

■ Article ■

## Education as a Mirror of Spanish Society: Challenges and Policies towards Multiple Diversity\*

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### Abstract

The ways in which the dominant cultural majority frames the educational system, determines perceptions of its own identity and understandings of the 'other.' In this article I take a political approach, by examining the management of cultural diversity within Spanish education policies, treating "education as the mirror of society". This article analyzes Spanish challenges and policies approaches towards the management of immigration related diversity in education. The main finding is that there is not one approach, but several, due to both the decentralized character of the education system and the multiplicity of diversity that is at stake (i.e. language, religion, culture etc.).

■ **Key Words** : Education, Diversity, Immigration, Spain, Europe.

### Introduction: Spain in the European debate

In the critical European dilemma between increasing diversity policies and an assimilationist policy,<sup>1)</sup> education is seen as an instrument of social integration and a mean of constructing identity. Education continues to be, perhaps more than ever, the most crucial socialization institution. The ways in which the dominant cultural majority frames the educational system determines perception of its own identity and understanding of the 'other.' Thus, principles of

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1) See, for instance, Zapata-Barrero (Ed. 2009), Ertovec & Wessendorf (Ed. 2010).

equality of treatment and opportunity, of societal cohesion, of respecting diversity and social justice are particularly relevant in Europe's education policies that aim at increasing tolerance for diversity and awareness of the growing unity between Europeans.<sup>2)</sup> This has an important impact on practical issues, innovations and concrete actions that schools and teachers undertake in order to address the education needs of ethnic minority groups, and/or to better manage ethnic and cultural diversity resulting from current migration trends.

Spain entered the policy debate on diversity following its practical approach<sup>3)</sup> by adopting intercultural education views that pay attention only to individual differences and not to group realities that emphasize host country language as an instrument for integration. However, in the current global context, a pressing need arises to re-consider and pluralize national culture and identity in view of the changing composition of the country's population, faster than was required in case of older migration hosts (Triandafyllidou & Gropas, 2008).

My purpose is to analyze the Spanish case within this European framework. In Spain, during the last 10 years, the number of foreign pupils in compulsory education<sup>4)</sup> has increased rapidly, from 43.481 in the year 1996-1997 to 432.800 in the year 2006-2007 (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 2007). This demographic reality has brought discourses and policies that need to be analyzed in order to situate Spain within the European framework, identifying its main features.<sup>5)</sup> The main information-sources for these analyses consist of policy-documents, interviews with policy-makers and a focus group with non-governmental stakeholders. <Table 1> gives an overview of the basic questions that we attempted to answer.<sup>6)</sup>

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2) See Gaine & Gewirtz (Ed. 2008), Triandafyllidou & Gropas (2008), Faas (2010). See also reports and policy briefs on multicultural education in Europe at <http://emilie.eliamep.gr/policy-briefs-on-multicultural-education/> (the following European countries are considered: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Poland, Spain and the UK).

3) See Zapata-Barrero (2010b).

4) Education in Spain is compulsory from 6 to 16 years old and consists of Primary Education (6-12 years), divided in 3 periods of 2 years and Obligatory Secondary Education (ESO) (12-16), divided in two periods of 2 years.

5) A first general analysis has been done in Zapata-Barrero (2010b).

6) We would like to thank research assistant Jonathan Zaragoza for his help with conducting interviews in Madrid and Barcelona and organizing the focus group.

&lt;Table 1&gt; Standards for analysis

Standards	Basic Questions
1. Perceived challenges	What are the main challenges of migration related diversity in education identified by policy-makers?
2. Multicultural focus of education policy	How do policy-makers think that multicultural reality in schools should be managed? Is there a positive evaluation of cultural diversity? Is there compensation for language and educational disadvantages? And what about education in/for diversity?
3. Management of linguistic diversity	What linguistic model is at work? How is language teaching to immigrants managed? And is there a possibility for immigrants to learn their native languages?
4. Management of religious diversity	Is it possible to study different religions in school? Are schools segregated according to religion, or can different religions be studied in all schools?
5. Organizational and institutional adaptations	Has a multicultural reality resulted in any institutional or curricular changes? If so, what changes have been made?

The nexus between challenges and policies constitute a driving-force articulating the following sections. *Section one* outlines how multiculturalism in Spain has shaped the education system after the democratic transition, giving a historical account of how policy has developed from exclusion and segregation to finally incorporating cultural minorities. In *section two* the educational challenges related to the arrival of immigrants in schools are discussed, by pointing out the main current debates. *Section three* then turns to the policy approaches and goes into the competence of different levels of administration. Finally *section four* summarizes the main characteristics of Spanish approach and policy discourses, and what we can learn from the European perspective.

## 1. Contextualizing educational challenges in the Spanish education system

The main educational challenges brought upon by immigration have to be understood within the democratic transition context of Spain. The terms of debate were twofold: how to de-monopolize education from the Catholic Church and how to manage the emergent cultural diversity related to minority nations - and to lesser extent gypsies - with their own language, history and "societal culture."<sup>7)</sup> The direction that took place on both issues frames today's basic educational challenges related to immigration.<sup>8)</sup>

With regard to the first debate on secularizing education, two outcomes are relevant. First, the educative system has been divided into public, private and what are called *escuelas concertadas*, schools financed partly by the state and partly by the Catholic Church. The concertada schools are results of the political negotiation that took place in the transition phase, since the Catholic Church had practically the monopoly over education during the Franco dictatorship. According to the statistics, 80% of the foreign students are enrolled in public schools and 20% in private and concertada schools. Not only has this resulted in educational inequalities between Spanish public and private schools, because students from minority backgrounds perform at lower academic level than their peers, but it also led to the politicization of the immigrants segregation question. Second, in spite of the decrease in the influence of the Church, Catholic religion is a compulsory course in both primary and secondary education, which means that it must be offered by educational establishments, but pupils now may take it or leave it on a voluntary basis. The arrival of immigrant students with different religious beliefs has given rise to demands for education on other religions.

The second debate is related to Spain's minority nations. Since the promulgation of the Spanish Constitution in 1978, several re-

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7) "By a societal culture, I mean a territorially-concentrated culture, centered on a shared language which is used in a wide range of societal institutions, in both public and private life (schools, media, law, economy, government, etc.). I call it *societal* culture to emphasize that it involves a common language and social institutions, rather than common religious beliefs, family customs, or personal lifestyles" (Kymlicka, 2001, p.25).

8) For an overview of legal reforms in the Spanish education system see Prats, 2005, p. 174-184.

gions of Spain have been re/granted political and administrative competences. The Spanish education system has undergone several changes in this respect, gradually transferring services and resources from the central administration to the Autonomous Communities. The Laws of Linguistic Normalization (1983) gave Catalan, Basque and Galician an official status in their respective territories and also provided regional authorities with control over the educational system and the possibility to develop bilingual education programs and distinctive curricula. In regions like Catalonia and Basque country the authorities consequently started a process of "normalization" of Catalan and Euskara.<sup>9)</sup> In both regions linguistic departments were established to enforce laws that put the national language on an equal status with Spanish, also in compulsory education. The social reality of multi-nationality thus explains some current demands of these Autonomous Communities and the ways to manage bilingualism and now multilingualism in schools.

