REDE PORTUGUESA
CIDADES INTERCULTURAIS

A PRACTICAL GUIDE
RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES
for Intercultural
Ecosystems

LISBOA
CÂMARA MUNICIPAL

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CASCAIS

RPCI
COOPERATIVA

INTERCULTURAL CITIES
CITÉS INTERCULTURELLES

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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The opinions expressed in the present document are the sole responsibility of the Portuguese Network of Intercultural CIties, the editorial coordination and the experts invited to the workshops held under the Intercultural Ecosystems project, and do not reflect necessarily the official politics of the Council of Europe. The present document is published as it was submitted to the secretariat.

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01 Introduction

Every year the Portuguese Network of Intercultural Cities (RPCI) meets to debate the most pressing issues regarding interculturalism, with a view to deciding the theme and target of the joint annual project.

This is how the Intercultural Ecosystems project emerged, promoted by the RPCI Cooperative. This project, implemented between March and November 2023 and financed by the Council of Europe (Intercultural Cities program), covers the 17 local authorities of the national network (RPCI), with the municipalities of Lisbon, Loures and Cascais being part of the development and monitoring team.

THE PROJECT HAD THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES:

- **Promote local** intercultural ecosystems;
- **Promote the intercultural lens** in Municipal Plans and Strategies, promoting learning opportunities;
- **Promote the intercultural competencies** of municipal staff and partner entities;

Within the scope of this project, the following activities were carried out:

- **Monthly meetings** with the cities that are part of the project team;
- **A survey** to survey the training interests of RPCI Cities;
- **A meeting to share practices** on "Development of Intercultural Competencies" between RPCI cities;
- **A** checklist to support the creation of "Intercultural Projects" translated into Portuguese;
- **Three episodes of** de "Portugal Plural" podcast: one on access to healthcare for migrant people; another on the integration of Roma communities in Portugal and, finally, one on the reception of refugees in Portugal;
- **Three workshops,** whose themes reflect the results of the survey: "Communication and interculturalism"; "Intercultural communication"; and "Organization of Intercultural Activities".

The experiences and valuable knowledge shared in the workshops by the invited people were compiled in this Recommendations and Resources Guide, hoping that it will serve as inspiration and basis for new practices and increasingly inclusive intercultural ecosystems.

Enjoy!

02

What is
Interculturalism?

02 What is Interculturalism?

The concept of interculturalism is born with the increasing globalisation, the expansion of commerce and the digital scenario in which people easily communicate with others in different geographies around the world and with the increasing relevance of migration, which leads to the Interaction between people with different cultural references being increasingly common.

The function of interculturality is to ensure that people with different cultural references and identities can interact on an equal footing, so that all points of view are respected, considered and valued. In this sense, interculturality is a social, cultural and communication phenomenon that favours understanding and dialogue, and strengthens horizontal relationships between people with different cultural references.

It is important to highlight that for interculturalism to work, its principles must be observed, which are:

Seek to achieve **true equity and equality of opportunities and access to rights and duties,** preventing discrimination and adapting the city's governance, institutions and services to the needs of a diverse population.

· See **Diversity as an advantage:** political leaders and most people ideally view diversity positively, as a resource, and understand that all people, regardless of their cultural references, change as they find themselves in the public arena. It means defending a pluralistic urban identity built around a shared vision and common values.

· Actively promote **meaningful interaction between different groups,** designed through public policies that promote trust, create connections and transform public space in order to multiply occasions for meetings, exchanges and dialogues.

· Promote **active citizenship and participation** to ensure that no one is left aside, that even those who do not have formal citizenship have a voice in the construction of their local society.

DID YOU KNOW?

As part of Oeiras' diversity and inclusion strategy, a training offer was made available in the field of Diversity and Inclusion, anchored in an opportunity promoted by the Aga Khan Foundation. A representative from Oeiras participated in the training of multipliers, which enabled her to organise a 7-hour training session for all Oeiras staff. Participation in the training is voluntary, with 51 people already covered (people from the operational area, operational assistants, senior technical staff and technical assistants). Learn more about this free online course in Aga Khan Learning Hub webpage.

02 What is Interculturalism?

Equal opportunities, diversity, interaction, active citizenship and participation are four interconnected values that underpin the development and sustainability of an intercultural city. There are no better cultural references or traditions. All are equally worthy and deserve to be respected, with room for dialogue and disagreement. Interaction with diverse people enriches us and values our society, and it is desirable to promote policies favourable to migration and the integration of people in the host society. In this sense, it is vital to reflect on the social, political and economic dynamics, as well as the relations of power, privilege and discrimination present in each context.

In an inclusive city, interculturality is promoted in each of the ecosystems, in all aspects and areas of intervention of organisations, municipalities and parishes.

Inclusion is the practice of providing all people with equal access to opportunities, rights and resources, that is, ensuring equity. It is a universal human right and affects all aspects of public life.

An inclusive city is a place where all people have the opportunity to thrive regardless of their social status, origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, skin colour, academic degree, health status, religion, and all other personal characteristics. Only then can we effectively benefit from the best that each person has to offer.

Inclusion is listening, understanding and respecting. Ensuring that everyone's voices and opinions are heard and carefully considered is vital to creating a more inclusive environment where everyone feels respected and can thrive as who they are.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the cities of Valencia and Bilbao, Spain, "Diversitours" were implemented where people from different backgrounds lead visits around the city, telling part of the city's history through different lenses and perspectives. These people receive training and remuneration for their work and it is a way of supporting local associations and generating extra income. The visits work to raise awareness of different experiences and take visitors from inside and outside the Municipality to less visited areas or to look differently at the most touristy areas of the city. In this way, there is a clear appreciation of the diversity present in the city, giving space to new narratives about the city and people from different origins.
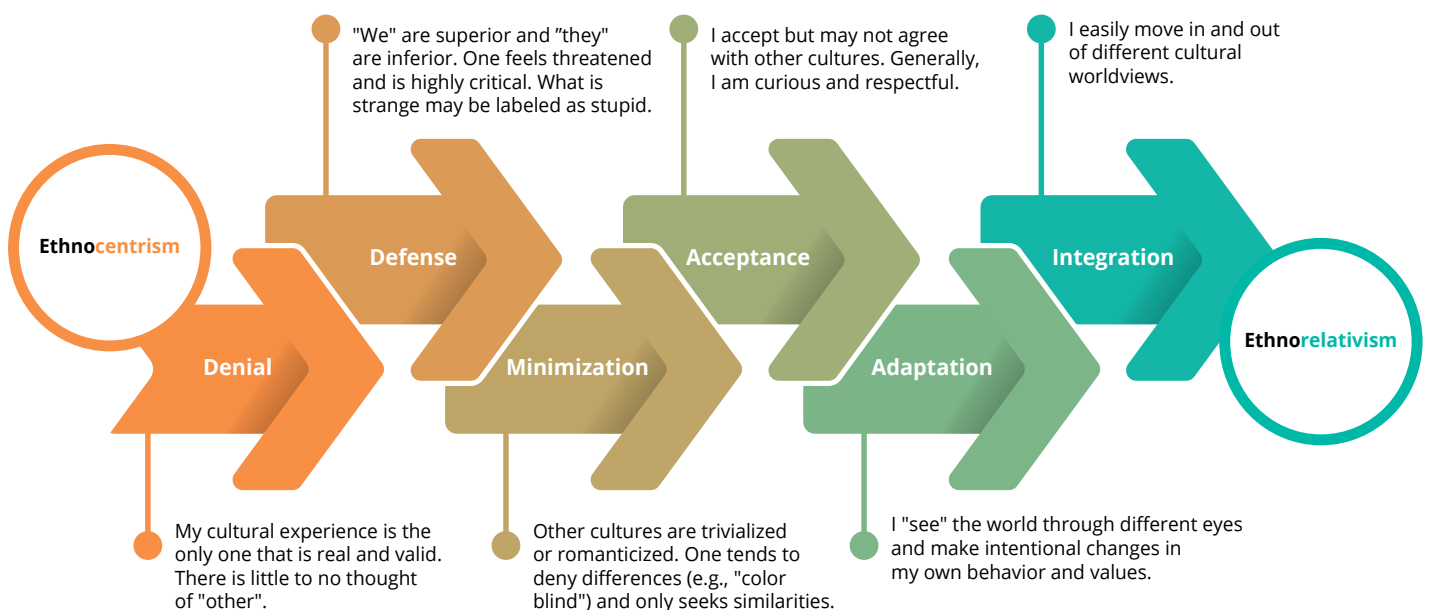Find out more in Council of Europe webpage.

2.1. ETHNOCENTRISM AND CONTACT WITH DIFFERENCE

Human beings tend to evaluate reality according to their own cultural standards. This means that we use our measurements to evaluate the behaviour of other people without taking into account that they may have another type of scale of values and beliefs: each person considers what they do and think as the "norm". This phenomenon can lead to feelings of strangeness when we come into contact with someone who may have habits and traditions that are different from ours. For this reason, true empathy is achieved by listening to and understanding the framework of values, traditions and beliefs of the person in front of us, assuming them as equally valid and important, even if we do not agree or are able to completely put myself in "their shoes" due to ignorance of its reality.

According to Milton Bennet (1986), our exposure to difference is an essential factor in helping us overcome our ethnocentric view of reality, recognizing other cultural references as valid and important. As we progress through respectful experiences of intercultural dialogue, we progress from an ethnocentric stance to a relativist stance, in which we assume the degree of subjectivity of what is considered "right" and "wrong", "good" or "bad", depending on each person's point of view, context and cultural and social references. Thus, Bennet summarises our path to becoming more interculturally competent in 6 phases, described in the figure below:

Experience of Difference Phases
Milton Bennett 1986

"We" are superior and "they" are inferior. One feels threatened and is highly critical. What is strange may be labeled as stupid.

I accept but may not agree with other cultures. Generally, I am curious and respectful.

I easily move in and out of different cultural worldviews.

Ethnocentrism

Defense

Acceptance

Integration

Denial

Minimization

Adaptation

Ethnorelativism

My cultural experience is the only one that is real and valid. There is little to no thought of "other".

Other cultures are trivialized or romanticized. One tends to deny differences (e.g., "color blind") and only seeks similarities.

I "see" the world through different eyes and make intentional changes in my own behavior and values.
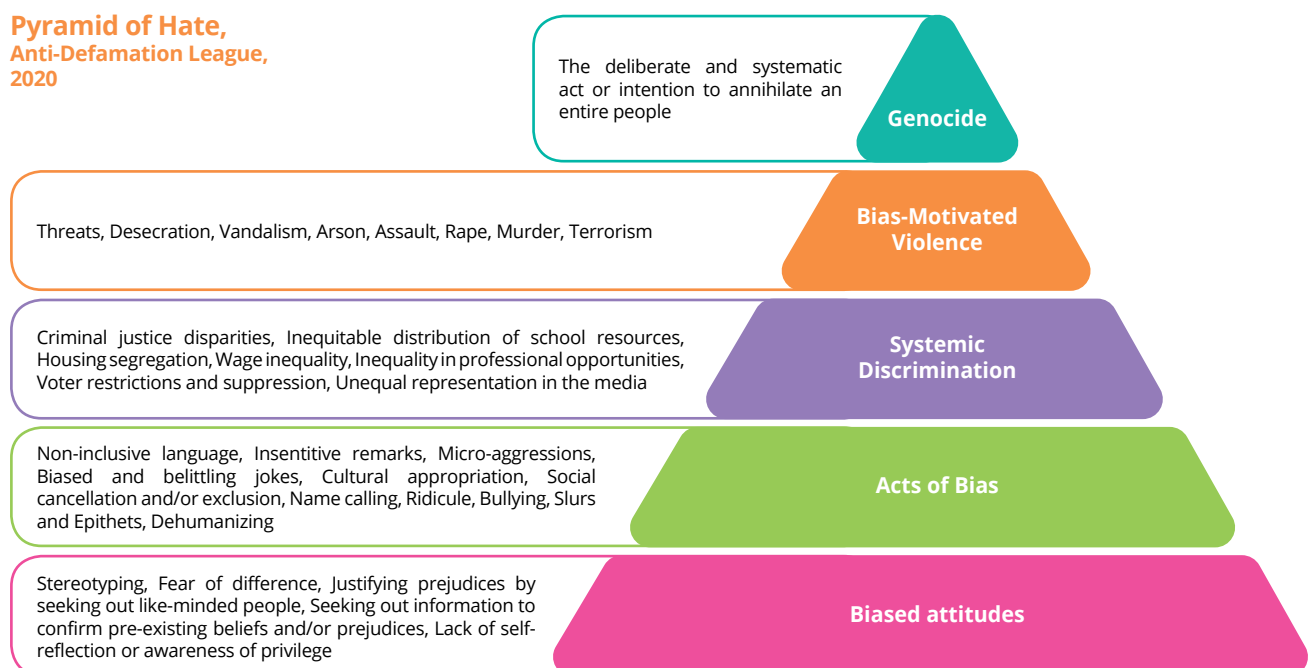
02 What is Interculturalism?

