

**Committee:** Youth Assembly

**Issue:** Action paper on multiculturalism, with due regard to elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Within contemporary western democracies, the practice of multiculturalism has been undermined by the lack of a consistent concept of 'racism' and 'anti-racism' as well as controversy about the role of multiculturalism within resolving drawbacks and battling racism. The lack of clarification has helped marginalize anti-racism within multiculturalism.

The phenomenon of xenophobia is also on its rise the past few decades as many governmental leaders promote the hate and fear against foreigners and more specifically, immigrants or refugees. While the UN is trying to improve the living conditions of the people in need there are many cases where they experience violent behaviors against them because of the hate that has been triggered for them. It has been stated that the xenophobic and immigrant/refugees rates have reached a tremendously high rate during the past few years. These people also have to deal with discrimination against them as they are not treated equally as the citizens of the place they choose or were forced to migrate to. This kind of different treatment could be observed for instance in many working environments where they can easily be rejected or fired by an employer or their wage is far lower than the average of local workers.

## **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

### **Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism is the view that cultures, races, and ethnicities, particularly those of minority groups, deserve special acknowledgment of their differences within a dominant political culture. That acknowledgment can take the forms of recognition of contributions to

the cultural life of the political community as a whole, a demand for special protection under the law for certain cultural groups, or autonomous rights of governance for certain cultures.<sup>1</sup>

### **Xenophobia**

Xenophobia is the fear of anything different and most specifically foreign to us such as people, customs, religions, etc. Because of it people refuse to accept foreigners and multiculturalism is not adapted this way.<sup>2,3</sup>

### **Racism**

Racism is the hate against foreigners expressed by different forms of violence such as physical or lacteal and in many cases through the marginalization of a person because of their color, ethnicity, religious beliefs, etc.<sup>4</sup>

### **Sexism**

Sexism is a form of discrimination against a specific gender and thus the restriction of the gender's rights in numerous fields such as the working environment.<sup>5</sup>

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is a form of prejudice and distinguishes of someone or something against someone or something else.<sup>6</sup>

### **Intolerance**

Intolerance is widely known as the unwillingness or refusal to tolerate or respect opinions or beliefs contrary to one's own. Because of this phenomenon the

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<sup>1</sup> Eagan, Jennifer L. "Multiculturalism." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 5 May 2020, [www.britannica.com/topic/multiculturalism](http://www.britannica.com/topic/multiculturalism).

<sup>2</sup> "Definition Of Xenophobia | Dictionary.Com". *Www.Dictionary.Com*, 2020, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/xenophobia>.

<sup>3</sup> "Search". *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/search?query=Xenophobia>.

<sup>4</sup> "Definition Of Racism | Dictionary.Com". *Www.Dictionary.Com*, 2020, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/racism>.

<sup>5</sup> "Definition Of Sexism | Dictionary.Com". *Www.Dictionary.Com*, 2020, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/sexism>.

<sup>6</sup> "Definition Of DISCRIMINATION". *Merriam-Webster.Com*, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/discrimination>.

integration of multiculturalism in a society can get even harder than it already is. This means that there is no equality between the two genders and discrimination is unavoidable.<sup>7</sup>

### Misogyny

Misogyny is known as the repulsion and discrimination against all females.<sup>8</sup>

### Equality

Equality means that the members of a society, for example, have the same rights, opportunities, etc. This means that all members of a society are treated exactly the same despite their color, gender etc.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the past 40 years it has been discussed whether the legal and political facilitation of cultural diversity could be achieved. This issue has also been mentioned as the rise and fall of the phenomenon of multiculturalism. The specific issue has drawn the attention of numerous experts such as scholars and some journalists which try to explain and clarify what level the debates about multiculturalism have reached.

