and critiques the cultural stereotypes underpinning Orientalism, the way the Western world views and represents the East. Said examined how Western societies have historically represented the East as exotic or inferior[6], mainly through a lens of power dynamics, his work urging for an incisive exploration and reciprocal intercultural dialogue, where the voices of those historically marginalized are acknowledged and understood on their own terms. Thus, it can be concluded that intercultural competence cannot be achieved by an individual alone, as interaction is a shared process co-constructed by all participants, but at the core of every intercultural encounter lies this idea of co-creation, where each participant contributes to shaping the dynamics of the exchange

[3] Gadamer, H.G. (1960), *Wahrheit und methode*, Tűbingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck); trans. *Truth and method* (2nd ed.), J. Weinsheimer and D.G. Marshall, 1989; Bloomsbury Academic, 2004.

[4] Garrett, Peter (2025), "Theory of Dialogue", in *Prison Dialogue*, available at https://www.prisondialogue.org/theory-of-dialogue

[5] Sen, Amartya Kumar (2006), *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, Penguin Books, London, pp. 261-262

[6] Said, Edward Wadie (1978), *Orientalism*, Vintage Books. A Division of Random House, New York p. 20

Core aspects of intercultural dialogue

The participants in a dialogue must respect each other's cultural identities and engage with an open mind, showing respect and openness. Dialogue seeks to deepen understanding of differing worldviews, cultural practices and values, thus creating mutual understanding. Individuals aim to understand others' perspectives and experiences emotionally and intellectually, empathy being a fundamental ability to understand and share the feelings of another. The Article 151 of the EU Treaty states that: "…the Union shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore" and that "action by the Community shall be aimed at encouraging cooperation between Member States".

Therefore, in order to help construct a European cultural space, based on a common cultural heritage as well as on national and regional diversity, the EU develops special programmes which support many cultural actions and projects. It is worth noticing that the Commission pays special attention to safeguarding the position of Europe's small cultures and less-widely spoken languages. So, all voices are considered equally important, regardless of cultural or social standing and the process involves not just speaking but also deeply and actively listening to understand others[7].

When does a person become intercultural? A man or a woman become intercultural when they develop the ability to interact effectively and respectfully with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. This transformation involves not just exposure to other cultures but also the acquisition of certain attitudes, skills and knowledge. In this respect, we will present in a structurally schematic overview, some fundamental aspects of becoming intercultural:

-recognizing that cultural norms, values and practices vary widely;
-understanding that one's own culture is not universal;
-reflecting on one's own cultural identity and how it influences behavior and perceptions;
-identifying potential biases or ethnocentric tendencies;
-demonstrating curiosity and a willingness to learn from others;
-respecting and valuing diverse perspectives without judgment;
-adjusting communication styles, behaviors, and expectations to fit different cultural contexts;
-being comfortable navigating ambiguity and complexity in cross-cultural interactions;
-using verbal and nonverbal communication effectively across cultures;
-understanding cultural nuances and avoiding stereotypes;
-learning about the history, traditions, values, and practices of other cultures;
-recognizing global interconnectedness and its impact on local cultures;
-seeing oneself as part of a larger, interconnected world;
-balancing appreciation for cultural diversity with the recognition of shared human experiences.

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[7] Wilk-Woś, Zofia (2010), "The Role of Intercultural Dialogue in the EU Policy", in *Journal of Intercultural Management,* vol. 2, No. 1, March 2010, p.79

This is the way, a person becomes universal or multicultural.

As phrased by UNESCO, the complication is that one person in an interaction cannot be interculturally competent alone, because interaction is a process co-constructed jointly by all participants. If together participants manage well, then together they are interculturally competent. If not, then it is simply inaccurate to say one of them was competent and the other incompetent. This notion of co-construction, of jointly making our interactions with others, rests at the heart of any intercultural encounter. Each encounter is about making something, creating something, jointly with at least one other person, and so the process of interaction must serve as focus. In any case, intercultural dialogue is the first step to taking advantage of different cultural traditions and histories to expand the list of possible solutions to common problems. Intercultural dialogue is thus an essential tool in the effort to resolve intercultural conflicts peacefully, and a precondition for cultivating a culture of peace[8].

It has been said that intercultural dialogues have been taking place between scholars, officials of non-government organizations and social, religious and political leaders. Generally, these dialogues revolve around the following topics: discussion of the meaning, possibility or impossibility of dialogue, the analysis of cases of dialogues, the clarification of issues related to dialogue, and finally the role intercultural dialogue plays in reducing international violence and promoting economic development[9].