In this period of time in which we find ourselves developing our intercultural competencies, discrimination can happen and, in some way, all people can contribute to unfair and non-inclusive societies by acting on their prejudices and stereotypes in an often unconscious way.

After the Second World War, behavioural science research sought explanations for what had happened: how was it possible for so many people to actively participate in the extinction of thousands of other people? Their conclusions were that our daily micro behaviours (so-called micro aggressions or micro discriminations), such as jokes, pejorative comments, non-verbal language of disapproval or the simple fact of not denying myths and prejudices or not acting in the face of discrimination, are the fertile grounds on which other types of more serious attitudes grow and gain strength. It is not just one person who is responsible for a genocide, but an entire society that for years has been feeding hatred and intolerance, seeking to blame certain groups for their daily difficulties in life, as happened in post-World War I Germany, ravaged by financial depression, hunger, poverty and shame. These investigations gave rise to the **Pyramid of Hate** theory, pictured below, which explains how each level of discriminatory behaviour is only possible based on the existence of the previous level. This means there is no "positive" stereotype, "small" discrimination or "mild" prejudice, as all these elements feed the most serious and violent forms of exclusion.

Pyramid of Hate,
Anti-Defamation League,
2020

The deliberate and systematic act or intention to annihilate an entire people

Genocide

Threats, Desecration, Vandalism, Arson, Assault, Rape, Murder, Terrorism

Bias-Motivated Violence

Criminal justice disparities, Inequitable distribution of school resources, Housing segregation, Wage inequality, Inequality in professional opportunities, Voter restrictions and suppression, Unequal representation in the media

Systemic Discrimination

Non-inclusive language, Insentitive remarks, Micro-aggressions, Biased and belittling jokes, Cultural appropriation, Social cancellation and/or exclusion, Name calling, Ridicule, Bullying, Slurs and Epithets, Dehumanizing

Acts of Bias

Stereotyping, Fear of difference, Justifying prejudices by seeking out like-minded people, Seeking out information to confirm pre-existing beliefs and/or prejudices, Lack of self-reflection or awareness of privilege

Biased attitudes

Therefore, it is important that each person reflects on their contribution to the pyramid of hate, through a **journey of self-knowledge** about themselves, their prejudices and stereotypes, formed in everyone's brain as a means of self-preservation. This journey will create the basis for developing intercultural competencies.

DID YOU KNOW?

Training on Human Rights can help to foster critical thinking and debate among professionals, in order to ensure initiatives that are aligned with these principles and aware of power relations and how to confront them.

The **Municipality of Cascais** is developing an initiative called "Ambassadors for Human Rights" to train its staff in the field. To this end, it will begin with a needs and knowledge assessment among the people who make up the various municipal teams; then, training will be implemented in accordance with the identified needs; and, finally, a meeting will be held between the various services where proposals for improvement actions will be collected within the scope of Human Rights. Each organic unit will select an improvement action to implement. Subsequently, a self-assessment tool will be built to evaluate the implementation of Human Rights in the different organic units. The application of the tool will allow the collection of relevant information for the preparation of the Local Strategy for Human Rights in Cascais. After using this tool, concrete changes will be identified and implemented in the different city services. The action will be subject to impact evaluation, namely through increasing knowledge and awareness of the staff involved and the effectiveness of the measures implemented. Finally, a seminar will disseminate the learnings of the project.
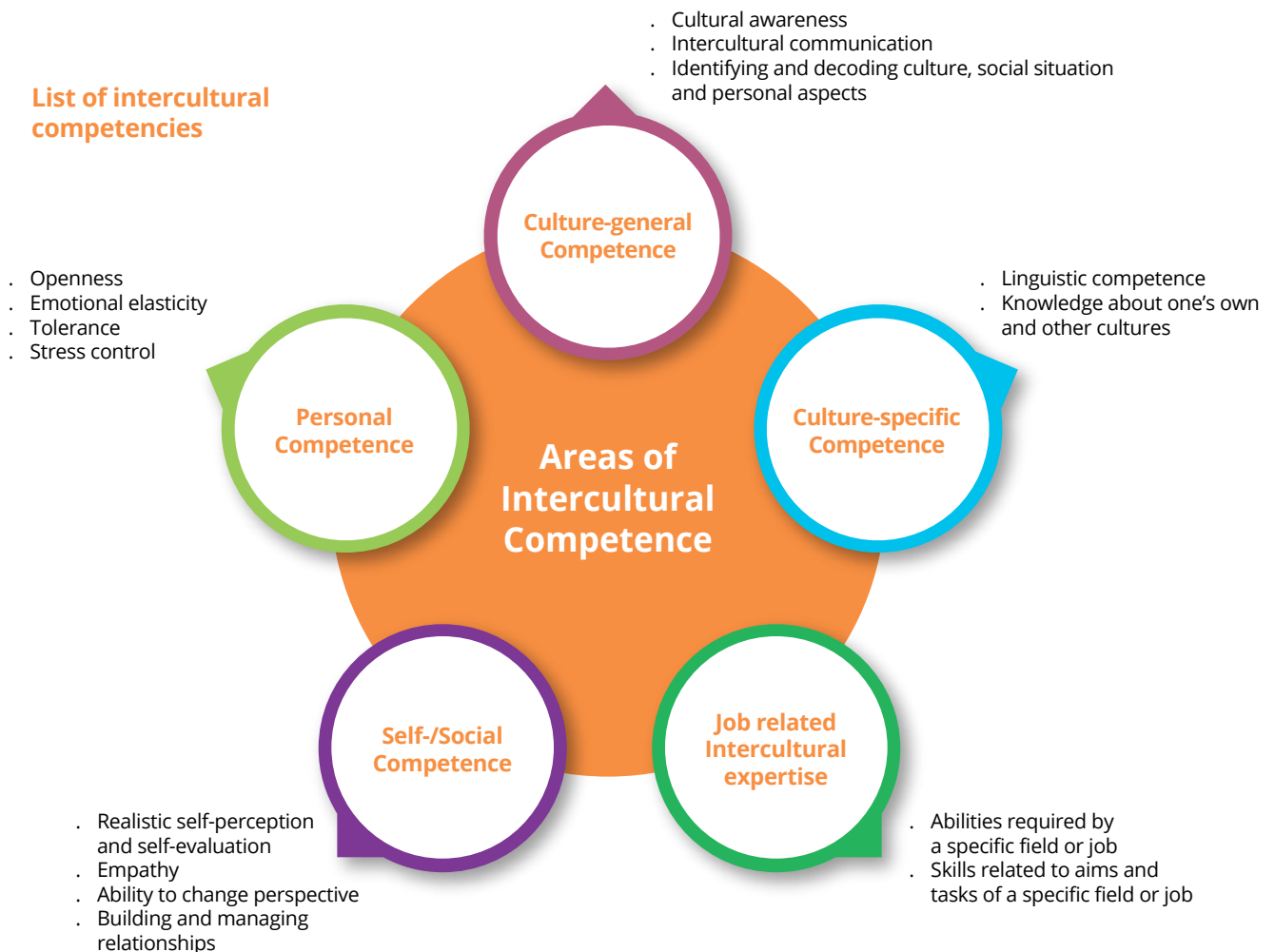
02 What is Interculturalism?
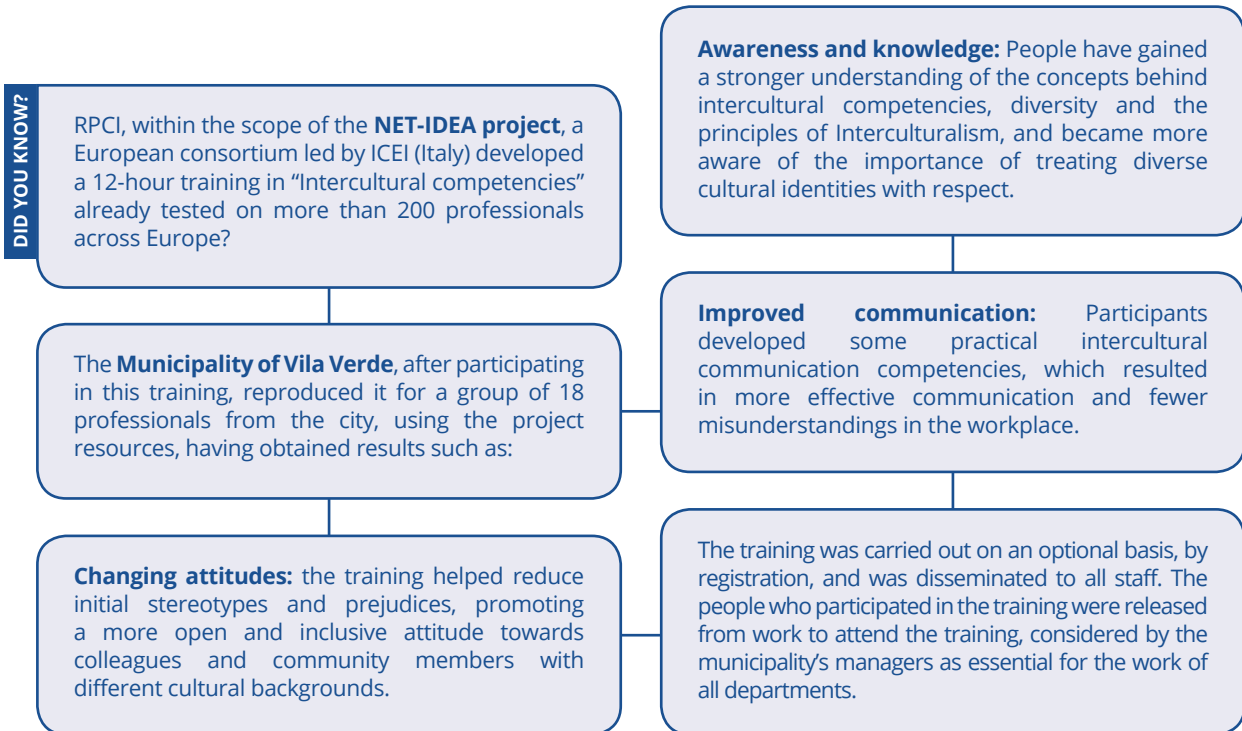
2.2. INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES

One of the main ways to enhance intercultural ecosystems is through the development of intercultural competencies. Both the general population and professionals from public and private institutions benefit from becoming more competent in establishing and maintaining intercultural relationships, as this provides essential tools to navigate in a respectful way that enhances inclusion in contexts of greater uncertainty and diversity.

> **DID YOU KNOW?**
>
> Intercultural competencies are the ability to mobilise and deploy relevant psychological resources to provide an appropriate solution and effective responses to the demands, challenges and opportunities presented by intercultural situations.

List of intercultural competencies

. Cultural awareness
. Intercultural communication
. Identifying and decoding culture, social situation and personal aspects

. Openness
. Emotional elasticity
. Tolerance
. Stress control

. Linguistic competence
. Knowledge about one's own and other cultures

Culture-general Competence

Personal Competence

Areas of Intercultural Competence

Culture-specific Competence

Self-/Social Competence

Job related Intercultural expertise

. Realistic self-perception and self-evaluation
. Empathy
. Ability to change perspective
. Building and managing relationships

. Abilities required by a specific field or job
. Skills related to aims and tasks of a specific field or job

RPCI, within the scope of the **NET-IDEA project**, a European consortium led by ICEI (Italy) developed a 12-hour training in "Intercultural competencies" already tested on more than 200 professionals across Europe?

