



Intercultural education and social innovation approaches as answers to societal challenges of migration

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Doi: 10.2478/gssjf-2023-0002

Abstract

Social reality is always in the process of changing. Globalisation has made these changes more abrupt with a more powerful impact. Migrations break one equilibrium and then create another. As a result, social reality is constantly facing new challenges. With ever-increasing immigration, social reality does not have time to settle an equilibrium that has to cope with significant changes. These situations can lead to social unrest. Both social innovations and intercultural education are constructive responses to these challenges. The manuscript aims to analyse how intercultural education and social innovation can be an opportunity to contribute to making societies more sustainable and cohesive.

Keywords: Intercultural Education, Culture, Migration, Social Innovation, Ecosystem Theory

1. Introduction

In the contemporary landscape, the intersection of social innovation and intercultural education emerges as a critical framework for navigating and overcoming the multifaceted challenges of migration and social dynamics.

Social innovation is seen as a '*new response*' to social changes to the situation deemed unsatisfactory. Social challenges are seen as an opportunity to make societies more sustainable and cohesive through inclusive practices, co-production, and proactive grassroots initiatives thanks to intercultural education and social innovation (Grimm et al., 2013, Spulber, 2018). Following this conception, any innovation carried out in the traditional sectors of civil society, such as education, is considered a social innovation. As societies become more interconnected, the need for innovative solutions to address the complexities of cultural diversity and migration has never been more pronounced. Social innovation, rooted in sociological perspectives dating back to Max Weber and Joseph Schumpeter, offers a lens through which to understand and address the evolving social needs of migration. Social Innovation becomes a dynamic process, propelled by the dialectical tension between the societal

context, the aspirations of social actors, and the imperative to correct deficiencies in economic, social, and cultural realms. Innovation is, therefore, initially conceived as a practice that provides a solution to day-to-day problems in the social, political, professional, or even personal sphere, achieved by changing the processes or strategies put in place to achieve the objectives that have been set. This social innovation, as a process and as an action, has a dual character: it contains both destructive and productive forces. Indeed, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Schumpeter (1942) said, concerning economic analysis, that innovation "*is the storm of creative destruction*" (McCraw, 2007).

Concurrently, intercultural education is pivotal in shaping individuals capable of embracing diversity and contributing to social cohesion (Spulber, 2018). It goes beyond the traditional educational paradigms, fostering open and creative personalities equipped to engage with the challenges posed by migration (Glorius, 2021). This synthesis of social innovation and intercultural education becomes particularly relevant in the face of migration challenges, where communities grapple with meeting concrete needs and addressing the aspirations of diverse populations. By embracing the concept of social innovation, educators and policymakers can chart innovative paths to navigate the complexities of multiculturalism and facilitate the integration of migrant populations into the social fabric.

This exploration delves into the potential synergies between social innovation and intercultural education, aiming to shed light on how these concepts can collectively serve as a transformative force in overcoming the challenges posed by migration. Through a nuanced understanding of both frameworks, it becomes possible to cultivate inclusive societies that leverage the richness of diversity as a catalyst for progress and positive societal change.

2. Concept of Intercultural education

Education should help individuals recognise their role and responsibilities: individually and collectively, as active members of a global community working for social justice, an economy for all, and the protection and revival of the Earth's ecosystems. Interculturality goes beyond tolerance, presupposes confrontation and exchange between cultures, poses the problem of citizenship and participation, exercises legitimate and mutual criticism and conceives cultural differences as a value. Adding to the concept of education the adjective *Intercultural* which composition is made by Inter and Cultural, then is possible to obtain or to complete the concept by constructive cultural contamination. According to UNESCO, (1980) who says intercultural necessarily says, if he gives full meaning to the prefix "inter" - interaction, interchange, openness, reciprocity, objective solidarity. It also says, giving its full meaning to the term culture, recognition of the values, ways of life,