According to the Spanish immigration law, foreigners under 18 years old have a right and obligation to receive education under the same conditions as Spaniards, which means free and obligatory primary and secondary education.<sup>10)</sup> One of its distinctive features is that Spain considers education as a universal good that has to be distributed independently of the status of persons and even independently of the administrative status of the immigrant.<sup>11)</sup> The Spanish approach towards education is thus based on human rights beyond other legal considerations.<sup>12)</sup> Next to this approach of equal

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9) While in most Autonomous Communities, the education system is monolingual, in Catalonia education is bilingual and in Basque country the principle of separation of languages has been applied. Therefore in Catalonia children are taught in both official languages and the educational system expects pupils to use both languages at the end of compulsory schooling. In Basque country, on the other hand, people can choose between three types of schools, each with a different level of attention to the teaching of Euskara; schools that provide all education in Euskara (model D), schools where almost all education is given in Castilian (model A), and schools that are situated in-between these two extremes (model B). Although two minorities have thus developed different policies for the normalization of Catalan and Euskara respectively, the decreasing knowledge of Euskara in Basque country has made the Basque government reconsider their language policy, and currently proposals seem to point towards the Catalan model.

10) See article 9 of Constitutional Law 4/2000.

11) The schooling of children of irregular immigrants is based on the UN's International Convention on Child Rights ratified by Spain.

12) Following the theory of goods applied to policies for managing immigration, Zapata-

opportunities, the immigration law prescribes that public authorities should promote the facilitation of education needed by foreign residents, in order to improve their social integration, with respect for their cultural identity.<sup>13)</sup> The law that regulates the education system has introduced a series of measures compensating for inequalities, to be adopted by both the State and the Autonomous Communities.<sup>14)</sup> Also the Constitutional Law for the Quality of Education of 2002 prescribes equal rights of education for foreigners, as well as norms of *convivencia* (coexistence)<sup>15)</sup> in the educative centers and the need to develop language assistance. Finally the Agreements of the State with the Evangelic, Jewish and Islamic communities in Spain establish some religious rights in the educational sphere, like the right to religious education, the provision of *halal* meat in school canteens and the right to religious holidays.

Aguado and Malik point out that cultural diversity is not new in Spain (2001, p.149). Before immigration became a social reality in the 90s, the factor of cultural diversity was introduced by the gypsy minority on one hand, and minority nations on the other hand.<sup>16)</sup> While the gypsies highlighted the differences in academic performance between social groups, the issue of language was an explicit challenge in specific Autonomous Communities with a second official language, especially Basc Country, Catalonia and Galicia. After a period of exclusion and segregation of gypsies within so-called “bridge” schools, they were incorporated into ordinary classrooms with the backing of compensatory programs (Fernandez Enguita, 1996). These compensatory programs were directed at the students “disfavored by economic capacity, social level or place of residence”. While cultural diversity was not regarded as a factor of in-

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Barrero (2002, p.85-87) says that the properties of education are symbolic, collective and heterogeneous. We can say that the symbolic and collective properties are respected in Spain, but that the heterogeneity of the good is still on the political and social agenda. The homogeneity/heterogeneity depends on the interpretation. Good A is homogeneous when there is no discussion on its value, and it is heterogeneous when not everyone values the primary good in the same way.

13) See article 9 of Constitutional Law 4/2000.

14) See the Constitutional Law on the General Organization of the Education System (1990).

15) There is no direct English translation for the Spanish term *convivencia*, which is not merely a descriptive term of coexistence, but also has a normative dimension, as it refers to coexistence as something positive and is sometimes translated as peaceful coexistence.

16) See Constitutional Law of 19 July 1980 regulating school statutes.

equality, “the program did [...] include “cultural minorities” as a specific area of action for the enrolment of infant population, the regularization of attendance at class and the avoidance of early drop out”(Garetta Bochaca, 2006, p.266). The development of these programs should be understood as the context of Spain adopting the notion of equality of opportunity much later and in a way different from other European countries.

The 1990 Constitutional Law on the General Organization of the Education System was the first to mention the need to fight ethnic-cultural discrimination and, in line with the Council of Europe, introduced the idea of intercultural education programs (Terrén, 2001). First, the law states that special education<sup>17)</sup> has to be provided for: “the pupils with special educational needs, because they suffer from physical, psychic or sensory disabilities, serious behavioral disorders or are in unfavorable social or cultural situations”. Culture is therefore understood as a variable that can lead to disadvantages. It also sets out an educational system that compensates for inequalities without parallel action, meaning that all students regardless of their socio-cultural background and ability levels have the right to be educated in general classrooms (Garetta Bochaca, 2006, p.266). Second, intercultural education aims to adopt curricular and structural changes that celebrate the diversity of culture, gender, religion etc. In spite of the attention to cultural diversity in the 1990 law, the implementation of intercultural education is ambiguous (Aguado & Malik, 2001).

Originally developed to integrate the gypsy minority into mainstream schools, the idea of compensatory programs has been applied to immigrants when they started to fill classrooms in the 90s. The main purpose of these programs is to solve the linguistic difficulties encountered, as well as to bridge cultural and ability gaps. Within these compensatory programs, cultural diversity is dealt with from a deficit approach. It is thus a form of positive discrimination, which includes special treatment for special students performed by specific teachers (Arnaiz & Soto, 2007, p.376). While compensatory programs aim at marginalized groups in general, the ethnic groups, the so-called *aulas de acogida* (insertion classes) are created specifically for immigrants and consist of separate classes

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17) Special education can consist of “Educational and professional counseling”, “Social Guarantee Programs”, “Compensatory Education”, “Special Education etc. (CIDE, 2002).

for immigrants who learn the language and forms of conduct in school. These insertion classes should be understood in the context of political orientation directed at what Spanish policy makers call *normalización* (normalization), incorporating immigrants into the mainstream society and avoiding whatever direct/indirect segregationist effect. It is also common for secondary students to be placed in a class a year below their actual age in order to learn the language and cope with school work. Many schools also have a special teacher, the so-called "cultural mediator" that helps immigrant children and their parents with social integration into the education system, by solving conflicts related to language or cultural differences. The educational investigation centre CIDE indicates that next to reception plans (so-called *planes de acogida*) some Autonomous Communities have also adopted special education programs, including the modification of school organization and adaptation of curricula which are in line with so-called "intercultural education" (CIDE, 2005, p.65-66).