Awareness and knowledge: People have gained a stronger understanding of the concepts behind intercultural competencies, diversity and the principles of Interculturalism, and became more aware of the importance of treating diverse cultural identities with respect.

The **Municipality of Vila Verde**, after participating in this training, reproduced it for a group of 18 professionals from the city, using the project resources, having obtained results such as:

Improved communication: Participants developed some practical intercultural communication competencies, which resulted in more effective communication and fewer misunderstandings in the workplace.

Changing attitudes: the training helped reduce initial stereotypes and prejudices, promoting a more open and inclusive attitude towards colleagues and community members with different cultural backgrounds.

The training was carried out on an optional basis, by registration, and was disseminated to all staff. The people who participated in the training were released from work to attend the training, considered by the municipality's managers as essential for the work of all departments.
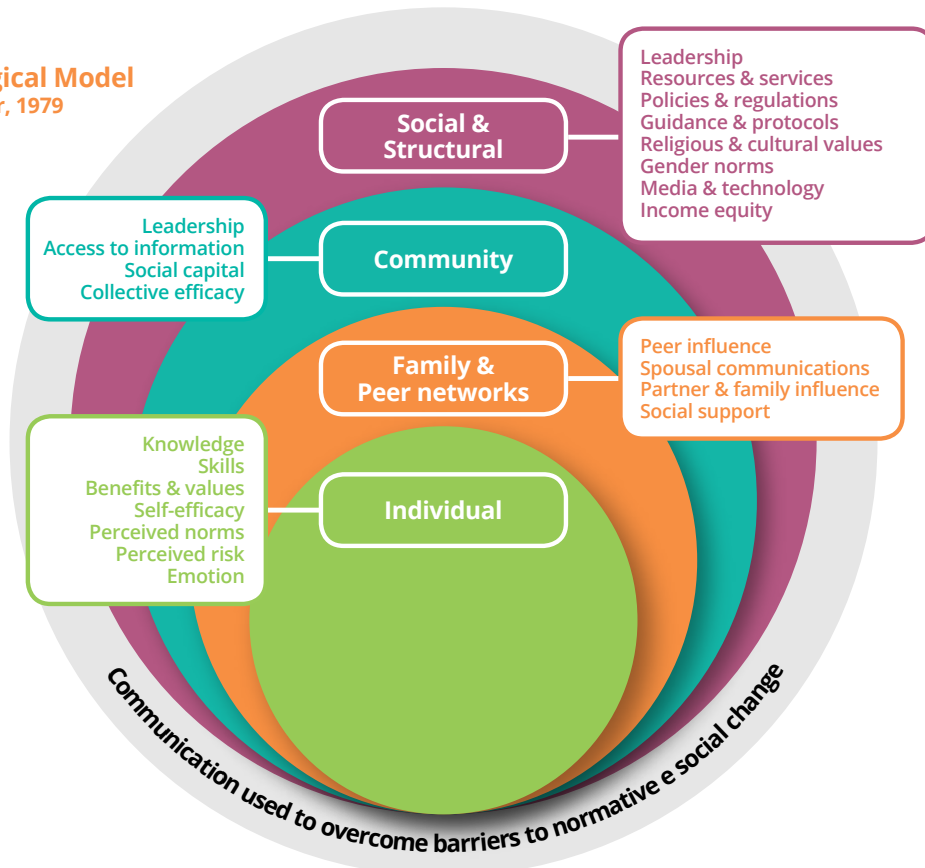
Intercultural competences are a powerful tool for social change, as they allow us to become aware of inequalities and power relations, enabling us to act on them in various contexts within an ecosystem. In this context, inclusive communication is especially important, as Bronfenbrenner pointed out in 1979:

Social-Ecological Model
Bronfenbrenner, 1979

Leadership
Resources & services
Policies & regulations
Guidance & protocols
Religious & cultural values
Gender norms
Media & technology
Income equity

Social & Structural

Leadership
Access to information
Social capital
Collective efficacy

Community

Peer influence
Spousal communications
Partner & family influence
Social support

Family & Peer networks

Knowledge
Skills
Benefits & values
Self-efficacy
Perceived norms
Perceived risk
Emotion

Individual

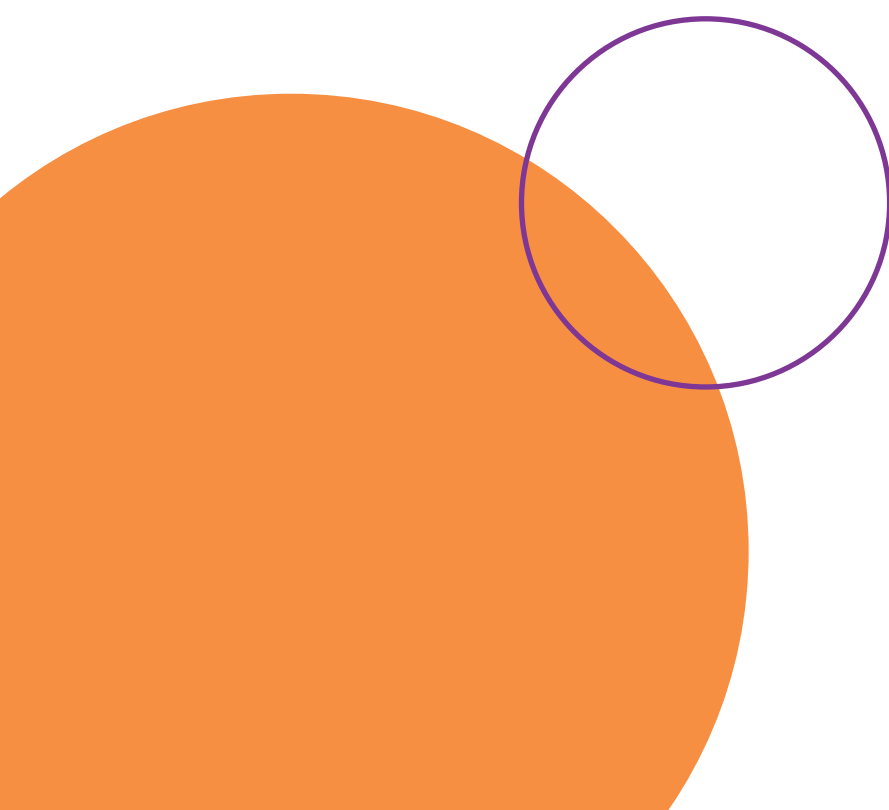Communication used to overcome barriers to normative e social change

02 What is Interculturalism?

Each person moves in an ecosystem made up of various interrelated systems that can enhance or hinder their social integration.

Communication is essential to enable integration and to make barriers visible, recognise their role and overcome them.

In each of the systems in which we move, we can face greater or lesser difficulties according to our degree of privilege and power and depending on what is valued in that particular context. A Muslim person, for example, may find it easier to communicate and have access to more privilege living in a majority-Muslim country whose rules, calendar, cultural norms, values and policies reflect their religious beliefs, just as if they are part of a majority-Muslim community, a Muslim family, a majority-Muslim workplace, etc. But if in one of these systems you move into an environment where you become a minority (for example if you work in an international organisation led by and made up of a majority of Christian people), the rules and norms will no longer so easily reflect your values and beliefs, making it harder to communicate and meet your needs, your interpersonal relationships and your integration will be more complex and you may face more challenges to fully integrate.

03

What is Communication?

03 What is Communication?

There are many ways to communicate… In interpersonal communication, two ways are most common:

VERBAL COMMUNICATION,
which takes place through the use of language. It can be oral, which varies in terms of tone, volume of voice and rhythm as the person speaks; or written, which contains grammatical and syntactical rules.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION,
which happens without the use of words, through signs, looks, gestures, postures, etc.

DID YOU KNOW?

Human beings register the intention of non-verbal communication more than verbal communication. Even more, if what is being said contradicts the non-verbal communication.

Rule 7-38-55 based on Albert Mehrabian´s studies (1967), states that only 7 per cent of the communication received is attributed to the verbal component (meaning), 38 per cent to the vocal component (the tone of voice) and 55 per cent to the facial component (facial expressions).

According to **Marc et Picard** (1996), **non-verbal communication** has three functions: The first function is linked to the **body signals** we transmit, which pass on information or even emotional states we are in when, for example, we are sad, or smile to show empathy. The second is a **regulatory or relational function,** which structures the exchange that takes place when communicating, such as when we look at a person to show our attention and interest in what is being said. And finally, a **symbolic** function, which materialises in rituals, such as when we extend our hand to greet an incoming person.

In general, communication is a **reciprocal process** in which information is sent from a person to someone who will receive it and who will consequently produce a reaction or response, producing new information. Therefore, in communication, there are important elements that must be taken into account and that can influence the context of communication and its interpretations:

1. One of these elements is the **sender**, i.e. the person who has the information to be transmitted and who generates the communication.
2. Then there's the **message**, the content, the information that the sender wants to transmit to the receiver.
3. The medium used to send the information: the **communication channel** (television, social network, newspaper, speech, etc).
4. The **code used** is the set of rules that are used to pass on the message, which can be language, Braille, language, sign language, for example.
5. The person receiving the message is the **recipient**: they have their own characteristics, their own language, their own cultural references and experiences, their own languages.
6. And finally, to complete the cycle and restart the spiral of communication, **feedback**, which is the reaction, or the message that comes back to the sender, which allows them to see if the message they sent was clearly received.

Communication is a very powerful tool that can shape our behaviour and influence our perceptions and attitudes.

It has an integrative concept that allows us to redirect the relationship between people, between people and society and between people and organisations, as well as between organisations and cultural norms.

3.1. INCLUSIVE AND NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION

The constant evolution of language means that words change and, as a result, so does the way we use them. The words we use project images into our brains and help construct realities. For this reason, an important factor in communication is the use of **inclusive language**, free of stereotypes, prejudices, judgments and inappropriate perceptions about people's different characteristics in terms of gender, disabilities, origin, religion, skin colour, among others.

Words and images can sometimes be harmless, as their inappropriate use can enhance experiences of discrimination and contribute to communication that is perceived as violent. The American psychologist Marshall Rosenberg, in his book **"Nonviolent Communication"** or NVC (2006, p. 22), says: "I believe that it is in our nature to enjoy giving and receiving in a compassionate way". While studying the factors that enable people to be more compassionate, the author realised the great importance of language and the use of words in effective communication. From there, he developed an approach to speaking and listening that allows people to connect in a naturally compassionate way and establish a type of non-violent communication. This way of communicating uses humanised language and communication techniques and competencies, even in the most adverse conditions.

The main objective of non-violent communication is to remind each person of how we should relate to each other in order to **fulfil our emotional and relational needs,** improving the way we express ourselves and listen to other people.

In this sense, our words stop being just a way of reacting and become a conscious response to what we perceive, feel and need. This allows us to express our thoughts clearly, respectfully and empathetically. In this type of communication we must be aware of our own needs, observe our own feelings and behaviours that affect us and those around us.

03 What is Communication?

Non-violent communication or empathetic communication starts from the principle that we don't know what it's like to be in the other person's shoes and, as such, we won't know what they need, nor will they be able to know what we need if it's not communicated. It is therefore based on several essential elements:

a) OBSERVATION

Non-violent communication is based on impartial observation: learning to separate what actually happened in a situation from the assessments we make about it. An observation is a factual description of something that happened: anyone who witnessed the situation would describe it in the same way.

When we talk about what we observe, and nothing else, we share the same reality. We agree and testify that it really happened, and we take the focus off judgements about what happened. This means avoiding adjectives, adding our feelings about the situation, etc.

Judgements and evaluations are part of our human experience and often act as defence mechanisms produced by the brain. Nonviolent Communication does not suggest that we should stop judging, but recognise that this makes communication more prone to misunderstandings and conflicts that distract us from what we want to achieve.

The assumption is that when we verbalise our judgements, we reduce the chances of being understood. And when we talk about what actually happened, we increase the chances of a productive conversation with the other person.

b) FEELINGS

In Nonviolent Communication, in order to communicate in a way that connects us, we must **express our feelings,** bringing our vulnerability into the conversation, which brings us closer to the other person.

The challenge is that most of us are not emotionally literate and tend to mix up what we think with what we feel. This also happens with some words that seem to describe feelings, but which tell us more about our judgements of other people's actions, such as "I feel wronged" or "I feel humiliated": these are called pseudo-feelings.