symbolic representations to which human beings, individuals, and societies, refer in their relations with each other and in their understanding of the world, recognition of their diversity, recognition of the interactions that take place from time to time between the multiple registers of the same culture and between different cultures, in space and time. Intercultural education is not only the acceptance and respect of diversity but also the recognition of cultural identity, in the daily search for dialogue, understanding, and cooperation, in a perspective of mutual enrichment. Claude Claret (2002) defined intercultural education as “*the set of processes - physical, relational, group, institutional - generated by the interactions of cultures, in a relationship of reciprocal exchanges and in a perspective of safeguarding a relative cultural identity of the participants in the relationships*”. Intercultural education involves different methodologies that focus on the formation of a society based on principles such as tolerance, equality, the complementarity of values, the valorisation of the spiritual specificity of local values by linking them to the general values of humanity. Intercultural education aims at the enhancement of the educational framework in the spirit of diversity, human rights, equal opportunities, intercultural dialogue, and the promotion of identity and citizenship. The principle of the dialogue of cultures, which acts in intercultural learning as the main multifunctional principle of the organization of the entire system of teaching a foreign language, starting with the purpose, and ending with the methods, by means and forms of education, it helps to overcome cultural and communicative barriers, openness to dialogue and mutual understanding between speakers of various linguistic cultures. Despite the fact that all people are different because of the cultural background they bear, the concept of intercultural education is emphasised with the immigration process.

3. Concept of Social Innovation

The concept of innovation, originating in the realms of technology and engineering, has expanded into sociology, with social innovation entering the sociological discourse as early as Max Weber's discussions on "social invention" in the early 20th century and Joseph Schumpeter's contributions in the 1930s. In Weberian sociology, social innovation is viewed as a social phenomenon arising from the dialectical tension between the perceived social needs of actors within a specific societal context and their aspirations to enact innovative social practices. This tension aims to "correct" deficiencies and enhance economic, social, cultural, and political conditions, including the city's governance.

As outlined by Chombart de Lauwe, Langlois, and Legault, social innovation serves the purpose of leading a community, situated in time and space, from the realm of

identified needs to a space of social aspirations through novel ways of thinking, acting, and feeling.

A shared perspective among researchers is that social innovation goes beyond merely addressing local needs; it involves innovators pursuing social goals, grounding their actions in values and aspirations. (Peschi & Fundneider, 2008, Grimm et al 2013 Glorius, 2021)

In essence, social innovation is not solely about solving social problems; it is a dynamic process aiming to address aspirations and contribute to a broader sense of social well-being, emphasizing the creation of new meanings and values within the involved community.

According to E. Paul and S. Will Social Innovation is defined “as innovative activities and services designed to meet social needs”, pursuing this idea they distinguished the following four areas: - Social innovation as a driving force of institutional change (Rodríguez-Núñez et al 2023, Campomori & Casula 2023); - social innovations as new ideas, aimed at achieving social goals and satisfying social needs (Choi, N., & Majumdar, 2015); - social innovations as ideas of social good (Centre for Social Innovation, etc.), as a new solution to social problems aimed at improving the quality of life of the whole society rather than individuals (Farzad et. Al., 2020);- social innovation as a new way of overcoming social problems that cannot be influenced by the market (OECD, European Commission, etc.).

4. Immigration a challenge for social innovation and a fertile land for intercultural education

To comprehend the intricacies of intercultural education, it is imperative to first examine the landscape of migration flows, recognizing the interconnected nature of these two phenomena. Beyond the mere movement of goods and people, globalisation encompasses the dynamic circulation of knowledge, diverse traditions, and various cultures. The escalating trend of immigration over recent decades, marked by uncontrolled flows, has been identified as a contributing factor to social unrest. Within this global exchange, intercultural education becomes increasingly paramount, interwoven with and influenced by migration patterns. According to the 2022 United Nations migration report, a number of 281 million people were registered as migrants (UN, Migration report). As for migration in Europe in 2021, the number of migrations increased by 18% in comparison with 2020. These migration patterns underscore the need for nuanced and context-specific intercultural education strategies, as the diverse origins and destinations of migrants demand a tailored approach to foster understanding, tolerance, and effective integration. The intricate interplay between globalization, migration, and intercultural education invites exploration and strategic interventions to harness the

potential benefits of cultural exchange while addressing the challenges associated with the current dynamics of global movement.

