

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION, BUSINESS AND LEARNING COMPETENCES (ICBLC)

ROUNDTABLE, 11 MAY 2007

Intercultural Learning and Teaching Competences: Learning and Knowledge development – Linkages within and beyond companies, VET-institutions and Institutions of Higher Education

CENTRO DE CAPARIDE

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REPORT

Roundtable Organiser

AidLearn, Consultoria em Recursos Humanos, Lda

Roundtable Objectives

- To present and discuss European and national projects in the scope of the roundtable theme;
- To identify best practices and relevant outcomes from the selected projects;
- To gather information to support final conference preparation.

Roundtable Structure

The structure of the round table was established according to the template agreed within ICBLC project.

Opening Session

The opening session was assured by

Maria Helena Antunes, AidLearn,
Johann Laister, Merig and
Rupert Beinhauer, FH –Joanneum.

Maria Helena Antunes welcomed all the participants at Caparide Center and highlight the relevance of intercultural learning as a mean to increase international and cross-cultural tolerance and understanding.

Johann Laister and Rupert Beinhauer presented their organisations, the main objectives and structure of ICBCL project and invited all the participants to attend the final conference at Graz, 21-22 June 2007.

It was established that each presentation will be followed by a short period of plenary discussion in order to facilitate a deeper understanding of the projects and a process of experience's interchanging.

Presentations

In the morning two organisations presented their projects and programmes.

APAI (Portuguese Association for Intercultural Learning) presented various programmes in the scope of exchange and intercultural learning they are currently developing and targeted to five different areas:

- Youth programmes - targeted to youngsters, between 14 to 35 years old, as Summer Camps, Work Camps, *Au Pair* Programme, European Voluntary Service, Leonardo da Vinci Programme, Home Stay Programme, Group Programme, School Programme and University Programme;
- Family programmes: as to be an Host Family or receiving an *Au Pair*;
- Programmes for institutions: as the European Voluntary Service or the International Voluntary Service;
- Programmes for enterprises: summer camps, radical weekends, voluntary courses and
- Learning courses: Youth animators course; youth monitors course and youth leaders course. It was particularly relevant the living demonstration of a technique used in their learning approach.

Around 500 individuals are enrolled, in average by year, in APAI different programmes.

During plenary discussion it was emphasized that most APAI work is developed by volunteers what renders visible their commitment to the intercultural learning.

AidLearn presented than the ALF (Adult Learners Forum) project in the scope of the Grundtvig 2 that targeted to adult learners aims to strength their role as active citizens in society and to increase intercultural competences through the exchange of experiences by means namely of transnational forums.

The partnership is composed by partners from Estonia, Greece, Italy and Portugal.

In plenary was brought to light the difficulties on engaging adult learners in developing international interactions, namely due to a lack of foreign languages domain, as well as the preference for different interactions according to the countries.

In the afternoon four organisations presented their work into the intercultural learning, more one then it was foreseen. For the reason that was present at the audience Mrs. Elisabeth Clanet dit Lamanit, responsible for the project *Schooling for Travelers* of the Cned (National Centre for Distance Learning), France, that gently accepted to present it and share her experience within the roundtable.

ICE (Institute for Educative Communities) presented the Nomad Project aiming principally to value and dignifying the gipsy culture as well as changing attitudes and practices promoting a participative democracy built on solidarity with difference.

The methodological approach is especially rich, gipsy cultural centered and diversified, including:

- Animation of markets and streets, where educational acts are visible as cultural acts and formal and informal learning are intersected;
- Ecotraining- targeted to teachers and trainers, aiming to provide methodological aid to professionals and allowing a consolidation and systematization of the knowledge emerged from the analysis of the practices;
- Activation of cultural groups;
- Newspaper for disseminate and share educational practices and gipsy culture.

The reflection made upon the practices implemented renders possible to set up new tasks and competences to the teachers and trainers, as: (1) a development agent, close to people and organisations; (2) a support and consulting actor; (3) a reflexive practitioner; (4) able to learn with others and within situations; (4) committed to a continuing process of self building and self awareness and (5) revealing capacity to sensitive listening and educational improvisation (creativity).

For the time being 4 books were edited and the project has been presented in different national and international forum as a good practice for social inclusion of the gipsy communities and simultaneously for building up a more tolerant and multicultural society.

Europraxis presented a Socrates project entitled “Managing Diversity and Gender – Experts for Europe”. The partnership involves 7 European partners (PT; DE; UK; LT; FN; GR and BE) and aims to design, test and renders available a modular learning course able to build up, amongst other objectives, personal competences in managing diversity.