The purpose of intercultural communication and dialogue is to foster understanding, respect and cooperation among individuals and groups from different cultural backgrounds. It is also to learn and to want to live together peacefully and constructively in a multicultural world and to develop a sense of community and belonging. Intercultural dialogue can also be a tool for the prevention and resolution of conflicts by enhancing the respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In this respect, we present a set of objectives that should be taken into consideration in order to have a respectful exchange of views between individuals:

- encourage people to learn about and appreciate the values, beliefs and traditions of others, breaking down stereotypes and misconceptions;
- build bridges between diverse communities to create more inclusive societies where everyone feels valued and respected;
- identify similarities and differences between different cultural traditions and perceptions;
- facilitate joint efforts in addressing common challenges, such as social inequality, discrimination and conflict;
- share visions of the world, to understand and learn from those that do not see the world with the same perspective we do;
- reduce tensions and conflicts by promoting empathy, dialogue and shared solutions, especially in multicultural or divided societies;
- bridge the divide between those who perceive diversity as a threat and those who view it as an enrichment;
- share best practices particularly in the areas of intercultural dialogue, the democratic management of social diversity and the promotion of social cohesion;

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[8] E-Platform on Intercultural Dialogue, https://en.unesco.org/interculturaldialogue/core-concepts

[9] Doron, Aviva, "Towards a Definition of Intercultural Dialogues", in *Peace, Literature, and Art,* vol. II, Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems (EOLSS), United Nations, Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, p. 5, available at https://www.eolss.net/sample-chapters/c04/e1-39a-30.pdf

-equip individuals and organizations with the skills to interact effectively and respectfully with those from different cultural contexts;
-recognize and embrace cultural diversity as a source of enrichment and creativity instead of division;
-develop jointly new projects.

Accordingly to the principles mentioned above, we can conclude that encouraging individuals to appreciate the values and traditions of others, helps break down stereotypes and misconceptions that often fuel division. More than just a way of exchanging ideas, intercultural dialogue nurtures empathy, promotes inclusive societies and encourages collaborative efforts in solving global issues, and ultimately, equips individuals and organizations with the necessary skills to interact with respect and contribute to shared projects, leading to a more harmonious and innovative world.

European institutions initiatives in implementing intercultural policies

The challenge of fostering equity and cohesion in culturally diverse societies has become more acute. While people of diverse national, ethnic, linguistic and faith backgrounds have immensely contributed to post-war prosperity, inequalities related to origin, culture and skin colour persist, and anxiety about pluralism, identity and shared values is often politically instrumentalised. The Intercultural Cities program (Council of Europe) assists cities and regions in evaluating and adjusting their policies with an intercultural perspective, while also helping to develop inclusive strategies that leverage diversity as a benefit for society as a whole. It also serves as a global platform, bringing together cities and leaders to form a network where initiatives and practices from one city are analyzed and shared to inspire others[10]. At present, The Intercultural Cities programme is being implemented by over 130 cities in Europe and beyond, include Australia, Canada, Japan, Israel, Mexico, Morocco and the United States. The ICC program provides robust methodologies to assist cities in developing their strategies for managing diversity and integration, along with a community for exchanging best practices, and the participation of cities in international networks can have a great impact on local dynamics of governance and on public policy[11].

It also offers a variety of tools for policy development and evaluation. An example of such methodologies is the Anti-rumours strategy, which focuses on eliminating the root causes of discrimination. It involves mapping and dismantling diversity-related prejudice and rumours that lay the foundations of discriminatory and racist attitudes. To support the process of intercultural strategy development, implementation and evaluation, the Intercultural Cities programme provides methodological support and offers extensive city profiles, a database of good practices, a Step-by-step guide, as well as manuals, handbooks and policy briefs related to specific policy areas.

The ICC INDEX tracks the efforts of cities to promote participation, interaction, equal opportunities and the integration of interculturalism and diversity as strategic advantages. Based

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[10] Council Of Europe, *About Intercultural Cities,* available at https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/about

[11] White, Bob W. (2021), "City-Based Inclusion Networks In A Post-Multicultural World: The Intercultural Cities Programme Of The Council Of Europe", in *Local Government Studies*, volume 48, 2022 - issue 6*: City Network Activism And The Governance Of Migration,* Routledge

on this assessment, the Council of Europe provides a detailed report, offering recommendations and sharing examples of best practices from other cities. In the next phase, an expert visit takes place, involving independent experts and a Council of Europe representative. This visit engages city officials and a broad range of local stakeholders to evaluate their policies from an intercultural perspective. Local stakeholders are then supported in the development (or revision) of a comprehensive intercultural strategy to manage diversity effectively and harness its potential as an advantage.