Massive immigration could be suggested to create imbalances in hosting societies, resulting in social unrest. Hostility towards immigrants is attributed to perceived intergroup competition and threats to the cultural or national identity of the host society. Hostility is a defensive reaction fuelled by perceived competition for resources and risks to the interests of the native social group. Economic crises may exacerbate these feelings, leading to irrational ethnic antipathy, prejudice, and an exaggerated response to immigration. The Group Conflict Theory posits that anti-immigrant sentiments arise from perceived intergroup competition and perceived risks to the interests of the native social group, especially during socio-economic crises. The Social Identity Theory is introduced to explain discriminatory behaviours, racism, and xenophobia. The threat to national identity is a key factor contributing to hostility towards immigrants. McLaren L.M. (2003) supports the idea that groups perceived as threatening the distinctive national identity are likely to elicit hostility from the host society. Overall, we can suggest that the fear of losing national identity and perceived intergroup competition are significant factors contributing to hostility and discriminatory behaviours towards immigrants in hosting societies.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 triggered an unprecedented wave of population movement, marking the largest flow in Europe since World War II. Residents from regions bordering the front zone and occupied territories sought refuge not only in safer Ukrainian regions but also in foreign countries (Poznyak, 2023). Even before the invasion, Ukraine faced challenging migration conditions. Since the 1990s, the country has been a major source of the labour force for Europe. Data from the third national survey on labour migration, conducted by the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine between January and June 2017, revealed that from 2015 to mid-2017, 1.3 million Ukrainian citizens aged 15–70, comprising 4.5% of the age-matched population, were either working or seeking employment abroad (SSSU). The invasion intensified an already complex migration scenario, emphasizing the need for coordinated international efforts to address the humanitarian challenges arising from this mass movement. In fact, according to EU data, there are 21.6 million non-EU nationals in the EU, representing 4.2% of its total population. Each year, new migrants to the EU represent less than 0.5% of the EU population.

	Total		Citizens of another EU Member State		Citizens of a non-EU country	
	(thousand)	(% of the population)	(thousand)	(% of the population)	(thousand)	(% of the population)
Estonia	202,7	15,2	21,6	1,6	181,1	13,6
Latvia	245,0	13,1	6,6	0,4	238,3	12,7
Malta	107,4	20,6	45,0	8,6	62,4	12,0
Luxembourg	304,0	47,1	245,9	38,1	57,9	9,0
Cyprus	170,1	18,8	94,2	10,4	75,9	8,4
Austria	1.572,3	17,5	826,3	9,2	741,5	8,3
Spain	5.407,5	11,4	1.741,1	3,7	3.664,0	7,7
Germany	10.893,1	13,1	4.523,1	5,4	6.358,8	7,6
Slovenia	172,4	8,2	21,2	1,0	151,3	7,2
Ireland	671,3	13,3	355,7	7,0	314,8	6,2
Italy	5.030,7	8,5	1.389,3	2,4	3.640,8	6,2
Greece	747,9	7,1	115,2	1,1	632,7	6,0
France	5.315,3	7,8	1.486,6	2,2	3.828,7	5,6
Denmark	562,2	9,6	235,6	4,0	318,0	5,4
Sweden	868,2	8,3	299,9	2,9	556,4	5,3
Portugal	698,9	6,8	169,2	1,6	529,7	5,1
Belgium	1.488,9	12,8	958,0	8,2	530,1	4,6
Czechia	538,2	5,1	173,3	1,6	364,7	3,5
Finland	294,6	5,3	102,9	1,9	190,4	3,4
Netherlands	1.230,0	7,0	650,7	3,7	574,0	3,3
Bulgaria	124,2	1,8	15,7	0,2	106,6	1,6
Hungary	202,3	2,1	78,9	0,8	123,3	1,3
Lithuania	34,3	1,2	1,6	0,1	30,6	1,1
Poland	453,1	1,2	33,4	0,1	419,0	1,1
Croatia (1)	35,9	0,9	10,8	0,3	24,6	0,6
Slovakia	60,1	1,1	37,9	0,7	22,2	0,4
Romania (2)	48,6	0,3	20,6	0,1	28,0	0,1
Iceland	55,0	14,6	43,8	11,6	11,2	3,0
Liechtenstein	13,5	34,4	7,1	18,0	6,4	16,4
Norway	586,0	10,8	361,0	6,7	223,4	4,1
Switzerland	2.242,3	25,7	1.436,9	16,4	804,8	9,2

Table 1 Non-national population by group of citizenship, 1 January 2022 (Source Eurostat)

Despite the impact of Ukrainian immigration numbers, it is precisely this latest wave of immigration that makes us reflect on the need to intervene at the European level so that all states are aligned concerning the arrival and integration of immigrants.

Analysing the data set out in the table reveals 3 categories: Non-nationals, EU nationals and non-EU nationals.

