

3. What Types of International Learning?

3.1 Integration Through International Projects

Communications between young people in different countries are educationally valuable in themselves. If they are well-organised they offer extraordinary opportunities for learning and confidence-building that are more powerful than most normal school lessons. The Get-In! Network believes that international projects can make a significant contribution to the integration of different groups within the school. This is the case regardless of the specific activities and topics chosen for the project. We believe, however, that the best educational outcomes are achieved if aspects of intercultural learning and responsible international citizenship are given a prominent place in the learning activities planned. Young people who may be experiencing tensions within their local community that are related to ethnicity, religion or the relationships between migrant communities and other residents may benefit from discussing these issues in a much wider international context. Others who are not at present directly conscious of such situations will also benefit from learning about issues of equality, integration and community cohesion as they will all grow up in a Europe where these issues are increasingly prominent. Learning how inter-community issues are handled in other countries gives young people a deeper understanding of their own situations and a renewed confidence to develop their own positive solutions.

Key Questions For Schools Planning International Projects

1. Will some ethnic groups within the school need extra encouragement to take up opportunities to be involved?
2. Will additional efforts be needed to encourage girls from certain groups to take part?
3. How will the project contribute to young people's awareness of equality, human rights and responsible 'International Citizenship'?



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● The Importance of Intercultural Learning Activities

All successful international projects naturally allow the young people involved to experience some intercultural learning. This intercultural work can result in many different kinds of learning where pupils can:

- Find out about how other people live and what is important to them
- Start to understand the value of different cultures
- Find ways to explain and share their own interests activities, beliefs and background with other people
- Clarify what they value in their own culture and from your heritage
- Discover areas of common interest with people of different backgrounds
- Understand the value and benefits of diversity and cooperation
- Collaborate with other young people on projects that combat xenophobia and promote, celebrate and advertise the benefits of diversity and inter-cultural cohesion

The Get-in! Network encourages and supports international projects that promote equality and inclusion. This is partly achieved by ensuring that some of the learning activities used in the project openly and specifically explore issues of:

- Citizenship – What is responsible global citizenship?
- Living together in a world of mobility and change
- Intercultural communication – How do we do it? Why is it important?
- Valuing diversity
- Identity – my own and others – What do they mean? How do we express our identity?
- Equal rights – gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality etc.
- Human rights – global, national, local and those in our own school
- Migration – historical causes and present consequences
- Integration / community cohesion – building friendly communities without losing cultural identity

● 3.2 International Learning Projects in a Wider Whole School Approach to Internationalism

In order to face the future challenges of a rapidly changing Europe, all schools should be developing a whole school international awareness that can permeate most aspects of the curriculum. This requires a strategic overview with proper planning and resourcing if good intentions are to be translated into actions that have a real impact on pupils' learning across the school.

International partnership projects (i.e. school to school links) play an important part in the school curriculum, but they should take their place as part of a range of learning that is carefully planned to inspire young people to develop their own vision of what it means to be a responsible global citizen.

3.3 Different Curriculum Approaches To Internationalism

1. Exploring Intercultural Issues

Time-tabled class lessons on intercultural issues: How has migration affected our area? What is the evidence for integration between cultures in the arts? What arts and skills do refugees and asylum seekers bring? What life experiences do refugees and asylum seekers bring? What can we learn from them? Does religion clash with other aspects of modern life? Does government (local or national) really represent all the people in a multicultural society? Are the young more tolerant to differences than the old? Will future society be less xenophobic? Will future communities be more integrated?....

2. Learning About Other Cultures

Lessons with learning about other cultures and our global interconnectedness, learning about how other cultures have influenced our own language and culture over time, how global trade, cheaper travel, international sports and media have brought other cultures into our lives?

3. School To School Links

Linking projects with schools in other countries. These can be limited to virtual links exchanging images, factual and creative work through electronic communications or develop much further.

4. Individual Communications

Setting up individual one to one contacts between pupils from different countries.

5. European Projects Involving Foreign Travel

Projects involving visits to schools in other countries and hosting visitors in your country. European Union funds are available in the 'Lifelong Learning Programme' for projects involving three or more countries (normally more than three countries should be involved to ensure continuation if someone drops out).



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3.4 What Kind of Learning Activities Do We Need?

Well planned international projects can make a major contribution to this kind of learning. See Section 5 for more ideas about planning projects. The following ideas may help when deciding on the kinds of learning activities young people can do:

- **Active Learning:** Activities in which young people plan, explore, move, discuss, research, create, present, negotiate, evaluate and present to different audiences develop skills, knowledge, confidence and motivation
- **Explore issues of:** Diversity, Equality, Migration, Integration, Identity, Human Rights
- **Activities that help pupils to overcome reluctance to speak** (e.g. using a simple agreed structure in all schools involved to share information about yourself)
- **Activities that bring groups together from different countries and support them in creating something together** (e.g. video, drama, dance, music production, website)