Compensatory education programs, thus, take place in a way segregated from the standard curriculum and are performed by special teachers, for the purpose of compensating for students' differences in language, culture and ability. Intercultural education, however, aims at teaching tolerance and solidarity necessary for educational equity and social justice to all students. It therefore should not be limited to immigrant students, but teach all students to coexist and cooperate within a multicultural society.<sup>18)</sup> What is understood as multicultural education by policymakers in Spain is actually segregation of homogeneous cultural groups. Intercultural education is what takes the conflicts of a multicultural reality as a starting point and aims at stimulating interaction between students from different cultural groups (Amani, 2004, p.47-50). According to Etxeberria, the historical evolution of the management of multiculturalism in Spain can be summarized by a movement from assimilation, to compensation, to multi-culture, to intercultural education. While the latter two are often used interchangeably, intercultural education is different from multicultural education, because it

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18) See Muñoz (1997). Carbonell i Paris (2005, p.30-31) on the other hand argues that intercultural education should contain two basic pillars: education in (and for) equality and education in (and for) respect for diversity, thereby including compensatory education within intercultural education.



does not focus on cultures as separate groups, but stresses communication and dialogue between them, thus responding to the terminology of the Council of Europe (Etxeberria, 2002, p.15-16). It thereby goes beyond the liberal-assimilationist world view, by demanding both a real change in curricular contents and strategies, as well as changes in the level of cultural competence (Aguado & Malik, 2001, p.151). Most of the academic work on multicultural and/or intercultural education in Spain is done by scholars in education/pedagogy, anthropology or sociology.<sup>19)</sup> In this article we adopt a political approach, by examining the management of cultural diversity within Spanish education policy, treating “education as the mirror of society” (Zapata-Barrero, 2002, p.215).

## 2. Educational challenges as a mirror of social challenges

From an educational perspective, the academic underachievement of immigrant students<sup>20)</sup> is the main challenge, that includes the high number of foreign pupils failing to finish compulsory schooling and the high number of school abandonments after compulsory education (Playà Maset, 2007). These results can be explained by a combination of socio-economic, cultural and pedagogic variables.<sup>21)</sup> Another important challenge beyond the scope of this article is a relatively low number of foreign students in post-obligatory education. The share of foreign pupils is about 13.5% in primary and secondary education, while it only represents 6% and 9.7% in undergraduate university and professional education.<sup>22)</sup> My focus here is not on academic achievements, but on challenges re-

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19) For education/ pedagogy see for example: F. Etxeberria, 2002, F. Carbonell i Paris, 1995, 1996, 2005; T. Aguado, et.al., 2005; E. Terrén, 2001; X. Besalú Costa, 2002; for anthropology: J. García Castaño, 1995; M. Fernandez Enguita, 1996; G. Dietz, 2003 and S. Carrasco, 2003, 2005; and for sociology: J. Garreta Bochaca, 2004, 2006 and Colectivo IOÉ, 1997, 2002.

20) From an international perspective also the underachievement of Spanish pupils in general is a challenge. In the 2003 PISA study for example Spain was ranked 25th out of a total of 40 countries in mathematics, and 26 in reading and science (OECD, 2004).

21) For example, coming from a non-Spanish speaking background and having an ethnic minority status within the society are two risk factors pointed out for such underachievement, next to poverty and special needs (Arnaiz & Soto 2003, p.377). Age of incorporation, previous education, attention to immigrants and resources for intercultural education in educational centers are other factors mentioned in the literature.

22) See *La Vanguardia* (09-09-2007).

lated to the management of cultural diversity in mandatory education. I have identified three categories of challenges in the written media<sup>23)</sup> related to the presence of immigrants in Spanish primary and secondary classrooms: the concentration of immigrants in public schools, curricular challenges and institutional challenges.

### 2.1. Concentration of immigrants in public schools

Although by law immigrants have equal access to public financed schools --public and *concertada* schools--82.1% of the immigrant pupils are concentrated in public schools.<sup>24)</sup> The concentration of immigrants is believed to negatively affect the quality of education, and there is a fear that scholarly segregation results in marginalization, social fragmentation and will create social conflicts experienced in other European countries, like France, the UK or the Netherlands. These concerns have resulted in critiques of admission policies, and especially the lack of inclusion of immigrants in *concertada* schools. The new Education Law<sup>25)</sup> approved without the consensus of the main opposition party, *Partido Popular* introduced the regulation of entrance of students with special needs, including immigrants, up to 10% per class room. In Catalonia a quota policy has been introduced to regulate immigrants' admission in general, next to specific financial measures to promote immigrant admission in *concertada* schools. The introduction of quota policy has not passed without criticism. According to the critiques, forced redistribution does not reflect social reality. The director of immigration of the Basque government, Roberto Marro, for instance, states that "immigrants need to integrate in their own neighborhood and go to school there. You cannot solve the question of segregation by educational policy of admission" (Azumendi, 2007). Also the discriminatory and racist character of the policy is highlighted, because it

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23) Five major Spanish newspapers (*El País, La Vanguardia, ABC, El Mundo and El Periódico*) have been monitored between October 2006 and October 2007.

24) See Aunión (2007) and Benito (2007). Of the foreign students in mandatory primary and secondary education, about 1/5 fourth is matriculated in private schools, while 4/5 is matriculated in public schools. Within the category of "private", two types of schools can be distinguished: so-called *concertadas* (partly financed by the government and partly by the Catholic Church) and *non-concertadas*. The division of the Spanish education system into public, "concertada" and private schools is important for understanding segregation.

25) See Education Law (LO 2/2006, of 3 May).

only aims at the redistribution of foreign pupils and not of autochthons.<sup>26)</sup> On the other hand the parent association FAPAC criticizes the new admission policy of discriminating autochthons in Catalonia, because only immigrants are guaranteed free access to *concertada* schools, and they also receive the majority of *becas de comedor* (lunch grants). The association argues for an equal distribution of resources instead of the positive discrimination of immigrant students (Pérez, 2007).

## **2.2. Curricula challenges: confessional education, education for citizenship and language education<sup>27)</sup>**

Immigration has also triggered debates on curriculum changes. First, there is a question of confessional education. The socialist government proposed to make religion optional, in order to follow the constitutional principle of the Spanish a-confessional state. Arguments against this proposal came from the Catholic Church and the conservative party *Partido Popular*, who presented their claim for Catholic education to remain mandatory, because according to them 90% of the Spanish families demand Catholic classes and 70% think religious education should be mandatory. After a number of clashes between the two parties, the government approved a regulation of religious education without the blessing of the bishops, but accepting a good part of their demands. Catholicism maintains its prominent place within the public education system, as it must be offered in public schools, but is freely chosen by the students. While in primary school no alternative classes are provided, in secondary school an alternative course - history of religions - should be offered, but students are also free to choose neither of these options (Rodríguez de Paz, 2006; Morán, 2006). The debate on religious education highlights the struggle of the Catholic

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26) See *Deia* (05-07-2007).