- An examination of the data of the non-EU nationals reveals that in the top 5 positions are countries such as Luxembourg with 47,1 % of the population, Malta with 20,6 % of the population, Cyprus with 18,8% of the population, Austria with 17,5 % of the population and Estonia with 15,2% of the population. The last 5 positions are outlined as follows: Lithuania with 1,2 % of the population, Poland with 1,2 % of the population, Slovakia with 1,1 % of the population, Croatia with 0,9 % of the population, Romania with 0,3 % of the population.
- An examination of the data of the EU nationals reveals that in the top 5 positions are countries such as Luxembourg with 38,1 % of the population, Cyprus with 10,4 % of the population, Austria with 9,2 % of the population, Malta with 8,6 % of the population, Belgium with 8,2 % of the population. The last 5 positions are outlined as follows: Croatia with 0,3 % of the population, Bulgaria with 0,2 % of the population, Lithuania with 0,1 % of the population, Poland with 0,1 % of the population, and Romania with 0,1% of the population.
- An examination of the data of the non-EU nationals reveals that in the top 5 positions are countries such as Estonia with 13,6 % of the population, Latvia with 12,7 % of the population, Malta (2) with 12,0 % of the population, Luxembourg with 9,0 % of the population, Cyprus with 8,4 % of the population. The last 5 positions are outlined as follows: Lithuania and Poland with 1,1% of the population, Croatia with 0,6 of the population, Slovakia with 0,4 of the population, and Romania with 0,1 of the population.

The above data, divided into three categories, show us that some countries are in the top five in all three categories. These countries are in the same way, the data show us that some countries are in the bottom five in terms of welcoming immigrants in all three categories. These countries are Luxembourg, Malta, Cyprus. Austria is among the top 5 countries for receiving immigrants and is 6 position for receiving immigrants with non-EU citizenship.

The countries that are in the last positions for the percentage of immigrants receiving are Lithuania, Croatia, Poland, and Romania. Slovakia is at 21 place for receiving citizens from other EU countries.

5. What about immigration flow from Ukraine?

The information found on the European official portal highlights the significant number of Ukrainian citizens authorized to stay in the European Union (EU) by the end of 2021. This information can be summed up as follows:

1. *Overall Authorization:*

- At the end of 2021, 1.57 million Ukrainian citizens were authorized to stay in the EU.
- This makes them the third-largest group of non-EU citizens in the EU, following citizens of Morocco and Türkiye.

2. *Distribution among EU Member States:*

- Poland, Italy, and Czechia reported the highest number of Ukrainians holding valid residence permits at the end of 2021.

3. *Proportion to Population:*

- In terms of the proportion to their population, Czechia, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, and Slovakia were the EU Member States with the largest number of Ukrainian citizens holding valid residence permits at the end of 2021.

This data reflects the substantial presence of Ukrainian citizens in the EU, with specific countries like Poland, Italy, and Czechia hosting many individuals with valid residence permits. It also suggests a widespread distribution of Ukrainian citizens across various EU Member States, highlighting the diverse impact of migration within the region.

