



## APPROACHES IN SUPPORT OF HUMAN SECURITY

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In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, intercultural approaches contribute to ensuring and maintaining human security. In various forms of materialization, they promote open, tolerant, accepting and understanding attitudes, as well as the recognition and respect for cultural differences among people. Intercultural education, appreciated as a new level of education necessary for the realities of today's world and a means of resolving intercultural conflicts, corresponds to the third pillar of education inscribed in the UNESCO Report on 21st Century Education – the habit of living together with the others. For human security, intercultural education has an essential role, contributing to reducing various and multiple challenges by promoting values and attitudes, such as: respect for dignity and human rights, tolerance, understanding, openness to cultural differences, civic spirit. The objective of this scientific approach is to highlight the fact that intercultural education involves an approach with an important contribution in support of human security; in order to achieve this objective, we will bring theoretical clarifications and we will highlight intercultural educational approaches at international and national level and within the European Union.

**Keywords:** intercultural awareness; multiculturalism; intercultural dialogue; intercultural education; human security; approaches.

"What we need to do is find a way to celebrate our diversity and debate our differences without breaking our communities"<sup>1</sup>

Hillary Clinton

### Brief theoretical clarifications

Theoretical conceptual clarifications are necessary at the beginning of any scientific approach, especially since there are important differences between intercultural awareness and multiculturalism. It should be noted that both perspectives recognize cultural diversity, which is "a defining characteristic of humanity; a common heritage of humanity; it creates a diverse world that increases the number of options and enriches human capabilities and values; it is indispensable for peace and security at the local, national and international levels"<sup>2</sup>.

The term *multicultural* describes the diverse cultural nature of human society, with reference to elements of ethnic or national culture, as well as linguistic, religious and socio-economic diversity. The term *intercultural* is a dynamic one and refers to the evolution of relations between cultural

groups, specifically to the existence and equitable interaction of different cultures and the possibility to generate common cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect<sup>3</sup>.

Intercultural awareness presupposes multiculturalism, but it goes beyond it, being a vision that responds to the multiple challenges of the international context, which implies openness, tolerance, understanding and mutual respect.

Addressing the aspects of intercultural awareness, Antonio Sandu mentions that intercultural awareness means "different", more precisely "an explanation of the coexistence in the given social framework of several "worlds with diverse cultural experiences"<sup>4</sup>. The term *intercultural* is used, especially, when we talk about education, and *multicultural*, when it comes to a culturally diversified society.

A differentiation between intercultural awareness and multiculturalism is shown in Table no. 1)<sup>5</sup>:

*Intercultural dialogue* strengthens respect for cultural diversity in the context of an increasingly complex and changing reality and a world in which different cultural identities and beliefs coexist.

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Table no. 1

INTERCULTURAL – MULTICULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Intercultural awareness	Multicultural awareness
It refers to the reciprocity and interdependence between different groups; communication is a tool that facilitates dialogue, exchange, mutual understanding between individuals or groups with different backgrounds and affiliations.	It refers to the culturally diverse composition of human society and expresses the diversity of ethnic, national, linguistic, religious and socio-economic culture of social systems whose cohesion is based on respect for certain norms and values
It is more interactive than multiculturalism, facilitates cultural exchange, allows for change and transformation; it promotes community cohesion through interaction, dialogue and participation in the common life of society based on what unites them and less on cultural differences.	It preserves the cultural heritage over time; it emphasizes differences and diversity.
It is a perspective encouraged and promoted in the European context.	It is specific to the Anglo-Saxon world, socio-cultural and ethnic mosaic societies (USA, Canada, Australia).

Every year, on 21 May, *World Day for Cultural Diversity, Dialogue and Development* celebrates the richness of the world’s cultures and emphasizes the essential role of intercultural dialogue in achieving peace and sustainable development.