27) Under this heading we discuss those curricula challenges that have been mediatized, including religious education, citizenship education and language education. Although it did not receive much media attention there was also a debate over the way in which Spanish history is interpreted in school textbooks, especially the way the Spanish Muslim past is presented. In these history textbooks a traditional picture of Maurophobia is perpetuated that consolidates the idea of Muslims versus Christians (R. Zapata-Barrero 2006, p.143), essentializes Western versus Eastern culture and produces a great deal of Eurocentrism and Islamophobia (see for example Navarro, 1997).

Church to maintain power within the Spanish education system. As far as other religions are concerned, the agreements between the Spanish state and the Jewish, Evangelic and Muslim communities guarantee the right of religious education in both public and private schools, but in practice many schools do not provide this opportunity.<sup>28)</sup> The Islamic Community of Spain for example states that there are only 33 Islamic teachers working in public schools in Spain, while there are some 74.000 Muslim pupils. Moreover, of the three concertada schools that are not Catholic, none is Islamic. Two are Evangelic and one is Jewish (Sahuquillo, 2007).

Second is the introduction of a new course called "Education for Citizenship and Human Rights" (*Educación para la ciudadanía y derechos humanos*) which was introduced as an obligatory course with the new education law.<sup>29)</sup> The purpose of the new subject is teaching individual and social ethics and democratic values. It includes topics like climate change, human rights, immigration, multiculturalism etc. It will be introduced into the schedule of the fifth or sixth years of primary school and in one of the first three years of secondary school. The idea was initiated on recommendations of both the Council of Europe and the European Union (Council of Europe, 2002; Council of the European Union, 2004). The new course has been subject to much criticism and debate in Spain. The large amount of newspaper articles and commentaries show that the main argument *for* is the need to create democratic citizens and prevent inequalities between sexes, minorities etc. Arguments *against* the new course come from the Catholic Church and related parties<sup>30)</sup> who argue that it might lead to value indoctrination by the state and goes against the freedom of ideology and religion.<sup>31)</sup> In several occasions, comparison is drawn with Franco's education policy of producing a national spirit. It can be argued that those who were for the maintenance of religion as mandatory course in

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28) See Andújar (2005) and *El Periódico de Catalunya* (18-11-2004).

29) The introduction of the subject comes after a long social and political debate concerning not only its contents, but also its adequacy, mainly lobbied by Catholic Church, which sees a part of its original monopoly as threatened.

30) Like the Popular Party (*Partido Popular*), Episcopal conference (*Conferencia Episcopal*), Catholic confederation of parents (*Confederación católica de padres*) and the employers organization of private schools (*la patronal de Colegios Privados*).

31) At the start of the academic year 2006-2007 some *concertada* schools even started a boycott on the assignment (see for example *El País*, 10-09-2007).

the official curricula are now against the introduction of the new course. However, also secularists object to the new subject, but for different reasons. From their perspective, a special course is not enough and what is needed is an integral and transversal approach of *intercultural convivencia*, which includes a transformation of teaching methods and curricula of all subjects.

Another challenge for the bilingual Autonomous Communities, like Catalonia, is the question of language education. In Catalonia, the teaching of the national language, different from Castilian, is an important part of the politics for recognition. Recently, the Catalan government criticized the new state degree establishing the basic contents of the curriculum, since 55% of the curriculum is determined by the central administration, which includes an introduction of an extra hour of Castilian language every week in primary school. The Catalan government accused the central administration of interference in their competences and petitioned the Constitutional Tribunal (Beltran, 2007b). Another incident that reached the newspapers was a sentence from the Catalan Tribunal that obliged a school in Badalona to provide one of their students with a minimum of four hours of classes in Castilian, as obliged by law, after a complaint by the parents.<sup>32)</sup>

### **2.3. Institutional challenges: the Muslim headscarf, halal food and the celebration of religious holidays**

Although a public opinion barometer illustrates that 61% of the population are against Muslim girls wearing veils at school,<sup>33)</sup> the use of the Muslim headscarf in public schools has not been as controversial in Spain as in other European countries and there are no laws or policies on this issue. A debate on presence of religious symbols in the public space promoted by the Socialist Government showed that in Spain opinions are divided among those who defend religious symbols as part of religious liberty and those who wish to prohibit the use of religious signs in the public sphere in the name of liberal-republican values (Pérez-Barco & Bastante, 2007; Martí, 2007). The lack of policy has resulted in some incidents in practice, where Muslim girls were not allowed to wear veils or

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32) See *EFE* (01-02-2006).

33) See *La Razón*, (03-04-2007).

where the school did not know what to do. Recently a public school in Girona (Catalonia) prohibited a girl wearing the Islamic veil (*hiyab*) from attending classes, based on internal rules of the center that prohibit all elements of discrimination, a decision that was reversed after the intervention of the Catalan government, who placed the right to education above the regulations on religious symbols (Iglesias, 2007; Beltran, 2007d; Galán, 2007). The incident resulted in demands by schools for public regulations on religious symbols, which were ruled out by the President of the Catalan government who argued that “at this moment in this country this is not necessary” (Escrache, 2007). Also in Ceuta, the Education Ministry intervened to guarantee the return of two girls wearing veils to a *concertada* school. Again the argument was based on the prevalence of the right to education upon the regulations on religious symbols (*El Mundo*, 10-10-2007). The question of religious symbols in the public space was not confined to Muslim symbols. For example in the Autonomous Community Castilla y León, the parents of 4 students at school criticized the presence of crucifixes in the classroom. The council of Education of the Autonomous Community in question asked them to be “tolerant”. Their argumentation was based on the fact that a crux means different things for different people, Catholic, agnostic or others and therefore is situated within the sphere of *convivencia* (peaceful coexistence) (*Europa Press*, 21-02-2006).

The accommodation of cultural and religious demands, like the availability of halal food or cultural and religious holidays, is legally determined within the agreements between the state and Spain’s minority religions. The lack of this accommodation in reality shows that a common acceptance of cultural pluralism within schools is not yet achieved. Two examples illustrate this. First, when a school in Zaragoza in the Autonomous Community of Aragón decided to suppress the celebration of Christmas, because of the cultural and religious diversity of their students, they received a lot of criticism from parent associations (Rodríguez de Paz, 2006). Second, the decision of the Catalan government to change the name of a school in Barcelona from “CEIP Juan XXIII” (a pope) to “Rosa dels Vents” for “multicultural” reasons, was fiercely criticized by the Catalan Popular Party (Subirana, 2006).

### 3. The management of cultural diversity in education

### 3.1 Context and basic challenges

Foreign students are estimated to represent 8.4% of the total students in non-university education<sup>34)</sup> in 2006/2007. The largest groups of these foreign students (42.9%) come from Latin America countries, followed by students from Europe (28.3%) and Africa (19.5%). The majority of foreign students go to public schools (10.4%), while only a small number is enrolled in private centers (4.6%) (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 2007). The current administration under Zapatero has given a new stimulus to immigrant students, by investing 42% of the integration budget into education in areas with large immigrant presence. Moreover a new Education Law has been approved in 2006 that introduced new norms of admission policy, changed the curricula with regard to religious education, introduced the subject “education for citizenship” and established “attention to diversity” as a basic principle of the educational system. Next to the low academic achievements of foreign pupils, the concentration of immigrants in public schools and the changes in the basic curriculum are important challenges for the central administration.

