

Antirumours' Guide for the Educational Field

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Antirumours' Guide for the Educational Field

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We particularly value the initiatives shared by ICEI such as the IORISPETTO project implemented in different Italian cities; the Antirumours Strategy in La Bastida school in Álava and the antirumours actions in the Fort Pienc school in Barcelona.

An Antirumours' Guide for the Educational Field

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01

The reasons behind this Guide and the objectives of the Antirumours Strategy



The reasons behind this Guide and the objectives of the Antirumours Strategy

We are witnessing an increasingly polarised discourse by the political leaders. The far-right is gaining strength, and fear of "the other" is feeding polarisation as well as the growth of intolerance, prejudices and the discrimination towards minorities or particular social groups. In this context, a key question to be addressed is how increasingly diverse societies can promote citizenship and unlock the benefits and advantages of diversity.

The Antirumour Strategy (ARS) was launched in Barcelona in 2010. Since then, many territories have promoted and adapted it to their context. In many cities, the Strategy has evolved and expanded its scope to include the educational field. The expansion to the educational area has taken place through cooperation with educational centres by offering them training or workshops and including them in the Antirumours networks. There are even educational centres that have carried out some Antirumours actions (workshops, training for parents, teachers and other school staff) or that have also promoted some related projects or initiatives in the longer term. In this sense, a growing number of schools are showing interest in launching their own ARS and demanding resources, criteria, and guidelines to guarantee the effectiveness and impact of their interventions.

Therefore, the idea is to adapt the Antirumours Strategy specifically to the field of education. Based on the study of some experiences and projects, the

content of the Council of Europe's Antirumours Handbook and the analysis of several pieces of research, this guide aims to identify some guidelines for intervention that will inspire all those agents working in the educational field.

It is essential to keep in mind that the Antirumours Strategy, is part of the intercultural approach to diversity management, whose three principles are equality, recognition of diversity and promotion of positive interaction. The ARS is a long-term process of social change whose purpose is to prevent discrimination, improve coexistence and harness the potential of diversity by promoting a change in perceptions, attitudes and behaviour. For this purpose, we have adapted the three specific objectives of the ARS to the educational field:

- To involve and train a wide range of actors (teachers, students, management teams, families and other actors in the community near the school) through the construction of a multilevel cooperative platform.
- To promote critical thinking and awareness about the adverse effects of stereotypes, prejudices and false rumours, to reduce them through innovative and participatory actions, and to generate alternative narratives that question negative stories about diversity.
- To influence the educational policy agenda at different administrative levels so that the reduction

of prejudice and the prevention of discrimination is recognised as a fundamental collective objective.

Many territories perceive the educational field as strategic. Education plays an essential role in the process of socialisation and social inclusion and the construction of the representation of others. Educational centres are, therefore, spaces with the potential to generate or reduce stereotypes and prejudices, create a change in social norms and promote specific values and attitudes.

Numerous studies show that children between the ages of 3 and 5 already express ethnic prejudices (Levy, Lytle, Shin, and Milligan, 2015¹). These studies

support interventions from an early age since, also, the effects on the reduction of prejudices will continue into adulthood. However, in practice, there are more tools for intervening in secondary education than in primary education. Although some methodologies require a certain degree of cognitive complexity, it is equally important not to forget about the earliest ages.

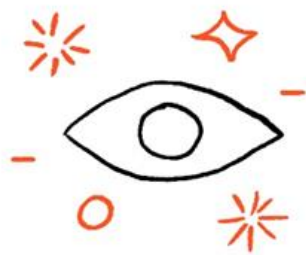
Finally, when referring to the educational field, we cannot limit ourselves to what happens within the educational centres. Promoting critical thinking and reducing prejudices is a collective responsibility, and education involves very diverse actors and spaces that we must take into account when designing an ARS.

¹ The theoretical basis chosen refers to research on the reduction of prejudices and discriminatory attitudes on ethnic grounds in childhood

and adolescence mainly from American authors in the field of social psychology.


02

The Antirumours approach in education



The Antirumours approach in education

The theoretical basis of the Council of Europe's [Antirumours Handbook](#) examines the concepts of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, how they originate and how they are learned. The handbook draws mainly on the theories in the field of social psychology, which focus on the multifaceted nature of the concepts' roots encompassing cognitive, emotional, and social components. To be rigorous and effective in the implementation of an ARS in the educational field, we have pursued theories focused on strategies to reduce prejudices and stereotypes and promote intercultural competences in this field.

 Annexe 1: Summary table of the evolution of different approaches and theories on the reduction of prejudice in children and young people.

 Annexe 2: Intercultural Competences in Education, Council of Europe, DG Democracy

While the research referred to in this guide focuses exclusively on reducing biases linked to origin and ethnicity, we must bear in mind that the ARS is progressively incorporating the reduction of prejudices relating to more diverse identity-related issues. Such issues include sexual orientation or gender identity, mental health disorders, physical or intellectual disabilities, age, religious beliefs or socioeconomic status, among others.

The main criteria to take into account when promoting Antirumours actions to reduce prejudices and stereotypes in the educational field are summarised below.

1. Cognitive skills: promoting knowledge and encouraging critical thinking

According to the Theory of Cognitive Development², prejudice is inevitable among children because they lack the necessary skills to see people as individuals. This theory suggests that children focus initially on themselves and then on social categories. When focusing on the latter, they tend to centre on superficial characteristics and exaggerate the differences between groups (for example, assuming that all members of group 1 do X). Only later, as their cognitive systems mature (between the ages of 7 and 11), are they able to recognise similarities between groups (members of group 1 and group 2 do X) and differences within the same group (some members of group 1 do X, and some do Y). As children acquire these cognitive skills, they are better able to judge people as individuals, which reduces their potential for prejudice. However, social and motivational factors also play a key role (Levy et al. 2015, p. 470). Furthermore, for Master, Markman and Dweck, (2012), recognising that people are on a continuum of characteristics rather than in distinct categories can help prevent stereotypes.

Teaching and raising awareness about the existence of different cultures and worldviews have a profound effect on the way we observe differences (Nesdale, Lawson, Durkin & Duffy, 2010). It is essential to know the workings and logic of any culture, to understand why it is so important for people as it is the context from which we extract the elements that will help us to explain reality. These elements will also help us interpret our existence, and what surrounds us or what we think surrounds us, but we do not know. It is equally important to explain some aspects of Western culture

² According to this approach, children's attitudes are influenced by their ability to think about the information in the group in complex ways and highlights age-related social, cognitive and emotional limitations that

lead to greater prejudice among the youngest (Aboud, 2008). More information in Annex 1.

that are related to cultural diversity and how these elements determine our relationship with people from other cultural contexts. In other words, raising awareness about those elements of our culture that condition our perception and interpretation of diversity will make us question the way we learn and see cultures. Moreover, culture is socially constructed, and each person builds it from their belonging to one or several cultures. In line with the recognition that people find themselves in a continuum of characteristics, children from diverse backgrounds should not be statically associated with one culture.

One of the strategies to reduce prejudice is to strengthen more global and inclusive identities. Based on the idea that people have diverse social identities, the objective is to emphasise the most shared aspects of these characters to generate a more inclusive identity³.

There is a line of thought that considers that prejudices arise from ignorance, particularly concerning the history and roots of inequality (Nesdale, Lawson, Durkin & Duffy, 2010). Hence, there is a need to not only study the concept of culture and cultural diversity, but also to teach and raise awareness about the history of cultures.

Finally, it is important to encourage critical thinking, or introspection through the presumption that we are biased in our moral reasoning in one way or another to allow the participants of a meeting, action or discussion to share their feelings and thoughts without having to justify themselves (Haidt, 2001). In this regard, the critical reflection that naturally occurs in intercultural encounters is a unique pedagogical opportunity. In the end, it is a matter of students being able to know and explore their own cultural identities, to better understand where they come from, how they have been shaped, and to be able to manage any intercultural interaction more efficiently.

2. The emotional component: working on empathy

Emotional intelligence is an element that is often ignored in education or given less importance compared to rational thinking. However, emotional and rational thinking go hand in hand: processes related to emotions are necessary to transform the theoretical

knowledge that is acquired into real-world situations, as they provide an indication for judgment and action (Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007). It is therefore essential to foster the ability to empathise with the experience of being "different".

The construction of empathy consists in developing the feeling of being "different" and to identify when an individual feels this way. Ultimately, it allows one to better comprehend the feelings surrounding intercultural encounters, both from the perspective of a majority and a minority group.

3. Promoting dynamics and spaces for positive interaction

Allport's Contact Theory (1954) indicates that direct or indirect exposure to inter-group situations will make people in different groups able to 'individualise' each other, instead of falling into stereotypes (Davies, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew & Wright, 2011). For this interaction to have positive results, it must comply with a set of conditions:

- Contact should take place between people who perceive themselves to be of equal status within the contact situation.
- The contact should be long enough and close enough to allow the development of meaningful relationships or friendships between the participants.
- The contact should involve cooperation in joint activities aimed at achieving common objectives (rather than encouraging competition between groups).

Concerning this last point, it is worth mentioning the concept of cooperative learning. This teaching strategy consists of the formation of groups of students that work together to achieve a common goal. It reinforces the idea that a plurality of perspectives not only co-exists, but is inherently positive, allowing for learning new things and rectifying, consolidating, or reaffirming learning already achieved. Five conditions are identified for a successful incorporation of cooperative learning. (Johnson & Johnson, 2009):

- Group members need to perceive that they are linked to others in the group in such a way that

³ This is based on the intercultural principles of equality, recognition of diversity and interaction. In this sense, a global and inclusive identity

should not be interpreted (or used) as an attempt to dilute the identities of minority groups and move towards an assimilationist model.

they cannot achieve the common goal unless they work together on the task at hand.

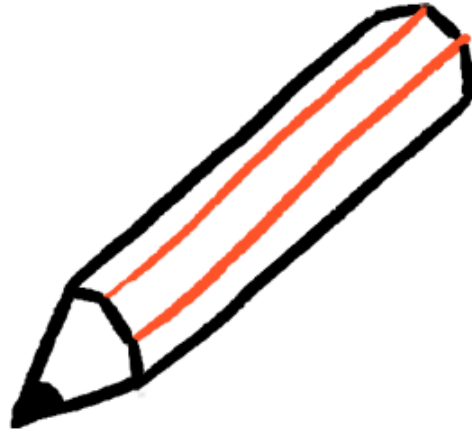
- The student's performance should be assessed regularly, and feedback should be given to both the group and the individual.
- There must be promotional interaction: helping, sharing and encouraging each other's efforts to complete tasks and achieve group goals.
- Appropriate use of social skills such as decision making, confidence building, communication and conflict management skills
- Groups should regularly reflect on how well they are functioning and how they could improve working relationships between their members.

A second approach to cooperative learning that can be adopted is that of collaborative discussion or dialogue in search of consensus (Felton, García-Mila, Villarreal & Gilabert, 2015). Changing the approach from 'debating to convince' to 'debating to reach consensus' does not only teach students negotiation skills for real-life intercultural encounters, but it also creates a different culture around the idea of debate and conflict resolution.

In line with the aforementioned and with the development of ARS during the last years, Antirumours Global has defined a set of communication strategies that allow greater effectiveness when questioning prejudices in face-to-face conversations. These can be found in the [Council of Europe's Antirumours Handbook](#).



Adapting the Antirumours Strategy to the educational field



Adapting the Antirumours Strategy to the educational field

While it is true that the general objectives and principles of the ARS remain independent of the field of action, the key elements and the methodology must be adapted to the educational context. Below are the five key elements that are common or necessary for the design and implementation of

successful strategies and their adaptation. Each specific context might require a greater emphasis on one area or another. Moreover, since meeting all the criteria can be challenging, sometimes the strategies will even begin in a partial manner.

3.1. Criteria

Commitment	This first criterion is fundamental. Regardless of the context, there must be a real commitment and willingness on the part of the school's management team to promote an ARS. However, ideally, there should also be a political commitment, as in the case of cities. This commitment can take different forms and can come from the local or regional government.
Involvement and participation of different actors	We must take into account which actors are most relevant to the promotion of ARS in schools. In each context, the promoters may be different. Among the actors to be involved, we can find the management team, teachers, school personnel (monitors, custodians, kitchen staff, etc.), families, students, and other actors within the school environment and the neighbourhood (social organisations, neighbourhood associations, civic centres, libraries, etc.).
Attract and seduce	The ARS' approach is to engage the target audience in the process of promoting critical thinking through dialogue and reflection. The aim is not to instil a sense of guilt, but to raise awareness of the adverse effects of prejudice and stereotypes. We assume that we all have biases and, in this case, so do teachers and other professionals, families and students.
Creativity	The ARS feeds on creativity, which is equally important in the educational field. To encourage creativity in the type of actions undertaken, in how we work in networks and in how we involve all actors in a process, should feel like a stimulating and motivating collective commitment to social change.

It is essential to promote actions that have an impact. And to do this, the activities must be based on existing knowledge (theoretical and practical) on this subject. This is why training and evaluation are so important.

