



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

### Spanish Questionnaire on Intercultural Dialogue Executive Summary

August 2007

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#### *Introduction*

This document provides a preliminary analysis of the answers obtained in the questionnaire on intercultural dialogue. The questionnaire was distributed by the Spanish government to the members of the International Network on Cultural Policy (INCP) in preparation for the second plenary session of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the INCP, to be held September 20 and 21 in Seville, Spain.

The aim of this comparative study is to help the INCP ministers engage in dynamic dialogue on best practices for developing public policy designed to build dynamic, creative societies characterized by social cohesion and inclusiveness in a context of growing cultural diversity.

This document provides an overview of the positions of the countries that answered the questionnaire. This will be further developed in the future with concrete data and examples provided by the countries themselves in their answers.

#### *1. Intercultural dialogue – Definition*

In this initial section, after a brief introduction and some proposed definitions contained in an appended document, the member states were asked whether their countries have an official definition of the concept of intercultural dialogue.

In general, the countries replied that they have not adopted an official definition of intercultural dialogue. In some cases (e.g. the countries of the European Union) they referred to the definition given by the Council of Europe in its questionnaire for the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue distributed recently among its member countries.

On the basis of the answers received, it can be inferred that the difficulty in finding consensus on the meaning of this concept is due not only to its vagueness, but also to the different social realities in the countries where this term is used.

Intercultural dialogue does not have the same meaning in countries that receive large volumes of immigrants, where the meeting of cultures is combined with other factors such as the newcomers' lack of economic resources. The meaning is different in countries that receive lower immigration from Europe, the United States, etc.

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On the other hand, countries with aboriginal populations and large social disparities are not in the same situation. They are not dealing with recent immigrants but people who have been on the fringe of the country's political and social life and whose situation is often associated with poverty.

Nevertheless, in most cases, there is a commonly accepted, if not official, definition of what intercultural dialogue means: communication between the various sectors of society, respect for others and, mutual influence of cultures and ideas – not only at the international level, but also in each individual country. On this last point, it should be noted that some countries are exceptions, basing intercultural dialogue on international cooperation and the export of their culture abroad, but not affirming intercultural dialogue between the different sectors of their own society.

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

In general, almost all the countries affirm that they reflect the cultural dimension in their international activities and acknowledge the need to combine domestic cultural policy with external cultural policy. Some of them have special agencies to coordinate relations between the ministry of foreign affairs and the ministry of culture – the ministries most often cited as dealing with this issue. Others state that they maintain fluid contacts between both ministries, along with regular, periodic meetings. As well, respondents also highlighted the importance of belonging to multilateral agencies such as UNESCO, active participation in the Council of Europe or the work of arts councils and cultural institutions that promote the country's culture abroad.

With regard to interministerial coordination of activities at the national level, different examples can be found.

Among the various activities mentioned are participation in the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, ratification of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, participation in international networks such as the INCP, cooperation with neighboring countries and, again, establishment of cultural institutes and arts councils abroad, etc.

None of the countries mentioned any example of an activity involving intercultural dialogue at the international level that has not achieved the anticipated results, despite the fact that this information was requested in one of the questions in the questionnaire.

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

The great majority of the countries recognize the importance of the cultural dimension of policies on social cohesion, and in general they consider participation in society and in public life to be one of the ways of fostering a sense of belonging and social cohesion. Some of the most widespread strategies are recognition of minority cultures and of excluded social groups by providing them with visibility in the organization of festivals and cultural activities; and giving support –mainly economic– to the various cultural associations and activities promoted by this sector.

However, mention is also made of the need not only to give recognition, but also to foster participation in society, including in the process of public policy design, as in the case of Brazil. There consultative bodies are established with various civil society groups in order to involve them in both the design and the implementation of public policy.

Only in exceptional cases does civil society play a large role in the design, evaluation and administration of cultural policy – for example, in Brazil. However, in general, civil society plays a considerable role in extra-governmental consultative bodies, which are valued by the various countries. Furthermore, civil society plays a key role in the conduct of cultural activities, and, in general, has the support of the national governments.