Feelings are words that describe our experience, such as "I feel insecure", "I'm upset" and "I feel excited". They play a fundamental role in the exploration that NVC invites us to, which is to convey valuable messages about what is important to us at that moment.

In Nonviolent Communication, feelings signal our met or unmet needs.

Expanding our vocabulary of feelings makes it easier to connect with other people when we talk about our experience, and it also helps paying better attention to the message that the feeling conveys. Here's a list of feelings and needs, that you can use to expand your vocabulary.

Understanding the role of feelings means that it is not productive to separate feelings into good and bad, as we have become accustomed to doing. In NVC, feelings are messengers of our universal human needs, which all people feel at one time or another in their lives and all of which are valid and important and should not be repressed.

C) NEEDS

Needs are the motivations that drive us to do, speak and choose. Marshall Rosenberg said that **"behind every action, there is a universal human need".**

Needs are human and universal, meaning that everyone, regardless of age, gender, social class, time or place, has the same needs now and then. This understanding makes it easier, in a difficult conversation for example, to find the common ground between us, connecting us with our shared humanity.

If I understand that behind a choice there is a universal human need, it's easier to understand its motivation. And if I also talk about my motivation, it increases the chances of finding a path that takes care of both our needs in that situation.

This understanding of needs for NVC increases our awareness that what the other person does or says is not the cause of what we feel. It can be the stimulus, but never the cause. The cause of what we feel lies in our needs. If I feel angry when someone interrupts me in the middle of a conversation, it may be because I need consideration and space. If a person feels sad when they're alone, it could be because they need connection, support and affection. But most of us don't have a large vocabulary of needs either, and having the support of the list can help a lot in investigating why we feel the way we do.

Being aware of what we need, in other words, what our needs are in the situations and interactions we experience, makes it easier to find alternatives to resolve conflicts.

D) REQUEST

Requests, the last component of NVC, are an expression of how we would like our needs to be met. When we make requests, we give the other person the opportunity to collaborate on what is important to us. Making a request assumes that we are responsible for our needs and we must assume this responsibility through explicit requests.

Culturally, we harbour different beliefs about the act of asking. Some people see asking as a sign of neediness or weakness; some believe that asking is annoying people; or that "I shouldn't have to ask, because what I need is obvious".

These beliefs that many of us harbour prevent us from making requests, which can be the root of many of our conflicts. In order not to annoy, I stop asking for what I need and can experience frustration. Because I believe that what I need is obvious, I don't say anything and I create expectations that are never fulfilled, which can become a burden in the relationship.

The idea is to make clear and specific requests so that other people understand what really matters to us and know how to contribute to our lives, giving them the opportunity to say yes or no to what we are asking for. If we're not open to hearing "no" to our request, then we're making a demand, not a request.

When we make demands, we run the risk of using guilt, fear and shame as motivation to get the other person to do what we want. And this sooner or later takes its toll on the relationship.

03 What is Communication?

A request in NVC is an opportunity we give the other person to collaborate, but we don't want them to do so at the expense of their own needs.

That's why it's so important for us to be aware of the needs we need to fulfil when we make a request. Because to meet a need for support, for example, there are several possible strategies. If I ask a family member for support and they can't fulfil my request, I think there are other ways to take care of my need for support, such as calling a friend or work colleague, and I can seek help elsewhere, making new requests if necessary. Sometimes we realise that we have an unmet need systematically because the strategy we used to meet it wasn't the right one. Changing our strategy and being available to other people's needs can be enough to make us more successful.

This type of communication can be useful in intercultural communication contexts because the potential for misunderstandings is greater when we are talking about interaction between people with different cultural references and whose communication may not share many elements in common with what we are used to. It becomes easier to understand a family that chooses to marry off their daughters earlier than I would marry off mine, if they realise that this strategy fulfils their need to protect and ensure the well-being of their daughters. I may not agree with the strategy and, in the same situation, adopt a different strategy, but I can more easily understand the needs and enter into a dialogue with the person that is more respectful and humane and leads to us being able to help each other.

To find out more about NVC see:
What is NVC and how to practise it?

04

What is empathy?

04 What is empathy?

In order to put our intercultural competencies into practice, it is essential to develop our empathy.

Empathy is a Universal Human Need to be deeply understood. We can think of it as respectful or compassionate understanding. By offering empathy, we embody the quality of being completely present.

THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EMPATHY, SUCH AS:

"Affective empathy"
refers to the sensations and feelings we get in response to other people's emotions; this can include mirroring what that person is feeling, or just feeling stress when we detect others' fear or anxiety.

"Cognitive empathy"
sometimes called "perspective taking": the ability to identify and understand other people's emotions. When people try to understand another person's point of view without internalising their emotions.

"Somatic Empathy"
the ability to feel what the other person is feeling, being able to react physically to the other person's suffering or discomfort by knowing exactly how they feel.

"Compassionate Empathy"
the acquired knowledge "that we are all connected", but aware that we don't share the same experiences and therefore aren't able to "wear other people's shoes".
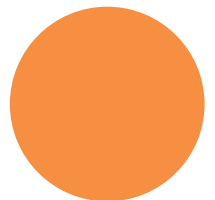
HOW TO DEVELOP EMPATHY?

The best way is to train our empathetic presence and listen to other people with a silent mind and an open heart.

Our only goal is to connect with the person in order to understand their feelings and needs deeply and without judgement.

We try to remain empathically present even when we are the target of criticism, blame and other forms of non-empathic communication.

We try to listen and understand even when we don't agree.

05

Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

If you find yourself coordinating activities with diverse groups, organising training activities or managing projects, you are in a privileged position to promote positive and respectful interaction. To do this, you will need to develop and mobilise your intercultural competencies in order to create safe environments of sharing and non-judgement.

5.1. BUILDING TRUST THROUGH POSITIVE INTERACTION

The following factors must be present in order to build a **safe and favourable environment** for positive interactions between groups:

Checklist for Intercultural Activities, Council of Europe

Non-judgement environment: all opinions are valid and important

Provoke reflection and self-questioning with open questions and generosity, not judgments

Validate feelings and experiences, not judgments or opinions

Use examples and short stories and avoid issuing opinions

Engage people in interactive and immersive experiences and debates: letting them discover rather than telling them

Avoid engaging into a one-to-one debate (2 trainers may help)

Promote dialogue and mutual listening, ensuring that everyone has room to speak if they wish

In order to develop intercultural initiatives, the Council of Europe has developed a checklist that can be used when designing initiatives. The list is organised according to the principles of interculturality and can be found in English and translated into Portuguese at Council of Europe webpage.

The intercultural vision promotes **horizontal** and respectful **interaction** between different groups, **full integration** and a **sense of belonging and participation** for all people. Since it is impossible for us to make the right decisions for everyone, participation is the only way to ensure that everyone's needs are being met and that systems are not discriminatory.

5.2. PARTICIPATION

Participation can be fostered through various types of involvement:

Informing: providing regular information to the population/groups you work with about the project or programme, the use of public money, transparency regarding tenders, etc.
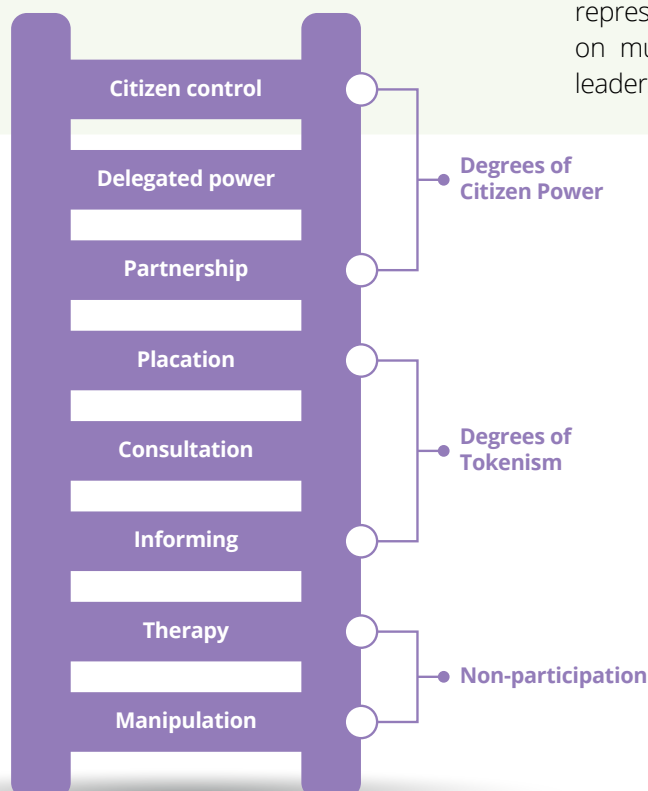
Consultation: organising community consultation assemblies, focus groups, debates and carrying out questionnaires and surveys, public hearings and consultations, praise and suggestion boxes.

Establishing partnerships: providing communities with resources and establishing partnerships with them to carry out projects and programmes defined by the municipality, hiring mediators, supporting local movements and associations for priorities established by the municipality, and working groups.

Delegation of power: providing support for local movements and associations when this allows them to take decisions on priorities for the communities they represent and design their own projects and programmes, community assemblies when they have deliberative power.

Citizen control: through participatory budgeting (when this means citizens led the decision-making and implementation), collaborative planning, community decision-making, increased representation of people from different communities on municipal or project teams, including in the leadership of governmental organisations.

Ladder of Participation,
based on Arnstein's model (1969)

- Citizen control
- Delegated power — Degrees of Citizen Power
- Partnership
- Placation
- Consultation — Degrees of Tokenism
- Informing
- Therapy
- Manipulation — Non-participation

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

Participation allows us to make room for the different experiences of each person, including different people within the same groups of belonging.

Each person has their own individual experience of discrimination, which they may or may not share with others (for example, Muslims may experience religion in very different ways, children and elderly people from Roma communities may not share the same interests, etc.). Ideally, we should involve people with different profiles within each group, bearing in mind that these experiences may or may not be perceived as discrimination by the person themselves, whether they are more or less conscious of it, but they always have consequences for people's quality of life.

DID YOU KNOW?

As part of its participation in the DiverCities project, the **Municipality of Loures** organised training in participatory methodologies for 18 participants, professionals from the municipality and local parishes. The aim was to include **participatory methodologies** in the evaluation of the Municipal Migrant Integration Plan, which ended in 2022, and in the drafting of the next plan.

Loures felt that training was needed to sensitise its staff and give the city more competencies to mobilise the different communities concerned to take part in drawing up the plans. Following this, a participatory assessment was carried out with people who approached the local services for the integration of migrants, and in 2023 Intercultural Assemblies will be held in two areas of the city to collect proposals and collaboratively decide on the actions to be included in the plan. Only with the participation of all communities and groups is true inclusion possible.

5.3. DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination can happen at an interpersonal, institutional or social level. It consists of acts that in some way harm or devalue a certain group of people or a person because they belong to a certain group or have a certain characteristic.

It can be done directly or indirectly:

DIRECT DISCRIMINATION

Occurs when a person is treated worse than another person or other people because:
- They have a certain "characteristic".
- Someone thinks you have this characteristic (known as discrimination by perception)
- You are linked to someone with this characteristic (known as discrimination by association)

Even if no other person who has been treated better is identified, it is still direct discrimination if it can be shown that a person who did not have that characteristic would have been treated better in similar circumstances. It is possible to be discriminated against by someone who shares the same characteristics.

INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION

Occurs when a policy applies in the same way to all people, but disadvantages a group of people who share a characteristic, putting those who are part of that group at a disadvantage. A "policy" can include a practice, a rule or an agreement.
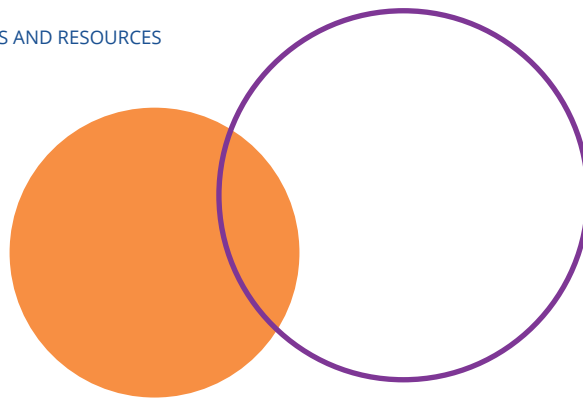
Example
When a dark-skinned man is approached by the police and a white man in the same situation is not.

