





## Intercultural educational science

Educational action cannot replace politics. But it is not only the realization of socio-political requirements, it also includes their analysis and critical review. Political decisions must warrant the social framework in which people can exercise their basic rights and live together in democratic structures. In many areas politics still needs to create such conditions. In a situation of confusion, where individual knowledge, social forms of behaviour, and personal action can no longer rely on established traditions for guidance, education becomes key. In an environment of incessant change, it provides orientation and becomes essential for the lifelong process of the human quest for identity. Education signifies not only the communication of knowledge and skills, it also appertains to the development of social skills and personal integrity. The aim of intercultural education is to communicate insights, to reinforce motivations, and to encourage forms of action that empower people to exercise their basic rights and to contribute actively to the shaping of democratic, pluralistic societies. Changing social and cultural conditions make it essential to meet with other cultures and ways of life in an understanding environment. Intercultural education considers cultural diversity an enrichment to the individual and advocates peaceful coexistence. It aspires to create an awareness for things shared and discrepancies with one's own cultural system of orientation, by encouraging people to deal with other forms of perception and thought, different value systems and customs and to learn to understand these, with the aim to allow people of different cultural origin to meet with mutual respect and appreciation. To this effect, intercultural education explicitly decries all forms of violence and marginalization, xenophobia, and racism.

## Interkulturelles Zentrum aims and field of work

The work of Interkulturelles Zentrum gives priority to self-reflective, experience-oriented, and social learning processes before the receptive acquisition of knowledge and the practice of purely technical exercises. Personal encounters and joint action are contributions considered central to the development of an awareness and appreciation toward and of people with other worldviews and ways of life. Intercultural experience during one's childhood, adolescence, or adulthood can generate just as much curiosity for the unknown and open association with foreign cultures as xenophobia, and mono-cultural isolation. The Positive experience of encountering things or people foreign is rare; it requires planned educational preparation, guidance, and reflection. Interkulturelles Zentrum promotes the development of relations between people of different cultural origin and trains people to carry out practical intercultural work (e.g. multipliers in youth work, educators). Beyond this, the Centre defines itself as a mediator between political decision-makers and culturally active institutions (e.g. youth organizations, basis initiatives) with the aim to generate additional high-quality opportunities for trans-national meetings and cooperation.



