

“Internationalization at Home”

Concept Note

WORK PACKAGE 1

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The need for developing an IaH concept

The INTERBA project was designed with the aim to strengthen international, intercultural and global dimension via Internalization at Home (IaH) implementation at partner HEIs in order to enhance the quality of education and to make a meaningful contribution to the society. More specifically it aims:

1. to formulate a coherent and detailed IaH concept that could be mainstreamed into the partner HEIs Roadmaps following on from their specific exigencies
2. to level up the scope and viability of IaH activities implemented in partner HEIs
3. to train expert pool capable of developing and integrating IaH into HEI environment
4. to launch an online platform as a tool for IaH implementation
5. to establish/modernize the existing structure/entities responsible for IaH at HEIs

In regard to the first specific objective, that of formulating a coherent and detailed IaH concept that could be mainstreamed into the partner HEIs, we consider it fit to initially review the generally accepted concepts of Internationalization at Home in Higher Education and then combine them with the understanding of IaH by the partner institutions in this project based on their previous experiences and efforts for internationalization.

How is IaH perceived in various environments

The simplest definition we can find from the EAIE is the one that considers IaH as “**Any international related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility**”¹. In an attempt to fill in the gaps left by these definitions, Beelen and Jones (2015)² define IaH as the “... **the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments**”. While the first definition considers IaH as “any international related activity”, the other definition is focused on the importance of including international and cultural aspects into curriculum. However, we consider that it is important to expand this concept beyond curriculum, by including other aspects of HEIs management besides learning and teaching that would positively impact the overall student experience and the overall functioning of HEIs.

¹ <https://www.eaie.org/blog/internationalisation-at-home-strategy.html>

² https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312862761_Redefining_Internationalization_at_Home

What does IaH mean for WB countries

To better understand what Internationalization at Home means for the partner institutions in this project, we have firstly analyzed the areas in which they have so far collaborated the most at the international level - believing that these were the areas in which they have mostly needed to benefit from international experiences. These fields include:

- New innovative curricula/educational methods/development of training courses
- ICT - new technologies - digital competences
- Regional dimension and cooperation
- Cooperation between educational institutions and business
- Quality Improvement Institutions and/or methods (incl. school development)
- Research and innovation
- Labor market and skills mismatches

Afterwards, we have looked at the areas in which HEIs have had initiatives of cooperation but the level of cooperation still remains lower, arguing that with greater participation in joint international projects, HEIs have begun to identify new areas of cooperation from which all parties involved can benefit. These include:

- **Addressing human rights in education**, including disabilities, gender equality, minority issues, migrants' issues, inclusion, as well as health and wellbeing of individuals involved in any form in education
- **Quality assurance in Higher Education**, including combating failure in education (early school leaving), recognition, transparency and certification, adjustment of programs to the needs of differently abled students, open and distance learning, graduate tracking systems, student retention
- **Social development of students**, including human rights and rule of law, social/environmental responsibility of educational institutions, Social dialogue, Inclusion – equity Intercultural/intergenerational education and (lifelong) learning
- **Political education and civic engagement**, including reaching the policy level/dialogue with decision makers, cooperation with least developed countries and
- **Economic and entrepreneurial education**, including elements of Rural development and urbanization, Entrepreneurial learning - entrepreneurship education, Economic and financial

affairs (incl. funding issues), Enterprise, industry and SMEs (incl. entrepreneurship); and finally

- **Cultural development of students**, including being mindful of cultural heritage and cultural differences, creativity and culture, and promotion of education in and through sport and arts with special focus on skills development

What are the elements of IaH

Based on the above short analysis we can conclude that the concept of Internationalization at home, at least in the context of this project, must adhere to the following characteristics:

What should entail

Incorporating international and intercultural views and experiences into:

- Updating and improving curricula
- Updating and improving student services
- Updating and improving HEIs management processes, including the development of projects to address various institutional, local, national or international issues from an academic perspective
- Increasing cooperation of academia with the industry
- Increasing the involvement of students and staff in social, political, and cultural life in their country and at the international level.

Where should it take place

- Domestically, either in-campus or virtually

Who should it include

- Current students, potential students, and alumni
- Academic staff of HEIs
- Managerial staff of HEIs
- Technical and administrative staff of HEIs
- Collaborators from public institutions, industry, media and other stakeholders

To put it succinctly, for the purposes of this project, Internationalization at Home is understood as

“The purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum and curriculum delivery, managerial and administrative processes, industry cooperation, and social, political and cultural engagement for all students, staff and collaborators within domestic environments at HEIs”