8

Universities as Cosmopolitan Places for a Culture of Peace and Tolerance.
The Case of the Ponto De Partida — Experiências Educativas

Cláudia Vaz, Ana Carolina Reis, João Ferreira Marini

University of Lisbon, Portugal

Abstract

The *Ponto de Partida — Experiências Educativas IN | The Starting Point — Educational Experiences IN* (INclusive, IN[non]formal and Inspiring), like other similar university projects, most likely resulted from something as simple as a *Kantian* impetus stemming from *goodwill and a sense of duty* — an informal conversation in a university hallway between a professor and an African student. Professor — "Is it true that African students at our university face greater difficulties and challenges than other students?" Student — "Oh Professor, you cannot imagine how much greater. In particular, students from Guinea-Bissau face difficulties you cannot even imagine." The professor may then respond with, "We must do something to change this situation." To that, the student replies, "We absolutely must!" The professor, eager to address this issue, states, "Let's schedule a meeting with the African students. I would like to hear what they have to say, get to know their experiences here and see what we can do from now onwards." Then finally replies — "Yes, let's do it!"

Guided by the assumption of *the dignity of the human person* (Kant 2010) from a cosmopolitan perspective (Appiah, 2006; Becker, 2016), in little over two years, this simple *act of goodwill* imbued with a sense *of duty* gave rise to a methodology for the development of the human potential in a multicultural context which aims to educate students to be the best version of themselves, regardless of whether in the job market, as political citizens or as human

beings. Through this methodology, we have demonstrated that educational experiences in "cosmopolitan places" are transformative in the sense that they promote soft skills (such as empathy, creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork, and communication) which are in themselves essential for building a culture of tolerance and peace.

Keywords: cosmopolitanism, ethics, development of human potential, *soft skills*, culture of peace and tolerance, starting Point — Educative Experiences IN.

8.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to reflect on the role that universities in the 21st century play in training young people to build a culture of tolerance and peace. The proposal stems from the *Ponto de Partida — Experiências Educativas IN | Starting Point — Educational Experiences* (INclusive, IN[non]formal and INspiring), an educational project which aims to create educational and cosmopolitan environments that, on the one hand, stimulate the development of *soft skills* (such as creativity, emotional–empathetic intelligence, problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork, big-picture thinking, and interpersonal communication) in a global and VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) world and also foster the successful inclusion of international students.

In just over two years, from design to prototyping and execution, more than 40 *activity-experiences* were carried out in the classroom and in spaces outside the university (in other institutes and colleges at the University of Lisbon and in the streets and cosmopolitan spaces of Lisbon city), with groups of students from ISCSP, University of Lisbon, international universities,[1] and trainees from companies (collaborative knowledge transfer). The scientific areas were diverse.

Similarly, to Serres, "I would like to write narratives, songs, poems, a thousand enthusiastic texts encouraging all women and men to intervene in all public matters that are, and are not, pertinent to them" (2019, pg. 114), with the aim of creating a true culture of tolerance and peace. But I will not do it, not just yet (and certainly not alone). What I propose here is a collective reflection on a cosmopolitan pedagogic design adapted to 21st

---

[1]Cases from Warsaw Universities (Poland), Windesheim University of Applied Sciences (the Netherlands), and the College of engineering at Texas University, the latter represented by the company Brazil Cultural.

century universities, in line with a global agenda of building a culture of tolerance and peace. This too is the view of Ozdemir (2016), "To respond to the challenges of a globalized world, new visions and mindsets are needed. This can be done by 21st century universities."

To reflect on this, we begin with four assumptions.

1) We believe that *Starting Point's* activities are true cosmopolitan experiences and are places for personal transformation because they mirror the *Other*, the one that is different from myself and those who are closest to me.

2) We believe that these places, designated here as *cosmopolitan places*, facilitate essential learning, designated as *soft skills* that are crucial for our personal, social professional, and environmental success of millennials, centennials, and other generations of the 21st century.

