



## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

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#### *Introduction*

On September 20-21, 2007 Seville will be the venue for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Network on Cultural Policy (INCP). As a proposal of the Spanish Culture Ministry, host of the meeting, one of the subjects to be discussed is Intercultural Dialogue.

This document provides a synthesis of the responses received to the Intercultural Dialogue questionnaire developed by the Spanish Ministry of Culture to the Member Countries of the INCP as part of the preparatory work for the September meeting. The aim is to provide INCP Ministers with a document based on the specific experiences of its Member Countries, illustrating the best practices that may help to draw up public policies intended to build dynamic, creative and fruitful societies, characterised by social inclusion and cohesion in a context of growing cultural diversity.

The countries that have contributed to the questionnaire developed by Spain are Germany, Angola, Armenia, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Cuba, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece Mexico, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland<sup>1</sup>. This document's structure is based on the same layout as the questionnaire and follows its index.

#### **1. *Intercultural Dialogue – Definition***

This first section, after a short introduction and some proposals for definitions enclosed in an appendix, requested information about the existence of an official definition in the different states about the concept of intercultural dialogue.

The general reply was that an official definition of the term intercultural dialogue (DIC) has not been adopted in any of the member States. On some occasions, such as for example the case of European countries, reference is made to the definition put forward by the Council of Europe and covered in the questionnaire for preparation of the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue<sup>2</sup> as a definition acceptable for the states.

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<sup>1</sup> The replies were in some cases of very different lengths, meaning that this may give rise to imbalances in the level of the different countries' representation in this.

<sup>2</sup> “*Intercultural dialogue is an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that leads to a deeper understanding of the other's world perception*”. Questionnaire distributed to the member states of the Council of Europe in March 2007.

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

The different replies given by the member states indicate some difficulty in reaching consensus about the definition of this concept. In spite of this, three main tendencies can be drawn from them, in overall lines.

First of all, a meaning of DIC almost exclusively covering everything referring to foreign relations; that is, the cases in which “national culture” or national cultures – without specifying the number – come into contact with other cultures outside the frontiers of the state but without stating, at least explicitly, that multiple cultural identities may (co)exist in the same state.

Secondly, a sense of DIC understood in the framework of an integration process. This definition stems from respect for difference and understands DIC as being a tool for coming into contact with “otherness” in an area of mutual respect and understanding. This concept entails defining a “one” and “another”; it takes for granted that the dialogue process is intended to integrate the “otherness” in the area of the “one” –the host setting - in total freedom and with the safeguard of differences, but does not take into consideration the changes that integration represents in the “host culture”.

Finally, a third meaning is shared by the States which consider DIC to be a dialogue in its broadest sense and closely associate this with cooperation and exchange on all levels. In general, this approach to intercultural dialogue starts from a conception of identity as something multiple and not only connected with nationality, but also with the sphere of gender, socio-economic situation, etc.

One should also add that, as was already mentioned, the differences in the definition of this concept also correspond to different socio-cultural realities where this is applied and where this is mainly focalised. Intercultural dialogue does not take on the same significance for states in which there are large amounts of immigration, or whose immigration rate has considerably increased over the last twenty years, and where the cultural encounter may also come along with other conditioning factors, such as for example the newcomers’ lack of economic resources or their irregular situation, both often factors that are interconnected.

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

Apart from this, the states with native populations and major social inequalities are not in the same situation as described above either; in this case the problem involves not an immigrant population but populations which have historically, and above all through situations of poverty, remained outside the country's political and social life. Finally one should add that there are many states which, though they do not give an official definition of the term "intercultural dialogue", do indeed incorporate the value and safeguarding of cultural diversity in different regulatory documents and official strategic plans.