Within the central administration, the Education Ministry and Integration Secretary are the main institutions that develop the pre-conditions for education and integration policy at the Autonomous Community level. It is important to note that the Integration Secretary is within the Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs; it develops a transversal integration programs that include education. With regard to state education policy, the state’s power is largely confined to a regulatory nature and addressing the fundamental elements of the system. The Autonomous Communities have regulatory powers to expand the basic standards set by the state, and to regulate non-basic elements or features of the education system, as well as to manage the system in their own territory. For example, the Autonomous Communities use the core curricula established by the central administration as point of departure to draw their own official curricula, after which educational establishments adapt and expand it.<sup>35)</sup>

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34) Next to compulsory primary and secondary school, non-university education includes also child education (4-6), and pre-university and professional education (16-18).

35) The curricular model introduced by the LOGSE (1990) gives schools the possibility of

The remainder of this section will discuss the policy of the central administration related to the management of cultural diversity in education. The next section will first inquire into the framework provided by the Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration (*Plan Estratégico de ciudadanía e integración 2007-2010*) developed by the Immigration Secretary and the third section will discuss the approach of the Ministry of Education and Culture, by analyzing their “program for the attention to diversity”. Findings are complemented and contrasted to interviews with policymakers of both the Secretary of Immigration and Emigration and the Ministry of Education.<sup>36)</sup>

### 3.2 Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration 2007-2010

The *Secretaría de Estado de Inmigración y Emigración* (State Secretary of Immigration and Emigration) of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has recently developed a new integration program, the *Plan Estratégico de Ciudadanía e Integración*, that gives a new color to integration policy. The plan aims to stimulate a broad range of immigration policies in the fields of reception, education, employment, housing, social services, health, youth, non-discrimination, women, participation, raising awareness and development cooperation.

The challenge of immigration in the public policy of education is twofold. On one hand immigrant citizens demonstrate the quantitative and qualitative insufficiencies of the Spanish education system, which is in need of adaptation. This is made explicit in the priority actions to promote measures against scholarly segregation, reception, and to teach educational staff the cultural diversity and an intercultural approach. On the other hand, education provides the conditions for integration in the host society, in which language teaching and basic social conduct should be promoted. The fact that education is regarded a priority in both senses becomes clear in the distribution of resources. The GDI explains that 45% of the support

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making decisions on their educational approach and address the needs and contexts of each center. In this context each center produces two documents: the Education Project of the Center and the Curricular Project of the Center (Arnaiz & Soto 2003, p.379).

36) On the 15th of June 2007 an interview has been conducted with a representative of the General Direction of the Integration of Immigrants (abbreviated as GDI) and another with two representatives of the Ministry of Education (abbreviated as MEC)



fund for the integration of immigrants, consisting of 200 million euros, divided among the Autonomous Communities is dedicated to education.<sup>37)</sup> This amount should be used for several activities, including the development of reception plans, the promotion of *convivencia intercultural*, the maintenance of students' culture of origin, the promotion of non-compulsory schooling for children before 6 years old and the promotion of adult education. The role of the Immigration Secretary is therefore confined to providing resources and a framework of priority actions for integration in education that need to be further developed on the regional level.

### **3.3 Education policy: Attention to Diversity and Intercultural Education**

The new Education Law establishes an attention to diversity as a basic principle of the educational system, which aims at responding adequately to the educational demands of the diversity of students, without any exclusion. All citizens, including immigrants and Spanish citizens, should reach the maximum possible development in education and be guaranteed equality of opportunities. One of the MEC representatives we interviewed explains that the fact the words "immigrants" or "children of immigrants" do not appear in the new Law points towards a change in discourse. Collectives, like immigrants are no longer treated separately and the focus is on integrating different collectives within the classroom, rather than separating them. One of the main purposes of the new education reform has been planning the school admissions into *concertada* and public centers, for the purpose of guaranteeing an adequate and stable division among the schools of the students with needs of educational support, a category that mainly includes immigrants. The Autonomous Communities however are free to develop policies to reach this goal, as the school education is within the educational administration of the 17 regions, except the case of the cities Ceuta and Melilla that are under direct management of the Department of Education and Science.

As far as the curricular competence of the Education ministry

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37) All Autonomous Communities, except Basque country, Navarra and Ceuta and Melilla, have to present a Plan in which they describe what they plan to do with the money. The Autonomous Communities also need to co-finance 30% of the plan.

is concerned, it is determined by Law (the LOGSE, 1990) that the contents of the core curricula can not take up more than 55% of the timetable of Autonomous Communities with an additional official language other than Spanish -like Catalonia, Basque country and Galicia-, and no more than 65% for those that do not have another official language. The remainder of the curricula is filled in by the Autonomous Communities (CIDE, 2002, p.37). The most important curricula change in the new law is the introduction of the new course "Education for Citizenship", which, according to one of the MEC representatives, "is facing brutal opposition by the Catholic Church, while being a normal subject in all European schools". Another change is the regulation of religious education. In accordance with the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, Catholic religious education still must be offered in public schools, though students are free in choosing it, and an optional alternative is provided in secondary education.

Apart from admission policy and the partial development of the curriculum, the Ministry of Education does not have much power in defining education policy related to the management of diversity. Concrete policy programs developed by the Education Ministry include the teaching Program on the Arabic Language and Moroccan Culture, Portuguese Language and Culture Program and the Program "Attention to Immigrants". The first two programs derive from bilateral agreements with Morocco and Portugal to promote the preservation of languages and culture of origin. Teaching immigrants in their languages of origin is not part of the basic curriculum though, but agreements have been made with the governments of Morocco and Portugal, to bring in teachers of students' native languages during or after school hours. The program "Attention to Immigrants" seems most relevant, though it is not very extensive. In a one-page document, the Ministry communicates the idea of immigrants being citizens, by stating that free obligatory education is to be guaranteed for both *autochthon* and immigrant citizens. Equality of access though does not guarantee equality of opportunity. For this reason the instrument of so-called compensatory programs should "decrease" differences in education levels (i.e. compensating for language and educational gaps). This compensatory education is obligatory whenever such needs arise in a school, but the way it is put into practice may differ depending on the preferences of autonomous regions. In schools under the juris-

diction of the State however -like Ceuta and Melilla Autonomous Communities in the African shore- children with special needs attend special classes in their school hours.