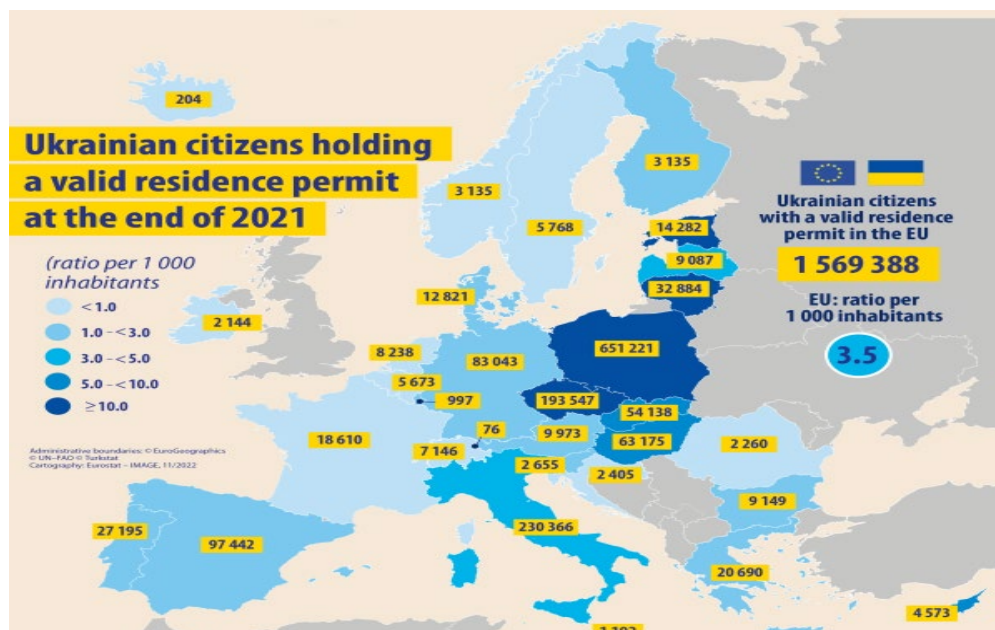


Figure 1 Number of Ukrainians holding a valid residence permit at the end of 2021 (Source Eurostat)

After the events of February 2022, migration to EU countries surged suddenly. The European Union found itself with an armed conflict on its borders and had to manage the migratory flow of people fleeing Ukraine. After the events of February

2022, migration to EU countries surged suddenly. The European Union found itself with an armed conflict on its borders and had to manage the migratory flow of people fleeing Ukraine. This wave of immigration came on top of previous waves of migration to Europe for economic reasons, with Ukraine already among the population with the largest presence in European Countries. As stated before, Ukraine was the third largest group of non-EU citizens. The information provided by Eurostat indicates that as of December 31, 2022, approximately 3.7 million Ukrainian citizens had arrived in EU countries and obtained temporary protection status. This number increased to 4,31 million in 2023.



Figure 2 Ukrainian citizens with temporary protection in EU countries (Source Eurostat)

The Eurostat snapshot done by illustrated in Figure 2 show that Germany hosted 968,000 individuals (25% of the total), Poland hosted 961,000 (25%), and Czechia had 432,000 (11%). It is possible to state that Germany, Poland, and Czechia were the main EU countries where Ukrainian citizens fleeing Ukraine stayed in 2022. When considering the population of each EU country, the highest number of beneficiaries of temporary protection at the end of 2022 was recorded in the Czech Republic (41.1 beneficiaries per 1,000 people). Estonia followed with 28.8 beneficiaries per 1,000 people, and Poland with 25.5 per 1,000. In contrast, lower numbers of beneficiaries per 1,000 persons were observed in France (1.0), Greece (2.1), and Italy (2.5).

This data reflects the scale of Ukrainian citizens seeking temporary protection in EU countries, with variations in the distribution among different nations. The figures also highlight the disparities in the number of beneficiaries relative to the population size of each EU country. It is important to remember that European Union funds finance the temporary protection program for Ukrainian citizens. According to data, the European Council Europe gives financial and technical support to member states hosting refugees (<https://www.consilium.europa.eu>). In this case, the countries that received more financing are Germany, Poland, Czechia and Estonia. The countries that received less financing are France, Greece, and Italy. In the meantime, Italy is one of the first countries to receive Ukrainian immigrants for economic reasons, and it is in last place concerning the presence of Ukrainian immigrants with temporary protection status. Furthermore, comparing the data with the presence of immigrants, it can be seen that Poland is in last place. Consequently, Poland is one of the first countries that host Ukrainian refugees and receive funding from the EU, but is one of the countries that receive the smallest number other immigrants. The explanation of these big discrepancies should be searched in the national politics of the countries. In confirmation of this concept is possible to see Estonia representing one of the first countries that host immigrants of non-Eu nationality and Ukrainian refugees seeking temporary protection

6. What are the feelings of immigrants?

The immigration process has almost always been studied from an economic demographic and political perspective. In recent decades, the migrant question has also been the subject of research by psychologists, sociologists, educationalists, and clinicians. The "threshold" that forces a person to leave the homeland is quite subjective and depends on a set of background factors. Some of the heaviest factors are social and economic status, and socio-economic factors related to the real opportunities to leave (financial opportunities, the presence of relatives abroad, the new work, etc). Also, ethnic characteristics should be considered like modus of ethnic self-identification, the degree of the ethnicity of a person, the internal functional state of self-consciousness and properties of ethnic self-image and personal characteristics. Many migrants and refugees experience psychological distress (in particular anxiety and depression, feelings of hopelessness, sleep disturbance, fatigue, irritability, anger, pain, and suffering).