Study visits, thematic events and the transfer of innovation, expose a range of policy-makers, practitioners and advocates from each city to reflections and discussions with peers from across the world.

In the Council of Europe, intercultural dialogue is defined as an "open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups from diverse ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds, based on mutual understanding and respect". It takes place at all levels within societies, between European societies and between Europe and the broader world (White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, 2008). The awareness and understanding fostered by intercultural dialogue are viewed as tools for promoting reconciliation and tolerance, preventing conflicts and ensuring both integration and social cohesion.

The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue aimed to enhance the visibility, effectiveness and coherence of European programs and actions that promote intercultural dialogue, such as the *Europe for Citizens 2007-13* initiative and the *Culture* program. Additionally, it seeked to integrate intercultural dialogue into other European policies, actions and programs wherever possible. The general objectives of the Year focused on promoting intercultural dialogue, highlighting the opportunities intercultural dialogue provide for a diverse society and raising awareness of the value of active citizenship. The Year prioritized the following types of activities: European-level actions, including information and promotional campaigns, surveys and studies and consultations with important stakeholders; symbolic European-level actions designed to raise awareness, mainly among young people, about the Year's objectives, with eligibility for European grants covering up to 80% of the total cost; national-level actions that emphasize a strong European dimension, qualifying for European support of up to 50% of the total cost.

The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, even though officially celebrated in 2008, remains relevant today for several reasons. As societies become more interconnected, intercultural dialogue is essential to fostering understanding, cooperation and peaceful coexistence among different populations. Then, many European cities and countries are experiencing increased cultural and ethnic diversity due to migration, refugee and global mobility, which makes intercultural dialogue crucial for promoting integration and social cohesion. In today's world, where populism and nationalism are on the rise, intercultural dialogue serves as a countermeasure to racism and intolerance, encouraging mutual respect and understanding. As regional and global tensions persist, intercultural dialogue continues to play a decissive role in preventing conflicts by fostering communication between different groups and reducing misunderstandings. And last but not least, from educational perspective, intercultural dialogue helps promote lifelong learning and education about different cultures, fostering empathy and curiosity among individuals, paticularly young people. Therefore, considering all these aspects,

we state that the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue remains foundational for building inclusive and tolerant societies in the face of ongoing social and political challenges.

Horizon 2020 was the EU's ambitious research and innovation funding programme from 2014-2020, which has been succeeded by *Horizon Europe*, 2021-2027. The programme facilitates collaboration and strengthens the impact of research and innovation in developing and implementing EU policies while tackling global challenges and supports creating and better dispersing of excellent knowledge and technologies. It generates employment, fully taps into the EU's talent pool, drives economic growth, enhances industrial competitiveness and maximizes the impact of investments within a more robust European Research Area.

Horizon Europe offers opportunities to researchers and innovators from all over the world, albeit with the possibility of restrictions where necessary. Under Pillar I researchers can apply for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowships to come to work in European research groups or for European Research Council grants to establish a research group in Europe. They can participate as partners in research consortia submitting collaborative proposals under Pillar II. Additionally, if they intend to launch a start-up or a Small or Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) in Europe, they are eligible to apply for funding from the European Innovation Council under Pillar III[12]. The EU supports bilateral cooperation through Science and Technology Agreements with countries worldwide, as well as through Regional Dialogues to enhance partnerships and by associating with the Horizon Europe framework program, non-EU countries can contribute to its budget, allowing their researchers to participate on equal terms with those from EU Member States.

On 16 July 2025, the European Commission submitted its proposal for the Horizon Europe Framework Programme (2028–2034), and will boost Europe's productivity and competitiveness, while also improving the well-being of millions of people across the continent.

Horizon Europe (2028-2034) will build upon the successes of previous programs, expanding successful initiatives, streamlining processes where feasible and directing investment to areas where Europe's needs are greatest and it will be closely aligned with the European Competitiveness Fund.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations, its purpose being to contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through education, science, culture and communication. UNESCO and the European Union share the same values and goals, namely the promotion of peace and mutual understanding, and the recognition of human rights and fundamental freedoms as cornerstones of international cooperation and development.

As provided in Article I - *Purposes and functions,* in the Constitution of the UNESCO*: "*The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter

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[12] European Commission, *International cooperation*, available at https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/europe-world/international-cooperation_en

of the United Nations"[13]. UNESCO collaborates with its 194 Member States worldwide on different initiatives, including protecting biodiversity, addressing the challenges of artificial intelligence, advancing quality education, preserving cultural heritage and ensuring access to reliable information.