Finally, the education ministry stimulates the integration of immigrant pupils in the education system, by developing special materials for teachers that work with immigrants, within the context of compensatory education or intercultural education. One of the MEC representatives points out that it is important to distinguish between “attention to immigrant pupils” on one hand and “intercultural education” on the other hand. While the first refers to compensatory education that compensates for language and educational differences, the latter aims at all pupils and teaches them to respect and value the cultural diversity. The MEC representative explains that the role of the ministry includes providing materials and introducing best mechanisms of intercultural education. For this purpose, the ministry has created a Resource Centre for Attention to Cultural Diversity in Education (CREADE), a website and network for supporting the professionals in educational and social spheres with information related to cultural diversity.<sup>38)</sup>

### **3.4. Catalan administration: Context and basic challenges**

The management of immigration in Catalonia is special, because Catalonia is a minority nation within the Spanish State. Immigration adds a second variable to the social reality of multiculturalism and affects the process of nation building (Zapata-Barrero, 2009). It therefore requires not only a discussion on rights and non-discrimination, but also on the language of identity, the use of political instruments of self-government<sup>39)</sup> and language policy (Zapata-Barrero, 2007, p.179). Immigration presents a potential danger to Catalan culture and identity, especially with regard to the future of Catalan language. With a bilingual education model, but with a majority of pupils speaking Castilian with their peers in and out of the classroom (Departament d'Educació, 2007, p.6), the Catalan language is believed to be in danger. R. Zapata-Barrero

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38) See <http://apliweb.mec.es/creade/index.do>.

39) In this context new the *Estatut* is important (voted for in a referendum by the citizens of Catalonia on 16 of June 2006 and approved by 90 percent of the Catalan Parliament) being the first legal framework talking about immigration in terms of necessities and claims for powers.

(2007, p.191) also points out the effects of immigration on the Castilian language, brought by the immigrants from Central and South America. As a consequence the strengthening of Catalan language is one of the main issues in *Generalitat* policy which relates to immigrants' integration.

The percentage of immigrants in Catalan classrooms has increased rapidly over the last decade. In obligatory education, immigrant students made up only 0.8% of the total number of students in the year 1991-1992, compared to 10% in 2004-2005 and 12.5% in 2007-2008. Most immigrant pupils come from Latin America countries (44%), Maghreb countries (26.5%) and non EU European countries (11%). Like in the rest of the country, most of them are concentrated in public schools (14% of immigrants in public and 4% of immigrants in private schools).<sup>40)</sup>

When the policy-makers in Catalonia are asked about their main challenges, they all stress the need of the Catalan society to perceive cultural diversity as enrichment and opportunity, rather than as a problem. The main challenge, according to them, is therefore a need for a change in a public attitude toward cultural diversity, so that cultural diversity becomes the preference and segregation becomes the basic fear. In schools teachers should be able to teach an intercultural approach; therefore the formation of teachers is one of the most important challenges. Another important challenge discussed in the focus group is the lack of participation of immigrants in after-school activities and of immigrant parents in school and parents associations, and the lack of grants for lunch and transport.

The main outcome of the National Pact on Education of 20 March 2006<sup>41)</sup> has been the regulation on admission of foreign students to public and private schools, which creates a maximum quota of 30% of foreign students per school, for the purpose of preventing segregation. In order to achieve this goal, the *Generalitat* will finance *concertada* schools that admit immigrant students by signing special contracts<sup>42)</sup> with them, for provision of extra finance

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40) See Generalitat de Catalunya, 2005, p.27 and Departament d'Educació (2007).

41) In this pact, the Catalan government (*Generalitat*) and the principal agents of the public and *concertada* schools (including labor unions, parent associations, local governments etc.) have agreed on several issues.

42) In 2007-2008 27 almost 1.300 *concertada* schools have such a contract (Beltran, 2007c).

to schools with students having specific needs (mainly immigrants), and building schooling commissions that provide information on available places in schools. The limit of these anti-segregation policies is the parents' right to choose a school for their children. Other issues of the Pact include the introduction of so-called intercultural mediators to stimulate social integration, the regulation of religious education, including the possibility to study an alternative course for non-believers, the introduction of "education for citizenship" (*educación para la ciudadanía*) and the regulation of the hours dedicated to Spanish and Catalan language teaching (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2006). The remainder of this section will discuss the policy of the *Generalitat* with regard to the *Language and Social Cohesion Plan* by the Catalan Education Department. Findings are complemented and contrasted to interviews with policymakers and a focus group with non-governmental stakeholders.<sup>43)</sup>

The Language and Social Cohesion Plan by the Education Department aims at promoting and consolidating social cohesion, intercultural education and the Catalan language, in a multilingual framework.<sup>44)</sup> Similar to the focus of the Immigration Plan on all "citizens", this Plan includes "all students in Catalonia, regardless of their background, situation or origin, and its purpose is to strengthen the foundations of a democratic culture based on justice, dialogue and coexistence" (Departament d'Educació, 2007, p.5). The Plan also talks about the teachers, the families and the local environment. The Sub-Director of Language and Social Cohesion (LSC) explains that the policy to manage cultural diversity developed by the Education Department can be understood through the metaphor of a highway. The *aulas de acogida* (insertion classes) are the first step of immigrant pupils towards the highway, while Catalan is the vehicle language. The second step is the education centers as a whole, where an "intercultural approach" needs to be

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43) Two interviews have been held in the Education Department: one with a representative of the Interculturality and Social Cohesion Service (abbreviated as ISCS) on the 7th of June 2007 and another one with the Sub Director of Language and Social Cohesion (abbreviated as LSC) on the 25th of June 2007. Another interview was held with a representative of the Immigration Secretary on the 20th of June 2007 (abbreviated as IS). Finally on the 29th of June 2007 a focus group was organized in Barcelona with representatives of teachers, parents, immigrants and cultural associations.

44) Catalonia is a bilingual area where Spanish is the majority language sharing official status with Catalan.

implemented and it should affect all pupils. The third step is the adaptation of school environment to cultural diversity and intercultural approach, which results in *planes de entorn*.<sup>45)</sup>

The point of departure is to guarantee equality for all and respect for diversity. The representative of the Interculturality and Social Cohesion Service (ISCS) describes this as following: "We were mono-cultural and now we have to recognize that we have to exist together with different cultures". Both the ISCS and LSC stress that cultural diversity must be seen as enrichment of Catalan society and its schools. The Plan stresses that a school is a laboratory of the society where "pupils from different cultural backgrounds can build a new, shared and non-exclusive identity as citizens" (Departament d'Educació, 2007, p.3). The LSC states that ideally all schools should have between 10 and 30% of immigrants. "Concentration of more than 30% of immigrants creates management problems, while less than 10% give pupils a limited vision of our globalized world". According to the LSC, the segregation of cultural groups creates problems not only in the long run, but also does not accord with "the Mediterranean culture of proximity". LSC: "The idea of a multicultural neighborhood does not work here, the idea of a public sphere where intercultural - not multicultural - *convivencia* is possible" is more important.<sup>46)</sup> The ISCS takes a similar position:

*"The Catalan society does not like ghettos, and we want that everybody communicates with everybody. Therefore the idea is to prevent exclusion and to create the situation in which all people that come to Catalonia will quickly feel Catalan, without renouncing what they are. We believe in multiple identities, and think that you should never renounce your identity but integrate in new identities, which in this case is the Catalan identity we have here."*

The term "interculturality" was first referred to in 1992 when the Department of Education defined the curriculum for primary

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45) Local education plans, consisting of creating a local educational net to achieve school success of pupils.