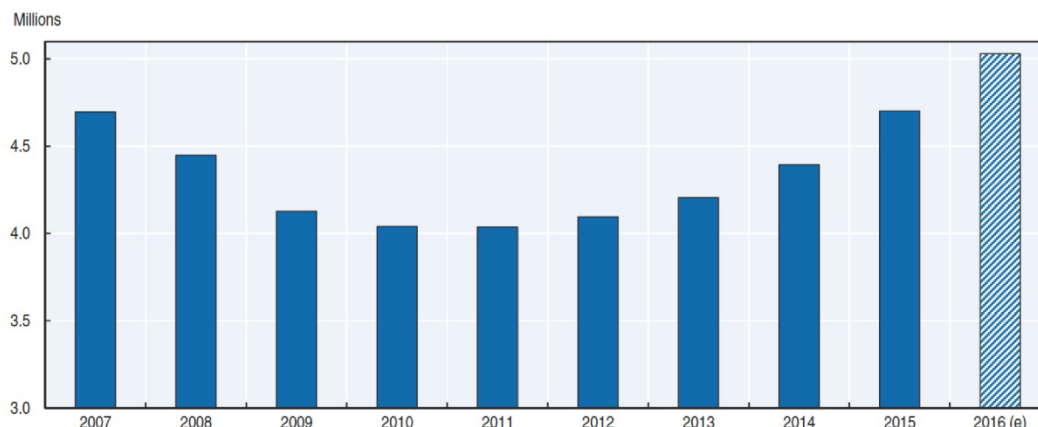
It is widely known, that the phenomenon of multiculturalism and the acceptance of it has caused debates among countries as there are many who believe that such a trend and the increasing influx of refugees from war zones could contribute to the deformation of a country's cultural identity. This happens because the "newcomers" tend to integrate their traditions to the country's environment and thus creating a new form of the original culture of the place which sometimes can improve it with new characteristics but sometimes can have a tremendously bad effect on it and potentially contribute to its destruction.

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<sup>7</sup> "Definition Of Intolerance | Dictionary.Com". *Www.Dictionary.Com*, 2020, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/intolerance>.

<sup>8</sup> "Definition Of MISOGYNY". *Merriam-Webster.Com*, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/misogyny>.

Permanent migration flows to OECD countries, 2007-2016



Source: OECD, 2016.

Note: OECD calculations based on national statistics. Data relating to 2016 are estimated based on growth rates published in official national statistics.

**Figure 1:** The graphic depicts the amount of migrants during 2007-2016

### Historical background

The phenomenon of discrimination was detected some centuries ago when Americans turned people of color into their slaves. These people most of the times came from African countries. They were forced to work on the field of tobacco and other kinds of plantation and after that the cotton and sugar ones. This kind of slavery was popular in the South but the Northern people managed to make great fortunes from them without using these exact methods on their terrains.

Furthermore, the 9/11 terrorist attack, the wars in Middle East countries and the International Financial Crisis of 2008 need to be taken in consideration, since they make clear why the way and the reason people choose to migrate has changed through the years, is not questionable. As a result the phenomenon of xenophobia has increased in the past years. These events are crucial to how multiculturalism is currently viewed, thus they need to be more specifically analyzed.

The 9/11 event is related with the Muslim community and this is one of the reasons why they experience xenophobia. In this particular attack members of the al-Qaeda Islamic terrorist group hijacked airplanes from four passenger airlines and proceeded with some suicidal attacks in the United States of America on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. Two of the airplanes crashed into the twin towers, parts of the World Trade Center which was located in New York. The other plane crashed on the Pentagon, while the last one somewhere in Pennsylvania. These attacks had as a result the death of almost 3,000 innocent people and after this event the security measures around the world became better and much more intense.



**Picture 1:** The picture depicts the moment when the two airplanes crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York

The International Financial Crisis of 2008 started in the United States of America and it was the consequence of the destruction of the American housing market. Because of this phenomenon the international financial system was almost destroyed while companies related to insurance issues, banks (especially commercial ones), organizations related to loans and saving were closed down. The International Financial Crisis of 2008 has been characterized as the second biggest financial downturn since the Great depression during 1929-1939.

Lastly the conflict in Middle Eastern countries started over 1,400 years ago with the death of Prophet Mohammad and who would be his successor. Two groups were formed each of whom developed their own culture the Sunni and the Shiite. Until today it has not been decided which of whom is dominant and this is the reason why the conflict still continues. Another reason behind the wars in Middle East countries is the conflict between Palestinians and Jews. Since the terrain consists of a sacred place for both Jews and Arab Muslims there had always been conflict as for who would dominate Israel. Nowadays the Jews are the dominant ones while Palestinians are almost wiped out of the map.

It is also worth mentioning that, due to attacks on Indian students, during the period of 2009-2010, as well as the riots on Cornulla beach of Australia during 2005, it became questionable to the public whether multiculturalism could help improve the society's cohesion or not.

