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CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS



Sharing the Passion for Learning

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MOBILITY AS A EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL AREA: THE CONTRIBUTION OF HERITAGE DIVERSITY

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Abstract

The globalisation of today's society has forced a rethink of the priorities of the educational plan and their relationship with universal values and with cultural and heritage values. Some decades later, the words of Jacques Delors, in his 1996 Report "Education: a treasure to be discovered", are still relevant, when he underlined the need for world citizens not to lose their roots, to recognise the richness of their traditions, to achieve a constructive adaptation, to evolve in a process of freedom, respecting difference and diversity, enhancing the construction of an individual educational project, in an inner, concentrated, calm and self-critical process. Thus, heritage education, accepted as transversal to the educational programmes, is assumed as indispensable to consolidate skills enabling a better relationship with the different cultures and their particular heritage expressions, in an awareness of the increased responsibility for these legacies, whose safeguarding, protection and preservation are sometimes threatened and unprotected. This educational model, with an orientation towards the development of a personality, enhances the integration of the individual in the community, consolidates his/her training and envisages individual and collective responsibility. The different educational mobility programmes that exist in higher education participate in this contribution, as one of the privileged responses. And if the mobility programmes suggest promoting a reflection on a European cultural identity, it is no less important that this mobility presents itself as a new form of learning and awareness of cultural diversity and heritage. Based on this premise, we propose to analyse how heritage diversity can be seen as an effective contribution to the construction of the European identity.

In order to guide the answer, we outlined the following objectives for this study:

- i) to promote regional and local heritage with mobile students;
- ii) to identify students' heritage highlights; and,
- iii) to analyse the contributions of local heritage diversity and its relation to students' education in the European educational area.

As an instrument of data collection, we used a questionnaire survey applied online to mobile students from a Portuguese Higher Education institution (random sample). As a data collection tool, we used the questionnaire survey created in the Google Forms platform, which was distributed online by email, explaining the purpose of the study.

The students show interest and curiosity for the heritage knowledge of the country and region surrounding the hosting educational institution, although they reveal few opportunities to expand their "knowledge" in the first weeks of integration, but highlighting their awareness of an effective contribution to their training as European citizens, in a global society, whose heritage particularities deserve recognition and appreciation.

Keywords: Education, heritage, Erasmus students, heritage diversity.