46) The LSC affirms this by pointing out that the vision of Catalan government is to manage questions of cultural diversity from a bottom-up approach of contextual proximity. Nevertheless, in May next year a congress is planned to discuss the limits of *convivencia*, especially in relation to questions of religious symbols, alimentation etc.

and compulsory education (Departament d'Ensenyament, 1992). According to Carrasco (1999) the guidelines and resolutions of the Council of the European Union on responses to racism and xenophobia underpinned the new focus. When in 1996 a "transversal axis on intercultural education" was proposed to be followed in schools, the concept developed more in terms of intentions to respect cultural diversity through openness, respect and dialogue in order to prepare pupils for living in a culturally diverse society (Departament d'Ensenyament, 1996). Intercultural education is giving all pupils "cultural competence", consisting of positive intercultural attitudes, improvement of personal cultural self-conception, strengthening co-existence and improving equality of opportunity for all pupils (see Garreta Bochaca, 2006, p.268). The analyzed policy documents and interviews with policy makers reveal that this conception of "interculturality", as an attitude rather than policy doctrine remains at work today. It basically means a positive evaluation of cultural diversity and a need to create bonds of solidarity between "different" citizens (Departament d'Educació, 2007, p.12). The ISCS describes it as a tool to fight xenophobia and racism and to give immigrant pupils a feeling of recognition, by teaching pupils to respect difference, know and value other cultures. The LSC describes it as space of *convivencia* (coexistence), in which all pupils know the limits and norms. What becomes clear from these data is that "intercultural" is an attitude and practice of dialogue and interaction that need to be taught to pupils and therefore need to be embraced by teachers.

Although cultural diversity is understood as enrichment of the Catalan society, and the Plan is full of recognition, respect, intercultural education etc., there are certain limits to diversity in the public sphere. Social cohesion is the precondition for celebration of cultural diversity and the main tool to create social cohesion is learning Catalan language. In the words of the LSC: "We don't want anybody to feel like a second rate Catalan". One of the main aims of the Plan is therefore to consolidate Catalan as the mainstay of the multilingual scheme. Both policy-makers and participants in the focus group underline the importance of Catalan as a vehicle language.<sup>47)</sup> In order to promote learning Catalan language, the fol-

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47) Only one participant in the focus group made a critical note, by stating that "some immigrants do not plan to stay for a long time, and they might profit more from learning Castilian".

lowing intervention spheres are defined: language immersion programs,<sup>48)</sup> encouraging the use of Catalan as language of instruction and communication in schools as well as in families and the entire school environment, and the creation, adaptation and sharing of materials for better language learning. The so-called *aulas de acogida* are classrooms in educational centers that aim to teach immigrant students the basics of Catalan language. They have substituted the so-called “workshops of school adaptation” that were realized outside education centers. Immigrant pupils spent max. 50% of their time (15 hours a week) in these classes for maximal 2 years approximately, depending on their mother tongue and level of education. The ISCS makes clear that the Education Department is not in favor of separate classrooms for immigrants and stresses the integration into the school.

Learning the language and culture of the country of origin is not part of the official school curriculum, but in schools with demand, it is offered as an extra-school activity (CIDE, 2005, p.139). Due to an agreement of the Generalitat with the Moroccan government, there are 15 professors teaching Arabic after school hours in Catalan schools. Most parents however send their children to learn Arabic language and culture in cultural associations or in the mosque.

While language is a political tool for integration, other areas of cultural diversity are neither politicized nor celebrated within the context of the intercultural approach. Religious education is one example. Unlike the language, religious diversity is not mentioned in the Plan. When asked about religious diversity, the ISCS explains that education centers are non-religious,<sup>49)</sup> but that there are covenants with “other” religions, i.e. Jewish and Muslim community, thereby revealing the salient importance of the Catholic Church

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48) In the year 2007-2008 there are 1.155 insertion classes (*aulas de acogida*) out of the total 3.000 educational centers. This means that one of every three education centers has an insertion classroom. It is also important to note that while the policy tool of *aulas de acogida* is a resource provided by the *Generalitat*, including the appointment of a tutor, materials, time tables etc., the education centers are responsible for constructing a Reception Plan (*Plan de Acogida*) (CIDE, 2005, p.136-137).

49) Although outside of their competence, the Catalan Education Department is in favor of implementing the principle of secularism (*laïcité*) in schools. Also most participants in the focus group argue that religion classes should not be given in schools, except for teaching respect for religions in general.



(Catholicism courses are offered in all public schools). Parents who wish for religious education of "another" type can ask for it, but in practice this is not often the case. According to the ISCS this is so due to the lack of teachers for which religious communities are responsible and the lack of pupils in schools demanding it. Also the LSC argues that "there is almost no demand for religious education from immigrant parents, nor do autochthons worry about this". The debates on religion in the new Education Law, according to the respondent, were more "salon debates" than questions relevant to daily practice. According to the LSC, "Catholicism is a normal religion in schools, Evangelism is punctual, Judaism is a small minority and Islam lacks accreditation". The IS gives another reason for the lack of Islamic classes: "In practice Islamic education is not offered, because Islamic teachers lack respect for Catalan methods of teaching" and do not hide prejudices: "it cannot be accepted, for example, that they hit pupils". A representative of Moroccan immigrants in the focus group argues though that the problem of a lack of teachers is due to the malfunctioning of bilateral agreements with countries of origin. The lack of possibility for formation of Islamic teachers in Catalonia or Spain for that matter shows that impartiality is not embraced when it comes to the management of religious diversity (Andújar, 2005).

Another example of a lack of impartiality is institutional challenges caused by migration related diversity. When asked about how Catalonia manages the question of veils, for example, the ISCS states: "We do not start a war on veils" and explains that these issues are managed and negotiated at the local level in a practical manner. Although there is no policy on religious symbols, the respondent explains that "there are demands that are negotiable and those that are not". While wearing a veil (but not a burkha) is negotiable, not participating in gymnasium is not. When asked about the management of religious holidays, the salience of the Catholic Church is confirmed again. "The festivals (mainly Catholic) are what we have here, and we cannot permit more or less festivals". The ISCS explains that students who want to have a day off because of religious festivities can ask for it and will get permission if the school has an intercultural approach. Cultural and religious demands are to be resolved "through dialogue and with common sense" at a school level. Only if schools encounter problems, the Education Department is contacted. These examples highlight the

limits of respect and celebration of cultural diversity in Catalonia. It can be argued that although cultural diversity is evaluated as an enrichment, it is limited by the Catalan public space and in practice depends on decisions made at a school level.