### **The community**

In numerous States, because of the denial of certain people to accept the cultural diversity of others, phenomena like xenophobia or racism are thriving. One of these countries is Germany. The Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel stated that the multiculturalism has failed in Germany after her denial to approve immigrants or refugees in the country. It has been noticed, that in certain occasions people from different countries or with different religious beliefs have been treated as terrorists or criminals by legal policies when they were looking for an asylum. One reason of this kind of treatment could be the 9/11 event and how in many occasions people link it with all the Muslims around the world and thus creating xenophobic behaviors against them.

However hard, many societies try to embrace this kind of diversity occurred by the multiculturalism, it has been noticed, that problems regarding racism, xenophobia or inequality appear or are unavoidable. This is something that is happening worldwide and not only in specific countries or states.

Nonetheless, despite all the difficulties and problems that may occur because of the multiculturalism phenomenon, governments and international organizations still have as one of their main purposes its acceptance by the public. They try to integrate the “newcomers” in the society with many different measures such as helping them learn the country’s language through schools which open at nights when the will be available and not working in order to make ends meet.

## **MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED**

### **The United States of America (USA)**

It is commonly known, that the US was a goal for many immigrants since it was found. This would mean that the phenomenon of multiculturalism was unavoidable as they were coming from numerous different countries such as African ones. However, their true American identity had been questioned by the Germans at first and then everyone else. As for the America’s modern political ways on the issue of multiculturalism it is known , that after 1960 it started improving due to the mix of the cultural narcissism and the identity of politics on the multicultural field. Nevertheless, the United States are not listed with the most cultural diversified countries in the world. As it is known they tend to be somewhere above Russia in the middle of the list.

### **The United Kingdom (UK)**

After the World War 2 a huge migration wave has hit Britain. Because of that it can be characterized as a multicultural society. It consists of people with different roots and religious beliefs. However, there are many citizens who believe that the integration of new characteristics from other cultures could contribute to the destruction of the British culture. According to some statements the British government is not willing to sacrifice the wishes of the public in order to please some cultural preferences. Surprisingly enough, British citizens seemed more than excited to help immigrants integrate in their society by learning the English language and thus having the opportunity to communicate with them, the results of a gallop point out.

### **Canada**

It is known, that the Canadian history has been founded by the French, the Indigenous and the British. Of course many other countries participated in its formation and this is one of the reasons why it is characterized as a multicultural society. Its diversity has been detected by a study held in 2016 which points out that people from over 250 places live there. The most common were Germany, Ireland, France, Britain, Canada, China and Scotland. It is worth mentioning that over the 21.6% of the citizens were not born in Canada while the biggest percentage of immigrants (48.1%) comes from Asian countries. As for the diversity of the language it has been pointed out, that the English language is the most commonly spoken followed by the French. However the phenomenon of multiculturalism has never disturbed the peace of the country as there has never been a conflict related to Canada's cultural diversity.

### **China**

China consists of over 56 different ethnic groups with different religions, language and culture. Because of its fast and in some cases violent expansion in order to gain new terrains China has a multicultural character as a state. The multiculturalism phenomenon in China tends to appear some kind of conflicts at times though. One example is the conflict between original Chinese citizens and the Uyghur who live in Western China in Xinjiang province. This issue has made the

complex multiculturalism in China questionable internationally. Another reason why is because all kinds of festivities and celebrations are not allowed for members of a group which belongs to the minority. This has also as a result numerous protests all around the country against specific groups. Last but not least, the minority groups have to deal with discrimination as they have limited rights in fields such as employment, education or even wellbeing.

### **The Democratic Republic of Congo**

The Democratic Republic of Congo is known for its tremendous size (almost as huge as the Western Europe) and thus its high population rate which marks almost 70 million people. Because of that, this country tends to have a significant diversity on the culture as people from different nations live there. The ethnic groups are about 250 while there are 700 different languages and dialects spoken. As for the religious beliefs, the majority of the population is Christians but there are also many Muslims and Kambuangists which are the members of a Christian Congolese sect. The religion is of high importance in Congo and as a result the religious leaders are respected more than anyone else.

### **The Russian Federation**

The Russian Federation consists mostly of native speakers but it is known that there are over 185 different ethnic groups in which over 100 different languages are spoken. The largest of these groups are the Tatars which are the 4% of the population of Russia, followed by Ukraine which is the 1,2% of Russia's population. Of course other groups could be detected too such as the Votes but because of some resettlement policies made by the soviets some older soviet republics tend to appear Russian minorities. Such could be Kazakhstan or Latvia. All these issues have led to conflict either inside of Russia because these groups want to gain independence or outside of it because they want to gain leadership.

