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# REPORT

## **MEDIATOR PROGRAM - the future of education**



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In today's day and age, with the accelerating globalisation, increased mobility of employees, mass migration, and the dynamic development of communication technology, different cultures inevitably confront each other in social, family, and professional life. It should be noted that cultural diversity can exist not only between different countries, but also within one country, where many different cultures meet, e.g., ethnic, religious, regional, within social groups, subcultures, etc. Therefore, the term "cultural differences" should be understood broadly as differences resulting from upbringing and being present in different environments.

Multiculturalism can be observed on various levels of life: at school, in business, in the work environment, and above all in the family environment. In such a reality conflict situations become inevitable, caused by a lack of understanding for culturally different behaviours and values.

We talk about intercultural conflict when the basis of the dispute or the cause of its aggravation is a mutual misunderstanding by people from different cultures of other points of view, norms, values, and behaviours.

Mediation belongs to the so-called alternative dispute resolution methods (ADR). It involves the involvement of a neutral third party called a mediator in the conversations between the conflicted parties. The mediator helps the parties establish effective communication and facilitate mutual understanding, supporting them in developing a solution that is satisfactory for each of the parties (win-win option). Mediation is voluntary, confidential, impartial, and neutral.

It is worth recognising that in everyday life there are very often situations in which people have to deal with conflict. These can be conflicts at work, school, in the family, among friends, in offices, and even during accidental contacts with strangers, e.g., on the street, in a shop, or in a queue at the doctor's. In such situations, we often use mediation techniques even when we are not aware of it: empathic or active listening; asking open-ended questions; looking for common points of view; looking for a common solution. For these reasons, the statement that we mediate almost every minute of our lives seems justified. While not all become mediators in the full sense of the word, we all use similar techniques and tools to a greater or lesser extent to resolve the problems and conflicts that naturally arise in our lives.

There is no doubt that mediation is also an effective tool for resolving multicultural conflicts. In the event of an intercultural dispute, it should be the first choice of the parties as a way to find an effective and quick way out of a conflict situation between people from different cultures.

Preventing and resolving intercultural conflicts requires increasing awareness of different cultures, traditions, lifestyles, communication styles in the country, and in the world. Multicultural mediation remains an area little recognised both in science and in the achievements of mediation practitioners. There is a lack of literature on this subject, as well as other sources that allow you to acquire theoretical and practical knowledge about the specificity of multicultural mediation and the profession of a multicultural mediator. This topic certainly deserves to be explored and disseminated among mediators.

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We already live in a globalised multicultural world, and the mixing of cultures is a trend that cannot be ignored or stopped. Now, there is a real need to educate people on multicultural competences and the ability to resolve multicultural conflicts. In the future, the demand for educated multicultural mediators will continue to grow.

MEDIATOR PROGRAM - the future of education, co-funded by the European Union, is the first innovative project around multicultural mediation in the European Union. The leader of the project Fundacja Rozwoju Społecznego i Profilaktyki DIALOG (FRSP DIALOG) Poland, and partner AUTPOST LIMITED Ireland carried out first such detailed desk research (DR) on multicultural mediation and the profession of the multicultural mediator in the European Union. The results are showcased in this report, which also presents the conclusions and recommendations developed on the basis of the results of the study.

This project is addressed to people who are qualified to practice the mediator profession, but do not have the competences necessary to conduct multicultural mediation.

We believe that the recommendations, ethical principles, and standards for educating multicultural mediators developed in this project, with accordance to a universal and innovative program, will contribute to the popularisation of multicultural mediation as a highly ethical, effective, modern and desirable method of resolving multicultural conflicts.