

Chapter 5

Integra(-te): Project Based on Integrative Science, Entrepreneurial, and Multicultural Activities

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ABSTRACT

The diversity transferred through the migratory pathways conveys new challenges to the higher education institutions regarding the conception of new strategies and educational resources that promote integration, interaction, intercultural dialogue, collective social capital, and individual skills. Thus, between 2016-2018, Bragança Ciência Viva Science Center in partnership with Polytechnic Institute of Bragança promoted the project “INTEGRA(-TE): Scientific Routes for an Intercultural Integration.” This project aimed a group of young foreigner students from a Community of Portuguese Language Countries who studied at IPB and lived in Bragança, using scientific, technological, pedagogical, and entrepreneurial experiences. The first edition of the project involved n=110 students and the second n=124 students. Overall, results from these editions pointed a very positive result and suggested an increased labor opportunity created by practical entrepreneurial actions.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is either intercultural or not democratic (ENED, 2015; Escarbajal-Frutos et al., 2019). This unquestionable engine for human development is also one of the cornerstones of migrant's community integration and a support of their migratory pathways construction (ODI, 2015; Papademetriou & Benton, 2016; Pascouau et al., 2016).

The profound socioeconomic changes in the second half of the 20th century led to an European status alteration, as a whole, in the international immigration panorama. The region of economic prosperity, relatively high level of political stability and democratic principles, have been for decades, appealing to many migrants, and became a major area of immigrants' reception.

Portugal also accompanied this change (Tomás et al., 2011). In the 1990s, started the beginning of immigrants' flows from Brazil and Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP). In the second half of that decade and up to the first years of the present one, the main immigration flows came predominantly from Eastern European countries. Simultaneously, we saw a reinforcement of immigration from Brazil and a diversification of the origins of the immigrant groups, which now also include significant numbers of Asian nationals (Oliveira & Gomes, 2018; OCDE, 2018). The composition of the European Union population is thus changing, and European societies are faced with increasing diversity.

European countries have a diverse history about migration. If for some it is a phenomenon, for others - those that had a colonial past, as Portugal - it has been a familiar aspect for many years, and thus political reality and social sensitivities often varies. In Portugal, this trend also brought the need for official policies, either in the view of the migration landscape protection, either by impositions placed by the signature of European Community treaties (e.g. Schengen and Amsterdam) and Tampere or Seville Summits, that would articulate the entry control and the immigrants' integration (Tomás et al., 2011).

Two actions plans have displayed an important role, and provided a coherent framework in this policies integration: National Action Plan for Inclusion (Plano Nacional de Ação para a Inclusão – PNAI), approved in 2006, and the National Plan for Immigrants Integration (Plano para a Integração de Imigrantes – PII), recognized in 2007 (PII, 2010; PNAI, 2006; Rodrigues, 2008). Both plans define specific measures and establish clear professional, social and cultural targets, foreseen the integration of migration population (Tomás et al., 2011). Moreover, globalization and accessibility have significantly accelerated these migratory flows, which play a crucial role in a country's development.

Moreover, the European Council has made strong efforts to create a “democratic citizenship education” as a priority area of its policy. In this sense, many initiatives are being implemented in Europe (e.g. ENED, Gene - European network for global education and development, CAD/OCDE, CLONG, among others). Within these policies, education process, either in formal and / or non-formal contexts, has been affirmed as an instrument against discrimination, exclusion, and neocolonialism (ENED, 2015), and their access has been facilitated as a mean of promoting justice, freedom, human rights and peace (ENED, 2015).

Thus, global education emerged as an attempt to systematize the pedagogies and bring them to the individual curriculum, beyond the possibility to open the path to a better understanding of the globalized world and to foster participative civic engagement in finding solutions to common challenges. Promoting new ways of thinking and acting towards a more engaged and critical citizenship, has been the purpose of many pedagogic principles that preceded and motivated the concept of global education.

Herein, it is particularly relevant to mention the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) not only because it is the main international reference framework linking human rights

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