The boundaries of cultural diversity are justified by the need for social cohesion in the public sphere. The ISCS stress that a school is part of a public space and therefore important for the production and practice in a community: "Everybody needs to know what they have to do and what to respect" [...] the public sphere consists of principles that cannot be waived, like language, human rights, child rights, women rights". The LSC states that public sphere of the Catalan is very limited, in comparison with the French: "Although there are important principles and rights in our public sphere, there is still a lot of liberty to organize into communities". Social cohesion and local citizenship are to be created by the idea of *socialization*, mainly learning Catalan language and basic "European" values, rather than on *cultural assimilation*. Catalonia's interpretation of integration therefore comes closest to the French civic assimilation model, with Catalan as the main tool for fostering a civic identity among the resident citizens. But there are also important differences, for example with regard to the management of religious diversity. According to the ISCS the Catalan education model should not be compared to other models in Europe, because "Catalonia has learned from its mistakes and is experimenting with its own models." The ISCS:

*"We know that the policies followed by other European countries have not brought hopeful results. This is true for the British, and the French and the German. They were implementing policies that did not function and which they had to change. Therefore, as none of the models convinced us, we created a model between the French one and the English one, [...] with a focus both on attention to immigrant pupils and on what binds them together".*

In sum, although a policy discourse on intercultural education is developing in Catalonia, the respondents admit that in practice intercultural education is not fully implemented and is mainly focused on reception of newcomers, support for school enrolment and language classes. These results are confirmed by the work of Garreta Bochaca (2004, 2006) who argues that although policy dis-

courses point into the direction of intercultural education, evaluation studies are critical for the practical interventions and guidelines. Reasons for this lack of practice are problems of admission of immigrant pupils, the difficulty to change the official curriculum and the limited pedagogical practice of teachers (Garreta Bochaca, 2006, p.270).

#### **4. Final Remarks: different policy approaches and multiple diversities**

This article has analyzed Spanish challenges and policy approaches towards the management of migration related diversity in education. The first finding is that there is not one, but several approaches, both due to the decentralized character of the education system and the multiplicity of diversity that is at stake, i.e. language, religion, culture etc.

First, the decentralization of state power after Spain's transition to democracy has resulted in a *decentralized education system* and therefore a variation in approaches towards the management of cultural diversity among different Autonomous Communities. These differences are most explicit with regard to language education. Especially in those Autonomous Communities where a second official language is promoted -like Catalonia, Basque country and Galicia-, immigration represents a challenge to identity politics and has resulted in specific challenges of how to manage bilingualism and now multilingualism in schools. The decentralized education system moreover has resulted in a situation of cultural diversity being mainly dealt with at the individual school level, usually following a compensatory approach, when immigrant students are given special attention to learn the official language(s) and bridge educational and cultural gaps. While education in, and for, equality of opportunity has been developed within compensatory policy programs, education in, and for, difference is a new policy discourse in Spain and in practice it largely depends on the efforts of educational centers. The lack of knowledge of policy-makers on the implementation of state and regional policies indicate that a research at a school level will provide important insights into the actual management of cultural diversity in Spanish schools.

Second, the historical, though diminished, influence of the Catholic Church on education has resulted in a situation of *cultural*

*hegemony*. First of all, Catholic classes are to be offered in all public schools, while classes on minority religions are almost absent, in spite of the bilateral agreements signed with the Jews, Muslims and Protestants. Second, the fact that the policy documents analyzed in this study do not talk about management of religious diversity at all, confirms the importance of the Catholic Church in Spain. Third, the Catholic Church and affiliated parties tried to prevent changes in religious education and the implementation of a new course "education for citizenship" recommended by the Council of Europe. After heated debates the Socialist government managed to implement a new Education Law which has made religious education optional and introduced the new course "education for citizenship". Finally, while there are many so-called *concertada* schools -schools half in the hands of the state and half in the hands of the Catholic Church-, there are only three schools controlled by other religious minorities -and none of them is Islamic. Moreover, the Catholic *concertada* schools have failed to incorporate immigrant students, thereby creating situations of concentration in public schools, which is one of the main challenges for Spain. The management of religious diversity therefore can be understood within the context of an integration model based on cultural hegemony, where decision-making power remains in the hands of the dominant culture and where the right of the majority, and therefore of the individual, is regarded more important than that of cultural minority groups.

Third, because immigration is relatively new in Spain, the authorities are struggling to manage this migration diversity and look at different approaches followed in Europe. Policy-makers are aware of different models of integration existing in older European host countries, but seem not to be convinced by any of them. They mostly look down at the multicultural model of integration that is negatively associated with segregation and social marginalization. In order to avoid the separation of immigrants, the idea of citizenship has been presented within the policy discourse as a new category for integration that includes both immigrants and Spanish natives. The wish for mixing cultures within schools is so strong, that quota policies for admission have been introduced in Catalonia and are considered in other regions. Next to these quota policies, the strong focus on language immersion, which in Catalonia is part of the process of "normalization", and the lack of teaching in languages and cultures of origin all point towards an integration mod-

el based on the idea of *civic assimilation*, according to which the main goal is to assimilate immigrants into the national language and conduct. However policy-makers do not want to be associated with the French doctrine and rather see themselves as the harbingers of a new model of integration, which is based on "interculturality", and draws on European concepts of integration and European values.

Fourth, *intercultural education* has gained a lot of popularity in the policy arena, as well as in academic circles. Policy-makers have different views on the meaning of this new approach and it often remains unclear what exactly is meant by this intercultural approach which is somewhere in-between assimilation and multicultural models of integration. Broadly speaking, intercultural education is conceptualized as an approach that aims at teaching all students values such as tolerance and respect, in order to live in *convivencia* (to coexist peacefully). It aims at the interaction of different cultural groups, and is therefore separated from both multicultural and compensatory education. An intercultural approach rather expresses the need to change societal attitudes and modify the public structure of the society in favor of cultural diversity. Though for some it is only about the positive evaluation of migration diversity and the need to solve multicultural conflicts by ways of intercultural dialogue, others point out the need for substantial organizational and curriculum changes. For the central administration, the implementation of an intercultural approach has been limited to the introduction of the course "Education for Citizenship" in the basic curricula and the development of intercultural education materials. In Catalonia, intercultural education is mainly understood as an attitudinal change that teachers must promote among their students, next to being a guiding principle for multicultural problem solving by ways of peaceful negotiation and dialogue, rather than through legislating the limits of cultural diversity in the public sphere. As a result, the formation of existing and new teachers is one of the main challenges. Therefore the scope of intercultural education at this moment seems to be limited to efforts to teach educational staff values like recognition and mutual respect and some marginal changes in the curriculum, while implementation is largely dependent on the willingness and interpretations of individual schools.

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