Example
When it's forbidden to enter a certain restaurant or establishment wearing jeans and trainers: the rule is the same for everyone, but it benefits some people more than others.

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

Several types of direct and indirect discrimination sometimes persist side by side in the same society:

SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION

A complex and articulated form of indirect discrimination involving the procedures, routines and organisational culture of any system that, often unintentionally, contributes to minority groups, compared to the majority of the population, having less favourable outcomes as a result of existing policies, programmes, jobs and services.

Example
The way education is structured in the country increases the likelihood of success for some groups to the detriment of others (for example, according to certain cultural markers, people closer to the "norm" have a better chance of success).

INSTITUTIONAL DISCRIMINATION

Practices and policies within public organisations or institutions that negatively affect a certain category of people. This type of discrimination is expressed through regulations, procedures and organisational practices.

Example
Countries where women cannot participate in certain cultural activities, vote or work in specific sectors.

MULTIPLE DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is not always related to a single factor, such as gender identity, skin colour, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or disability. We talk about multiple discrimination when there are several discriminatory factors at the same time in the same person that can lead to discrimination in different situations.

Example
Foreign Islamic women who may be discriminated against for multiple factors such as 1. being a woman, 2. of foreign origin, and,3. of a non-majority religion.

INTERSECTIONAL DISCRIMINATION

This is a special type, a subgroup and probably the best-known form of multiple discrimination, in which a person is discriminated against on the basis of several factors that interact with each other and are therefore inseparable.

Example
The profile of the "typical criminal" is outlined by considering a series of characteristics (skin colour, gender, age) as predictors of the likelihood of committing a crime.

"**Experiences of discrimination, racism and xenophobia negatively mark the lives of immigrants and racialised people.** This is because they affect the guarantee of equal opportunities, equal treatment and equal rights when, for example, a tenancy or a job is denied just because the person is of a certain nationality. In addition, discrimination, racism and xenophobia have an impact on mental health and jeopardise the quality of life and dignity of migrants. It is crucial to realise that experiences of discrimination are aligned with social markers such as gender, "race", class and nationality, so that discrimination can be multiple and varied, as structures of oppression intersect. It is therefore substantial to rethink our intervention practices to ensure responses from an intersectional perspective."

Migra Myths Report, Casa do Brasil Lisbon (2021)

DID YOU KNOW?

ISCAP - High Institute for Accounting and Administration of Porto, shared the European project ENFEM **(Female Third Country Nationals Integration in local Communities through Employability and Entrepreneurship Local Oriented Strategies), which involves a wide range of partners, including some RPCI cities.** The aim of the project is to support the integration of migrant women from third countries into local communities through a better match between competencies and requirements in EU labour markets.

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

5.4. LEARNINGS FROM THE INTERCULTURAL ECOSYSTEMS PROJECT

The "Intercultural Ecosystems" project arose from the desire of RPCI member cities to learn more about intercultural competences, namely the role of communication in the context of interculturalism and how to foster interculturalism in Municipal Plans and Strategies, in order to promote learning opportunities for their staff and partners.

Three workshops were held with various guests who discussed their experiences and perspectives from the work they do.

advertising posters for the three workshops held as part of the Intercultural Ecosystems project

COMMUNICATION AND INTERCULTURALISM

In this workshop we intended to discuss the best institutional communication strategies in order to avoid reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices and to promote positive intercultural relations.

The specific objectives were to promote local intercultural ecosystems; to foster the intercultural lens in Municipal Plans and Strategies, promoting learning opportunities for municipal staff and partners; and to foster the intercultural competences of municipal staff and partners.

To this end, several people were invited to share their experiences and knowledge in this field, such as:

- **Eva Calado**, RPCI board member, communications and marketing specialist;
- **Carla Calado**, president of RPCI, specialised in intercultural competences, diversity and inclusion;
- **Ana Pessoa**, Psychologist, working with the Aga Khan Foundation since 2013, implementing/coordinating projects in the area of diversity and inclusion for audiences from diverse backgrounds.
- **Ana Magalhães**, Anthropologist, worked as a researcher on scientific projects, carried out ethnographic research on marginalised neighbourhoods and ethnic minorities and was a member of the technical team of the Support Office for Priority Intervention Neighbourhoods - Almirante Reis, for the Arroios Parish Council. She currently works for the Lisbon City Council's Municipal Refugee Reception Programme.
- **Cyntia de Paula**, current president of the Casa do Brasil de Lisboa (CBL), a non-profit immigrant association founded in January 1992 by Brazilians living in Portugal and Portuguese friends of Brazil, open to all nationalities.

Eva Calado, shared the knowledge she had learnt from a training course organised by the Council of Europe on communicating with the media in 2022.

In this training, a researcher from the international network, **Ophelia Field, concluded that the more time people spend connected to social networks, the more their perception of public opinion is distorted.** In order to influence and change behaviour, long-term strategies should be practised, not short, loose initiatives without continuity.

When journalists edit interviews, they only use **10 seconds** of our entire speech?

DID YOU KNOW?

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

Eva shared tips on how to approach the media/public in a crisis situation without hurting susceptibilities, such as:

- **A lot of preparation:** knowing the context, the facts and the impact of what happened. It's important to do your homework!
- **Defining and conveying a clear message** with a clear objective as well. It's very useful to do the exercise of summarising what you want to convey in one sentence;
- **Choose simple and inclusive language:** don't use jargon or words and expressions that could be offensive;
- **Pay close attention to our non-verbal language:** what we are thinking affects the way we breathe and speak. We should try to think, breathe and speak separately;
- **Also pay close attention to our tone of voice:** it should be warm, sincere, intelligent, enthusiastic/empathetic, where appropriate;
- **Don't let facts** about our audience (age, religion, skin colour, etc.) distract us from our message;

- **Try to create bridges of empathy with the audience:** for example "I have children too and I know how you might be feeling", as long as they are genuine comments;
- **Be aware of your surroundings:** for example, if we're talking about the environment and we're in the middle of nature, we can take advantage of this setting to make our message more powerful. As another example, if we are promoting interculturalism and diversity and we have a group of people behind us (our team, for example) who are not very diverse, we are not conveying credibility in our speech. In short, the surrounding space can become an advantage or a disadvantage, an ally or an enemy, in what we are trying to communicate.

TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH THE MEDIA:

- Structure well the content of what you want to say:
- What message do we want to convey?
- What are the important figures (facts and statistics)?
- What mental images do we want to put in the minds of the listeners (something descriptive, almost like telling a story)?
- Repeat the main message;
- Show concern for what happened;
- Show a sense of urgency (communicate what is already being done to minimise and mitigate damage and impact);
- Show perspective (contextualise what is happening).

Eva Calado also shared some ideas and challenged us to think "outside the box":

Use billboards and other traditional media, including some less common ones (local/voluntary/university radio…);

Consider the media that most influences our culture/society;

Be aware of cultural events/initiatives (partnership/sponsorship opportunities);

Look for ways to interact with and include the younger audience: new generation; descendants of migrants are not represented enough;

For crisis communication: act in advance: maintain contacts and liaison with the people we know; create and maintain a good relationship with the community; address propaganda/sensationalism and rumours as they emerge;

DID YOU KNOW?

There is a platform for evaluating the impact of our campaigns/actions?

Finally, Eva Calado emphasised the importance of networking and posting on social media regularly. She pointed out that each social network has its own data analysis platform.

For McLuhan (1964/2016), the media have the potential not only to transmit information, but also to change the way people behave and their awareness of society and people. For the author, the rapid evolution of technologies brings about a phase in the extension of the human being that is the technological simulation of consciousness, where the creative process of knowledge is extended collectively and institutionally throughout society. This approach brings a new way of perceiving the media as more than just transmitters of information, they are human extensions, which is why it is important to look at the relationship between the use of the media and interculturalism in the construction of society, so that there is respect for the multiple cultural references that make up the different social groups.

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

Carla Calado shared some inspiring practices, including the public campaign "Somos os Direitos que temos" (We are the rights we have), developed by Lisbon City Council, which aimed to raise awareness of diversity, human rights and inclusion.

The campaign also wanted to "rewrite" what it means to be a citizen of Lisbon and to include all the different identities by showing that the city recognises and is proud of its Diversity and, at the same time, combats discrimination. This campaign was part of a wider project that involved listening to the needs and daily struggles of different people, involving them in the project and training and sensitisation sessions for various groups. The posters, with sayings such as **"every day I fight discrimination"** and **"every day I promote intercultural dialogue"** were distributed throughout the city, at bus stops, kiosks and other public spaces.

As a strategy for improving institutional communication, Carla Calado also suggested that, in certain cases, it is possible to hold focus groups with a sample of people to understand concerns, understand which terms might be more appropriate and test our messages.

Lisbon Municipality campaign, 2016

1. We are the rights we have
"Everyday I promote an intercultural dialogue"
I have been discriminated for being a member of the Roma community

2. We are the rights we have
"Everyday I fight against discrimination"
They judged me because I am a lesbian, but today I'm not hiding anymore

3. We are the rights we have
"Everyday I fight for a city without discrimination"
I grew up in a council house

The Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities programme has produced a series of useful tools for more inclusive communication?
You can find them at the **Council of Europe website** and at the **RPCI website**.

DIVERSITY PROJECT

Ana Pessoa shared the Aga Khan Foundation Portugal's DiversITy project, which began in the context of the pandemic.

The main aim of the project was to increase health literacy among 150 people from different backgrounds. To this end, face-to-face and online questionnaires were carried out to survey the issues and find out whether people had different understandings and experiences of accessing health systems and public services. The responses were diverse and the chosen theme to work on was food.

The DiversITy project invited the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon to conduct an evaluation (qualitative and quantitative) of the project, which has already demonstrated the increase in literacy of 116 people from different backgrounds.

Ana explained that food is part of our culture and who we are.

For health care, communication is also a very important component, as it influences the therapeutic relationship and consequently the evaluation of the quality of that care, since, according to Onga et al. (1995), communication between health professionals and patients can facilitate or hinder access to quality health services, by the degree of clarity in the clinical question and help to make the best therapeutic decision for the person in need of health care. Effective intercultural communication will enable people to better understand their condition and better comply with the proposed treatment. According to Ana, data collected by the project shows that many people stop taking medication they were previously taking because they are unable to establish clear communication with health professionals.

Ana Pessoa asked participants to say what four images she shared meant to them.

The images consisted of four representations of breakfast, representing four different types of eating habits, from four different cultural references. When we talk about health in an intercultural context, it's important to bear in mind that "breakfast" can mean very different things to each person and we must be able to adjust our recommendations to the eating styles and ingredients most used by each family and community.

People's relationship with health and illness is linked to various biopsychosocial and even cultural factors. In this sense, looking at interculturality becomes important because it takes into account complex health issues, especially with regard to the physical and socio-cultural issues of sick people, their beliefs, representations, practices and communication styles.

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

Something that can hinder the work of health professionals is poor communication with the people they serve, especially at an intercultural level, as this can lead to errors in diagnosis and favour low adherence to recommended guidelines (Ramos, 2012).

The DiversITy project implemented in 2020 drew on previous lessons learnt and the experiences of various partners, particularly in the health sector.

One of the first questions was to design a logo that would appeal to different audiences. All the communication media and the logo itself were produced in five languages: Mandarin, Bengali, English, Hindi and Nepali.

In order to implement the project, there was a concern to understand what the participants' understanding of health was according to their different cultural references and it became clear that creating a video would be a more accessible way of establishing good communication.

The idea behind the project was to create ways of understanding between people from different backgrounds and health professionals. The solution was to adopt participatory learning and co-construction between "Groundstigators" - health mediators trained by the Aga Khan Foundation Portugal - and health professionals. The outputs were digital resources intended to increase the health literacy of people from diverse backgrounds, in this case from Southeast Asia.