According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) it appears that people of African descent continue to experience racism, discrimination, and hate crimes generated by hatred. This has occurred despite the binding anti-discrimination laws in the EU in force since 2000 and significant policy developments since then. The data in the report illustrate: - that 45 % of respondents

claim to have been discriminated against based on race in the five years preceding the survey, an increase from the 39 % found in the last FRA survey. In Germany and Austria, this figure is over 70 %. They are often discriminated against in searching for a job or accommodation. Therefore, it can be stated that - *racial discrimination* - is very high. The data also show that the most affected are young people and people with a higher level of education. However, discrimination remains invisible, as only 9 % of victims report it;

At the questions about harassment - 30 % claim to have experienced racially motivated harassment, but almost hardly anyone reports it. In addition to the ethnic fact, there is also the issue of gender. A closer look at the harassment issue shows that it is young women who report harassment the most, as well as people with higher education and those who wear religious clothing.

The data show that 34% felt discriminated against on racial grounds when looking for a job and 31% in the workplace in the five years preceding the study. In addition, the type of employment contract also adds up, i.e. descendants of Africa are more likely to get only temporary contracts and are overqualified for their jobs than other people in general.

The investigation about racial profiling found that 58 % stated that their last arrest by the police in the year preceding the survey was the result of racial profiling. Those who perceive the arrest as racial profiling are much less trusting of the police.

The above data are a source of great stress. Strong social stress creates a favourable ground for an identity crisis of a future migrant (in this case a refugee), but the crisis becomes a deepened fact of the psyche, including ethnic self-awareness, already after "exile". To the stress of necessity to leave the homeland is added to the stress of adaptation to the new social and cultural realities and more to the attitude of others and here by others is important to indicate not only the autochthons but also the immigrants that are on the territory for more years.

The above highlights the pressing need for academic and policy-driven solutions to counteract the rise of social unrest and xenophobic movements. Fostering diverse cultural coexistence and promoting interculturality is imperative. Articles 13, 15, and 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights underscore that cultural rights are integral, universal, indivisible, and interdependent aspects of human rights. Recognizing cultural diversity as an enriching force rather than a cause for exclusion or alienation is crucial, especially for minority groups. Education is a key player in mitigating social unrest and enhancing social contentment. It becomes a shared responsibility for everyone to contribute to enriching the human experience through embracing and celebrating cultural differences.

7. Role of intercultural education and social innovation in overcoming migration challenges

The entire migration cycle provokes deep personal transformations as the changes accompanying a migrant's cultural adaptation affect the entire personality, from psychophysiological aspects to the functional and structural level of his or her self-awareness (Castro-Olivo et al., 2012, Ainslie et al 2013, Huang, et al., 2017, Lee-Johnson, 2023).

Nowadays, we can identify a pivotal challenge for society: the need to redefine and structure learning and education to contribute actively to building a sustainable, prosperous, and resilient society. It recognizes that the constantly changing dynamics of social, economic, and technological factors create an ever-shifting context for policymakers. The underlying message is that adapting educational systems to effectively respond to these dynamic influences is paramount. This adaptability is crucial for ensuring that individuals and communities are well-prepared to meet the evolving demands of an ever-changing world (Prospective Report on the Future of Social Innovation in Education (2020)

The societal exchanges brought about by globalization are echoed in schools and classrooms, emphasizing the pivotal role of integrational education in fostering understanding among pupils, particularly through interculturalism (Tourinan, 2008) and cultural hybridization (Gutierrez, 2005).

Bronfenbrenner Ecosystem Theory is useful to explain how intercultural educational and Social Innovation can reduce social unrest. Bronfenbrenner's theory, known as the ecological model of human development, states that human life develops under the influence of four ecosystems that can positively or negatively affect humans. The names of these ecosystems are: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystemic, and macrosystem.

The microsystem is the environment a person enters after birth. Most people have a family - dad, mum, brothers and sisters, grandmother, grandfather in few words the children's caregivers.

The mesosystem is responsible for the relationship of different systems to each other, which can also affect a person's life. In a prosperous mesosystem, parents have good relations with neighbours, peers do not skip school, teachers respect the principal and do not vent their anger on children. Relationships of other people, organisations with each other can also affect our development positively or negatively.