### **Nigeria**

Nigeria is one of the most multicultural countries in the world. It contains over 521 different languages and 1,150 different languages. There are four major ethnic groups: Hausa, Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba. There are of course many other ethnic groups spread around Nigeria but these four are the most commonly found. The Fulani are mostly spotted on Western Africa and they tend to be Muslims. The



Hausas are also Muslims but the Igbos are Christians. It is worth mentioning that the Yorubas are the balance between Christians and Muslims. Nigeria is also well known for the English language and its involvement in literature and history of the country. There is a part of the Nigerian population which consists of English speakers.

### Germany

A great number of citizens in Germany would prefer if the immigrants would adapt the local habits while a smaller percentage does not have a problem with the mix of new cultures with the old one, especially the younger. A tiny percentage believes that people should maintain their original culture. These are the results of a survey which indicate that the younger people do not mind getting a view of other cultures also while older people tend to believe that the maintenance of the original culture would work better for the society.

### TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1962	Cesar Chavez leads the United Farm Workers Union through nonviolent protest and action to win bargaining power for Mexican Americans
1963	Martin Luther King’s speech , “I have a dream” John Fitzgerald Kennedy was killed
1964	The Civil Rights Act is finally being passed while Patsy Mink becomes the first ever Asian-American woman to be selected after elections to serve in the Congress
1965	President Johnson signs an executive order requiring federal agencies and contractors to take "affirmative action" to address discrimination over jobs. The President also signs the Immigration Act, which removes color, religion and ethnicity as the criterion for entry to the United States. Malcolm X is assassinated, Los Angeles Race Riots follow
1968	Martin Luther King was killed. Riots are erupting nationally in 124 cities. President Johnson signs the 1968 Civil Rights Act, intended to eliminate housing discrimination. Senator Robert Kennedy is killed. Rep. Shirley Chisholm (D-NY) is the first woman to be elected African American to Congress
1994-1995	Some gangs consisting of armed youngsters destroyed entirely the properties of migrants which they thought they were undocumented in Johannesburg and then demanded to the police their removal from the place
1998	A Mozambican and two Senegalese individuals were forced to leave a moving train near Johannesburg from a group of people who had just returned from a protest which had to do with the blame on migrants for the low employment rate and even the spread of diseases like AIDS
2008	Barack Obama becomes the first ever African American president of the US

2013	The black live matter movement was originated after the assassination of the 17 year old Trayvon Martin
2020	George Floyd’s death by a police officer in comparison with the cases of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery’s triggered protests around the world for the inequality against black people.

## UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

The Global Declaration on Cultural Diversity of UNESCO represents a major step towards acknowledging cultural diversity as a vital factor for sustainable development.

This resolution tries to link the cultural diversity with things such as creativity, human rights, pluralism and international solidarity through a number of articles related to each of these principals. Such articles could be those who present how the cultural diversity is linked with pluralism or its contribution to development, the access to cultural diversity for everyone, strengthening capacities for creation and dissemination worldwide and last but not least an article dedicated to the role of UNESCO on the issue.

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

### The language barrier

One common problem when it comes to multiculturalism is the language barrier as people tend to have difficulty in communicating with each other when different languages get involved. A way to solve this issue could be to find a way to get messages across in a manner that everyone understands fully. The multilingual translators can be incorporated into the teams. Using interactive translation tools as an app can be of use as well. On-going language classes in the primary language of the company can also be offered. The goal is to make sure that every single member of the team feels included and respected. In addition, we should try not to convey any bias towards members of the team who are fluent in our native tongue. Everyone should believe they are handled equally, no matter what language they speak.

### Common differences

Another common problem when it comes to multiculturalism is the cultural differences that occur because of the people from many different countries living

together. This issue could be solved by taking the time to think about the team members' different cultural values, consider how they interpret assertiveness and interact appropriately. In addition, workers should also be allowed to learn about the cultures of their colleagues.

### Technical issues

A different, however equally, important issue is the technical challenges that the people will have to face as they might not be used to work with the country's tech media. A solution could be to make sure which techniques they are familiar with and they ensure their training with the needed methods in order to overcome all the difficulties that may occur if they are not familiar with the needed media.

### Cultural diverse teams

Last but not least, a problem that may occur could be the challenge of motivating a cultural diverse team. Since the kind of motivation is different for every culture what may be motivating for one group may not be for another. A solution could be a direct dialogue with people from other cultures in order to find out and become familiar with what motivates them. Then a middle ground should be found.

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