The target audience is careers professionals, educational and training organizations, teachers and trainers, management staff and members of minorities and immigrants associations.

The course is already in Grundtvig database and two deliveries (Lisbon and Athens) are by now planned.

The Associação Cultural Moinho da Juventude (Youth Mill Cultural Association) is located in one of the most risky and violent suburban shanty town (*Bairro do Alto da Cova da Moura*), inhabited by around 7 000 persons, settled down after 1977, mostly (3/4) immigrants from Cabo Verde (Cape Verde), an ex Portuguese African colony. Remain immigrant population came from Angola, Mozambique and Eastern countries. 50% of the residents have less than 20 years old. Most men works in building industry and women are employed in domestic service, cleaning, restaurants and fishing sale. Families dimension is of 4.3 persons by aggregate and have low schooling level. This area is one of the 3 more critical neighbourhoods existing in Portugal.

The association developed an enlarge set of activities targeted to the different groups of residents - adults, children and youth. The Association supports residents in their legalisation process; develop preventing actions on health, namely AIDS prevention, and against violence, promote literacy and ICT courses for adults, music groups, selling books of Cape Verdean writers; provide a day nursery and a kindergarten for children and activities to youth as scholar support, dance and sportive groups.

Amongst the various activities developed by the association at socio-economic level, the project “Training of Experts by Experience in Multicultural Context” was chosen to be deeply presented in the roundtable. The methodological approach within the two training actions already developed is based on *Empowerment* as a process for individuals and local groups or communities widen their capacities and the power for a more active participation in order:

- To get more influence or to be able to enrich their lives and society where they live in;
- To enlarge their capacities for taking decisions independently and influencing persons that took decisions upon them, in an increasing self learning process.

The process of action, reflection, communication and cooperation are the four axles for learning.

The concept *Expert by Experience* (perito de experiência, ervaringsdeskundige, expert du vécu) was used at first time in the Netherlands (1994) and was defined as “individual that acquired his/her authority on an experiencing basis and not by a knowledge systematic acquisition”.

An expert by experience related with poverty and social exclusion is subsequently someone that experienced poverty, that reflected on it, equated and framed those living experiences and after that, by a learning process, acquired attitudes, competencies and methodologies for applying his/her “experience of equated poverty” in one or more sectors for fighting against poverty.

This way, by training youngsters, previously belonging to target group, as experts by experience the Association is establishing an innovative approach for fighting against exclusion based on a new professional referential.

CNed (National Centre for Distance Learning) is a French centre that since 1991 develops the project “Schooling for Travellers” aiming to permit schooling of traveling young people.

Around 50 000 young travelers and 700 teachers joined by now the project. Specific learning material have been produced as a book – “*Cultures du Voyage*” for the students, about their own history and a DVD- “*Roms e Gens du Voyage*” for the teacher’s training.

Cned presentation was particularly interesting. An historic approach was made trying to explain the origin of the *gens du voyage*, around 500 000 French citizens today in France. It is actually an identity, recognise in French law, of itinerant people that from generations and often by economics and historic reasons live and work in families that are constantly moving.

Closing Remarks

The Caparide Centre, chosen as venue for the event, provided an adequate environment for the roundtable due to its beauty, calm and excellence of the different services offered, since the working room, the coffee breaks and lunch until the kindness and discretion of the staff, indispensable for the creation of a positive climate during all working day .

The projects for the roundtable were chosen not only because fitting its theme but also to approach it by different axles, proposing different methodologies and targeted to dissimilar audience.

From youth to adult learners, from gypsies to immigrants, from professionals and management staff to volunteers, an enlarge set of audience was covered by the projects.

Some methodological aspects should be underlined due to its innovative character as it was the case of the ecotraining, the animation of markets and streets or the experts by experience.

In common the projects present a preference by active and living experiences, for interchanging experiences and incentive reflection upon the practices as the best strategies to promote intercultural learning.

Finally to show up the active enrolment of the participants coming from different type of organisations (public and private, profit and non profit, national and transnational...) that followed carefully all the presentations and promote an interesting dialogue on crucial issues during plenary discussions.

Annexes

Annex A: Roundtable Agenda

Annex B: Welcome Speech

Annex C: APAI presentation

Annex D: AidLearn presentation

Annex E: ICE presentation

Annex F: Europraxis presentation

Annex G: Associação Cultural Moinho da Juventude presentation

Annex H: CNED presentation

Annex I - Participants List

Annex J - Certificate

Lisbon, 17 May 2007



Maria Helena Antunes