Some of the different official measures adopted by states and mentioned in the questionnaire there are as follows:

- in 1989 the French government set up the Haut Conseil pour l'Intégration;
- in 1997 the Swiss Parliament adopted the motto Sweden, the future and diversity – from an immigration policy to an integration policy, in relation with integration policies
- Germany has recently launched a national plan for Integration which considers cultural diversity in areas such as education, employment, local policies, sports or the communication media, while the channels for cross-border cooperation are bolstered;
- The Barbados government allocates a section to intercultural cohesion in the Strategic National Plan;
- The Republic of Armenia states in its 2002 "Law on principals of cultural legislation" the protection of the minority ethnic groups' cultures and defines the right to take part in cultural life;
- Since 1971 Canada has had multicultural policies supporting ethno-cultural minorities to foster an increase in their participation in social life;
- Portugal has created a High Commissioner for immigrants and Intercultural Dialogue to replace the former High Commissioner for Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities, and is one of the few public bodies to include the term Intercultural Dialogue;

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

- In Spain, in the VIII Iberoamerican Conference of Ministers of Culture (Cordova, 13-14 June 2005) it was agreed to adopt an Iberoamerican Cultural Chart. This Chart was adopted in the IX Conference (Montevideo, 13-14 July 2006);
- In Finland the approach to intercultural dialogue has to be pragmatic and performed through support for immigrants' groups and associations, and through granting resources for international cooperation and integration, festivals, etc.
- In Cuba the definition of DIC is inextricably connected to its particular political situation, since this country concentrates on the respect for sovereignty, non-intervention and each people's right to freely build in peace, stability and justice, its political system and (...) the constitution of a national identity;
- In Spain, "A National Commission for Enhancing the Intercultural Dialogue" has been adopted in the framework of the European Year for the Intercultural Dialogue (2008). The setting-up of this Commission assures the Spanish participation at national, regional and local levels.

## 2. *Intercultural dialogue and peace*

In general, almost all states claim that they reflect the cultural dimension in their international activities; they also assert the need to bond interior cultural policies with foreign cultural policies, as well as the advantage of incorporating the cultural dimension in foreign policies, as a further factor for helping to settle conflicts between cultures and safeguard peace. In spite of this, one should add that in certain cases, such as that of Switzerland, it was explicitly mentioned in the reply that intercultural dialogue in itself is not enough to further mutual respect and peace.

As regards the bodies entrusted with cultural relations abroad, most of the countries affirm that the relation between the Ministry of Culture and that of Foreign Affairs is particularly close. Sometimes there are bodies specifically created for coordination of both ministries in the form of committees responsible for a specific programme, of agencies responsible for permanent coordination between both ministries, or of branches of official cultural institutes. There is also a last group of countries in which, even though there is no actual body carrying out the coordination work, fluid contacts are kept up between both ministries as well as regular meetings.

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

One should add that the different states stress the diffusion of culture through headquarters of cultural centres, institutions, etc. abroad. A large number of these have some institution entrusted with this work, or failing this, it is the culture department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which handles this sort of measures, often by means of consulates and embassies.

Among the different examples which were requested in the questionnaire in relation with activities and projects, one should stress that most European States place a lot of hope in the projects that will be carried out during 2008 in the framework of the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue, coordinated by the European Union. We will now give some examples of events, activities and initiatives which have appeared in the replies<sup>3</sup>:

- In the framework of the European Union, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the role of the work done by the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures, Anna Lindh;
- L'initiative de Montreux, a project with Islamic associations set up after the "11th September" and intended to open a dialogue to re-establish trust between those who have different world views (Switzerland);
- "The Bicentennial Global Dialogue: The Slave Trade, Reconciliation and Social Justice" (Barbados, 2007) is an endeavour which fosters ethnic and integration studies, amongst others;
- "Routes of the Olive Tree" and "The Vine Wine Routes", European cultural routes as a tool for intercultural dialogue, sustainable development, cultural tourism and European integration (Greece);
- "Global Centre for Pluralism" a secular and non-governmental and international institution (Canada).

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<sup>3</sup> In view of the many examples given, the selection of these examples was made depending on the type of project represented by each of these, meaning that similar projects contributed by other states may possibly not have been mentioned, for reasons of space.