The so-called Groundstigators were part of the project from start to finish and were chosen because they had some previous training and experience in the health field. The project was implemented with three Health Centre Groups in Lisbon (ACES Lisboa): ACES Lisboa Central; ACES Lisboa Ocidental e Oeiras; and ACES Lisboa Norte and with a further 22 civil society organisations, among them: the Lisbon Intercultural Association (a migrant Association) - NIALP, Olá Amigo (Hello Friend), Templo Hindu de Santo António dos Cavaleiros (Hindu Temple), Liga dos Chineses em Portugal (Portuguese Chinese League), Programa Municipal de Apoio às Associações - PMAA (Association Support National Programme).

Video and brochure produced as part of the DiversITy project

Finally, there was a concern to create brochures and videos in a language that was accessible to everyone, but scientifically and pedagogically correct.

A brochure for health professionals has been produced with more than 600 pages and 54 videos are available on the YouTube channel, 9 videos per language, 3 videos per topic.

You can find out more about this project and access the resources produced at the What Health Portugal website.

When it comes to health care and education, communication is a crucial factor in the process.

Both in research, training and intervention, communication must be inserted in an interactive, systemic and interdisciplinary way. In this sense, the interdisciplinary relationship between communication, culture and health encompasses methodological, theoretical, strategic and political challenges with regard to information sharing, education, prevention and health promotion, including the development of intercultural and communication competences, which are necessary to work in the field of health.

Ana Pessoa said that communication strategies in health need to be broader, with people specialising in communicating effectively in intercultural contexts, and stressed the importance of networking and proximity work. She also emphasised that communication should be carried out in various ways, such as posters, social media and meetings.

In the case of the DiversITy project, indicators are collected on social networks and YouTube and a monitoring and evaluation team has been set up to check the quality and impact of the project.

GABIP

Ana Magalhães shared two projects carried out by the Support Office for Priority Intervention Neighbourhoods (GABIP) in Almirante Reis neighbourhood in Lisbon.

The project aimed to reach out and involve people in this territory, a territory where there are many intercultural crossroads, a lot of traffic, volatility and diversity.

GABIP Almirante Reis operated for three years, with a tripartite technical team (Lisbon City Council, the Aga Khan Foundation and the Arroios Parish Council) allocated full time. The whole team was permanently on the ground, either in the office or in the field.

To find out more about the project go to escuta.pt

**GABIP
Almirante Reis logo**

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

In Ana Magalhães' view, three characteristics were essential to the development of the project:

1st Time: the project had a full-time technical team, which enabled it to get to know the area and think strategically about it.

2nd an Institutional multiplicity: with different technical profiles, different experiences, training and competencies.

3rd Space. the team's permanent presence in the area has enhanced the proximity and knowledge of the territory and revealed the importance of permanent interaction with reality.

Initially, a participatory assessment was carried out and a local development plan created. For the assessment and design of the project, participatory processes and a bottom-up approach were used, involving local grassroots associations, local institutions and the population itself.

> **"Participatory assessment is based on mobilising the community to reflect and act, becoming part of the solution."**
>
> Participatory Diagnostics, Implementation Support Guide - AKF Participatory diagnostics | Listening, discovering and activating communities - AKF | The Learning Hub (akflearninghub.org) - only in Portuguese

The local development plan was based on three axes of intervention: **active ageing; employability; and interculturalism.**

Various initiatives were developed within each axis. Two projects were developed in the area of interculturalism:

- **Portuguese as an Additional Language | Functional Routes - "Roteiros Funcionais";**
- **Facilitating access to services | Creation of thematic information leaflets.**

> **The Portuguese as Additional Language | Roteiros Funcionais project took into account:**
>
> **1.** What is really important for people to learn immediately?
>
> **2.** What are the most suitable learning contexts? Mixed contexts were adopted: firstly in the classroom and secondly teaching in a practical context (always outside, visiting shops and services).
>
> **3.** Who is involved in the process?
>
> **4.** What added value beyond words?
>
> One of the advantages was that people were of different ages, backgrounds and genders. Another was that there was always direct contact with the realities being studied. The side of sharing and proximity was clearly an added value, in addition to the acquisition of new vocabulary. The important thing was to see what was important for people to learn (to put ourselves in "the other's" shoes) and to provide situations that foster interpersonal communication.

Communication is "a social and reciprocal act of participation".

This act is mediated by the use of symbols between individuals and different groups. In this sense, communication can be defined as a modality that is established, structured and developed in social relationships and guarantees the "I" in society with individual and/or collective people.

As for the project Facilitating access to services | Creation of thematic information leaflets, there was direct involvement of professionals and technical staff specialising in the health area in the co-creation of content adapted to the different communities, as well as migrants in language translation, cultural and symbolic adaptation, and dissemination in the communities of origin.

WITHIN THE SCOPE OF GABIP ALMIRANTE REIS, THE FOLLOWING PRODUCTS WERE CREATED IN SIX LANGUAGES:

Getting to know the National Health Service
Bengali: Brochura SNS Bengali
English: SNS English Brochure
Mandarim: SNS Mandarim Brochure
Nepali: SNS Nepali Brochure
Portuguese: SNS Português Brochure
Urdu: SNS Urdu Brochure

Guide to Pregnancy and Postpartum in Portugal
Bengali: পর্তুগালে অবস্থিত গর্ভবতী মহিলাদের – Bengali
French: Guide pour la Grossesse – French
English: Guidelines for Pregnancy – English
Mandarim: 葡萄牙 孕期和产后指南 – Mandarim
Nepali: पोर्तुगलमा बसाई हुने गर्भावस्था – Nepali
Portuguese: Guia para a Gravidez – Português

Guide to the Importance of Well-being in Health
Bengali: স্বাস্থ্য- সুস্থতার গুরুত্ব – Bengali
French: L'importance du bien-être pour la santé – French
English: Health- The importance of well-being – English
Mandarim: 身心健康的重要性 – Mandarim
Nepali: स्वस्थ- समृद्ध जीवनको महत्व – Nepali
Portuguese: A importância do bem-estar na saúde – Português

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

The big challenge was translating certain concepts and taking care when choosing images.

Ana Magalhães said that the GABIP Almirante Reis project was a very marked territorial intervention. Even so, it should be emphasised that the leaflets and the course have content that is valid for the migrant population in any part of the country. They relied on community interlocutors to publicise the resources/materials, using "word of mouth".

> **Yanli, the daughter of Chinese migrants who grew up in Portugal and has always been interested in social and intercultural projects, was responsible for translating all the leaflets into Mandarin.**

Yanli, present at the workshop, shared that GABIP Almirante Reis was her first opportunity to collaborate with a social and intercultural project. She summarises her experience in four words: development; growth; challenge and change. She said that it wasn't just a translation job, but also a mediation job.

development; growth; challenge and change

Other migrants with a different life experience to Yanli's also took part in the project. Throughout the process, everyone is considered to have grown and opened their minds to diversity. For example, she learnt that the symbol of the cross linked to health is not as universal as she thought, that there are countries that don't use this symbol.

Participating in this project has challenged her to change, a change that doesn't happen overnight. For example, she no longer says that the food of another cultural reference is strange, but different, and instead of looking at it strangely, she looks at it with curiosity. She has learnt that the important thing is not just to share, but to listen.

> According to **Wash** (2001) "interculturalism is [...] a dynamic and permanent process of relationship, communication and learning between cultures in conditions of respect, mutual legitimacy, symmetry and equality". This process is conceived by different people with different cultural references, experiences and knowledge, who seek a new way of looking at these differences. This dynamic encompasses a social and political exercise aimed at resolving relationships based on power conflicts, with conscious and concrete social practices and attitudes.

> **Interculturalism is a perspective aimed at building a plural, humane and democratic society,** which combines identity policies with equality policies and recognises people and dialogue between people from different social and cultural groups, helping to combat relations of domination (Candau, 2008).

Cyntia de Paula is the current president of the Casa do Brasil de Lisboa (CBL), a non-profit migrant association founded in January 1992 by Brazilians living in Portugal and Portuguese friends of Brazil, open to all nationalities. Since its foundation, the CBL has been actively involved in reflecting on and implementing public policies, playing a fundamental role in activism and demanding equal policies for immigrant communities in Portugal. It develops projects that aim to promote equal access to rights and services for migrant people.

The CBL has three main areas of intervention: social intervention; activism, promoting the valorisation of interculturalism; and integration through culture.

MIGRAMYTHS PROJECT

The MigraMyths project - Demystifying Immigration, funded by the Office of the High Commissioner for Migration (ACM), has reached four editions by 2023. It is based on the idea of combating hate speech and fake news about migrants. It also seeks to combat myths and promote information in various areas. It works mainly with social networks.

Each year a campaign is launched and a report produced with a different theme: the 2nd edition launched the campaign **"What migrants bring in their suitcases is cool"**, in partnership with the Lisbon metro, and talks about discrimination against immigrants in housing.

To find out more about this campaign and project visit: Casa do Brasil Lisbon

"It's cool what migrants bring in their suitcases" campaign poster, Casa do Brasil Lisbon

"I'm so much more than a refugee. I bring with me competencies that can contribute for the growth of my host communities"

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

Cyntia believes that it is essential to **produce knowledge, content and recommendations** based on the experience of migrants.

INFORMA IN ACTION PROJECT

Work has also been done on communication with people who have not yet migrated, who are still living in their country of origin.
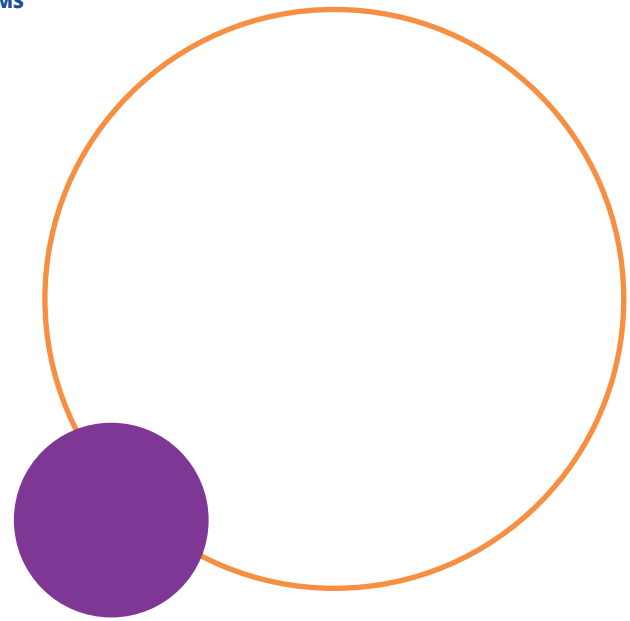
The "Informa in action" project was a very interesting experience for the CBL. The translations were done by members of the community. Mediation was carried out to build content.

To find out more: Casa do Brasil Lisbon

The management strategy implemented by CBL involves **promoting integration, reflection on communication and interculturalism.**

The CBL has been an active campaigner for gender-inclusive language and argues that organisations need to think about representativeness within work teams. It is important to promote the integration of migrants and people belonging to minority groups into teams.

The CBL advocates that the development of information materials should be participatory and shared with as many people as possible in their diversity so that diverse content can be built. In order to create good content, it is important not to forget design and to value professionals in these areas and in the area of communication.

Cyntia de Paula emphasised that the success of campaigns depends on the usefulness of the materials. It's important to know the needs of the target audience. When building resources, we have to start from the needs of those who are going to use them. What we build for information must come from the people it is aimed at. There are multiple channels for dissemination. With regard to social networks, images are very important, as using a lot of text doesn't appeal to people.

Cyntia de Paula underlined the importance of **capacity building the leadership of associations** to be able to imporve in the field of communication.

According to Cyntia, when developing content it is important to ensure that the images used are representative and to take care not to reinforce stereotypes in information materials and social media posts.

**RESOURCES FOR COMMUNICATION
IN INTERCULTURAL CONTEXTS:**

· How to Improve your Intercultural Communication Competencies (careeradddict.com)

· INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION: What it is, types, characteristics and examples (psicologia-online.com)

· Non-verbal communications that work, - Marwan Wahbi

· ICOON - Dictionary of -global images

· Anti-Rumour Dialogue Guide

· What is Nonviolent Communication? (cnvc.org)

· Handbook for combating hate speech online through human rights education

· DiversITy Project

· Health and Diversity

· Lisbon: "We Are The Rights We Have" Campaign Invades City, esQrever

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

In this workshop it was intended to reflect on the interaction between people with different cultural influences and discuss the best informal communication strategies in order to avoid reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices and help promote positive intercultural relations in our daily lives.