Finally, some respondents are critical of the use of the term *social cohesion policy* and prefer to speak of cultural, educational or social policies, since these all contribute to social cohesion.

These activities are coordinated primarily by the ministries of culture, along with the ministries of labour, social affairs and, in some cases, ministries of the interior. However, in some countries there are also other bodies –such as government offices for cooperation with civil society, government agencies for the development of civil society, specific government programs on multiculturalism, action plans and national networks against racism, xenophobia and exclusion– that coordinate the activities of various organizations.

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As mentioned earlier, one of the main activities mentioned in various questionnaires is the holding of festivals, exhibitions, courses, etc. to give visibility to the cultural endeavours of minority groups in the country and also from abroad. Likewise, in general, exchanges with other countries are encouraged, especially for youth, and artists and creative persons in residence. On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, there is keen awareness of the need to provide support to cultural organizations that work in the area of intercultural relations, by promoting efforts at the local level to encourage involvement –mainly of youth– with their surroundings, social integration and reintegration programs for excluded groups through professional and arts training; by providing forums for the various audiences that make up the population of the different countries; and by organizing events involving participation and cooperation with other countries through heritage, musical, artistic, gastronomic or sporting events.

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

The various countries are generally aware that youth is a priority group for action in cultural matters. With regard to education systems, intercultural dialogue is generally treated as a matter cutting across all other sectors, and may even be on the curriculum. In some cases, respondents mention efforts to provide adequate attention to immigrant students (i.e. support for special language programs) and specialized training in these matters for teachers. Some countries provide support for student exchanges with other countries, not only at the level of higher education but also at the secondary level.

In addition to making cultural dialogue present in the formal education of youth, emphasis is also placed on work being done in informal education to train young people in dialogue and how to live in a diverse society. This work is basically promoted and coordinated by youth councils in the different countries, and the ministries of Culture, Labour and Social Affairs, as well as ministries of Integration. In terms of informal education, exchanges are promoted through volunteer programs and youth sporting events, in addition to activities (prizes, contests, festivities, etc.) that bring together youth from different backgrounds. In some cases this is also done at the national level (e.g. in countries with aboriginal populations).

In poorer countries, youth programs are aimed mainly at occupational and artistic training of marginal groups, with a view to providing training and, in particular, empowerment and involvement in social life.

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In general, the respondents mention the expectations attached to the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008. The various youth initiatives that have been carried out so far are highly valued. As in previous cases, no mention is made of activities that have not achieved the desired results, although in the case of Denmark, reference is made to the need for the ministries of Education and Culture to allocate more funding to implement policies on minorities, immigration and intercultural dialogue.

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

On this matter, several respondents comment that it is crucial to follow up the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

It is generally considered especially important to strengthen various cultural institutions that make up a country's cultural mosaic – i.e. museums, cultural centers, libraries, cinemas, festivals, and especially the media (TV and radio). Some also remark that it is not only cultural dialogue that needs to be strengthened, but also dialogue in general, noting the need to create forums for this type of dialogue.

For this purpose, some countries have created specialized libraries, arts centers, museums of world cultures, intercultural centers, etc. In the case of the media, some countries, such as Canada, have created broadcast quotas for television stations in order to ensure diversity of programming on public television, in addition to offering support for the production of such programming.

It is really important to work with associations of immigrants and cultural minorities to create such forums for visibility and expression. Some respondents affirm that, in such cases, the state should only coordinate the various participating bodies and institutions, but should not concern itself with content issues.

Lastly, it is stressed that these sectors should be included not only in the arts specifically, but also in the different levels of public policy consultation and design. According to this view, cultural policies cut across all sectors and should involve the various government ministries in the development of policies and strategies. However, with few exceptions, this approach is not set forth in any regulatory instrument.

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**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.*

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#### 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.

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