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

Finally, we should point out that all the States stress the importance of belonging to multilateral bodies such as UNESCO and the European Council or, as has been mentioned above, the work of the councils of arts and headquarters of cultural institutions promoting the country's culture abroad. Most of the states also emphasise the importance of the ratification of the Convention on the protection and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions of the UNESCO, participation in international networks such as RIPC, cross-border and regional cooperation with neighbouring countries, etc.

No example of international-scale activity involving intercultural dialogue failing to have obtained the expected results was mentioned in any of the cases put forward, in spite of this information being requested in one of the survey's questions.

### **3. *Intercultural dialogue, social cohesion, and cooperation for development***

The great majority of states acknowledge the importance of the cultural dimension in policies of social cohesion and consider as a rule that participation in culture, society and public life is one of the ways to foster the feeling of belonging and to reinforce cohesion.

To this end one of the most widespread strategies consists in favouring the recognition of minority cultures and excluded social groups by providing visibility at festivals and different cultural activities and providing support – mainly economic, for the different cultural associations and activities promoted by this sector.

In this respect one should also mention the different socio-economic situations in which the countries surveyed find themselves. Brazil, for example, indicates the importance of social insertion policies as the first essential step to being able to talk of cohesion. Socio-economic inequalities mean that Brazil stresses two projects as main activities in this section: the “Programa Cultura Viva” (an organic cultural management and creation network, responsible for coordinating a set of measures encouraging creativity in low-income communities) and the “Bolsa de Familia” (direct transfer of income to families at particular times to fight hunger). Having said this, similar processes for fostering social insertion in which different ministries– Culture, Employment and Social Affairs - are involved also exist in countries such as Greece, Barbados, Switzerland, France, etc.

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

As already mentioned, one of the main activities stressed in different questionnaires is that of holding festivals, exhibitions etc. to give visibility to the cultural production of minority groups of different states. Similarly general exchange with other countries is fostered, above all as regards young people and residences for artists and creators. On the other hand, in countries such as Armenia, Canada and Denmark there is great awareness of the need to provide support for cultural organisations working on interculturality, for promoting the development of local-scale actions fostering the involvement – mainly of young people – with their setting, for offering space for the different audiences forming the population reality of the different states (for example, opening up the concept of heritage assets) and or organising events implying the participation and cooperation with other states such as heritage, musical, artistic gastronomic routes or holding sports events.

Some of the replies also mentioned the need to offer not only visibility to excluded populations but also to foster their participation in society and even in the process for designing public policies. This is the case of Brazil, where consultancy bodies with different groups of civil society are set up for both designing and implementing public policies and drawing up National Culture Plans. On the whole, society's role as a consultant in designing and appraising cultural policies is widely valued very highly and sometimes stressing the necessity of work as a network between concerns of civil society, associations, institutions and research through special programmes such as FORTEIL in Germany.

As regards the bodies with the task of coordinating different measures and endeavours, the first of these is the Ministry of Culture; there is also mention of Ministries of Employment, of Social Affairs and in some cases the Ministries of the Interior. In certain states there are also other bodies such as governmental offices for cooperation with civil society, governmental foundations for development of civil society, specific government programmes on multiculturalism and the action plans and national networks against racism, xenophobia and exclusion. For example, in Portugal, the High Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue coordinates the country's 13 ministries with responsibility in the field of social inclusion and also works with immigrants' associations and NGOs. Apart from this, the national strategic plans of Barbados and Croatia have incorporated the social cohesion factor. To this end, the Ministry for Social Change of Barbados works with different cultural associations, both in the design and the implementation of policies, and will shortly adopt a Charter on Rights for Civil Society. In this respect we should add that Canada sets interministerial cooperation, insofar as this refers to social cohesion policies, as one of the priorities of its Multicultural Programme.

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

In some cases, states with less immigration tradition, but in which these rates are increasing (Estonia), have made progress in drawing up fuller Integration Plans since up to now the main stress was placed only on language and education.