To this end, several people were invited to share their experiences and knowledge in this field, such as:

· **Mab Marques**, psychologist, co-founder of RPCI;
· **Sónia Matos**, founder and current president of the Association for the Development of Portuguese Roma Women (AMUCIP);
· **Mafalda Fernandes**, activist with a degree in social psychology, dedicated to studying and thinking about social problems related to racism.

Mab Marques, explained that when we interact in an intercultural context we have to be aware of the impact that our way of communicating can have on people. Communicating is a process that involves the exchange of information between people and it has to be mutually understandable.

People understand only 7% of what we say, the rest being interpreted by analysing our non-verbal communication.
(Albert Mehrabian, 1967)

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN
5 STEPS:

1. **Awareness**
Awareness of one's own prejudices and micro-discriminations.

2. **Language**
Understanding how words contribute to connection or distance.

3. **Communication**
Knowing how to ask for what you want and need, how to listen to other people even if you disagree, and how to move towards solutions that work for all parties.

4. **Means of influence**
Understanding power relations, sharing "power with other people" rather than using "power over other people".

5. **Empathy**
Connecting empathetically with yourself and other people in order to have more satisfying relationships.

For communication to be more sensitive to interculturality, it must:

1. **Overcoming the ethnocentric view of reality:** Various views and perspectives are valid, not just your own,
2. **respect yourself and other people,**
3. **not taking personal offence** cat what or how something is said,
4. **Presuming positive intent,**
5. **know, anticipate and accommodate** various cultural codes (verbal and non-verbal): tone of voice, type of words, gestures, touch, distance, greetings; rules of conversation and relationship,
6. **Avoiding assumptions, deconstructing stereotypes and prejudices:** knowing yourself well, paying attention and preventing them from interfering with your communication,
7. **Cultivating intercultural awareness and sensitivity:** Stages of contact with difference (as mentioned above by Bennet); Learning about different groups and realities (respectful curiosity); Representation: promoting self-identification and adjustments in written communication and images.
8. **Speak only from personal experience** and not on behalf of other people and don't generalise by saying "in my experience....".
9. **Communicate with observations** and in a non-judgemental way: Avoid right/wrong, good/bad prejudice, us/them or "you".

According to Bennet, (2011) Communicating is much more than simply transmitting information, it is the mutual creation of meaning.

In a more global context, it is advantageous to adopt intercultural communication. The author argues that it is important for people to understand themselves first in order to be able to give meaning to their own ways of communicating.

Some factors should be avoided in communication, such as saying words like "never", "everything", "nothing", "always", making exaggerations and generalisations (all young people, migrants, teachers, taxi drivers, etc.), which can cause discomfort and help reinforce stereotypes and prejudices. In addition, it is important to understand the context of what has been said or the behaviour and not to classify or qualify what we see or hear in the light of our beliefs and values.

Empathy is also important for effective communication. However, sometimes people don't really know what empathy is, as Mab Marques said.

WHAT EMPATHY IS NOT:

Suggestions
"Let me tell you what I think you should do..."

Arranging or sorting things out
"Daddy will buy you a new one!"

Sympathy
"I feel your pain, I've been there"

Inquiry
"When was the first time you felt this way?"

Diagnosis
"This is because you are [self-centred, Libra, etc.]"

Honesty
"When I hear what you're saying, I feel upset..."

Agreement
"You're right!"

According to Bennet (2011),
"Intercultural Communication is an evolution of Communication Theory to a more global context; it argues that people must first understand themselves, learn to give meaning to their own forms of communication, and only then can they create meanings that make sense to everyone else."

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Next, **Sónia Matos, from AMUCIP - the Association of Portuguese Roma Women,** recalled that Roma communities have been in Portugal for over 500 years. In her words, "Roma culture is Portuguese culture more than 50 years behind".

Roma women experience discrimination in various ways. She shared the difficulties she faced in getting a physical space to organise an event. She said that when she went to look at the space there were no obstacles because she doesn't have what is considered a "typical" Roma face, but after sending in the documents the space was no longer available. She could only get a space through her employer. It was only after 22 years that the association managed to get a physical space provided by the town hall, and the first ten years were spent in cafés.

Sónia Matos said that she feels more Portuguese when she's abroad than in Portugal. In Portugal she finds it difficult to be seen as a person.

When AMUCIP was founded, the media published news saying that a revolution was born in the Roma community, which caused a lot of problems and unease in the community.

Sónia Matos highlighted that that sometimes people **make statements with good intentions, but that discriminate,** for example, one of her teachers said "my girl is so pretty, she doesn't even look like a gypsy". Or her colleagues who say "you're a gypsy, but you don't count anymore, you're different".
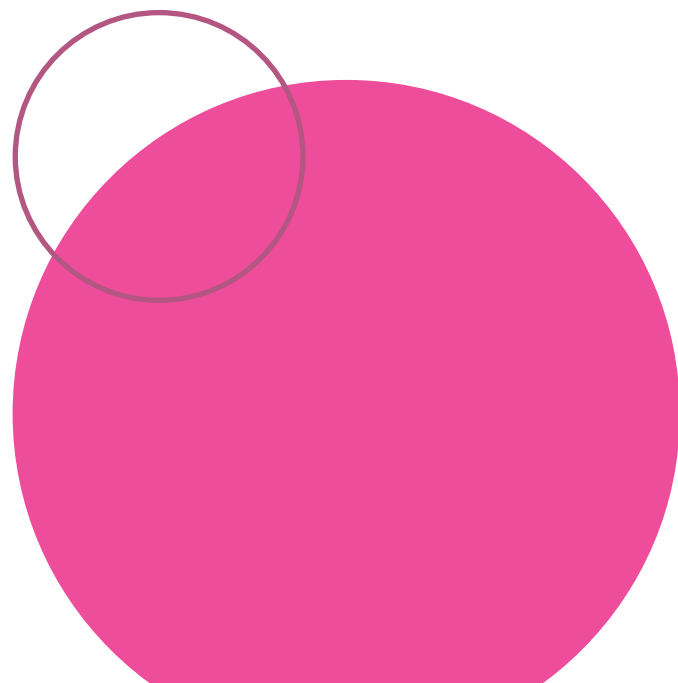
All this makes Roma people feel that they have to behave in a certain way, which is expected by society.

AMUCIP runs various projects with Roma women, trying to get them to interact and get to know each other, raise their self-esteem and discover themselves as women with abilities.

AMUCIP is based in Seixal and carries out activities in partnership with Seixal Town Council. It has also organised many training courses on Roma culture. Over the years it has developed national and international projects.

The Social Integration Income (RSI) brought about a revolution because it forced institutions to look at the Roma community. Institutions had to design integration processes for the community.

Today, AMUCIP is an **association recognised by several institutions.** This year alone it was able to sign labour contracts and currently has three human resources.

PEDAGOGICAL KIT - ROMANO ATMO

The Association has developed a project called **Pedagogical Kit - Romano Atmo**, which has been validated by the Ministry of Education and can be downloaded from the ministry's website. In 2023 alone, AMUCIP has authorised more than 500 downloads.

Last year AMUCIP applied the kit to adult Roma women with the help of a teacher and a library. They managed to empower a Roma woman who this year has been integrated into a school as a facilitator. She's a widow, which in the Roma community is usually seen as having no prospects in life. Absenteeism has fallen at the school because the parents trust the mediator's work.

To consult this guide, see:
Roma Pedagogical Kit Atmo (Alma Cigana) | Directorate-General for Education (mec.pt)

Today, AMUCIP has been challenged to work not only with women, but also with men, because the work it has done in the past has built trust among the Roma population. The men now realise that AMUCIP works for the good of the whole community. Within the Roma community, men still have the last word.

Sónia Matos also emphasised that gender inequality still exists in the majority community, not only in Roma communities.

Roma women are brought up to be housewives and mothers, but now they are starting to take the first steps towards conquering their own space and independence. **Fortunately, thanks to the dissemination of the educational kit, more and more Roma women are attending the 9th grade.**

Teaching kit developed by AMUCIP

Sónia Matos believes that the work of associations is to promote this change. She mentioned that there is currently a political measure to support young people from the Roma community entering university.

There are **40 young people of Roma origin graduating or doing a master's degree** in Portugal, most of them women.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sónia also said that AMUCIP has worked in other parts of the country, such as Évora and the Alvalade parish council in Lisbon.

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

For **Mafalda Fernandes, a black woman activist,** the word intercultural can be seen in a skewed way, because intercultural means encompassing various cultures and groups. In her view, we are sometimes talking about stereotyped groups.

She clarified that a minority group does not mean, in her view, fewer in number, but rather less powerful. For her, intercultural takes away some of the group's individuality, which is why she is reluctant to use the word.

Mafalda sought to promote reflection on the different identities that each person has, and this is an exercise that makes us a little uncomfortable, as it confronts us with some of the privileges we have. She believes that when we communicate with those who don't have the same privileges as us, it's important to keep in mind that other people haven't had the same opportunities. Unfortunately, however, these issues are often justified in the opposite way. It is said that the black community, for example, didn't study because they are black, or because they didn't try hard enough, and all of this creates obstacles to dialogue, because stereotypes and prejudices are ingrained.
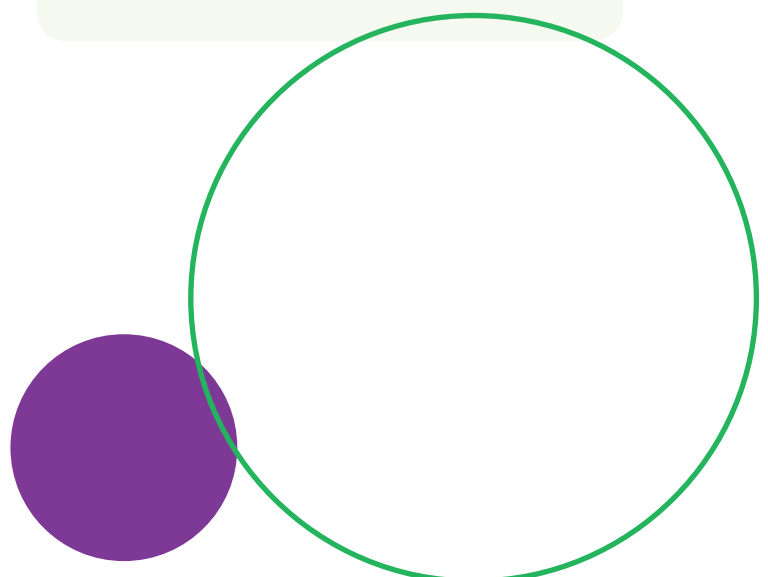
For Mafalda Fernandes, it is necessary to recognise the difference between a white person and a black person. Mafalda Fernandes explained that, in her view, this distinction is important because there is currently a perception that what happened in the past has no influence on the present, which is not true. What has happened in recent centuries has a huge impact on black people. African countries started the literacy process 50 years ago. The present is a consequence of the past.

Mafalda Fernandes also said that it is more difficult for black people to have access to college, health and justice, emphasising that the daily struggle of black people is invisible.

Like Mab Marques, she mentioned the importance of empathy: in order to improve intercultural communication, it's important to empathise more with other people and for this to happen, people must first get to know themselves well.

"Today's white man is no longer responsible for slavery, but he has a responsibility to balance the society in which he lives. No one escapes the past (…) Working through your own racism is a psychological process and is not related to morality. It starts with denial, goes through guilt which turns into shame and continues until it reaches recognition. **Once you have achieved recognition, you can begin to repair structures, the stage of reparation."**

Grada Kilomba

HOW TO ORGANISE INTERCULTURAL ACTIVITIES

In this workshop we discussed the best strategies for organising intercultural activities in order to avoid reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices and to promote positive intercultural relations in our daily lives.

The event had the same objectives as the previous ones: promoting local intercultural ecosystems; fostering the interculturality lens in Municipal Plans and Strategies, **promoting learning opportunities for municipal staff and partners; and fostering intercultural competences of municipal staff and partners.**

To this end, several people were invited to share their experiences and knowledge in this field, such as:

· **Mab Marques**, psychologist, co-founder of RPCI;
· **Carla Calado**, president of RPCI, specialised in intercultural competences, diversity and inclusion;
· **Filipa Bolotinha**, who has a degree in economics, found her vocation in local development and community work. She is currently President of the Board and General Coordinator of the Renovar a Mouraria Association.