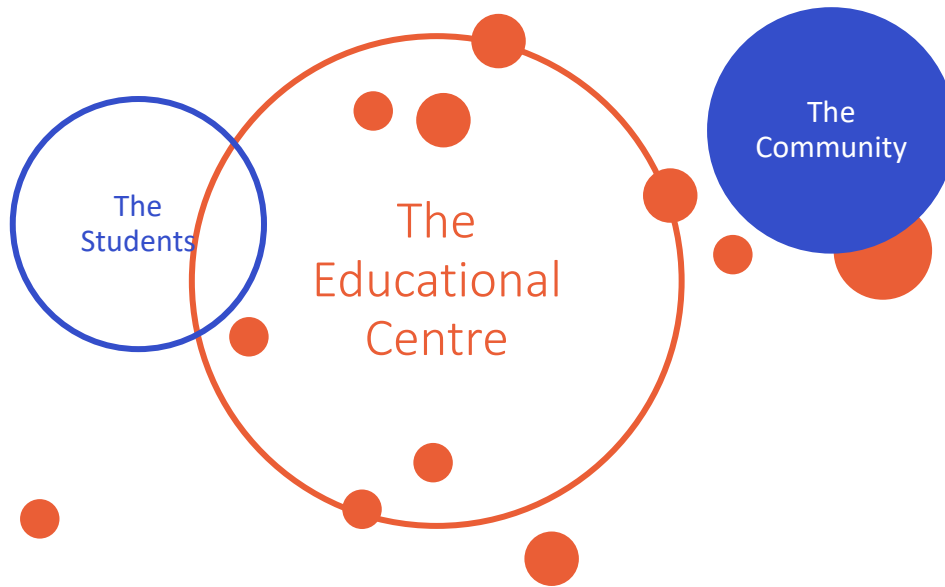
The Strategy's sustainability will depend on different variables, such as the commitment of the management team and the consensus between the various actors. It will, also be influenced by factors such as creativity and proactivity. A recurrent challenge in all ARS is to maintain the interest in the initiative over time and to avoid simple repetitions of the same action. Here are some ideas on how to do this:

Rigour, results, sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="416 1462 1415 1675">▪ <u>To promote spaces to generate new ideas.</u> One option is to ask for external help and to collect thoughts and opinions on how to improve the Strategy. This can be done through an invitation to an open dialogue in person, an online platform or questionnaire, among others. Such spaces, in turn, allow for the involvement and empowerment of the community with which you are working to play a role in combating prejudice and promoting critical thinking.<li data-bbox="416 1709 1415 1919">▪ <u>Working in an interdisciplinary way.</u> Professions are very similar to cultures as they make people focus on a particular set of attributes concerning a topic. Professionals from different fields (anthropology, intercultural mediation, artistic disciplines, cross-cultural psychiatry, neuroscience, social psychology, new technologies and communication, etc.) can help us gain awareness of factors and issues that we do not take into account within our vision.
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To better understand these criteria and how to apply them to the educational field, it is necessary to know and identify the agents that will be part of the ARS, as well as the different phases of the implementation of the Strategy.

3.2 Actors

Adapting the Antirumours approach to the educational sphere also implies adapting to the actors involved in this field. Reducing prejudices is a shared responsibility, and the interventions should be aimed not only at students but also at the school's teachers, parents and even the community closest to the school.



The school

Schools are spaces where, just as stereotypes and prejudices are generated, they can be reduced or eradicated. A basic criterion to design an ARS is that the institutional or management team must be committed to the Strategy, regardless of who first launched the Strategy. The main focus is that there ought to be a level of awareness regarding the value and respect of diversity throughout the whole institution from the management of its personnel to the decision-making level, including the teaching methods and even the way of relating between people. Without institutional support, for example in the allocation of time and resources to the ARS, it is difficult to achieve this. If, additionally, this Strategy involves a change of focus or policy, having the support and motivation of the management team will guarantee that it is taken seriously by the rest of the institution (for example the teaching staff, which is a crucial agent in the implementation of Antirumours actions with students). It will also be fundamental to have a shared and coherent vision.

Implementing a Strategy that encompasses multiple actors and areas is more complex than working independently on some elements or initiatives. However, if the Strategy includes different actors from the community and from the centre itself, it will be more efficient when it comes to sending the same unified message.

The students

As we have indicated previously, if we intervene from a very early age, the effects on reducing prejudice will continue into adulthood. It is important to note that aspects such as 'openness' and empathy can and should be worked on from preschool and primary education. However, other initiatives, such as those related to knowledge and critical understanding of culture, will be more productive with students in the final years of primary education and in secondary school.

The educational Institution will, henceforth, contribute to providing students with the cognitive and emotional skills necessary to succeed in intercultural encounters as well as positive attitudes towards socio-cultural diversity in society.

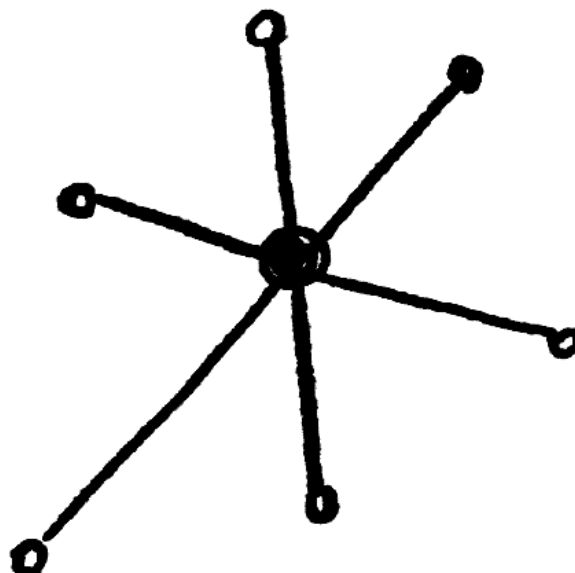
The educational community

The factors that influence children's socialisation are multiple: they learn from their peers, from the media and social networks they use, from the activities they do during their free time and from their parents, among

others. If the messages they receive from the different agents are aligned, they will be internalised more strongly (Levy et al., 2015). It is therefore vital to work with actors of the educational community who are linked to school life to a greater or lesser extent.

It is necessary to involve many and diverse social actors who are critical to the educational process to guarantee the Strategy's success in this field. Families should be included as fundamental actors in this sphere, but we must also involve other actors such as sports centres, NGOs, local governments and, if possible, the media. Nevertheless, the involvement of a diverse range of actors is challenging, and often results in the scarce involvement of external institutions with the ARS.

Educational structures and initiatives have always been a reference for the rest of the community around them. Still, they can also be limited when there is resistance to support this type of initiative from the community, Parents' Associations or even the local - or regional - government itself. This is why it is crucial to network and to ensure the support of many community actors from the outset.



3.3. Phases in the implementation of an ARS

Let's have a look in detail at the different possible phases when launching ARS in an educational centre. These criteria do not necessarily need to be strictly followed. 'Facilitating' actions such as workshops or training that might trigger a process of reflection and motivation, resulting in the decision to design a more comprehensive Strategy. Likewise, and depending on the context, more emphasis will be placed on one phase or another, allocating more time and resources when necessary.

1. Commitment and impulse of the motor team

The first step is to make the decision to implement an ARS. We can find cases in which the idea of working on the Antirumours approach comes from the school itself (the management team or a teacher), from the Parents' Association or from outside the school (social organisations or the City Council).

However, the ultimate decision to promote an ARS at the school should be taken by the school itself or even jointly with the Parents' Association to ensure that the Strategy has the necessary commitment. The decision must also be consistent with the school's existing policies and principles on diversity. Even in cases where the school's management team is not the core force behind the ARS -for example, if it is the Parents' Association- an important objective of the Strategy should be to seek support and involvement from various stakeholders. If the initiative for the ARS comes from the school's management team, it is essential to get the support of the Parents' Association because of the influence that parents have on their children. One way of obtaining this support would be to hold a meeting to explain what the ARS is, the possible changes that will take place, why they will be implemented, and hear their point of view on the matter. Later, in the case study of the La Bastida IEPC, we will have a look at how this centre organises coffee-talks with parents.

Prejudices and stereotypes are not the sole 'responsibility' of teachers, school management or parents. The Strategy needs a core team and cross-cutting cooperation and collaboration between all actors in order to have a more significant impact.

To achieve this commitment, the different actors must generate alliances within the centre that are as extensive as possible. This implies breaking down barriers between departments and getting the entire centre to work in the same direction so that the actions carried out will have a much greater impact and will be easier to implement.

2. Capacity building of the core team

One of the first actions that are implemented must be the training of the core team in the approach and methodology of the ARS. The initial training could take place through, for example, some introductory session or workshops, which would be prior to more intensive training as Antirumours agents.

Once the decision to implement an ARS has been made, it is crucial to determine who will lead the process and to train them. The profile to drive a successful Strategy requires skills in 1) managing engagement and participation processes, 2) creating a collaborative working environment, 3) promoting creativity and innovation. Furthermore, at least 3-4 people should be part of this team, which may take different forms:

- Members of the school's management team
- Members of the management team and teachers
- Members of the management team (and the teaching staff) and representatives of the Parents' Association
- Representatives of the Parents' Association

Concerning the training of the core team, a good starting point is to organise an introductory session (of about 3 hours) to deepen the approach and methodology of the ARS and to be inspired by other experiences. These sessions should preferably include not only the core team, but also other actors, such as representatives of the Parents' Association, teachers, and in some cases even students representative to promote cooperation and to motivate and involve them.

3. Diagnosis

Where do we start? What are the challenges related to the prejudices and rumours in the centre? What are we already doing in this regard, and how are we

approaching it? Which actors should be involved in the centre's ARS?

The diagnostic phase is crucial in defining the priorities and specific objectives of our Strategy. It is important to have a better understanding of the reality of the centre and even to identify challenges to work on within the same core group. This diagnosis can be carried out using a combination of methods and tools; from interviews and focus groups of key actors to surveys and actions of a more participatory or playful nature (collecting rumours through workshops, games, mailboxes, etc.).

It is essential to know what is already been done in the school, among the students or in the social and cultural entities as well as the nearby actors involved. In many cases, we do not start from scratch, and we must take advantage of all the previous work done by similar initiatives or projects. Is there an Antirumours Strategy in the city or the neighbourhood? Is there an initiative that works on issues related to prejudice, discrimination, racism? The diagnosis phase will, therefore, serve to map out all that is being done and detect whether it is susceptible to revision and improvement from an Antirumours perspective. This could be the case of projects within the framework of Education for Development, methodologies and regulations of the educational centre itself, or Diversity Plans to which the Antirumours approach could be added.

4. Building an Antirumours network

Although the school is a relevant area of intervention, the actions that are carried out through an ARS can be confronted with the students' interaction with their families, their community, or with content visualized in the media and social networks.

That is why an ARS must conceive the educational centre as one of several elements in the social organisation, and not as an isolated entity. The educational community and society in general already form part of the educational centre, so the measures and actions carried out to promote interculturality, such as the promotion of an ARS, must signify and improve this interaction between families, associations, socio-cultural centres, businesses and the school.

Launching an Antirumours network is an essential element of the ARS. Firstly, the centre should identify whether an ARS exists at the local level to establish the necessary coordination and collaboration mechanisms. Secondly, the network can be promoted from the educational field from the Parents' Associations, the closest community, the management team, the teaching staff, or a combination of different actors, but always with the aim of bringing others on board.

The network cannot be limited to the members of a Parents' Association Commission or a group of motivated teachers. Instead, it must be expanded and diversified in terms of profiles and origins. To be as representative as possible. By doing so, the network will have the capacity to expand the effect of the ARS to contexts beyond the reach of the school or families. In this way, resources are mobilised and positive synergies between the involved agents are formed.

Ultimately, building a strong network is also a way of dealing with the "machinery" of rumours. It helps us to understand reality better and determine the scale of prejudice and the amount of rumours present, as well as to identify the best approaches to combat them. The network also contributes to building a sense of responsibility and solidarity among its participants by involving them in a common goal for social cohesion.

One way to involve other actors in the milieu is first to keep them informed of the ARS and its progress and then to get them to commit to it through partnerships with external organisations. Such organisations can, for example, be sports centres, booster clubs, language schools, other out-of-school activity centres, and even the local administration, mainly if the latter implements an ARS at the city level. If community actions adopt an intercultural perspective and are linked to the ARS, synergies will emerge and the results will be more positive.

In any case, the creation of the network is a work in progress that will evolve from the first group of motivated people, and that must gradually grow from the actions, training and communication that takes place. One way of creating a network is to participate, first of all, in the Antirumours network of the city itself (if there is one). Perhaps there is or could be a working group on the educational field within this network.

The objective is not to grow for the sake of growth but to do so in a meaningful and qualitative way, to strengthen and enrich the whole process and guarantee its sustainability over time.

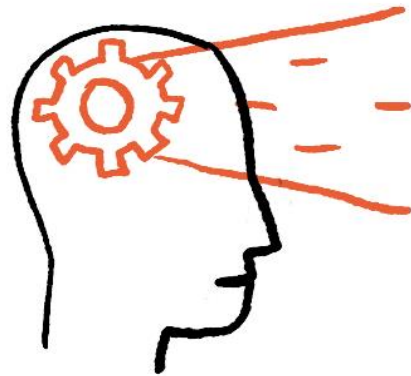
5. Training of Antirumour agents

In addition to the initial training of the core group, it is essential to carry out more comprehensive training of Antirumour agents. The training will allow some of the people directly involved in the design of actions to broaden their knowledge and ensure the effectiveness of the activities to counteract prejudices and rumours and to promote critical thinking.

It is possible to start with initial training for a specific group (e.g. families), but eventually, the aim is also to train teachers and other professionals.

6. Design and implementation of Antirumour actions

In the day-to-day work of the schools, intensive work is already taking place to reduce prejudices and stereotypes. However, it is not always clear in what way or to what extent this has a real influence on the consolidation or reduction of prejudices related to diversity. There are culturally homogeneous schools in which the students show quite a lot of preconceptions about particular groups (and about all kinds of social and cultural issues), but this can also happen in highly diverse schools. The simple fact that diversity exists does not mean that prejudices do not: interaction by itself does not guarantee the reduction of prejudices; this depends on what kind of interaction takes place. We must, therefore, examine the criteria that are most effective in designing actions that challenge prejudices and generate critical thinking and empathy.