*Intercultural education* is an answer to the problems of the contemporary world, which corresponds to the third pillar of education – *the habit of living with others*<sup>6</sup>; it is an approach to the teaching-learning process based on democratic values and beliefs that promotes cultural diversity in the context of diverse societies and an interdependent world. The founder of intercultural communication, Edward T. Hall, called its teaching *intercultural education*<sup>7</sup>. Intercultural education is “an umbrella term that includes a number of interdependent concepts encountered in the literature, such as: multicultural education, cross-cultural education, anti-racist education and the inclusion of diversity”<sup>8</sup>.

The concept of *human security*, originally defined in the Human Development Report prepared in 1994 by the United Nations Development Program, is an integrative concept whose essence is human development and the protection of human rights. By addressing human security issues, the scope of security analysis and security policy analysis extends from state security to human security. According to some authors<sup>9</sup>, human

security, together with other concepts, such as global civil society, human development and human rights, appears as a response to new challenges within states or to regional and international confrontations.

**From theory to practice, approaches in support of human security**

At international, regional and national level, the various approaches have a pronounced educational character and support the idea that intercultural education is based on a vision of a world in which human rights and human development are respected and where democratic participation and the rule of law are guaranteed to all. Dignity, tolerance, respect, friendship, understanding, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, etc. are some of the key words of the materialized approaches but also of the human security.

The United Nations, since its inception, has encouraged its recognition and acceptance of diversity and global cultural dialogue on common goals and values in support of human security; in this sense, the Charter of the United Nations (1945) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) are suggestive.

Various efforts to support human security have been carried out internationally by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;



we can mention: "Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms" (1974); "Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice" (1978); "UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression" (2005); various publications, such as "Education and Cultural Diversity" (2002), "UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education" (2006), "Learning to live together: an intercultural and interfaith program for ethics education; UNESCO – sponsored programs and publications" (2008), "Education for intercultural understanding" (2010) or "Culture in crisis: policy guide for a resilient creative sector" (2020)<sup>10</sup>.

The Council of Europe promotes human rights and upholds freedom of expression, as well as equality and the protection of minorities. Among the efforts to promote human rights and contribute to human development are: "Declaration regarding intolerance – a threat to democracy" (1981), "Recommendation R (85) 7 on Teaching and Learning about Human Rights in Schools" (1985), "White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, *Living Together Equally in Dignity*" (2008); "Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence" (2011); the course organized between October 29 and November 25, 2019<sup>11</sup>.

The European Union, a multicultural space, supports national identities by circulating cultural and spiritual values and norms in this space. Intercultural educational efforts to support human security are based on respecting the identity of the host country, exchanging knowledge and deepening mutual understanding of each other's culture, respecting and combating prejudice<sup>12</sup>. We mention: the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Articles 6 and 167) defining the role of the Union in supporting (including financial support), complementing and coordinating Member States' efforts to preserve and respect the cultural diversity of EU, expressed by the slogan "United in diversity"; Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union on key competences for lifelong learning (2006); Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and

the Committee of the Regions, *Communication on a European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World* (2007); Council Recommendation on the promotion of common values, of inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching (2018), "Creative Europe Program", 2014-2020; ERASMUS program for students. The opening of the European Union for intercultural dialogue and its contribution to the achievement of a number of EU strategic priorities culminates with the declaration of 2008 as the *European Year of Intercultural Dialogue*, by Decision no. 1983/2006/ of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Due to its geographical positioning, Romania makes the connection between the western and the eastern civilization. In the Romanian space, loaded with history and legend, multiculturalism and intercultural awareness were and remained a reality in many fields (cultural, religious, social, economic), enriching and giving uniqueness to the national specificity.

Referring to the respect of the particularities of the ethnic groups on a national level, Simion Mehedinți mentioned: "Let each one live with his language, with his law, with his art and with all of his, if he is satisfied with what he has. We, as the natives of this earth, are obliged to share with anyone like you, from our culture, just as we share daily from the culture of other older or newer peoples"<sup>13</sup>.