Apart from this, in the section on social cohesion some states thought it appropriate to emphasise questions connected with multilingualism. For example, in states where different official languages coexist, as is the case of Switzerland or Croatia, the importance of cultural minorities preserving their own languages in both socialisation and education is underlined.

Tangentially connected with these matters is the case of the French state, in which respect for cultural diversity is fostered partly through the creation of a Commission of images of diversity which grants aid to French cinema and audiovisual productions, with a view to fighting the major lobbies in the sector such as the north-American one in English.

We should finally point out that in some cases the use of the term social cohesion policies is criticised, proposing cultural, educational or social policies as a more appropriate term, as all of these contribute to social cohesion. The following projects refer to these:

- Intergram, in Switzerland, whose aim is to facilitate the search for work for foreigners;
- Programmes of vocational and language and customs training existing in Sweden, Switzerland and Germany;
- The different urban development management programmes implemented in the city of Helsinki, where since 1991 the immigration policy has been connected with urban policies;
- The programme for comprehensive development of culture of the native peoples and communities in Mexico, which sets out to reinforce minority native cultures as well as their self-management capacity.

Projects and programmes of research of the German government to strengthen a particularly affected group as is that of immigrant women.

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

#### 4. *Intercultural dialogue and youth*

All the states express in general that young people are one of the priority action groups in these matters. Insofar as education systems are concerned, intercultural dialogue is considered as being something transversal to all the others, though at times it may have a specific presence in the study syllabus. As a rule, most states refer to the need to pass on the value of intercultural dialogue at schools, for example, concentrating this as a subject in a theatre, photography, painting etc. competition (Portugal) or organising seminars on “artistic education and intercultural dialogue” (France). In some cases (Sweden, Switzerland) reference is made to the efforts to appropriately cater for immigrant students, or cultural minorities of the same country, through programmes for supporting language learning for example, or even by giving specialised training to teachers to be able to tackle the challenge of a multicultural classroom. Exchange with students from other countries is also encouraged, not only on the higher education level, but also in secondary education (Canada, Greece). One should add that on occasions (Sweden) they also stress the importance of work as a network between the school, parents and students.

Furthermore, as is the case of Finland, Sweden or Greece, it is mentioned that intercultural dialogue must have an influence and be considered as a transversal factor in higher education syllabuses.

But as regards young people, several states, such as Armenia, Denmark, Finland, Mexico, Denmark, Sweden, Cuba or Switzerland, give major emphasis to the work done in the sector of non-formal education to foster young people’s acquisition of capacities for dialogue and life in diversified societies. This work is promoted and coordinated mainly by the different youth councils – or similar bodies – existing in the different states, and by the Ministries of Culture, Employment or Social Affairs, as well as by the Ministries of Integration, where applicable. One of the essential aspects of this work is managing to make young people feel implicated in their setting and responsible for this; as an example we could mention the case of the Cultural Exchange Workshops in Mexico and the different endeavours fostered in Barbados.

In non-formal education, states such as Canada and Denmark also promote young people’s exchange visits through volunteer programmes, sports events or activities such as competitions and festivals, which allow encounters between young people belonging to different realities. In the case of native populations these activities are also fostered on a national level.

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

In countries with great socio-economic inequalities, there are programmes intended for young people focussing mainly on the professional and artistic training of marginalised groups, with the aim of providing training and above all empowerment and implication in social life. We could mention the ProJovem y Cultura Viva Programme in Brazil as an example.

In general all the European States mention the expectations aroused by the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue of 2008. Apart from this the diverse initiatives which have taken place up to now in relation with young people are highly valued and as in previous cases, without mentioning the undertaking of activities which have not obtained the expected results, although reference is indeed made on one occasion – in the case of Denmark – to the need for Ministries of Education and Culture to assign further resources to implementing specific policies for minorities, immigration and intercultural dialogue.