04

Antitumour actions

Antirumours actions

Below are a series of criteria that should be taken into account in actions of exposure, teaching or reflection on the topics of prejudices and rumours, that might involve students, teachers, parents and other agents.



Providing knowledge and promoting critical thinking

Working on the emotional dimension, such as empathy

Promoting dynamics and spaces for positive interaction

Facilitating the individualisation and recognition of the internal diversity of stereotyped groups avoiding homogenising labels

Emphasising the identification and recognition of similarities and commonly shared categories

Recognising the pluralism of identities and strengthening more global and inclusive identities

Understanding how we learn and see cultures (ethnocentrism) and getting to know the history of cultures to understand their inequalities

Call for collective and individual responsibility and action to reduce prejudice and prevent discrimination

With these criteria in mind, we have designed different types of actions that we group according to the public they are aimed at (students, school and community) and classify according to the objectives they pursue.

The main objective of the intervention is to work directly with students to increase and improve their

intercultural skills and therefore reducing prejudice. However, it is equally important to improve the intercultural competences of teachers and families and to ensure the support of the school and some external actors. Without this basis, isolated initiatives may have little meaning, lack legitimacy, or may only reach those who are already aware or interested.

	THE EDUCATIONAL CENTRE	THE STUDENTS	THE COMMUNITY
OBJECTIVES	INFLUENCING THE EDUCATION POLICY AGENDA	PROMOTING CRITICAL THINKING AND AWARENESS RAISING INTERCULTURAL SKILLS	INVOLVING AND EMPOWERING A WIDE RANGE OF ACTORS
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing Inclusive curriculums - Training teachers - Cooperating with other schools - Joining the global project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting knowledge and awareness-raising - Encouraging critical thinking and self-reflection - Working on empathy - Promoting spaces for positive interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing contact and influencing Public Administrations - Involving the wider community - Involvement of the Parents' Associations
	TRANSVERSAL: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct confrontation of prejudices - Communication 		

THE EDUCATIONAL CENTRE

We can find actions of an internal and institutional nature, such as policies and approaches emanating from the school or teacher training, and actions aimed at strengthening external links with the community, other centres or projects.

a) Intercultural approach and inclusive curricula

The institution as a whole must adopt a structural framework that supports the intercultural and human rights approach. One of the ways to create a climate of respect is to direct the teaching methods, the codes of conduct between staff and students and between staff and extracurricular activities, and the school governance and decision-making processes towards valuing diversity. (Barrett, 2018). Some ways of valuing diversity might be:

- To have a culturally diverse staff at all levels of the school.
- Taking into consideration the specific cultural needs that both students and staff may have
- Dedicating specific days to the celebration of diversity and taking advantage of them to get to know, explore and debate about diversity.
- Accompanying this recognition and enhancement of reflection with the promotion of positive interaction.
- Identify common elements and recognise people's fluid or mixed identities.

Schools can work with material related to a particular group present in the centre, which will help to learn about their culture, history and the contributions of people belonging to this group and to improve their attitudes. However, this focus on differentiating people according to their ethnicity could have potentially adverse effects by increasing stereotypes and the perception that differences pose a challenge to interactions or friendships between 'groups'. Knowing and valuing different cultures is important, but so is identifying commonalities and recognising the pluralism of people's identities. It is, therefore, necessary to design a Strategy with medium- and long-term objectives where different types of actions in order to avoid counterproductive effects.

Several ARS in cities such as Cartagena and Logroño celebrate, together with schools, international days against discrimination.

21 March: day against racial discrimination, Cartagena ARS.

The City Council opened a line of work with the educational centres in the 2016-17 school year, because they had some centres with significant involvement in all the actions they developed in the area of cultural diversity. On the occasion of the Day against Racial Discrimination, three secondary schools held the same event at the same time, which included:

- > Reading of a manifesto drawn up by the students against racial discrimination and in favour of coexistence.
- > Displaying posters with messages in favour of diversity.
- > Stating publicly that these educational centres supported and adhered to the "Cartagena Antirumours Network".

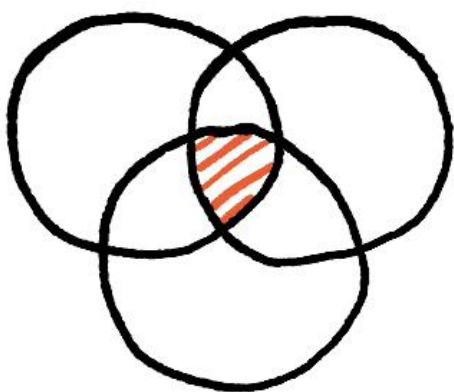
Project for the Celebration of the School Day of Peace and Non-Violence.

Within the framework of the project "Graduate in Coexistence", the Logroño ARS explores different lines of action. One of those actions is a joint event to promote coexistence on the School Day of Peace and Non-Violence (30th January) which is held in the Town Hall Square and in which all the schools in the city participate. This act is symbolic of building a more cohesive city. They have also drawn up a 'manifesto' ([Commitment for Intercultural Coexistence](#)) to which all the participating centres can join, with the possibility of each team to present it.

In line with this intercultural approach, using a more inclusive and cross-cultural curriculum sets a normative standard in the institution based on respect and appreciation of diversity (Cammarota, 2007, Sleeter, 2011). These plans should cover the histories, cultural practices, beliefs and contributions of minority cultural groups, thus providing a more accurate representation of the diversity present in the classroom. In Spain, many schools have developed Diversity Plans, following the Framework Plans for Educational Diversity and

the regulations established by the different Regional Governments. These plans include actions and measures designed to respond to the educational needs of diverse students.

In Catalonia, there are **Coexistence Plans** within the framework of the schools' educational projects. The Coexistence project has to reflect the actions that the school develops to enable the students and the rest of the school community to live together and manage conflicts positively. In this sense, the Catalan Government's Education Department offers an online application with elements of diagnostics, guidelines and resources to elaborate the plan. Moreover, the schools must constitute a coexistence committee that will have to collaborate in the planning, application and monitoring of the Coexistence Plan. The actions proposed can be approached from three different levels: values and attitudes, conflict resolution and the organisational framework. Likewise, these actions should improve coexistence in three distinct areas: classroom, centre and environment. More information [here](#).



Centres per la Convivència. For some years now, the Santa Coloma de Gramenet City Council and the city's secondary schools have been working together on issues related to coexistence, prejudices, positive conflict management, diversity (of all kinds) and how to combat harassment. With the implementation of the Coexistence Projects which follows the directives of the Department of Education of the Generalitat, the City Council proposes that different resources and instruments are made available to schools both at the municipal and city levels. The aim is to adapt schools' needs, reality, and relationship with the community, to this new regulatory framework. The objective is to introduce new mechanisms for conflict resolution in the classroom to work on existing conflicts from a perspective of dialogue and co-responsibility and make an attempt to approach the different strategies for the positive resolution of conflict. The project aims to create a network of public secondary schools to incorporate new tools, acquire knowledge, promote and energise models of positive coexistence and share best practices and methodologies. This is embodied in the elaboration of a coexistence project in each high school of the city.

To this end, initiatives are implemented to raise awareness, train and involve both students and teachers in the prevention and positive management of the conflict. With different resources, games, dynamics and spaces for reflection, the City Council provides tools to understand better how rumours, prejudices and stereotypes work through the responsible use of social networks, in their own families or in public spaces. Check out the project [here](#).

b) Training activities for teachers

In the same way that students are encouraged to learn the necessary skills to develop intercultural competences, adequate training of teachers and staff should support structural change within the institution. Those in charge of the institution are responsible for finding and providing professional training to all of its staff to guarantee that there is a shared and aligned vision among them and that they can work as a team to achieve interculturality in the school (Teekens, 2001).

This training can be carried out through official, or own training programmes or own ad hoc training. It is interesting to explore whether the City Council or any other entity, within the framework of an Antirumour Strategy, offers Antirumour training. A general model for the centre's staff is "Internationalisation at Home"⁴ (IaH), although there are other training models and the centre must choose the one that best suits its needs.



To find out more:

Crowther, P., Joris, M., Nilsson, B., Otten, M., Teekens, H., y Wächter, B. (2000). Internationalisation at home: A position paper. European Association for International Education. Access it [here](#).

Many educational centres and city councils offer training to teachers. One example is the [Fort Pienc school in Barcelona](#), which is promoting an ARS from the Parents' Association in collaboration with the school management. All the teachers at the centre participated in an introductory training session on the Antirumours approach. The training sought to share ARS' objectives and methodology and to generate a debate on the reality of the centre and the need to promote Antirumour actions

The Bilbao City Council has produced a [handbook containing Antirumours activities for young people](#). It includes tools and resources to encourage and develop their skills in communication, active listening, respect, empathy, assertiveness, solidarity, respect for diversity, etc. The idea is to have handy and entertaining material for educators working with young people that will help increase their intercultural skills. The handbook is available [here](#).

c) Cooperation and exchange with other schools

In line with Allport's Theory of Contact (1954), if students cannot have contact with other cultures within their community, then it may be useful to offer them the possibility of doing so elsewhere. In fact, students often tend to be more attentive to learning when they are outside the classroom.

A relatively simple way of doing this is by establishing links and organising joint actions with more diverse schools in the same territory. Participating jointly and mixing groups in artistic, sporting or social activities, creates opportunities for interaction in more diverse groups.

Another option, although more complex, would be to organise trips abroad, so that a class or course could "experience" other cultures with the supervision of its teachers, turning it into a learning experience. Furthermore, an exchange program with international educational institutions is a valuable educational tool that increases knowledge and promotes the appreciation and understanding of concepts that are studied in the classroom. The programme must be well organised, and it should contain material related to the country of destination, as well as preparation for the possible challenges one might experience. At the European level, the [Erasmus+](#) programme exists and includes both teacher and student exchanges.

The actions of cooperation and networking with other schools are driven by the desire to provide a coherent and coordinated response to educational challenges. Mutual learning and collaboration of pedagogical agents are necessary when it comes to improving


⁴ "Internationalization at Home" refers to the need for the educational institution to have a global dimension open to other cultures in all its manifestations. Some actions include the explicit incorporation of internationalization elements in each subject which can be expressed

through specific contents, teaching and learning approaches with an intercultural perspective, training in intercultural skills and through paying attention to communication.

efficiency in the diagnosis of needs, establishing shared objectives and designing actions.

One example is the network of [Schools without Racism \(SWR\)](#), [Schools for Peace and Development](#), whose objective is to promote Education for Development, intercultural coexistence, respect for Human Rights and social participation. Currently, the SWR network is made up of more than 250 centres. It provides teachers and educational personnel with tools and training that favour interculturality, appreciates diversity as a source of enrichment, encourages coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflicts, and promotes the joint search for solutions. More information ([here](#)).

The [AFS Intercultura Global Center Community](#) project already has 50 centres and collaborates with approximately 200 others throughout the year. It is a diverse, inclusive and flexible network of educational centres. Through this network, AFS proposes a model of stable collaboration with educational institutions, centres of all levels and models, universities and different educational communities in the state. The network seeks to promote internationalisation, the intercultural approach, and to strengthen global competence in the formal educational sphere. More information [here](#).

 There are several networks and programmes in Europe that connect schools and promote collaboration and work towards social inclusion and tolerance:

- [NESET](#)
- [etwinning](#)
- [European School Network](#)

d) [Join the Antirumours Global Project](#)

The Antirumours Global Project continues to grow, counting more than 25 territories in the Spanish state alone. The same is happening at an international level, where numerous national networks have begun to be formed (as is the case in Italy and Sweden). As more cities join, and therefore initiatives and experiences are added, those with good results will have a platform to share what has worked (and what has not) in their strategies. This growing interest and accumulated experience also create awareness of the Antirumours Global Project's existence at an international level and gives it legitimacy.

Sharing best practices and learning from others is one of the most important reasons to keep in touch with the global network. While the initiatives that a school takes in its community are context-specific and derive from its diagnosis, it is more than likely that another school with similar characteristics has implemented similar initiatives or actions and has lessons to share for the improvement of these. To be able to share the experience with other professionals and to acquire knowledge is one of the missions of the Antirumours Global Project, which also tries to create a community that aims to fight prejudice and to foster the intercultural vision. One way to keep in touch and benefit from this exchange is through participation in its annual meetings. Another option is to invite professionals who are part of other ARS to the centre.

From the Antirumours Global Project, we want to spread the message that diversity is an advantage while advocating for the reduction of prejudice. However, the way in which we transmit information, the arguments we use to dismantle rumours and the methodology we implement have varied as new research, and best practices have emerged. That is why keeping up to date with the Antirumours Global Project will ensure that the actions designed are in line with the updated knowledge that the project has gathered, and it will help avoid mistakes that can be counterproductive.

The Youth Antirumours Summit. This annual meeting, which in 2020 organised its fifth edition, has a triple objective:

- To strengthen a participative and active network of young people who are part of the Antirumours strategies of their territories.
- To promote the creation of spaces to meet and exchange experiences to eradicate rumours against vulnerable groups or stigmatised people.
- To strengthen the visibility of the Antirumours Strategy inside and outside the territories.

After the meetings in Sabadell, Getxo and Pamplona, at the IV Antirumours Youth Summit (Madrid) the design of a useful, participants proposed the design of an attractive and dynamic tool that could be replicated in the participating territories throughout the following year: An Escape Room or an Antirumours breakout.

Sixty young people from five different parts of Spain, attended the meeting, along with more than 200 people who have already participated in all the summits. It is, without a doubt, a unique opportunity to link different ARS and build a space for coexistence, exchange, learning, participation and motivation.