National intercultural approaches in any form intended to maintain open relations and individual and group security have always manifested themselves in this Romanian space. In this regard, an important step is the signing of the "Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities", on February 1, 1995, Romania being the first state to ratify this document, on April 29, 1995, depositing the instrument of ratification in less than three months after its adoption on 11 May 1995<sup>14</sup>.

At the national level, along with legislative approaches, intercultural education promotes an education for all, majority and minority, peacefully.

In July 2007, for the first time in the Romanian education, the issue of cultural diversity was introduced "in order to train students for a society characterized by cultural diversity"<sup>15</sup> Subsequently, the optional subject *Intercultural Education* was

introduced in the gymnasium and high school curriculum. The essence of intercultural learning consists in the formation and development of attitudes and behaviors aimed at the ethical component of students' personality and their manifestation in interpersonal relationships.

Aspects of intercultural awareness are also addressed in university programs. Many universities, for example: Faculty of Communication and Public Relations within the National School of Political and Administrative Studies, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, "Dunărea de Jos" University, Faculty of Security and Defence within "Carol I" National Defence University, Western University in Timișoara, Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj), introduced in the curricula disciplines such as: Intercultural communication, Intercultural education, Management of cultural diversity. At the same time, specializations have emerged and developed within the university study programs, such as: the undergraduate program "Public and intercultural communication in the field of security and defence" of the Department of Strategic, Public and Intercultural Communication / Faculty of Security and Defence / "Carol I" National Defence University; the master's degree program "Intercultural communication and professional translation" within the "Hyperion" University; master's program "Public Relations and Intercultural Development" at "Ovidius" University; the master's program "Intercultural Management" within the Faculty of Philosophy – University of Bucharest.

Other approaches are books, articles, studies or projects on intercultural issues. To exemplify we mention a few: the study published in November 2010, "Intercultural education: from theory to practice – implementation of intercultural education in multiethnic schools in Romania"<sup>16</sup>; the project "Romanian Culture and European Cultural Models, Research, Synchronization, Sustainability" co-financed by the European Social Fund through the Sectoral Operational Program for Human Resources Development 2007-2013, which includes the research with the title "Development of the Intercultural Curriculum in Romania"<sup>17</sup>; the national project "My Multicultural Journey"; the round table "Regional Intercultural Landmarks" in February 2017; the project "Combating Intolerance Through Intercultural Education in Schools" in September 2019; projects carried out by the Center

for Intercultural Research and Communication<sup>18</sup>; quantitative research conducted in order to analyze students' perceptions of cultural and intercultural aspects and the need to develop intercultural skills<sup>19</sup>.

To the above examples some others are added: the NGO *Intercultura Romania*<sup>20</sup>, whose purpose is to offer young people international experiences and intercultural education programs and the program "Human Security"<sup>21</sup>, designed to promote national and European public policies designed to contribute to increasing well-being individual, personal security and respect for human dignity; The Intercultural Institute of Timișoara<sup>22</sup>, an autonomous, non-profit non-governmental organization with cultural, civic and scientific activity, without political purposes, which accepts and promotes the values and principles of the Council of Europe in the field of intercultural awareness.

### **Conclusions**

Culture and creativity are important drivers of personal development, social cohesion and economic growth. In this sense, the various approaches related to intercultural awareness come in support of human security.

Among them, intercultural education, through anti-racial, anti-xenophobic, anti-discriminatory and relativizing activities of existing cultures, is a factor of democratic stability and conflict reduction, promoting values and attitudes specific to human security (for example: positive appreciation of cultural differences, respect towards one's own cultural identity and towards the cultural identity of others, tolerance and understanding, respect for human dignity and rights, peaceful resolution of conflicts).

Shaped by the history and traditions specific to states, as well as by existing national socio-political and educational systems, intercultural education has an essential contribution to respect for human rights and human development.

Barriers to communication can be removed through intercultural dialogue in support of human security and regional cooperation to stabilize relations between the states of some regions (such as the Black Sea Region or the Middle East).