Ecosystem is represented by social organizations, such as the workplace or social and health services.

The macrosystem includes the customs, values, resources, technology, laws and norms of the country in which a person is born.

In the process of e/i -migration the migrating person radically changes all ecosystems, i.e. by moving to another country the migrant leaves a social-political system with its culture history its laws and enters another country that carries another socio-political system. In the host country he finds a new type of functioning of the social networks of the mass media. The migrant person is confronted with a new type of legal work management. The migrant person finds a new social system with new rules of access. So we see that the ecosystem also changes. Then we come to the change of friends no longer having relatives close to them and so witness a process of change from macrosystem to micro-system. Figure 1 demonstrates the change that changes that a migrating person faces.

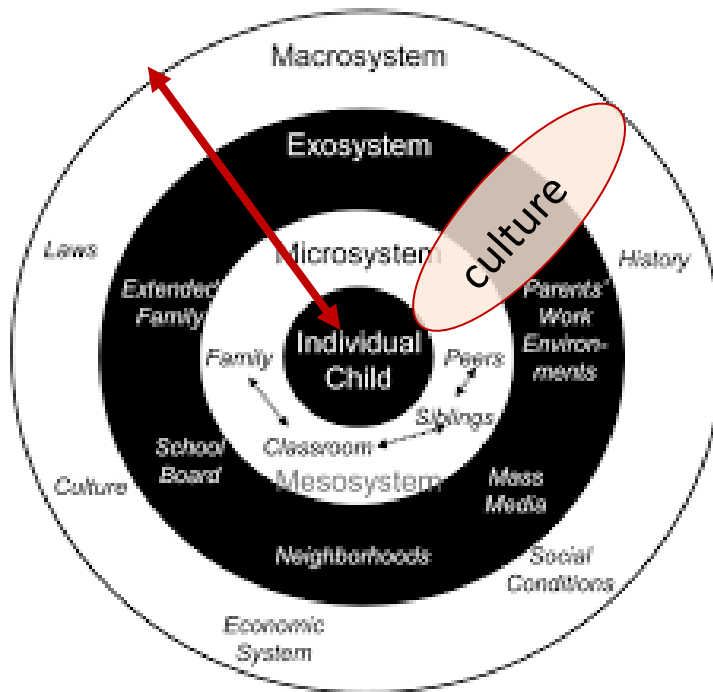


Figure 3 Bronfenbrenner Ecosystem Theory Adapted to Intercultural Education

According to Bronfenbrenner's Ecosystem Theory, culture acts as a crucial link, creating stress and connecting all components within an ecosystem. In all societies, including our ecosystems, culture holds a central and dynamic position, influencing the construction and implementation of macro models for change and serving as an indicator of efficiency and overall development. Culture, with its dual status, acts as a resource for transmitting ways of thinking, behaviours, and attitudes while also serving as a source of change, creativity, autonomy, and freedom. According to D. Spulber, (2018) *“The process of transmission of culture, involves the following steps: - the reception*

of the values of cultural/intercultural objectives; the subjective living experience of those values; the creation of new values thanks to the possibility of transformation of the values of the objective into subjective values.” The individual transforms into a person through socialization, teaching, and internalizing cultural values. Social interactions within microsystems, starting with parents, family, friends, peers, and the classroom, play a vital role in personality development, cultural value transmission, and the formation of attitudes and behaviours. The micro-social environment, including family and culture, determines an individual's development profile, with the school environment existing within the mesosystem alongside extended family, mass media, and neighbourhoods. Any culture consists of a variety of subcultures - regional, age, professional, etc., which makes the world unique in its cultural diversity. The principle of a multicultural approach takes into account the diversity of cultures in society and the multiplicity of personal cultural orientations in the process of formation and development of intercultural competence. The educational environment facilitates cultural exchange and promotes social and cultural connections. Education's primary objective is to instil solidarity, recognition, and cooperation attitudes, fostering a dialogue between diverse cultures to harmonize societal relations.