THE STUDENTS

a) Promoting knowledge and awareness

Firstly, it is necessary to teach the different approaches that exist towards the study of culture, a method that is more efficient with secondary and high school students. Cultural analysis is done through the dominant culture from which one is taught and which then one uses as a comparison. It is crucial to be aware of how we learn and see cultures (ethnocentrism, universalism). Culture is a general concept that contains much more than ethnicity or nationality. Other characteristics such as professions, gender, sexual orientation, spirituality and socioeconomic status are some of the numerous components that are part of a human being's culture and identity. This idea must be the frame of reference of any education that promotes an intercultural perspective. Consequently, it is necessary to study the concepts of culture, plural identities, and cultural diversity.

Another way to promote knowledge and raise awareness is to teach and increase students' awareness of the history of cultures, emphasising the historical components of inequality and discrimination that some groups have suffered and continue to suffer. This approach is not only applicable in history or geography classes but the entire curriculum. That said, it will always be more effective to teach history and information that relates to groups that are relevant to the school or community. When presenting this information, it is vital to take into account the risk of students feeling guilty or singled out, as the main objective is to strengthen the capacity for critical thinking and the recognition of the privileges of certain groups over others in different contexts and situations.

It is important to show the great variety of factors (cultural, personal, socioeconomic) that cause situations of discrimination, especially for young people, by disclosing and discussing the structural causes of inequality in our society. To do so, it could be useful to reflect on the historical past of the country itself and then analyse the present, where situations of discrimination continue to occur, sometimes with very similar patterns to those of the past.

In this context, a useful activity might be to invite representatives (activists, artists etc.) from different communities or people who have been victims of

discrimination to the classroom to highlight situations close to the students.

The [Barcelona City Council's catalogue of Antirumours activities](#) offers awareness-raising and citizen education activities to dismantle and reflect upon the rumours, prejudices and stereotypes that hinder intercultural coexistence and social cohesion. The entire catalogue is available to entities and educational centres free of charge. One of the activities is a forum theatre "[I am not racist, but...](#)" whose objectives are: to work on the Islamophobic attitudes present in the city; to realise that rumours transform into negative perceptions and suppose a challenge to coexistence; to connect the public with some actual experiences related to cultural diversity; to promote the participation of the audience to create a group reflection of their attitudes and stereotypes concerning the 'others' to deconstruct them. The initiative works on the following topics: the experience of fear and feeling of threat; misinformation, believing false things leads to fear, and fear can lead to racist behaviour; the concepts of generalisation, stereotypes and prejudices; assertiveness and other communication tools to effectively refute rumours about people from different cultural backgrounds.

One way of promoting knowledge and awareness is through project-based learning tools (Cook and Weaving, 2013; Trilling and Fadel, 2009), which include analysing texts, viewing films or theatre plays that raise awareness on interculturality. Depending on text, film or play that is chosen, and the way the teacher frames the exercise, students could be asked to explain their judgements or to take the perspective of the characters portrayed. Theatre plays further extend this learning opportunity because acting allows people to personally explore and reflect on experiences they might never have had otherwise. Project-based learning will serve us both for actions that aim to develop cognitive intercultural skills and emotional (empathy) skills.

The 'Girls in Action' project is part of the ARS in Cartagena and its collaboration with the educational sector. It started about three years ago due to the specific situation of some Moroccan girls from two high schools who were showing difficulties in their family and personal environment. Given the case, they created a space for listening and support, where other girls could share their experiences, and where they tried to help these girls to manage the situations in the best possible way from an empathic perspective.

As this space was consolidated, and the potential of the participating girls was revealed, a stable group of Moroccan girls was generated in three institutes that met weekly to manage activities aimed at the whole school. These activities were devoted to highlight cultural aspects that were unknown to their peers, and to break stereotypes acquired from the profile of Moroccan girls (they drop out, get married, etc.). This group began to invite girls from other backgrounds and designed two activities that have remained stable: the "Intercultural Classroom", in which girls disclose cultural elements (food, religion, geography, crafts, ...) to their peers and the reading of a manifesto in the celebration of the Day Against Racial Discrimination.

Divercinema is a proposal by the City Council of Valencia that aims to educate in universal values of coexistence and the prevention of racism and xenophobia using the empathy provided by the cinematographic language as a teaching resource:

- > **AULACINE**: screening of a film for educational groups (secondary schools, training courses and popular universities) accompanied by a guide for teachers so that they can work the topic in-depth in the classroom before and after the screening.
- > **VIDEOCREATION**: workshop of audio-visual creation to make short films on a subject related to migrations, carried out in collaboration with the students of the superior formative cycles of audiovisuals of the Juan Comenius School. The final product is used for the activity "Migratory Realities" included in the project "Xarxa Apuja el To contra el Racisme", in which the aim is to promote critical thinking and raise awareness on the consequences of racism through audiovisual materials and real testimonies.

Another example would be the organisation of the Youth Antirumours Contest, where, through art and audio-visual resources, young people have the opportunity to reflect on their vision of intercultural coexistence including how to achieve it, how it benefits us, and what should never be allowed. These young people will have previously worked in schools or youth centres on Antirumours dynamics. The winning groups will attend the Youth Antirumours Summit. Some videos are available [here](#) and [here](#).

- 👁 Some interesting resources by Angelica Dass.
 - Ted talk: The beauty of human skin colour. Access the video [here](#).
 - We Learn Together (BBVA): What colour is a skin-coloured pencil? Access the video [here](#).



b) Encourage critical thinking and self-reflection

To encourage critical thinking and self-reflection is probably the most important and transversal criteria in the actions aimed towards students. Critical reflection of the feelings and thoughts that naturally occur through actions is a unique pedagogical opportunity. Every activity must have space to talk openly about what has been generated internally in the students, in which the teacher must play a mediating role. This way, students will begin to learn how to manage the ambiguity or discomfort often generated by intercultural encounters. It is essential to create a space for critical reflection in any action that is carried out that will allow students to know and explore their own cultural identities and the feelings and thoughts they experience in intercultural encounters.

The Council of Europe has developed two educational tools through which teachers can facilitate such introspection. These tools provide students with structured sequences of questions designed to progressively channel and deepen their reflection about their intercultural encounters, their reactions to those encounters and their cultural positioning.

- > The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters supports critical reflection on face-to-face encounters that involve communication with other cultural actors.
- > The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media supports reflection on the images of other cultures found in visual media such as television, film, newspapers and magazines.

There are two versions of each tool, depending on the student's age: one for students between the age of 5 and 11 years old and another for students that are 11 years old and older. Their use has shown to have positive effects on both teachers' and students' learning experience in terms of their intercultural awareness, self-awareness and ability to gain perspective. A third tool is currently under development and aims to support students' critical reflection on the cross-cultural encounters that take place through social networks. All three tools are designed to be used during an academic year.

One type of reflective activity is an **ethnographic task**, in which students are asked to observe something about a particular socio-cultural group, or even about

their own culture, identity or origin, and then to reflect and present their findings to the class. Reflection can be an essential mediating role in helping to address concerns and misunderstandings pedagogically.

The City Council of Fuenlabrada provides a catalogue of Antirumours activities to schools (primary, secondary and vocational training centres). Specifically, the activity '**Mindfulness and Antirumours**' which addresses the contributions of mindfulness in the elimination of stereotypes and racist and xenophobic prejudices, is aimed at students from 1st to 4th of secondary education and teachers. One of the objectives of the action is to understand the cycle of the generation of racial discrimination; to learn a psychological technique to become aware of one's prejudices and stereotypes, and to apply mindfulness to eliminate one's own biases and stereotypes. The one-hour session is given by a professional specialised in migration and mindfulness. The session takes place in a classroom with the possibility of showing a video and carrying out exercises.

'**Jo vaig a l'Escola**' is a comprehensive project that includes 360° of empathy. This project is addressed to the educational community of the NGO Cooperación Internacional and is based on the principles of awareness-raising and education for development. The project wants to bring closer the daily reality of 3 children from less advanced countries and their access to education. It consists of the following material:

- > An audio-visual guide which compares the experience between a young man from Valencia and a young man from Lebanon from the time they go to school until they return home.
- > An educational guide with exercises related to the audio-visual material so that teachers can use it to achieve the project's awareness-raising objectives.
- > Videos and material in 360° as a support to the graphic and audio-visual activities to stimulate the students and achieve the maximum level of empathy between them.
- > A short documentary on the history of the protagonists to be disseminated through social networks.

More information [here](#).

c) Working on empathy

The specific actions directed towards the emotional component in intercultural relationships are mainly related to the construction of empathy. This is a crucial skill within emotional intelligence that allows one to understand what it means to feel 'different', to belong to a minority group, or simply to manage the confusion inherent to intercultural encounters.

Role-playing simulations help experience first-hand what it is like to be different, to be criticised, or to be marginalised or excluded. These games allow students to understand that although people may have superficial differences in appearances, beliefs, or values, they also have many common and shared elements, and everyone has dignity and deserves respect. These role-playing simulations can be done in many ways, and are perfect for more physical and movement-oriented classes (dance, physical education, or drama classes).

As mentioned in the previous sections, teachers must always be careful not to make students feel guilty, as this is not the aim of the activity. Instead, the objective is to become familiar with the feelings involved in intercultural encounters, both from the perspective of a majority group and from that of a minority.

Finally, it is essential to leave space for critical introspection, especially with regards to the feelings and questions that students may have related to the role-playing task. It is thus necessary to create a safe and unbiased space for the discussion of emotions to normalise such activity and also to make students feel that it is humane to have one reaction or another and to understand it better.



An interesting resource from the Good Planet Foundation and UNRIC.

- 7 Billion Others is a series of videos by Yann Arthus-Bertrand. Each of the videos features a single person telling the viewer about their life, often in their native language. More than 6,000 interviews have been recorded. The project aims to help different people understand each other by listening. Access the videos [here](#)

The toolbox offered by the ARS of Zaragoza

contains various activities to work on empathy. Some examples are:

- > **Labels for Cans'** has the following objectives: to motivate empathy, to recognise the use of topics and stereotypes, to question the stereotypes that appear, to question the object-person relationship, and to recognise the emotions present during the session. The activity consists of distributing images of people among the participants along with a can to stick them onto it. They have to choose a single image, attach it to the can and make up the life of this person (name, occupation, place of origin, hobbies, family and social environment). After watching and discussing videos related to the elimination of prejudices, the cans are redistributed, trying not to repeat the same combination of can and participant, so that they have the opportunity to create a new imagined reality. After a presentation, and after reflecting on stereotypes, we can see if anything has changed from the first imagined life.
- > **Why do you leave?** is a dynamic that aims to motivate empathy, identify causes for moving from the place where one lives as well as represent the role of a person forced to leave their country and recognise the emotions present during the session. The dynamic also brings up the discussion about what we leave behind when we leave (a love, a family, etc.). Moreover, it includes an exhibition of "Portraits of a flight". This activity consists of opening an empty suitcase in which each participant writes down on a piece of paper what they would take with them according to the following three scenarios: going on holiday for a week, leaving for three months to work, or fleeing from a war without knowing if you will ever return.
- > **What is yours, what is ours'** seeks to motivate empathy, to reflect on sharing, to compare the term equality with equity, and to recognise the emotions present during the session. The term empathy is introduced through two videos ('empathy and sympathy' and 'the bridge').

More activities from the toolbox can be found [here](#).

d) Promoting dynamics and spaces for positive interaction

Returning to Allport's Theory of Contact (1954), the first type of action is aimed at finding ways in which students can 'experience' cultural diversity. This experience (or contact) should have a pedagogical purpose, that is, the promotion of critical thinking should accompany it. This will make students capable of "individualising" people of different origins and cultures, becoming aware of and respecting differences, finding similarities among one another, and experiencing positive encounters. Contact may be both direct and indirect. However, the type of contact with the highest potential is face-to-face contact, which can be in person or through the Internet.

Simply bringing students from different cultures, backgrounds, identities or beliefs into contact with each other may not be enough to reduce prejudice. They will need to co-operate within the classroom on tasks where they have common goals and equal status within the collaborative situation (e.g. they should have equal opportunities to express their views, make suggestions and influence group decisions).

In schools where there is diversity among students, these situations of cooperative interaction often already take place. But these situations can be more or less intense depending on the pedagogical approach. Schools whose educational approach promotes working in groups on different subjects in a cooperative manner are already fostering this kind of interaction.

As an alternative to intercultural contact in the classroom – when, for example, the school is rather culturally homogeneous - students can meet people from other cultural backgrounds in various ways: organise exchanges or promote joint projects with other schools in the city that are more diverse.

Another type of direct contact would be through the Internet, providing an almost unlimited opportunity to access information about other cultures, to communicate with students from those cultures, and to exchange views and perspectives with various people with whom they might otherwise never meet or interact with in person. For example, video conferencing and social networking can be used in collaborative projects between students from different countries (they can introduce themselves, interview each other, discuss topics and complete assignments designed by the

faculty). Online activities using social networks could enable students to develop, among other things, openness, the ability to listen and gain perspective, tolerance, respect for others, critical thinking skills, communication skills and critical understanding of culture and cultures.

Inclusive Mathematics - Trying to include some of the recommendations of the INCLUD-ED Project (2006 - 2011)^(*), the Pablo Picasso IEPIC in Laredo carries out inclusive mathematics classes where the classroom is organised in heterogeneous interactive groups^(**) (in terms of gender, language, motivations, learning level and cultural origin). The exercise is driven by a volunteer from the school or the educational community (including families) who facilitates collaboration among students. The teacher coordinates the work of the facilitators, and both them and the students must know how the groups work, their rules, the objective they pursue and the role that each person plays (Elboj and Niemelä, 2010). The method has proven to generate success in the learning process of students, improving solidarity and coexistence in the classroom.