Our final conclusion is that, regardless of the way of materialization, human security efforts recognize human rights as fundamental to human



development, address culture as a necessity for achieving sustainable development goals and support intercultural exchange to promote social and economic development for the benefit of all.

#### NOTES:

1 <https://www.greelane.com/ro/umanistic%C4%83/literatur%C4%83/diversity-quotes-and-sayings-2832777/>, accessed on 06.01.2021.

2 *The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression*, adopted at Paris on 20 October 2005, the preamble to the Convention; this Convention was published in the Official Gazette no. 559 of June 28, 2006.

3 *UNESCO guidelines on intercultural education*, Paris, 2006, p. 17, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000147878>, accessed on 28.12.2020.

4 Antonio Sandu, *Orientări metodologice privind dezvoltarea culturală a comunităților etnice*, Lumen Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009, p. 13.

5 Marius Mocanu, Daniela Albu, Mihaela Scarlat, Translations: Valeriu Rendec, Daniela Albu, coordinators, *Human Rights*, year XXVII no. 2, Romanian Institute for Human Rights, Bucharest, 2017, p. 15.

6 The other three pillars are: *the habit of knowing, of doing, the habit of being*. Delors, J., *L'éducation: un trésor est caché dedans. Rapport à l'UNESCO de la Commission Internationale pour l'éducation du vingt et unième siècle*, Paris, Editions Odile Jacob, 1996, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000115930>, apud. Ana Ivasiuc, Maria Koreck, Roberta Kővári, *op.cit.*, p. 11.

7 Luiza-Maria Costea, *Educația interculturală pentru managementul internațional de succes*, "Carol I" National Defence University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2017, p. 7.

8 Elena Gómez Parra, "Bilingual and Intercultural Education (BIE): Meeting 21st Century Educational Demands", p. 88, in *Theoria et historia scientiarum*, vol. XV, Nicolaus Copernicus University, 2018, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/>, accessed on 28.12.2020.

9 Mary Kaldor, *Securitatea umană*, CA Publishing, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, pp. 19-23.

10 <http://www.unesco.org/>, accessed on 28.12.2020.

11 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/north-south-centre/learning-intercultural-dimension>, accessed on 08.01.2021.

12 *Council Conclusions of 26 November 2009 on the education of children from migrant families*, 2009 / C 301/07, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52009XG1211%2801%29>, accessed on 12.01.2021.

13 Simion Mehedinți, *Poporul*, Albatros Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, p. XLVIII.

14 *Ibidem*.

15 Art. 1 of *Order no. 1529 / 18.07.2007 on the development of diversity issues in the national curriculum*, <http://oldsite.edu.ro/index.php/articles/8319>, accessed on 26.11.2020.

16 Ana Ivasiuc, Maria Koreck, Roberta Kővári, <http://www.agentiaimprensa.ro/uploads/educatia%20interculturala.pdf>, accessed on 27.11.2020.

17 [http://www.cesindcultura.acad.ro/images/fisiere/rezultate/postdoc/rapoarte%20finale%20de%20cercetare%20stiintifica%20ale%20cercetatorilor%20postdoctorat/lucrari/Bunaiasu\\_Claudiu.pdf](http://www.cesindcultura.acad.ro/images/fisiere/rezultate/postdoc/rapoarte%20finale%20de%20cercetare%20stiintifica%20ale%20cercetatorilor%20postdoctorat/lucrari/Bunaiasu_Claudiu.pdf), accessed on 28.11.2020.

18 <http://ircc.ro/>

19 Alina Ionescu, Florin Vasiloni, *Cultural and intercultural perspectives in a multicultural society*, <https://trivent-publishing.eu/libri/comunicare/9.%20Alina%20Ionescu.pdf>, accessed on 28.11.2020.

20 <https://www.gointerculturala.org/despre-noi/>, accessed on 04.12.2020.

21 <http://www.ecler.org/ro/programul-securitate-uma-na/>, accessed on 04.12.2020.

22 <https://www.intercultural.ro/>, accessed on 08.01.2020.

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