Intercultural education in light of Bronfenbrenner's Ecosystem Theory road to the assimilation of ideas, skills, and strategies necessary for further disclosure of something "alien", which can lead to changes: a) in thinking: a better understanding of the worldview of a representative of another culture; levelling stereotypes in thinking concerning speakers of other linguistic cultures; the development of a comprehensive worldview in relation to another culture and an increase in the amount of knowledge about this culture; b) in the behaviour of a communicative personality: improving interpersonal contacts with representatives of another culture; overcoming conflict situations in a foreign socio-cultural environment, the successful fulfilment of their professional tasks; c) in feelings: confidence in one's competence when communicating with representatives of other cultures; in successfully solving communicative tasks. Tailoring learning approaches to individual psychology and socio-cultural aspects, education institutions become a platform for diverse roots in the learning process. Intercultural education focuses on the relationships between individuals, aiming for students to internalize new cultures, be aware of them, and adopt new values, fostering a knowledge-based society where cultural diversity is seen as an enrichment rather than a source of fear. In the same way, social innovation acts through all ecosystems. P. Heiskalo (2007) understands social innovation as changes in the cultural, normative, and regulatory structures of society that increase the collective power of resources and improve social and economic productivity. The main value of this definition lies in pointing

to "increasing the collective power of resources". Social innovation is seen as not as an idea but as a change, which forms an alternative approach to defining the essence of social innovation. This change as was explained before acts at all levels starting from the microsystem to the macrosystem.

8. Conclusion

As a dynamic process, education must continually evolve in response to the dynamic interplay between society and culture, mirroring the changes in the broader societal landscape. Intercultural education is a multifaceted process that demands adaptation from schools, teachers, students, and families driven by the transformative forces of migration and globalization.

Intercultural education addresses pedagogical, psychological, and social dimensions, reinforcing cultural identity and fostering an understanding and alignment with other cultures. This intricate process necessitates the consideration of various factors, including personality aspects, cognitive peculiarities, social representations, intercultural dynamics, behaviours, societal evolution, social indicators, and shifts in values. The strategy for intercultural education is grounded in an interactive process that encompasses values, educational outcomes, rules, institutional management, and the cultivation of a desirable model of personality, collectively shaping individuals within the educational system to navigate and engage effectively with diverse social and cultural realities.

Education plays a pivotal role in shaping the human personality and serves as a conduit for the assimilation of universal human values, fostering the development of individuals into culturally creative personalities. Intercultural education is instrumental in cultivating open and creative personalities, individuals capable of embracing diverse perspectives and contributing to the harmonious coexistence of cultures within society. As stated by Spulber, (2018) *"with the assimilation of new values, education processes achieve the principal goal of growing up as a person with a strong cultural background, with an open mind ready to accept diversity.... Education has to contribute to decreasing immigration's social unrest and should reduce marginalization or social outcasts of minority groups through promoting the diversity and interaction of different cultures not only inside the school wall but also by hardening the understanding between individuals and groups in the social reality and consequently contributing to realizing a social cohesion"*. The education applies to the persons and act through person to the society, in the meantime, the SI acts directly at the societal level as a response to the social unrest. According to the five parameters of social innovation identified by Bourque, Proulx and Fréchette (2007) adding the Bronfenbrenner Ecosystem Theory and later interpretation and connection of intercultural education done by Spulber, 2018 it is possible to sustain that

1) Social innovation is a response or solution to a social problem observed at the microsocial or local level and intercultural education acts to prevent the microsocial conflict.

2) Social innovation pursues a social goal and is based on values that inspire a certain number of social actors located in this microsocial context and intercultural education is helpful to arrive to the intercultural values of the society.

3) Social innovation as Intercultural education is the result of the mobilization of several players.

4) Social innovation must "find takers" while intercultural education aims to be an indispensable condition to be able to talk about shared values and cultural contamination with the aims of a sustainable society.

5) In the medium to long term, social innovation must move beyond the experimental phase and enter into a long process of institutionalization, just as intercultural education must become a structural process for education

The overarching goal of intercultural education extends beyond individual development, seeking to enhance social cohesion by promoting understanding, tolerance, and mutual respect among culturally diverse communities. By nurturing open-mindedness and creativity, intercultural education becomes potent in mitigating social unrest triggered by immigration challenges, fostering a more inclusive and integrated societal fabric. In essence, the transformative power of intercultural education and social innovation not only shapes individuals but also plays a crucial role in building bridges between cultures, fostering a shared sense of humanity, and paving the way for a more cohesive and harmonious society these results are emphasized also by social innovation.

Acknowledgments: This publication is provided in the frame of Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence "EU Studies of Social Innovations in Education" (ESSIE) - 101085552 - ERASMUS-JMO-2022-COE. The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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