For more information on this initiative, click [here](#). For more information on the concept of interactive groups, we recommend this [reading](#).

(*) The INCLUD-ED project, financed by the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme, analyses which educational strategies contribute to overcoming inequalities and promoting social cohesion and which ones generate social exclusion, especially concerning vulnerable or disadvantaged groups.

(**) According to the perspective of dialogical learning, people learn thanks to the multiple interactions that take place not only between students and teachers in the context of the class but also between these and the rest of the people who participate in some way in the centre: volunteers, non-teaching staff or members of interactive groups that make up discussion groups or mixed commissions. These interactions do not only occur in schools but also in the presence of families, friends, shops, sports institutions, etc.

The **Våga Mötas - Våga Meet** (Dare to meet) project in Sweden. The project consisted of organising two-day trips with pupils from a very culturally homogeneous school with students from Swedish middle-class families and pupils from a school with a lot of diversity and a more complex socio-economic environment. The students from both schools shared rooms and had to overcome some complicated situations that the project leaders had prepared. To solve them, the students had to cooperate from a position of equal status (complying with the basic conditions of Allport and his Theory of Contact). The experience resulted in a reduction of stereotypes and generalisations, and the creation of friendships and relationships that often lasted over time. The interesting thing about the experience is that, besides influencing the perceptions of the students, it also changed the perceptions of the families, especially the most privileged ones, breaking stereotypes concerning the origin and the socioeconomic environment of people.

Exercises that emphasize cooperative learning go beyond merely bringing students together from different socio-cultural backgrounds to work collectively. We must consider that, under the right conditions, mutual help and cooperation allow better learning. The cognitive conflict that is generated when different or opposing points of view are confronted in group discussions enables us to learn new things, but also to rectify, consolidate or reaffirm the learning already achieved.

A great example to understand a cooperative task of this type is the **Jigsaw Classroom** by Aronson and Patnoe (2011). This exercise involves dividing the class into groups of five or six students. Each member of a group is assigned unique information that must then be shared with the other members of that group for them to achieve its common goal. This way, each member of the group becomes equally important, and the members are interdependent, which translates into a reduction of their competitive approach and improvement of their cooperative attitude. This type of exercise leads to an increase in empathy and positive attitudes towards the rest of the students. Likewise, students reduce their prejudices when groups are composed of peers from different socio-cultural backgrounds, identities or beliefs.

Escape Rumours. The methodology of the Escape rooms offers a very interesting opportunity to promote the dynamics of interaction and cooperation between the participants. Antirumours Global is promoting an initiative to evaluate the impact of the Escape Rumours, which was already used at the last 4th Antirumours Youth Summit in Madrid. The idea is to offer an online tool so that it can be used in very diverse contexts without the need for investment in the adaptation of spaces (in classrooms of educational centres, in the headquarters of associations, cultural centres, etc.). The initiative is designed especially for young people so that through their participation, they can have a first contact with the Antirumours approach. It also promotes knowledge, critical thinking, empathy and positive interaction by having to pass various tests that require teamwork to achieve a common goal, thus following the criteria of the Allport Contact Theory. During the year 2020, various Escape Rumours will be implemented in different Antirumour territories, and an online platform will be built to allow a personalised design of Escape Rumours adapted to different themes and contexts.

Another approach to cooperative learning is to discuss collaboratively or to dialogue in search of consensus. In opportunities where class discussions occur, teachers can ask their students to participate in a debate in which they must 'debate to reach consensus' rather than 'debate to be convinced'. It will be possible to assess how much the teams or students listen or if they are interrupted, if they negotiate or argue, or if they try to merge the different perspectives or ignore possible points of co-creation.

Looking back at the classification of types of contact, indirect contact has also proven to be useful in reducing prejudice (Vezzali, Stathi, Cadamuro, and Cortesi, 2017). This type of contact is particularly useful when the school is under-resourced or not very culturally diverse. There are three forms of indirect contact:

1. **Extended contact.** This occurs when we know that a person from 'our own group' is making friends with people from 'another group' and has similar effects on reducing prejudice in the whole group, even if the other members have not experienced first-person contact (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe & Rupp, 1997). An extended-contact intervention developed by Cameron, Rutland,

Brown and Douch (2006) involves reading a series of stories once a week over six weeks to children aged 5-11. The stories described the friendship between peers in the group itself and a refugee child. This intervention led to significantly more positive attitudes toward refugees.

2. Imaginary contact. This type of contact implies imagining yourself interacting with someone from an outside group. This means asking students to imagine having contact with a person from a different cultural context than their own.
3. Vicarious contact. Such contact occurs when observing a group member interacting with a member from another group. Studies show that observing positive interaction between individuals from different groups, for example in a video, has positive effects on reducing prejudice (Weisbuch, Pauker & Ambady, 2009) and on actual behaviour (Mallett & Wilson, 2010). Vicarious contact can be experienced through the media, television programmes or series. In the classroom, one can create ad hoc stories that depict characters from different groups establishing friendships.

THE COMMUNITY

We have previously stressed the importance of including the community closest to the school in the implementation of an ARS in the educational field. We recall that having a wide diversity of allies and key actors is a fundamental criterion to carry out an ARS. This should start with the involvement of the families, but little by little, it is desirable to move further and involve other actors in the neighbourhood (associations, sports and cultural centres, local businesses, etc.). Finally, we must also be in contact with the public administrations and take media into account.

a) Establishing contact and influencing the public administration

One of the key players we should be contacting is the public administration, whether at a local, regional or national level.

The first thing that the centre or the Parents' Association should investigate is whether an Antirumours Strategy is already being implemented in their municipality so that they can then collaborate in carrying out joint activities and form part of the Strategy at the city level. Having the support of the local administration will be vital to achieving a more significant impact on actions and counting on more resources, among other things. Furthermore, being part of an existing Antirumour Network (e.g. in the education committee, or a youth working group) will be an opportunity to strengthen relations with the community. The involvement in the network will also serve as an important learning process that can be transferred to the school.

Additionally, and in line with the strategic objective of influencing the educational policy agenda, schools should carry out advocacy actions (in networks or through the closest public administration) to highlight the importance of reducing prejudice and preventing discrimination.

Some of the territories that have focused on the educational sphere in their Antirumours strategies in Spain, are Cartagena, Santa Coloma de Gramenet, Logroño, Zaragoza, Bilbao, Castellón, Tenerife, Fuenlabrada and Getxo.

One of the objectives of the Second Plan for Intercultural Coexistence of **Logroño City Council** is the construction of an "Educating City". Along these lines, it has programmed the implementation of several actions in the city's educational centres. The project "Graduate en Convivencia- Escuelas libres de rumores" has the following lines of work: 1) To transfer the interest in and commitment to the construction of intercultural coexistence to the educational centres. 2) To carry out a project intended for primary education, generating dialogue around coexistence, consequentially impacting both the schools and the city. 3) To invite people to participate in a joint event to celebrate the Schools' Peace and Non-Violence day.

The Bilbao City Council's Antirumours Strategy consists of several lines of intervention. One of them is the mediation with young people, which has three areas of work: schools, gaztegunes, and leisure activities for children and young people. In the schools, the actions are planned for both the students and the educational community, carrying out specific and curricular activities. Some examples are: the seminar on Intercultural Education aimed at the educational community; the radio workshop for secondary school students; and introducing the recognition of cultural diversity based on respect and tolerance as a key element of the school's educational project, as well as the celebration of some milestone related to cultural diversity.

The **Barcelona City Council** has organized a cycle of four roundtable sessions on Intercultural Education in the Espai Avinyó in which young professionals in the educational field, families, teachers and secondary school students have shared and discussed the different visions and challenges related to the topic. For example, what do teachers think about the application of intercultural education in schools? What is being done to reduce the social inequalities that affect the educational system? From a student's perspective, how do they evaluate teachers and schools in their task of building a pluralistic, inclusive, and equitable school? More information [here](#) and [here](#).

b) Involving the surrounding community

As interaction with and linkage to the environment is a necessary mechanism to improve learning, we must encourage community involvement in schools and school participation in the community. One way to generate links with the community is through the establishment of agreements with external agents and organizations or involvement in projects of a cultural and social nature. These projects should require students to participate in organized activities that benefit the community beyond the school borders, and the activities should reinforce and complement what they have learned in the classroom.

Another example of collaboration is that people from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds can be invited to the school to talk about various topics and participate in events where students can debate with and interview them using questions they have prepared in advance.

Additionally, students can visit organisations, cultural facilities, civic centres and social associations in their neighbourhood, as well as interview community members in their surroundings and carry out volunteer activities.

Finally, it is essential to note that students can (and should) be active, and not just reactive, agents in the proposed interventions. Furthermore, the students could also design an awareness campaign aimed at their neighbourhood. In any case, after each performance, it would be necessary for students to reflect critically on these experiences.

The [Xarxa Apuja el To contra el Racisme](#) is a program led by the Area of Intercultural Coexistence of the [Valencia City Council's](#) Service of Migration and Cooperation for Development. The network is developed in collaboration with five social initiative entities and 33 educational centres of preschool, primary school, education and vocational training cycles of the municipality. This network aim is to commit the city's educational centres to actively participate in the fight against racist and xenophobic attitudes and in favour of intercultural coexistence, both to impregnate the educational function towards their students and to manage the coexistence of their educational communities.

The Network offers two forms of participation: 1) participating in the activities through the educational offer aimed at all of the city's educational centres; 2) joining the Network, through the commitment of the School Council. In the latter case, it offers the following: support and guidance in situations of racist and xenophobic discrimination and the promotion of intercultural coexistence; activities and workshops on the prevention of racism and xenophobia and the promotion of intercultural coexistence; training actions for the educational community, Parents' Associations and the centre's mediation agents; and support and guidance to the centres in the organisation of actions.

[\[REC\]Fugiades](#). This project, which uses the service-learning methodology, is organized by the NGO Justicia i Pau and the entity La Bretxa, and supported by the Barcelona City Council. The [Rec]Fugiades educational proposal is available to any school in the city. During the 18/19 academic year, it was the students of the Mare de Déu dels Àngels School who participated in the project to comprehend better what it means to be a refugee and to raise awareness in the neighbourhoods of La Sagrera and Sant Andreu about the topic. Through contact with refugees and a theoretical basis on the phenomenon of migration, they were able to start reflecting on how to shake the conscience of their neighbours. This social communication work has taken the form of a series of [video clips, short films, photographs, poems, interviews and raps](#).

This project combines different criteria, such as the promotion of empathy, critical thinking, self-reflection and awareness-raising. Moreover, the initiative, which is meant for educational centres, is promoted by different third- sector organisations and supported by the City Council. It gives young people the role of agents of change in the community and the opportunity to encourage interculturality and to raise awareness from their perspective among the residents of the Sant Andreu district, in collaboration with various entities.

More information [here](#).

'Anti-Gypsyism' prevention workshops in Castelló de la Plana's ARS. To dismantle stereotypes and prejudices towards the Roma culture (anti-gypsyism) and to promote self-reflection and critical thinking, Castelló de la Plana's City Council organizes workshops for 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th -grade students to allow them to approach and get to (re)know the Roma culture through debates. Furthermore, in order to raise awareness, representatives of the Roma community have visited the educational centres to give talks within the framework of the campaign #gitan@sdehoy.

The Castelló City Council promotes this initiative within the framework of its Antirumours Strategy. It was created at the request of the educational centres, which asked for "spaces of proximity free from prejudice" where the Roma referents themselves would visit share their experience first-hand.

The need to carry out the workshops on the prevention of anti-gypsyism arose from the evaluation of seminars on "Roma History and Culture" which were held by the Department of Social Coexistence and Interculturality in the three schools in the municipality with the highest number of Roma students. The evaluation revealed that the majority of Roma students do not know their history. Despite this, these students said that they were proud of and assumed their stereotypes. When faced with the option of countering the stereotypes, the students answered that this was not possible for them because "they are like that". This expression, shows the lack of resources to be able to question the already internalised stereotypes

Libraries are essential facilities to promote culture and critical thinking, but also to facilitate positive interaction and social cohesion. In many cities, libraries have been evolving into proactive spaces that organize different activities, from storytelling to debates, using diverse dynamics to learn and experience the socio-cultural diversity of the neighbourhood.

Worship centres in the different provinces, organise open days so residents can enter and talk to community leaders and learn first-hand about the activities that take place. Usually, some schools organise visits to these centres allowing the students to ask questions and converse with the people in charge to comprehend the reality of the different confessions better.

In the Fort Pienc district of Barcelona, there is an important community of Chinese origin, and every year a parade is held to celebrate the **Chinese New Year**. For years, many entities, including some linked to the local popular culture, have participated in the street parade. This has created the opportunity to go beyond a 'segregated' celebration of the Chinese community and promote cultural interaction and exchange. In 2018, the Fort Pienc primary school decided to join this celebration, taking advantage of this event to organize workshops for all the school's students and their families, which allowed an approach to the Chinese community present in the school and the neighbourhood. The school's Parents' Association promoted this activity through a group made up of native families of Chinese origin, and through the collaboration of various cultural entities in the Chinese community and the neighbourhood. The workshops take place at the school the Sunday before the Parade and bring together over 200 people. Afterwards, a delegation of students, families and teachers participate in the parade with some of the objects and banners made in the workshops. In so doing, they combine elements of knowledge and recognition of diversity with the promotion of positive interaction, not only among students but also among families.

c) Involving the Parents' Associations

Families, understood in a broad and diverse sense, are per se an essential project of coexistence with a shared educational project, and a strong emotional commitment. It is also a network of support and an environment of development for both children and parents. The family has considerable influence on the prejudices and behaviour of the youngest children, both for good and bad. Therefore, parents and teachers must complement each other and work together if they want to reduce prejudices, stereotypes and improve the coexistence inside and outside of the school.

