



Universities as promoter of intercultural dialogue in multicultural societies

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Recommendations

- i. Training for the dialogue
- ii. Manage cultural diversity and cultivate dialogue
- iii. Research: Mapping the field
- iv. Policy-making for intercultural dialogue
- v. Risks and challenges



i. Training for the dialogue

- Training students to comprehend and address world culture and, at the same time, enable them to preserve tradition and regional diversity.
- Fostering a learning culture that is open to intercultural exchange.
- Providing training to the teaching staff so they become sensible to intercultural settings/situations. Enable teachers to engage intercultural dialogue in the classroom.



ii. Manage cultural diversity and cultivate dialogue

- Promoting higher education access and participation among all cultural communities, thereby furthering the implementation of the European Higher Education Area.
- Developing a managerial culture that embraces cultural diversity:
 - Encouraging the internationalisation of the educational process: curriculum, student body and staff
 - Furthering campus initiatives to promote cross cultural exchanges
 - Proposing codes of conduct to further intercultural exchange among students, staff and faculty.
- Encouraging intercultural awareness in society and reach out to the wider public (for instance via media, festivals, cultural events etc.).



iii. Research: Mapping the field

- Engaging a mapping exercise on how universities deal with increasing cultural diversity throughout Europe (i.e. identifying tools and structures to overcome social/cultural fragmentation)
- Research should gather data on didactic and technical innovations to further curriculum innovation with regard to intercultural dialogue.
- Researchers should develop a critical awareness on the cultural conditioning of research strategies, concepts and solutions.



iv. Policy making for intercultural dialogue

- Supporting intercultural dialogue as core mission of universities and encouraging them to develop policy projects addressing cross cultural exchanges.
- Policy makers should foster the role of universities in regional development and the preservation of regional/cultural diversity.
- Raising public awareness for intercultural dialogue and empowering cultural minorities to take part in societal processes.



v. Risks and challenges

- Universities need to be aware of the dangers implied by their new social responsibility. By opening their doors to the wider society, they become vulnerable to new threats.
- Intercultural dialogue should become part of the core missions of universities. Universities need to address the integrative challenge of modern democracies: How to achieve unity and integration while maintaining individual freedom?
- There is no single way of promoting intercultural dialogue. Accepting the diversity of approaches to intercultural dialogue and remaining open to new ideas, actors and forms of dialogue is an essential part in implementing and furthering cross cultural exchanges.



Thank you for your attention!

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