UNESCO's Intergovernmental Council of the Management of social transformation Programme adopted the 2022-2029 MOST Strategy, guided by the UNESCO Programme and Budget 2022-2025 (41 C/5). It contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to the priorities set the UNSG report on "Our Common Agenda," which calls for strong action against inequalities, the rebuilding of the social contract, and the strengthening of analytical capacities in governments, particularly through foresight, big data, computational social sciences and complex systems approaches. Additionally, it aligns with the African Union Agenda 2063[14]. The new strategy emphasizes addressing inequality and exclusion, the coordinated development of population, environmental change and society, governance of regional and global commons and the impact of digital transformations and societal disruption. It advocates for more effective, data-driven policy frameworks that prioritize multi-dimensional well-being and inclusive development.

In examining the initiatives of European institutions in implementing intercultural policies, it is clear that these efforts play a pivotal role in creating a more inclusive and harmonious Europe. Through programs like those mentioned above and through other policy frameworks we have explored, European institutions have made significant strides in promoting intercultural dialogue and addressing the challenges of a diverse society. However, the analysis also highlights that while considerable progress has been made, there are ongoing challenges, particularly in ensuring the effective integration of cultural diversity across all levels of society.

Looking ahead, the continued success of these initiatives will depend on the ability of European institutions to adapt to new socio-political realities, harness the full potential of digital transformations,and prioritize the well-being of all citizens, and by reinforcing the principles of mutual understanding and respect, European institutions can help build a future where diversity is not only accepted but celebrated as a strength.

Discussions, conclusions and perspectives

As an essential component of human communication activities, intercultural communication is indispensable among individuals, groups and nations. Intercultural communication helps maintain the balance within social structures and systems[15], fostering the development and evolution of human culture. Specifically, based on the nature of human cultural exchanges, intercultural communication refers to the information exchange activities among social

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[13] Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Article I-Purposes and functions, Adopted in London on 16 November 1945 and amended by the General Conference in several sessions, available at https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/constitution?hub=171411

[14] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Sustainable devepolment, UNESCO, available at https://sdgs.un.org/un-system-sdg-implementation/united-nations-educational-scientific-and-cultural-organization-1

[15] Yingchun Sun, Yi Shi (2024), "Knowledge Strategies For Indigenous Studies On Intercultural Communication In Non-Western Countries in The Global Power Structure", in *Journalism And Media*, vol.5, issue 3, 1057-1070

members from different cultural backgrounds and involves the diffusion and transformation of various cultural elements globally[16].

The political and socio-cultural context within which the White Paper emerged in Europe was characterized by rising levels of anti-migrant feelings, perceived lack of integration of minorities and more salient security threats brought about through the so-called global war on terror . The intercultural idea aims to address a number of critical questions about how people relate to one another and how these interactions are framed, shaped and enacted in everyday situations. More substantively, other key relevant questions relate to how individuals and groups of people from different cultures interact with one another; how they live well together despite differences pertaining to language, culture, religion, ethnicity and other socio-cultural orientations; how they resolve conflicts arising from cross-cultural misunderstandings; and how their daily encounter with diversity shapes their attitudes, behaviours and experiences[17].

Beyond any description or explanation the real aim of intercultural dialogue is considered to be the reduction of international violence: terrorism and war. Intercultural dialogue challenges harmful stereotypes and misconceptions about different cultures, religions and communities, which are often exploited by extremist ideologies and by engaging in dialogue, people come to see members of other cultures as individuals with shared human values and concerns, reducing the likelihood of seeing them as enemies.

Dialogue creates a platform for discussing grievances that might otherwise fuel radicalization or resentment and this can help address the root causes of terrorism. Encouraging diverse voices counters extremist propaganda, offering alternative narratives that promote coexistence and peace, and further more joint cultural, educational and community-building programs obviously foster relationships between groups that might otherwise remain isolated. Facilitating direct communication between conflicting parties can reduce misunderstandings, build trust, and lead to peaceful negotiations. According to the researchers, understanding and accepting others requires respecting one's own culture, being confident in its valuable and positive meaning, and engaging more often with others[18].

However, intercultural dialogue implies an understanding that leads to praxis. Therefore, dialogue cannot be accomplished merely by holding conferences, but should be built into the very structure of the cultures of the world, and dialogue, in this respect, is a rational conversation between two parties in an atmosphere of freedom, respect, equality, trust and commitment to truth.

Intercultural dialogue does not exclusively deal with social and political issues. It also considers the importance of dialogue in the relationship between religion and science due to the diverse religious conflicts around the world caused by a lack of knowledge of the other's culture. In other words, a lack of a worldview.