Taking into account the multifaceted development of children, the influences of the different socialising agents that intervene in education should coincide in the objectives, resources and procedures that promote the development of the child's personality coherently.

It will be necessary to, firstly, train parents and, secondly, to promote their participation in the school's Antirumours actions. This participation should reach the highest number of parents, and the Parents' Associations should work to eliminate those barriers that prevent greater involvement of some families and to make all families feel like the project is theirs.

The Empathy Bank is the Time Bank of the [Empathy Site](#) project of the La Salle Bilbao school, which is aimed at the entire educational community of the centre. Under the slogan 'Take your time. Share your time' it seeks to involve families and encourage their participation and interaction with other families, among other objectives.

It is a tool where people exchange their skills without using money. Instead, time is used as a currency, counting the hours of service rendered and received. In other words, a system for exchanging services, skills and knowledge by time, in which the unit of measure is the hour. This type of exchange, in which every participant is valued equally, promotes social relations and equality and revitalizes community life.

More information about the project can be found

[Ongi Etorri Eskolara](#) (Welcome to School) is a program carried out since 2014 in several schools in the Donostia-San Sebastian province. It aims to collaborate in the inclusion of families from different origins, starting from the educational community, as well as to make all school actors aware of the advantages of cultural diversity. The project was initiated by voluntary parents and is currently financed by the local administration. The programme consists of appointing voluntary mentor families to accompany newly arrived families to become part of the local community. Usually, these families have their children in the same classrooms, and the two-year focus is the shared situation (families with children in the same school and the same classes). The programme has an impact on teachers, students and families.

Ongi Etorri Eskolara also promotes interaction beyond the educational centre. It carries out different activities for all families, paying particular attention to the invitation of families with a migrant background to local events such as the Aste Nagusia (Donostia's Big Week), the Tamborrada or the Hogueras de San Juan. Furthermore, every two years, teachers are trained in intercultural skills.



CROSS-CUTTING MEASURES

a) The direct confrontation of prejudices and rumours

So far, the guide has focused on what to do to create the right context to promote critical thinking and positive intercultural encounters. These strategies should have a positive effect towards accepting diversity and reducing prejudice, but what happens when a rumour is presented in public by a person or a group of people? Or what happens if the rumour creates feelings of rejection, anger or sadness?

When counteracting rumours, we must keep in mind that the presentation of information that contradicts a point of view is 'unpleasant': the brain will look for elements to reject this new information. This means that we tend to accept new information uncritically when in accordance to our perspective (confirmation bias), a process that is inherent to all human beings.

To begin with, the group we want to work with needs to feel that their point of view is being heard and acknowledged (De Torres, 2018). To do this, the teachers must, first of all, not judge from a position of moral superiority -we must be cautious not to pretend to teach the "truth" by treating people as ignorant or racist-. Being denoted or labelled negatively for having a point of view (intolerant, bigoted, stupid, etc.) by those people who contradict that position will only serve to polarise the perspective further. We should start by recognising that all people have prejudices and have shared rumours on occasions, while also normalising and identifying the reasons why students or other agents in the school have these prejudices. How? By sharing experiences where we have been victims of a rumour or prejudice, but also the ones in which we have had biased thoughts. Depending on the action, this can be done through active individual listening or a group discussion.

Finally, the 'correction' of disinformation will not consist so much in presenting the 'truth', but in sowing the seeds of doubt in those who have a prejudiced perspective. Some responses could be: to stimulate curiosity about the factual validity of prejudice; to analyse the origins (racism, social inequalities, power or status relations, patriarchy, etc.) and consequences of such prejudice; to highlight how we can all be victims of generalisations; to find common ground between the two groups in question; and to ask more questions

about why they may feel that way and to invite them to reflect on it. While it is tempting to present objective evidence of why a prejudiced belief is wrong, it is much more useful to let students or others explore it for themselves.

The direct confrontation of prejudices requires a personal and collective proactive attitude and is one of the key elements of any ARS. Confronting prejudice is fundamental to reducing impunity, stopping the spiral of rumours, and avoiding the normalisation of specific comments, attitudes and behaviour. This confrontation can and should be carried out in various ways and through different channels:

- Face to face with the teaching staff or students.
- At the institutional level, through public statements, to build consensus.
- Through manifests, specific actions, etc. from the Antirumours network
- Promoting specific communication campaigns or designing strategies to dismiss rumours and negative narratives about diversity in social networks.

Strategies to counter prejudices and rumours face-to-face are key to any training of Antirumour agents in order to guarantee an effective performance, because sometimes without such training, our reactions can be counterproductive. It is equally necessary to train teachers and families to develop tools to face rumours and prejudices both in the classroom, in the school environment or at home.

b) Communication and dissemination

The role of communication is crucial in any ARS. However, communication is not understood as a single campaign to dismantle rumours and prejudices through the dissemination of Antirumour data and arguments. Rather, communication is important for several reasons:

- To visualise and demonstrate the commitment of the school to address this issue and to generate debate and interest.
- To attract a higher number of people with different profiles (families, teachers, students, social actors) who might be interested in participating in the Strategy (as Antirumour agents, members of the network, etc.)

- To complement other actions in sending messages that promote awareness of the negative impact of prejudice and rumours.

The [Handbook of Antirumour activities for young people](#) produced by the Bilbao City Council presents a series of actions to promote critical thinking, such as 'El Rumor'. This exercise aims to reflect on the distortion caused by an unclear message. In general, what is most striking, or what is considered most important, is what remains in one's memory. Access the manual [here](#).

The Bilbao City Council, organised some practical workshops with young people for the production of [comic strips](#) on the subject of Antirumours. The workshops were carried out within the framework of the city's ARS and in cooperation with the Gazteguneko de Bilbao network and Pernan Goñi, a cartoonist from Bilbao.

Therefore, it is essential to generate an ARS logo and other logos and slogans for specific actions or campaigns, as well as communication products (brochures, comics, videos, or objects such as glasses, erasers, pencils, etc.) through which to reinforce some messages related to the Strategy. Moreover, these products can be designed in a participatory way and become an 'excuse' to mobilize students and families through creative workshops and other actions of a recreational nature.

The [Fort Pienc school](#) in Barcelona has started its steps towards the design of an Antirumours Strategy. To give the Strategy an entity, they have created a logo with the slogan "a Fort Pienc esborrem els rumors" (At Font Pienc we erase rumours) which has been used to design bookmarks, a 'tattoo' and napkins. They are currently working on another slogan to spread it through sustainable snack packaging, with the message "A Fort Pienc reciclem els rumors" (At Font Pienc we recycle rumours). The project is presented as a case study in point 5.



05

Case studies

a) Project #IoRispetto in Italy



#IoRispetto is a project financed by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) and promoted by Cifa Onlus in collaboration with the Istituto Cooperazione Economica Internazionale (ICEI), Social Community Theater, Amnesty International Italy, Associazione Multi-etnica Mediatori Interculturali and the municipalities of Palermo, Turin, Milan and Albano Laziale. The project has received support by Antirumours Global, especially in Antirumours training for key actors in the different cities.

The project was carried out in several Italian cities between March 2018 and November 2019 and aimed at promoting civic awareness and active empowerment of young people for a more inclusive society. In the framework of the project, the organisation ICEI of Milan, the Italian coordinator of the Cities of Dialogue Network (the Italian network of the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme), has been particularly involved in the implementation of the Antirumours Strategy in schools in four cities: Milan, Palermo, Albano Laziale and Turin.

Each municipality has coordinated an Antirumours network in the cities with the participation of stakeholders. In each territory, training sessions on the Antirumours Strategy were organised with three different audiences: the project partners, local administration staff and local civil society actors (teachers, associations, organisations, etc.).

A total of 15 primary and secondary classes (8-13 years old) participated in the project: 3-4 classes per city, coming from different contexts with a heterogeneous composition. The classes were selected through close collaboration with the municipalities and with the direct participation of the teachers who took part in the Antirumours training.

Concerning the Antirumours training, three courses were given to teachers. The training included methodologies of social community theatre, as a tool to reflect on interpersonal communication (verbal and non-verbal). Each of the classes chose a creative methodology to transmit the Antirumours approach.

The students designed the interventions together with the teachers and trainers to adapt each path of the experience to the needs and requirements of the class groups.



The ARS puts great emphasis on the aspect of communication and how each person can contribute to preventing the spread of hate speech or communication influenced by prejudice. This approach enabled students to identify and reflect on the most frequent rumours in their context (class, school, neighbourhood) and rework them into positive messages through videos, creative writing, street art, theatre, comics, cooperative games and even social circus. The response of the classes was very positive and reflecting on these topics created a relaxed atmosphere in which each participant found their way to contribute to the creation of a final product. Below we present the different methodologies used in the various schools:

- Milan: street art; theatre and non-verbal communication; video haiku; theatre of the oppressed
- Turin: creative writing and storytelling; non-violent communication; non-formal education
- Palermo: theatre; speech laboratory; comics; cooperative games
- Albano Laziale: cultural and educational recreational activities for socialization purposes; educational and social circus

At the end of each course, each municipality or school organized different events. In some cases, the classes shared their experience in the events scheduled for the end of the year festivities, with parents and fellow students, proposing a moment of reflection and discussion on these topics. This allowed them to promote a positive message and explain why it is important to prevent discriminatory acts and encourage respect for diversity in a creative and

entertaining way. Some municipalities, such as Palermo or Albano Laziale, were able to organize bigger public events at a city level. In these events, the classes from the different schools could exchange and learn about each other's experiences, collect and analyse the rumours of the city, and encourage discussion and positive interaction between people, even in the presence of local authorities.

Within each class, the final products were created and conceived directly by the participants themselves. Here are some examples:

- L'Inventastorie, a collection of Antirumour stories produced by a class of the Giulio Bonfiglio Palermo High School, together with the LABE Association.



- A class from the Colorni Middle School in Milan has created a video-haiku on the theme of Antirumours and respect, along with the trainers Andrea Robbiano and Davide Bonaldo. The complete video is available [here](#).

- The class of the Da Vinci Institute in Turin has made some drawings to say "No to discrimination and yes to respect!" The illustrations were placed in the classroom and around the school.

- At IC Grossi in Milan, together with the street artist Andrea Franzosi, artistic installations have been created to remind us that "rumours erase us".

- A class at IC Verdi in Palermo has invented a new game to promote respect: The Heroic Cards! The workshop was led by the GAMES Association.



b) The Labastida school, in Álava

The Labastida Primary School has 80 students (32 girls and 49 boys). There is little interaction between students and families from different socio-cultural backgrounds, and prejudice and derogatory comments are common.

The project seeks to improve their intercultural coexistence through the implementation of a process of training and critical reflection to reduce the incidence of rumours that arise in the school. To this end, the Labastida HLHI IEPC, with the support of the Asociación Matiz - Matiz Elkarte, proposed the design and implementation of an ARS, adapting the Council of Europe's Antirumours methodology to the peculiarities of the territory and school environment. With the implementation of this Strategy, they seek to, identify, analyse, and discuss the main stereotypes, clichés, and false rumours that circulate concerning cultural diversity and migrants, through a critical and rigorous perspective.

Furthermore, the centre carried out a process of training and critical reflection with the different educational agents from a participatory and community approach. This training has deepened the analysis and debate concerning the main stereotypes and false rumours that circulate and hinder coexistence in the school environment. Parallely, the school carried out teachers training, as well as recreational workshops and activities with students, using participatory dynamics to work on prejudices, stereotypes and rumours. Finally, they have also carried out several meetings with families in a "coffee chat" format, in which families from different origins participated and where they approached the subject from a more experiential and close perspective.

Information sessions with different key actors at the municipal level

The school made contact with several key agents in the area: the equality and community prevention techniques of the Cuadrilla de La Guardia-Rioja Alavesa; the municipal health centre, Cáritas and the "Gao Lacho Drom" association. Besides, they also contacted the Berritzegune (The Basque Government's Educational Department) and the Coexistence Committee, which showed their support and interest in the development of the project. As a result of these contacts, two face-to-face information

sessions were held. The school also held a meeting with the Berritzegune Head of Interculturality with whom they shared the main details of the initiative, noting the suitability of the project with institutional approaches. Finally, they held a presentation on the progress of the project to the Municipal Coexistence Committee, which was attended by the town's mayor.

Analysis of the "Antirumours" school context and elaboration of the initial diagnosis

The centre carried out a brief analysis of the school context in collaboration with teachers and families and prepared an informal initial diagnosis to detect the main rumours circulating the school environment. Questionnaires were distributed to teachers in order to detect the presence of certain rumours. Furthermore, they organised two discussion groups with families of migrant and autochthonous origin, one of them with Roma women and women of Moroccan descent, to share the rumours circulating concerning them and their cultural groups. These group meetings and questionnaires facilitated an initial informal diagnosis of the "rumorology" detected among the families and the teaching staff.

"Antirumours" training for the educational community of Labastida HLHI IEPC

Both students and teachers participated in Antirumours training. The teaching staff participated in four Antirumours training sessions of two hours each. Through these sessions, teachers were able to approach the subject of migration by tackling the



negative stereotypes and prejudices that give rise to the main rumours in the educational sphere.

Furthermore, the training also covered affective and communicative strategies to face the rumours.

Additionally, two training sessions were held for the school's students. The first training was directed at 5th grade students, where they designed the lyrics of the

song "Naizena naizelako" (Because I am as I am), with the participation of all educational agents. The second session was aimed at all primary school students. In each training process, students attended two workshops: one of recreational and another of experiential nature, to work on stereotypes, prejudices and rumours. The song "Naizena naizelako", is a participatory and intercultural action in which music was used as a meeting point for coexistence and mutual knowledge. This song includes rhythms from the Basque, Flamenco and Arabic cultures.