Carla Calado and Mab Marques brought a practical approach to talk about how to organise intercultural activities.

As you may already know, multiculturalism is based on the premise that groups of people with different cultural references coexist in the same society, unlike interculturalism, where different people or groups relate to each other in the same society, learn and are enriched by each other's relationships and are aware of their interdependence.

Interculturalism involves a number of principles that must be reflected upon in order to make a city more inclusive.

Integration and equality is a principle that ensures that all people can thrive and that systemic discrimination is combated.

In this sense, it promotes people's participation and the sharing of power. In addition, interaction must be promoted by creating the conditions for regular and positive intercultural encounters, thereby establishing a culture of "we" rather than a culture of "us" and "them". Finally, it is important to **think of diversity as an advantage**, to realise the added value of a diverse and inclusive society and to commit to managing, preserving and recognising it. Consequently, the implementation of these principles makes it possible to establish an intercultural city, which should be a place with a clear commitment to preserving and valuing diversity, as well as combating discrimination, where people feel they belong and at the same time feel free to express their various cultural references and thrive.

"... access to citizenship, education, public services, the labour market and cultural life **scan only be equitable if governance and institutions are designed for culturally diverse communities and managed by culturally competent individuals and teams.**"
CM Rec (2015)

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

IN ORDER TO BE AN INTERCULTURAL CITY, THE CITY NEEDS:

- **Spaces for interaction: creating spaces for interaction between groups with different identities;**
- **Access: ensuring that all people have access to opportunities to develop their potential;**
- **Power sharing: involving people from diverse backgrounds in decision-making at all levels and in all fields;**
- **Inclusive narratives: fighting stereotypes and promoting positive messages about diversity;**
- **Intercultural competences: service staff and leadership as well as other stakeholders should develop their intercultural competences;**
- **Commitment: leadership demonstrates constant commitment, through speech and actions;**
- **Conflict management: managing conflict and seeing it as a positive development opportunity.**

Intercultural competences are the ability to mobilise and implement relevant psychological resources to provide an appropriate solution and effective responses to the demands, challenges and opportunities presented by intercultural situations.

They are divided into **five areas:**

- **personal competence,** which works on issues of emotional resilience, tolerance and stress management;
- **social competence,** which focuses on realistic self-perception and self-evaluation, empathy, the ability to change perspective and to build and manage relationships;
- **general intercultural competence,** which aims to expand cultural awareness, intercultural communication, identifying and decoding culture, social situation and social aspects;
- **specific intercultural competences,** which focus on linguistics and knowledge about one's own culture and other cultural references;
- and finally, **intercultural competences related to the profession,** which are the skills acquired for a particular area or task in a specific area.

AN INTERCULTURAL APPROACH ALLOWS TO:

- **Value diversity as a resource** - It is also relevant for the integration of other people with different backgrounds, and for the smooth adaptation of society as a whole to its increasingly diverse fabric (Diversity Advantage).
- **Promote diversity** in institutions and residential and public spaces (Transversal)
- **Reduce segregation** in social, cultural, economic and political life (Equality/ Social Justice) and increasing intercultural interaction
- **Achieve effective inclusion by promoting the ownership and active involvement** of state institutions, regional and local authorities and civil society (Participation)

Participants were presented with a summarised checklist for of how to design intercultural projects. The checklist is divided into four parts:

1. **Valuing**
2. **Intercultural interaction**
3. **Real Equality**
4. **Participation/ Collaboration**

Measuring the intercultural nature of an activity or project means understanding to what extent it:

1) **positively addresses diversity;**
2) **promotes real equality; and**
3) **fosters meaningful intercultural interaction and participation**

**You can access
the Checklist** here**.**

pratical guide and checklist,
Council of Europe

Filipa Bolotinha is the current president of the "Renovar a Mouraria" Association. The association is an NGO of public interest, which was born on 19 March 2008 on the initiative of a group of residents committed to contributing to the revitalisation of a neighbourhood through community, educational and cultural initiatives. Today, they are a reference in local development and in the work of integrating migrants living in the neighbourhood and at the city level.

They are anchored in Mouraria, Lisbon - "Casa Comunitária da Mouraria", revitalised in 2012, a house for all, which is a space for socialising, support, culture, training, cultural events, etc. It has a team, together with a network of around 100 volunteers, working every day to improve people's lives and contribute to the development of their community spirit.

They take on the defence of historical, cultural and human heritage, in favour of the right to the city and in defence of human rights.

BELLOW YOU CAN FIND THE PROJECTS DEVELOPED BY RENOVAR A MOURARIA.

**You can also follow them on
Ongoing projects - Renovating Mouraria**

**You can also follow them on Facebook
eand Instagram**

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

CV.PT ACADEMY
GOOD PRACTICES

CV.pt trains school groups to implement the ACV.pt methodology, contributing to the integration of immigrant and refugee kindergarten and primary school children with communication difficulties in Portuguese, producing an impact on learning, school success and social inclusion.
To find out more see:
www.academia-cv.pt

CV.PT ACADEMY SCHOOLS NETWORK

The CV.pt Schools Network **consolidates methodologies** that have already been tested in other territories (Alvalade, Alfama, Penha de França, São Vicente), by **training various key players,** namely local NGOs, school groups, educational agents, volunteers (multipliers and disseminators) and children (agents of change).

EI!
EDUCATION FOR INTEGRATION

The study Education for Integration: the **Portuguese school system from the perspective of the integration of third-country immigrant children, young people living in Portugal and asylum seekers,** aimed to analyse and understand the migratory phenomenon and the dynamics of reception and integration in the school context.

CLAIM
LOCAL SUPPORT CENTRE FOR THE
INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS IN MOURARIA

CLAIM is a **decentralised integrated support service for migrants from non-European countries.** It supports migrants in navigating the support systems for health, regularisation, social support, family reunification, work, education and training. It is part of the national CNAIM network.

TPC
TIME TO GROW

TPC - TIME TO GROW **promotes equal opportunities in access to education** for children and young people in the Mouraria neighbourhood. It fulfils this objective by organising weekly study support sessions for children and young people aged 6 to 18 who live or go to Mouraria, in close coordination with a network of volunteers.

CHANGING (H)EARTH

Changing (H)earth takes place with the school community of Agrupamento Gil Vicente and aims to **promote environmental sustainability, co-operation, emotional intelligence and intercultural ties** through the development of the first agroforest in a public school in Portugal.

MIGRANTOUR
SUSTAINABLE ROUTES

Migrantour is a social project committed to **building a positive narrative about migration** by organising walking tours led by migrant guides who share the history of the Mouraria neighbourhood and their own migration stories. Lisbon is one of 25 European cities in the Migrantour network where tours take place that are a sensory and human experience, promoting empathy and inclusion, and educating participants about the cultural diversity of one of Lisbon's most multicultural neighbourhoods.

It is being implemented in 10 countries - Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain - and 25 cities.

To find out more see:
www.mygrantour.org/en

HÁ MANHÃS

"Há Manhãs" (the name is a play with words that could be translated into both "tomorrow" and "morning"), **organises monthly meetings for women of all nationalities** at Renovar a Mouraria. It's a safe place for socialising, self-care and practising the Portuguese language by sharing stories.

GRADE AA
LEARNING AND WELCOMING

Grade AA is a mobility project that allows for **training and job shadowing,** consisting of ten training activities aimed at Migrantour guides, community mediators, project coordinators and technicians.

MOURARIA PARTICIPATES

MOURARIA PARTICIPATES is a space where the community presents problems and from which **innovative ideas and solutions for their improvement** should emerge, strengthening the participation of civil society.

COMPOST MOURARIA

COMPOST MOURARIA is an **electromechanical composting pilot plant** with the capacity to transform organic waste into compost, aimed at the inhabitants of Lisbon's historical centre.

PORTUGUESE COURSES

The association offers **courses in Portuguese as a Host Language,** since learning Portuguese is essential for integrating the labour market and society in general. There are beginners' courses, lasting 25 hours, and advanced Portuguese courses, lasting 150 hours.

MOURARIUP

MourariUP is a project to **support migrant business development** by building an entrepreneurial community in the Mouraria neighbourhood. The aim is to accompany migrant entrepreneurs, regardless of their country of origin, in developing their maximum personal and entrepreneurial potential in a collaborative, intercultural and permanent learning community.

05 Intercultural Projects and Initiatives

RÁDIO BAÚ
THE SOUNDTRACK OF MOURARIA

Rádio Baú is a podcast that **identifies and records the stories and memories of residents of the neighbourhood,** recognising them as part of the territory's intangible heritage. Its aim is to preserve collective memory in the present and open the way to a more affectionate and attentive relationship with places, both for those who live in the neighbourhood and for those who live in and visit the city of Lisbon.

RADIKA
ANTI-RACISM EDUCATION

RADIKA is an anti-racism education project consisting of **training programmes for primary school children and a national awareness campaign.** The anti-racism education sessions aim to value diversity and understand difference as a universal characteristic, while at the same time addressing racism as structural to our society. Methodologically, the workshops are based on belief in and respect for children's intelligence, always and necessarily placing them at the centre of discussions. The dynamics chosen are intended to be playful and experiential, promoting participation and horizontality in the process at all times.

RESOURCES FOR INTERCULTURAL PROJECTS:

- **Participatory Assessments" guide (in PRT)**
- **Evaluation of policy impacts, Council of Europe**
- **Checklist "Intercultural Projects", Council of Europe (in PRT)**
- **The Intercultural City Step by Step, Council of Europe**
- **Romany Pedagogical Kit Atmo (Gypsy Soul) | Directorate-General for Education (mec.pt) (in PRT)**

PROJECT PODCASTS

PODCAST 1
Access to Health for Migrant People (in PRT)

To access it go to:
cidadesinterculturais.pt

PODCAST 2
Integration of the Roma Communities in Portugal (in PRT)

To access it go to:
cidadesinterculturais.pt

PODCAST 3
Welcoming Refugee People to Portugal (in PRT)

To access it go to:
cidadesinterculturais.pt

06

Resources
and References

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- Definition of Empathy | What is Empathy, berkeley.edu
  Empathy: Definition, Types and Tips to Practise, verywellmind.com
- Interculturalism, Spring Institute
- Center of intersectional Justice
- Cultural Ethnocentrism VS Relativism: What is Ethnocentrism?, IUPUI, Ken Barger
- Recommendation CM/Rec (2015) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the processing of personal data in the context of employment, Council of Europe

06 Resources and References

6.2. USEFUL RESOURCES

- Breaking Prejudice - activities to work on prejudice and stereotypes, breakingprejudice.org

- Podcast channel "Portugal Plural", Spotify (in PRT)

- Youtube channel RPCI

- RPCI website (in PRT)

- The Intercultural City Step by Step guide, Council of Europe

- Intercultural projects Checklist, Council of Europe (full version)

- Online free course - Diversity and Inclusion - AKF | The Learning Hub

- Intercultural Citizenship Test, Council of Europe

- Online Trainings on Interculturalism, Council of Europe

- Hate Speech - a Systematized Review, Sage Journals

- Awareness video: The danger of the single story | Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie - YouTube

- Games and Exercises: International Workcamps and Seminars - free PDF Download (docplayer.net)

- Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on intercultural integration, REC (2015), Council of Europe

- Intercultural Competences for Technical and Political Positions in local Governments, RECI Reflexion activities manual for youngsters: SALTO, Inclusion and Diversity, (salto-youth.net)

- Top 13 Reasons Why is Diversity Important? [2022], Diversity for Social impact

- An interview with Milton Bennett: Interculturality. Do you know what it is? (globo.com) (in PRT)

- Interculture for Development: Milton Bennett, video on YouTube

- Movement Against Hate-Speech (odionao.com.pt), (in PRT)

- Article about Systemic Discrimination: The infinite dressings of systemic racism, Expresso.pt (in PRT)

- Public consultation on racism and systemic discrimination in Montreal, OIDP.net

- YOUTH AS LEADERS OF CHANGE. How to involve young citizens in anti-discrimination initiatives, (salto-youth.net)

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