Pope John Paul II asserted that the church and the scientific community will inevitably interact; their options do not include isolation. Science can purify religion from error and

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[16] *Ibidem.*

[17] *Ibidem,* p. 492

[18] Ivlev, Vitaly Yu (2020),"Intercultural Communication and Dialogue of Ethnic Cultures in the Context of Digitalization of Society", in *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, volume 507, Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Education, Language, Art and Inter-cultural Communication (ICELAIC 2020), p.322

superstition. Religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish. According to his attitude, we need each other to be what we must be, what we are called to be (this was according to Pope John Paul II, Letter to Director of the Vatican Observatory, 1.6.1988, in Papal Addresses 9, p. 300).

Political support plays a critical role in promoting and sustaining these efforts and there are essential ways by which political actors and institutions can support intercultural communication and dialogue. One of them is to enact and enforce legislation, through anti-discrimination laws, that protects against racial and cultural discrimination to ensure equal opportunities and respect for diversity. Then, to develop policies that encourage the integration of minority groups while respecting and preserving their cultural identities, by promoting cultural integration policies. Promoting language access laws the political system will ensure access to government services in multiple languages to promote inclusion and effective communication. Integrate cultural studies and language programs into school curricula to promote understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures from a young age means to provide intercultural education and meanwhile to launch initiatives, within public awareness campaigns, to educate the public about the benefits of diversity and the importance of intercultural dialogue. Providing funds for programs that bring together people from different cultural backgrounds, such as cultural festivals and community centers could become parts of the community projects and invest in research to understand the challenges and opportunities in intercultural communication, and use data to inform policies, could develop research and data collection. Cultural exchange could also support international exchange programs that allow individuals to experience and learn from different cultures. Different leadership categories should promote diversity in political representation to ensure that all cultural groups have a voice in decision-making processes. Peacebuilding initiatives should supply with programs that use intercultural dialogue as a tool for conflict prevention and resolution. By organizing cultural holidays and events, diverse cultural holidays and traditions could be recognized and celebrated at national level, as well.

While political support can significantly enhance intercultural communication and dialogue, it must be inclusive, which means to avoid tokenism and ensure that all cultural groups feel genuinely represented and valued. This support must also be sustained with long-term commitment as necessary to create lasting impact. Then it should also be adaptable, with policies and initiatives that should evolve in response to changing demographics and societal needs. The role of the media in shaping political discourse also affects intercultural communication. Political parties and governments often use media to influence public opinion about cultural issues, but through campaigns or social media, politicians can either promote or diminish intercultural understanding, influencing how different cultural groups communicate and relate to each other. Political support for certain languages, through language policies, can impact intercultural communication. For example, some countries may promote the use of a national language while downplaying the use of minority languages and this can either facilitate communication between different cultural groups or create barriers if individuals are not fluent in the dominant language.

Migration policies play a significant role in intercultural dialogue, as they determine how different cultural groups are integrated into society and how they interact with one another. Effective migration policies can promote positive intercultural dialogue by fostering respect, shared values and collaboration and they should include integration measures aimed at helping migrants adjust to their new country. These programs may include language courses, cultural orientation,

civic education, all of which can contribute to a smoother integration process. Integration policies that prioritize intercultural exchange encourage migrants to share their cultural practices and learn from the host culture, fostering mutual respect. Immigration policies that actively address discrimination and racism are essential for ensuring that migrants feel welcomed and valued in their new environment. Laws that protect against discrimination based on ethnicity, religion or cultural background can reduce tensions and promote positive intercultural dialogue by ensuring that all groups have equal opportunities for participation in society. The inclusion of intercultural dialogue in educational curricula can help young people of both migrant and host backgrounds to understand each other better[19].

Migration policies that emphasize intercultural education in schools can help build bridges between different communities, reduce stereotypes and promote mutual understanding. Many migrants succeed in establishing themselves in their new communities, but others, those at the centre of our attention, face difficulties. They may lose the links with their families and communities[20].

Outside their traditional support systems, they often are unable to access health and social services that respect their basic needs and dignity. Migration policies that facilitate migrants' access to employment opportunities can contribute to both their economic integration and social inclusion. When migrants can access stable jobs, they are more likely to establish connections with local communities and participate actively in social life, leading to more open and constructive dialogues between different cultural groups.

Summing up we will emphasize the idea that political support can significantly contribute to intercultural communication by influencing perceptions, creating frameworks for interaction and facilitating or hindering dialogue between cultural groups, and the intersection of politics and culture is crucial for fostering mutual understanding, reducing conflict and promoting collaboration in a globalized world. By prioritizing these strategies, political leaders could foster a culture of mutual respect and collaboration, paving the way for more harmonious and equitable societies.

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