You can check out the video of the song [here](#).



The involved actors made a significant effort to give visibility to this video in media. For example, the director of the educational centre was interviewed on the Cadena SER radio program "A vivir que son dos días". The interview is available [here](#).

The second training process aimed towards students consisted of two sessions in each primary class, where they worked with playful and participatory dynamics on aspects concerning the generation of stereotypes, prejudices and rumours, as well as respect for difference and intercultural coexistence. Each session lasted approximately 55 minutes and was facilitated by two educators from the Matiz team, in Spanish and Basque to facilitate the understanding by all students. The aim was for them to work with empathy and respect in an experiential way.

Family involvement

The place to meet with the families was the café-tertulia or "coffee-chat", which already existed in the school. As it is an open and informal space, it was considered highly suitable to favour a mixed interrelationship between teachers and families. The first session was dedicated to present the "Educational Antirumours Strategy" carried out at the centre and to invite families to join the project. Furthermore, the school initiated a

program of four sessions which brought together over 20 people per session with a variety of different backgrounds. The meetings also counted on the presence of teachers which created a mixed space for reflection. The sessions were based on something that all families had in common; "the dream" of what they want for their children.

The sessions made it possible to identify and talk about the common concerns of families, the future of their children, and the difficulties related to the families' origin ("labels"), taking a more in-depth look at how other people in the municipality experienced this difference. The meetings also addressed the schools' cultural diversity as a possibility of enrichment and positive learning. To this end, the sessions were held with a methodology of an informal approach to the topics using open questions that encouraged dialogue and participation of the families, thus achieving a space of trust and reflection. The families have valued this space of interchange and interaction between them positively, and the initiative will continue during the present school year.

Up to now, the aim has been to strengthen participation and the intercultural relationship of the meeting group. Going further, this group will continue their work by making a more detailed analysis that will lead to the realization of a script or formal argument.

Image design and slogan of the centre

A competition was held among the students to find a slogan that would be attractive, and that would represent the whole academic community. Once the drawings were collected, the teachers reviewed them, and later on, the families were invited to a session to choose the picture that best represented the School's ARS. The chosen slogan was "Don't go with the flow", which went with an image of two fish starting a conversation.

With the design and the slogan, they created various objects such as fabric tote bags for adults, fabric backpacks for children, as well as stickers, bookmarks and notebooks for the students.



New actions

The Antitumours coffee-chat is maintained for the future to ensure a community-based participatory approach to the Strategy. Moreover, some of the proposals planned for the new school year will allow working with children in pre-school education by organising an ad hoc playful workshop and outlining an argument between them. Furthermore, they will enjoy the implementation of an artistic and photographic project based on the experience of the project Inside Out, by the French artist Jean René and a workshop on 'Pneumatic Architecture', which will be included in the Basque Public-School Festival.

c) The Antirumours Strategy at Fort Pienc school in Barcelona

The Parents' Association of the Fort Pienc public primary school in Barcelona decided to promote an Antirumours Strategy to reduce prejudice and encourage coexistence amongst diversity. A team of parents was created and they received training on the basic foundations of the Strategy. They then contacted the City Council to design an Antirumours agent-training for a wider group of parents, and the Parents' Association joined the city's Antirumours network. They have also started to set up their own Fort Pienc Antirumours network and scheduled a first training session for teachers in collaboration with the school's management.

To boost the Strategy, they have created a logo for the Antirumour network and another logo with the slogan "a Fort Pienc esborrem els rumors" (At Fort Pienc we erase rumours). The logos and motto were used to design bookmarks that were distributed at different school events and activities. The school also created a "tattoo" which was distributed through napkin rings. They are currently working on another slogan to spread through sustainable snack packaging, with the message "A Fort Pienc reciclem els rumors" (At Font Pienc we recycle rumours).

Within the framework of the Antirumours Strategy, some awareness-raising activities have been carried out both for students and families. One example is the Antirumours clowns, which are part of the City Council's Catalogue of Antirumours activities. In the coming year, there are plans to promote new training activities and to raise awareness and promote critical thinking in the classroom, in collaboration with the school's management and teachers.





Resources

WEB PAGES WITH EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

In Spanish:

- AULA INTERCULTURAL. Didactic units for teachers (Educating to counter racism and discrimination; Cooperative work and team building ([teachers](#)) and material for working with students ([here](#)).
- CUADERNO INTERCULTURAL. Resources for interculturality and intercultural education. Access it [here](#)
- RED DE ESCUELAS INTERCULTURALES. Keys and experiences to build an intercultural school. Access it [here](#)
- CRUZ ROJA JUVENTUD. Didactic resources. Education for Development and International Cooperation, Health Promotion and Education, Social Intervention and Inclusion, Environmental Education and Sustainability, Gender Perspective and Participation. Access the web page [here](#)
- EDUCAIXA. Resources for the educational community. Access the web page [here](#)
- FUNDACIÓ PAU I SOLIDARITAT. Proyecto Interactuemos: Didactic materials for children teachers and educators in primary and secondary school. Access the web page [here](#)
- PAULA. A web page to promote education for peace in schools. A joint initiative of the University of Barcelona's Institute of Educational Sciences and Fundació Solidaritat. Access the web page [here](#)
- RECURSOS DE EDUCACIÓN INTERCULTURAL. Wiki designed to share materials (dynamics, group techniques and resources) classified by type of resource and content. Access them [here](#)

In English:

- BREAKING THE PREJUDICE HABIT. This Bale State University project brings together numerous resources for classroom work, from video clips and songs to exercises and podcasts, to reduce prejudice and discrimination. Click [here to find out more](#).
- Understanding Prejudice. Contains over 2,000 links to resources related to prejudice. Access them [here](#).
- Intersectional and Privilege Pedagogies. A website dedicated to educators who want to address intersectionality, privilege and social justice. Includes videos and exercises to use in class. Click [here](#).
- Speak Up: Opening a Dialogue with Youth About Racism. This resource was designed to facilitate dialogue on identity, inequality and education. It also

highlights how racism should be addressed in the classroom. Click [here to find out more](#).

- Racial Equality Tools. Contains a complete glossary. Access it [here](#).
- ENAR is a pan-European anti-racism network that combines advocacy for equality and facilitation of cooperation among civil society actors against racism in Europe. It has publications, fact sheets and toolkits on different forms of discrimination (anti-Semitism, anti-gypsyism, Islamophobia, etc.). Access it [here](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

In Spanish:

- Juegos para disolver rumores. Handbook of Antirumour Activities for young people. Bilbao City Council. Access them [here](#).
- Catálogo de actividades antirumores. Xarxa Antirumors de Barcelona offers entities, schools and other organizations a series of activities to work on reducing prejudice and rumours. Access it [here](#).
- Guía Didáctica "Ponle Información, Ponle Corazón". SEMI, Cultural Diversity Program of the Department of Social Welfare of the City of Fuenlabrada. Access it [here](#).
- Guía para la resolución de conflictos en los centros educativos: self-portraits. Getting to know each other at school. FETE-UGT. Access it [here](#).
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- Superando prejuicios: la historia de Álex y Mohammed. Access this video [here](#).

In English:

- Educational resource pack for secondary schools. Limerick Youth Service. Project C4i. Access it [here](#).
- Who, me, biased? The New York Times. Short dynamic videos about stereotypes, prejudices, how

we think and act, and the importance of positive interaction:

- The Life-Changing Magic of Hanging Out. Access it [here](#).
- Peanut Butter, Jelly and Racism. Access it [here](#).
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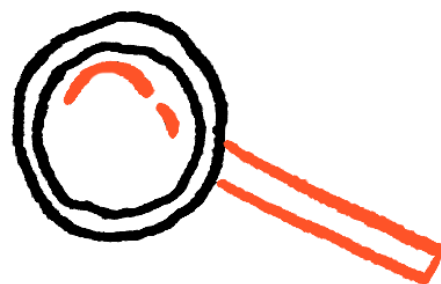
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Annex 1. Summary table of the evolution of different approaches and theories on the reduction of prejudice among children and young people.¹

Social Learning Approach

Gordon Allport (1954)

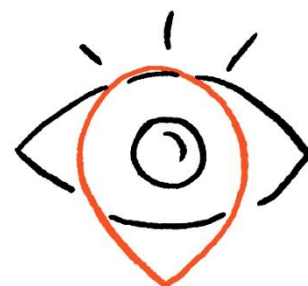
According to this theory, children learn prejudice by observing and imitating others in their environments such as parents, peers, teachers, and the mass media.

Variables such as the extent to which children identify with their parents contribute to the degree to which their explicit and implicit prejudice influences that of their children. Another variable that may impact the degree of overlap between parents and children's attitudes is the extent to which parents explicitly convey their attitudes. Sometimes, parents (including open-minded, tolerant ones) do not discuss issues around race with children for fear of bringing attention to race, but evidence suggests it is a better strategy to discuss these issues with children explicitly. Additionally, children may learn prejudice from adults in implicit ways, for example, through nonverbal communication between their parents and a person of a different racial or ethnic group. Children's levels of prejudice would also be influenced by peers in their surroundings, including in the neighbourhood and classroom environments.

This approach is embodied in multicultural education interventions, including anti-racist and empathy education. Multicultural education theorising suggests that prejudice is developed because of a lack of both knowledge and understanding of diverse groups. Thus, through learning about diverse groups and their experiences, individuals will understand and respect other cultures, thereby increasing positive attitudes toward people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. On the one hand, anti-racist education focuses on how prejudice derives in part from a lack of intergroup knowledge, namely awareness and understanding of the history and roots of inequality. Therefore, anti-racist teaching involves teaching students about past and contemporary racial and ethnic discrimination and inequalities and pointing out the forces that maintain racism. Such teaching can be useful to increase empathy toward discriminated groups and at the same time, discourage future racism. Anti-racist education can provide children with the cognitive, linguistic, and social skills needed to identify and counter biases. On the other hand,

empathy education works on emotional experiences concerning prejudice in a way which may motivate people to feel marginalisation or discrimination as if they were experiencing it. These are often interconnected approaches that can be adopted by schools in a coordinated matter. These training approaches suggest that educators focus on teaching interracial relations while being careful not to overemphasise differences among groups.

Intergroup Contact Theory focuses on how direct interactions among different racial and ethnic groups can facilitate the development of positive attitudes and relations. In order to facilitate positive contact, four criteria must be met: (1) Contact should be individualised or on a one-to-one basis; (2) Contact should be cooperative (instead of competitive) in nature; (3) The environment should provide or promote equal status between the interacting individuals; (4) The positive intergroup interaction should be sanctioned by authorities such as teachers in the classroom. Such intergroup interactions promote intergroup friendships, which are key ingredients in the development of positive intergroup attitudes over time.



Cognitive-development approach

(Piaget & Weil, 1951) and applied by Katz (1973), Aboud (1988), & Bigler and Liben (1993)

The Cognitive-development approach focuses on developing cognitive abilities as well as interconnected social and emotional abilities. Therefore, according to this approach, children's attitudes toward racial and ethnic groups are influenced by their ability to think about group information in complex ways and highlights the age-related social, cognitive, and emotional constraints that contribute to the generally higher levels of prejudice among younger children. The theory emphasises the developing skills that children acquire with age (typically around 7 years of age) that allow for less rigid and exaggerated views of groups and their members (Only once their cognitive systems mature, can children recognise similarities across groups and differences within the same group, hence view people as individuals) and therefore support less prejudiced views and behaviours.

Social-cognitive development approach

The Social Identity Development Theory (SIDT) focuses on the pivotal role of people's numerous social identities (e.g., gender, nationality, social class, race), which become salient in different situations and impact social judgment and behaviour. It highlights the role of context in eliciting one or more social identities above others and thereby emphasises the interaction between the person and the situation. SIDT (Nesdale, Durkin, Maass, & Griffiths, 2004) proposes that ethnic biases are the result of a four-phase developmental process that begins early in children's development: 1) Children's ethnic cognitions are undifferentiated because very young children are relatively unaware of ethnic group membership and cannot identify themselves or others based on ethnicity; 2) Ethnic awareness when children develop ethnic identification abilities; 3) At 4 or 5 years of age, children develop an ethnic preference, in which they exhibit a preference for their ethnic ingroup, without rejecting ethnic outgroups. Ingroup preference is thought to emerge due to children's developing levels of self-esteem, which motivate them to view themselves and their social ingroup positively; 4) Elementary-aged children continue to prefer their ethnic ingroup, and may begin to reject ethnic outgroups, possibly to increase or maintain high self-esteem.

The degree to which children exhibit ethnic prejudice is determined by: (1) The strength of children's ethnic

ingroup identification; (2) Their ingroup's norms of prejudice expression; (3) The presence of intergroup conflict; (4) Knowledge about the outgroup; and (5) Children's level of peer acceptance or rejection. There is evidence that the broader cultural context can affect ingroup attitudes: in a context that strongly favours one's ingroup, ingroup favouritism can emerge in the absence of ingroup identification (Bennett, Lyons, Sani, and Barrett, 1998).

The **Developmental Model of Subjective Group Dynamics** (DSGD) (Abrams, Rutland, Cameron, and Marques, 2003) focuses on understanding the processes that may lead to favouring the outgroup or derogating the ingroup in the context of social exclusion and inclusion. DSGD focuses on both intergroup processes (evaluations of the ingroup as a whole compared to the outgroup) and intragroup processes (evaluations of individual members of both ingroup and outgroup). Research shows that, with age, children do not simply use category memberships when they judge group members. The model highlights that context, the characteristics of individual group members in relation to group norms, also drives older children's group attitudes.