#### 5. *Intercultural dialogue in cultural policies*

As regards intercultural dialogue and cultural policies, states mention on several occasions that following the UNESCO'S 2005 Convention on protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions is vital. They also underline the role of other international bodies such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) –mentioned by Canada- or the Latin American Culture Charter (2006), referred to in the Cuban questionnaire.

Some of the aspects considered of special relevance are the need to reinforce the presence of diverse cultural expressions configuring a state's mosaic of cultures in museums, culture centres, libraries, cinemas, festivals, etc. (Mexico, Brazil, Estonia, Sweden, Greece, Croatia) and above all, in the communication media, such as the television and radio (Armenia, Finland, Sweden). The questionnaires put forward many examples of culture centres, associations press, etc. (Sweden, Germany, Armenia) which are given support by the state to ensure their existence and provide channels for extending the right to participation in cultural life. Furthermore, in some states specialised libraries, arts centres, museums of the world cultures, intercultural centres etc., have been created. As regards the communication media, in some cases, such as Canada for example, the television broadcasting channels have established broadcasting quotas to ensure the diversity of the public television available; aid has also been offered for this type of programming, publications, broadcasting on the radio, etc. In Spain some public services broadcasting offers some daily programmes focussed on migrants.

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

As regards the financing of activities designed to create spaces for visibility and expression in the media, states such as Portugal claim that work with associations representing immigrants, of cultural minorities or population sectors with a risk of exclusion is vital. On one hand they say that the state should provide economic aid to these associations, but they also state on occasions that the role of the state should be that of an agent coordinating the different concerns and institutions taking part, with no need to go into matters of contents.

On the other hand, in some cases, such as for example that of Finland, it is also affirmed that not only intercultural dialogue but also dialogue in general needs to be reinforced, pointing out the need to create spaces in which progress can be made in practising this in all sectors.

Emphasis is also placed on incorporating these sectors, not only in the area specifically referring to the arts, but for their participation to be developed on the different levels of consultancy and design of public policies. From this stance cultural policies take on a transversal aspect which must be interrelated with a state's different ministries in the development of their different policies and strategic lines, though in most of the cases, save some exceptions, this is an approach which is not covered in any regulatory document.

Finally one ought to point out some specific programmes such as the "Multiculturality Year", held in Sweden in 2006, for proposals designed to strengthen the country's cultural diversity; as well as the scheme entitled "Ethnography of Mexico's Native Regions" fostered by Mexico on the grounds of the need to extend and update knowledge on Mexico's native peoples, to understand their dynamics and bolster the formation of interethnic regions in national territory.

### *Conclusions*

What can mainly be gleaned from this questionnaire is that there is widespread consensus on the importance of introducing intercultural dialogue into the formulation of strategies and programmes of public policies either in the strictly cultural sphere but also transversally, in the social sectors as a whole. In spite of the mechanisms for formulating these policies differing from one state to the next, the concern with the importance of introducing this aspect into the political agenda is clearly accepted.



## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

In this respect one could add that intercultural dialogue is as a rule seen as a tool for respect between cultures, keeping the peace and as a process required for fostering citizens' participation and social cohesion. Although, as has also been pointed out on several occasions, this is a necessary but not sufficient factor, and other kinds of social measures are also needed to attain said aims. Young people can also be seen as one of the groups on which a special influence has to be exerted, either through their particular vulnerability to exclusion, the speed of social changes and the cultural paradigms of globalisation, or because these are the citizens of the future, the ones who will really have to know how to use the tools required for harmonious coexistence in a diverse multicultural society. A good deal of the programmes referred to herein are aimed at these, and this population sector was also the one in which the different initiatives got under way obtained the most satisfactory results.

Apart from this, one cannot fail to mention the hopes of the European states as regards the opportunity meant by the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue for advancing in these questions and raising the awareness of the population about the importance of intercultural dialogue in a society where diversity represents a positive factor to be safeguarded, as well as the importance, common to all states, of implementing the principles of the Convention on the protection and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions of the UNESCO.

**TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY**

**Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue**

**September 2007**

---

**Annex**

***Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue***

**1. *Defining of Intercultural Dialogue***

Despite the increasing use of the term "intercultural dialogue", a commonly accepted definition has not yet been adopted. As such, the different activities created to promote this dialogue in various states have also taken different approaches, such as: exchange programmes between countries, grants funds for cultural associations and centres that represent minorities, training and resources for integration, festivals, etc.

- a) *Does your country have an official definition of or stance on "intercultural dialogue"? If so, what is it?*
- b) *If not, is there any consensus or commonly accepted definition for referring to "intercultural dialogue"? What groups are included in these definitions?*

**2. *Intercultural Dialogue and Peace***

In recent years, intercultural dialogue has emerged as a key factor in establishing strong foreign relations that are based on mutual respect and cooperation. The international community has recognized that incorporating the cultural dimension to the international negotiations agenda has significantly contributed to establishing the basis of a political pedagogy for overcoming conflicts between cultures.

- a) *Is the cultural dimension reflected in your country's foreign policy initiatives? If so, how does your country ensure cooperation and coordination between governmental departments responsible for culture and foreign affairs? Also, how does your country assure cooperation with other possible stakeholders?*
- b) *Please describe an example of a recent initiative by your government, involving intercultural dialogue in the context of international relations.*

## TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue

September 2007

---

#### 3. *Intercultural Dialogue, Social Cohesion and Cooperation for Development*

The international community has increasingly come to regard intercultural dialogue as a fundamental component of active citizenship. Recent studies have demonstrated that through intercultural dialogue, citizens feel committed to and participate for the community's benefit. Dialogue between citizens of different cultures may thus be a tool that will allow them to live together- more harmoniously- in the spaces where they share their daily lives (i.e. at school, at work, etc.).

As well, Intercultural dialogue is a factor in flexibility and adaptation to the changes in human resources. It may therefore be a factor in improving the employability of the population and the quality of the employment environment.

- a) *Does your country formally recognize the importance of the cultural dimension in the development of social cohesion policies? If so, how does your country ensure cooperation and coordination between governmental departments responsible for culture policy and those responsible for social cohesion policies? Also, how does your country assure cooperation with other possible government stakeholders?*
- b) *What role does your country's civil society element play in helping to design, manage or assess policies in the field of social cohesion?*
- c) *Please describe an example of a recent initiative by your government, involving intercultural dialogue in the context of social cohesion policies.*

#### 4. *Intercultural Dialogue and Youth*

Recent case studies have shown that culture is an effective tool in reducing the sense of alienation facing young people from marginalized groups (underprivileged environment and/or ethno-cultural minority communities) within community life. Arts and culture programs that exist both within and apart from academic curricula have been used to create a sense of belonging and pride among marginalized young people. Some of these programs also include a training component. By seeking to develop certain basic skills, these initiatives also ensure the constructive and active participation of these young people in their community's life, since they will thereby be better equipped to enter the labour market.

- a) *How have intercultural dynamics been incorporated in academic and training policies in your country?*

**TENTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY**

**Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue**

**September 2007**

---

- b) *If applicable, please describe an example of a recent initiative by your government, which underlines and promotes the importance of engaging youth in intercultural dialogue. Please describe how your country ensures cooperation and coordination between governmental department responsible for developing cultural policy and other possible government stakeholders.*

**5. *Intercultural Dialogue in Cultural Policy***

The adoption of the UNESCO *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, by establishing a link between the management of domestic diversity and the promotion of international cultural diversity and by promoting new policies based on the recognition of diversity, should also have an impact on how Cultural Policy is designed.

- a) *Please describe an example of a recent initiative by your government, involving intercultural dialogue in the context of cultural policy.*
- b) *What effects have the notions of "intercultural dialogue" and "cultural diversity" had on cultural regulations and in how cultural policies and programs are designed in your country?*
- c) *What groups are the policies that are developed in this regard aimed at? What role is given to the target groups in the design, management or assessment of policies in the cultural sphere?*