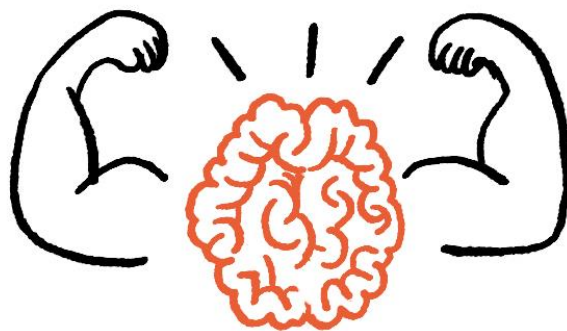
The **Social Domain Model** (Killen et al., 2002; 2007; Killen, Mulvey, & Hitti, 2013) highlights the need to study context, but also to focus on the reasoning children bring to intergroup contexts. Children's social judgment from a young age are context-specific and influenced by three types of reasoning: moral (e.g., justice, rights, others' welfare), social-conventional (e.g., traditions, rules, norms, including ensuring group functioning), and psychological (e.g., personal choice). Killen and colleagues (2002) found that almost all children and adolescents thought that excluding a child from school because of the race was morally wrong. However, when the context was multifaceted—for example when the children learned the qualifications of a stereotypic and non-stereotypic racial outgroup child who wanted to join a club—children (particularly older children) used social-conventional reasons (e.g., group functioning) in addition to moral reasons for excluding some other-race children from the club.

The **Developmental Intergroup Theory** (Bigler & Liben, 2006, 2007) specifies that intergroup biases develop if a social dimension acquires psychological salience. Psychological salience is influenced by perceptual salience of groups, unequal group size, explicit

labelling of group membership, and implicit segregation. These four factors characterise society's treatment of race and ethnicity; thus, children are presumed to be likely to view race and ethnicity as an important dimension in which individuals vary. With the psychological salience of race, the development of racial biases is augmented by other factors, such as essentialist thinking about race and ethnicity. The theory highlights that exogenous factors (e.g., stereotypic environmental models) and endogenous factors (e.g., self-esteem, cognitive development

contribute to the maintenance of prejudice and stereotyping.

The **Social-Developmental perspective on Lay Theories** (Levy et al., 2005, 2011): Existing evidence suggests that common-sense theories, that is, the theories that people use in their daily lives to explain what happens in their social environment, serve as frameworks to influence the perception and interpretation of information, the prediction of events and, consequently, also people's choices and behaviours. An example would be the Protestant ethic around work. This perspective highlights the role that personal characteristics (e.g., age, race, psychological motivations) play in the interpretation of lay theories children receive from their environments.



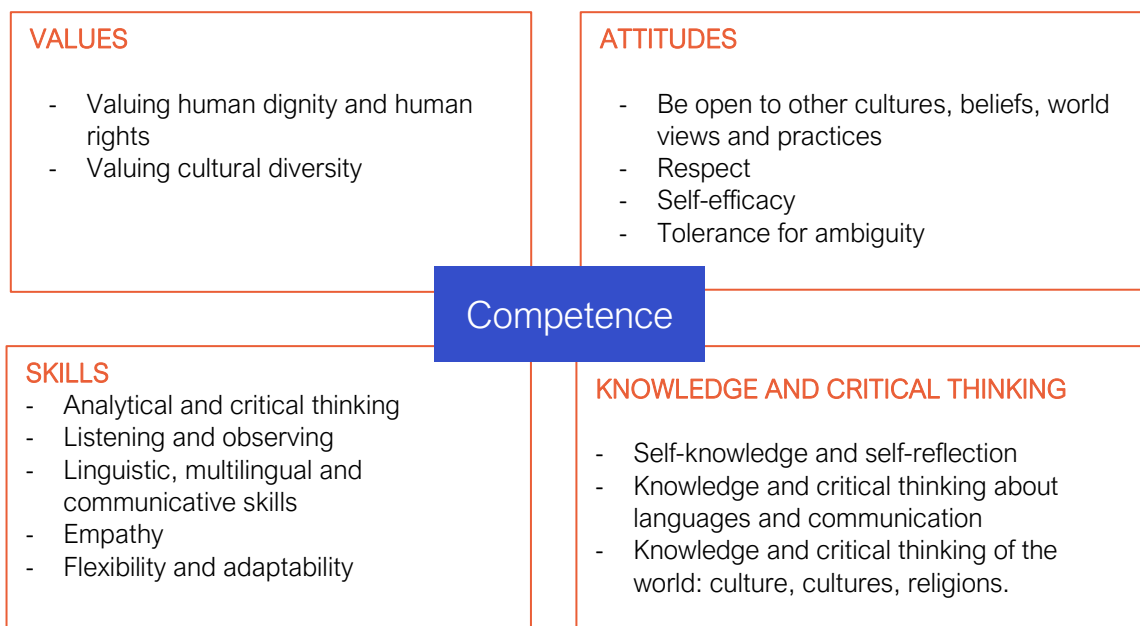
Annex 2. Intercultural Competences in Education

In the framework of the Competences for Democratic Culture project, The Council of Europe has developed, a [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture](#), with the aim of facilitating actors in educational planning to empower students to become autonomous, respectful and democratic citizens by equipping them with competences necessary for democracy and intercultural dialogue.

An intercultural competence is the ability to mobilise and deploy (select, activate, organise and coordinate) relevant psychological resources (applied through behaviour) to give an appropriate and effective response to the demands, challenges and opportunities presented by intercultural situations. The term “competence” is understood as a dynamic

process: appropriate and effective adaptation implies a constant self-monitoring of the results of the behaviour and the situation, i.e. behaviour can be modified if the situation requires it. In other words, intercultural competence is the set of cognitive, affective and behavioural skills that lead to effective and appropriate communication with people belonging to other 'cultural systems'.

The Reference Framework⁵ describes 20 competencies that include not only skills and knowledge, but also encompass intercultural and democratic values and attitudes. Barret (2018)⁶ extracts 14 of these 20 components, which he considers necessary for intercultural competence.



⁵ More information at : Council of Europe (2016), Competences for democratic culture: living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies: www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture

⁶ Barrett, M. (2018). How schools can promote the intercultural competence of young people. *European Psychologist*, 23(1), 93-104. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040/a000308>

VALUES

- > Valuing human dignity and human rights. Recognition that all people share a common humanity and have the same dignity, regardless of their cultural affiliations, status, abilities or particular circumstances. Fundamental freedoms must always be defended unless they undermine or violate the human rights of others. It is essential to defend the universal and inalienable nature of human rights, which must also always be promoted, respected and protected.
- > Valuing cultural diversity, pluralism of opinions, world views, and practices is an asset for society. Everyone has the right to be different and to choose his or her own perspectives, beliefs and opinions, as well as to respect those of others unless they are aimed at undermining the human rights and freedoms of others. People who are perceived as different must be listened to and engaged with in dialogue.

ATTITUDES

- > Openness to cultural otherness and other beliefs, world views and practices. Sensitivity to cultural diversity and willingness to question the "naturalness" of one's worldview, beliefs, values and practices. Curiosity and interest in discovering and learning about other cultural orientations and affiliations and other world views. An emotional disposition to relate to other people who are perceived as different and to seek or take advantage of opportunities to cooperate and interact with those who have cultural affiliations different from one's own, in a relationship of equality.
- > Respect. Consideration and positive esteem of other people as equals who share a common dignity and have the exact same set of human rights and freedoms regardless of their particular cultural affiliations, beliefs, opinions and lifestyles or practices.
- > Efficiency. Ability to understand problems, make judgements and select appropriate methods to carry out tasks; to organise and implement

courses of actions to achieve certain objectives, and to overcome obstacles that may arise. Confidence in facing new challenges, such as engaging in intercultural dialogue.

- > Tolerance of ambiguity. Recognition of the multiple perspectives and interpretations of any situation or issue and that one's perspective may not be better than the views of others. Acceptance of complexity, contradictions and lack of clarity and willingness to deal with it constructively.

SKILLS

- > Critical and analytical thinking skills. Systematically breaking down the materials being analysed and logically organising them. Identifying and interpreting the meaning of each element, to compare and relate them to what is already known. Identifying any discrepancies or inconsistencies between the elements. Identifying possible meanings and alternative relationships for individual elements, imagining and exploring new possibilities and alternatives. Understanding and evaluating the preconceptions, assumptions and conventions within the historical context in which the material has been produced to make evaluative judgements of it. Weighing the pros and cons of available options, resource analysis and risk analysis. Gathering the results of the analysis in an organised and coherent matter to build logical conclusions about the entire context. Recognising that your own assumptions and preconceptions are biased, and that your own beliefs and judgements depend on your own cultural affiliations and perspectives.
- > Listening and observation skills. Paying attention not only to what is said but also to how it is said, body language, the subtleties of meaning, and to what is only partially said or left unsaid. Paying attention to the relationship between what is said and the social context in which it is said. Paying attention to other people's behaviour and retaining information about that behaviour, and the similarities and differences in the way people react to the same situation, particularly people who are perceived as having different cultural affiliations to each other.

- > Language, communication and multilingual skills
On the one hand, it includes the ability to communicate clearly - expressing one's beliefs, opinions, interests and needs, explaining and clarifying ideas, defending, promoting, arguing, reasoning, discussing, debating, persuading and negotiating. Furthermore, it is the ability to meet the communicative demands of intercultural situations by using more than one language or a shared language. It is also essential to recognise different forms of expression and different communicative conventions (verbal and non-verbal) in the communications of other social groups and their cultures and to adjust or modify communicative behaviour. When communicating, it should be possible to express disagreement with another person in a way that respects that person's dignity and rights, for example, by asking clarification questions in an appropriate and sensitive way in cases where the meanings expressed by another person are not clear or where inconsistencies between verbal and non-verbal messages produced by another person are detected, by handling interruptions in communication, by requesting repetition or rephrasing from others, or by providing rephrasing, revisions or simplifications of one's misunderstood communications. Finally, a very valuable skill is that of being a language mediator in intercultural exchanges, including translation, interpretation and explanation skills, or as an intercultural mediator helping others to understand and appreciate the characteristics of someone or something perceived as having a different cultural affiliation to one's own.
- > Empathy. We understand empathy as the ability to take a cognitive (apprehending and understanding the perceptions, thoughts and beliefs of other people) and affective (apprehending and understanding the emotions, feelings and needs of other people) perspective.
- > Flexibility and adaptability. Adjusting one's habitual way of thinking due to changing circumstances, or temporarily switching to a different cognitive perspective in response to cultural signals; reconsidering one's opinions in the light of new evidence or rational arguments; controlling and regulating one's emotions and feelings to facilitate more effective and appropriate

communication and cooperation; overcoming concerns and insecurities about meeting and interacting with others who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations; regulating and reducing negative feelings towards members of another group with whom one's group has historically been in conflict; adapting behaviour in a socially appropriate way to the prevailing cultural environment; adapting to different communication styles and actions; and changing to proper communication styles and behaviours to avoid violating the cultural norms of others and to communicate with them through means they can understand.

KNOWLEDGE AND CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING

- > Knowledge and critical understanding of oneself, one's cultural affiliations and one's perspective of the world and its cognitive, emotional and motivational aspects and biases; understanding how one's perspective on the world is contingent and dependent on one's cultural affiliations and experiences, and in turn affects one's perceptions, judgements and reactions towards other people; awareness of one's emotions, feelings and motivations, especially in contexts involving communication and cooperation with other people; knowledge and understanding of the limits of one's competence and experience.
- > Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication. On the one hand, it is essential to have knowledge of socially appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication and to understand how one's perceptions, beliefs and judgements relate to the specific language(s) spoken. Understanding that people with different cultural affiliations may perceive the meanings of communications in different ways and even that there are multiple ways of speaking the same language. Furthermore, it is crucial to understand the social impact and effects that different communication styles have on others. Finally, there is an understanding of the fact that languages can uniquely express culturally shared ideas or express unique ideas that may be difficult to access through another language.
- > Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

> Knowledge and critical understanding of culture and cultures: How people's cultural affiliations shape their worldviews, perceptions, beliefs, values, behaviours and interactions with others; that all cultural groups are internally variable and heterogeneous, have no fixed inherent characteristics, contain individuals who question traditional cultural meanings, and are constantly evolving and changing; how power structures, discriminatory practices and institutional barriers within and between cultural groups work to restrict opportunities for disempowered people; knowledge of the specific beliefs, values, norms, practices, discourses and products that may be used by people with particular cultural affiliations, especially those used by people with whom one interacts and communicates and who are perceived as having different cultural affiliations from oneself.

> Knowledge and critical understanding of religions: Key aspects of the history of particular religious traditions, the key texts and doctrines of particular religious traditions, the commonalities and differences between different religious traditions; symbols, rituals and use of language; important characteristics of the beliefs, values, practices and experiences of people practising particular religions; the fact that the subjective experience and personal expressions of religions may differ in various ways from the standard textbook representations of those religions; the internal diversity of beliefs and practices that exist within each religion that do not have fixed inherent characteristics and that are continually evolving and changing.

The [Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue](#) (2008) noted that democratic and intercultural competences are not automatically acquired, but need to be learned and practised. In the guide, we point out some actions grouped according to who performs or receives the action. One way of doing relevant training in this field is to encourage the cognitive aspects (training of key concepts around diversity, democracy, human rights, etc.) and self-reflection as well as the affective features (promoting interaction, cooperation, encouraging empathy).



ⁱ Summary based on the chapter "Understanding and reducing racial and ethnic prejudice among children and adolescents" by Levy, S., Lytle, A., Shin, J., & Milligan, J. (2015) in T.D. Nelson (Ed.) Handbook of