3) We believe that the University, as an institute of higher learning, is responsible for producing high-level professionals ready to tackle market challenges in a global world and responsible for producing researchers and cultivating human and environmental knowledge. In addition, it also has the responsibility to incorporate and support cosmopolitan programs for the development of *soft skills* in order to guarantee human potential in this *Baumanian liquid modernity*, which characterizes today's world.

4) We believe that a humanist education with humanity, is the path to "constructing the *builders*" of a culture of tolerance and peace. During this process, it is interesting to understand the role of inspiring narratives and its play in forming positive beliefs and values. Although the urgency to reflect and contribute toward building a culture and a narrative of tolerance and peace are unfortunately not a new theme, thankfully, various initiatives, on a global as well as a national and local scale, have sought to answer this global appeal that has at its root the Kantian Idea of the *Dignity of the Human Person*.[2] There are also several contributions that indicate the importance of education curriculums focusing on peace that integrate activities which incite the development of emotional skills.[3]

---

[2]In this regard, see the works of Nussbaum (2003, 2012), Sen (1985, 2009), Reardon & Snauwaert (2011), Kant (2018, 2019), and Popkewitz (2009), among others.

[3]This is the case of Reardon (2001) in *Education for a Culture of Peace in a Gender Perspective*. In this author's perspective, skills of co-operation, communication skills, cultural skills, and conflict skills are some of the social skills essential for building common purposes.

As you will have the chance to see, our perspective is based on the originality of this systemic-multilevel design. For one, we have its hybridism, followed by a collaborative nature emphasizing its synergy. In conjunction, with a defined flexibility that can be farmable to any situation as a mechanism to which one uses and not necessarily as a final form.

This chapter is organized as three sections, resulting in a crossing of both objectives and assumptions presented, with the design of the non-formal, inclusive, and inspirational exercises that are Starting Point's cosmopolitan experiences.

Therefore, the initial "(One) Starting Point" is dedicated to this case study based on its context, process, and model. The third section — "Assumptions of the Model and Pillars of Education — An analogy," is committed to situate the model's assumptions within the scope of education for the 21st century. Finally, the fourth section — "The responsibility of Universities *to Nurture* a Culture of Tolerance and Peace," is organized around two questions: How can models like the SP-EEIC be an integral part of a more socially responsible educational culture? How can Universities contribute to a culture of peace and tolerance?

8.2 (One) "Starting Point" — An Educational Experience

Starting Point, as a university project of just two-years-old, aims to create cosmopolitan educational environments that trigger, on the one hand, the development of soft skills (empathy, creativity, emotional intelligence, problem solving, teamwork, big picture thinking, cognitive flexibility, and intercultural communication) in a global and VUCA world and, on the other hand, a successful integration of international students (with a special focus on Lusophone students). It is, therefore, a humanist project for the development of human potential.

Like so many other university projects, it resulted from something as simple as a Kantian impulse of feelings of goodwill and duty — an informal conversation in the hallway of a university between a Guinean professor and student. A conversation as simple as this:

- *Is it true that African students arrive at our university with greater difficulties compared to other students?*
- *Yes Professor, you can't imagine how many difficulties they have to overcome on a daily basis.*
- *We have to do something to change this situation.*

- *We really do!*
- *We will schedule a meeting with African students. I want to hear what they have to say, to know their experiences and see what we can do from there.*
- *Let's go!*

Understanding the statement that Starting Point was born from the intersection of feelings of goodwill and duty goes through the knowledge of the characters in the story — but is not that always the case? Is there a project, an idea, or even a business that can be truly understood without taking into account its protagonists? If so, this is not the case.

I am the professor of this story. I majored in Anthropology, the human science that is concerned with the understanding of behaviors and attitudes of all human beings. I do not know if being born in Africa, more specifically in Angola, will explain my anthropological interest in hybrid identities of children and young people of African origin (with a focus on those of Cape Verdean origin).[4]

Regardless of the reasons why I chose this master's degree, I studied the identities of children of Cape Verdean origin in school and for my Ph.D., the identities of young people from one of the most stigmatized migrant neighborhoods in Portugal — Bairro do Alto da Cova da Mora — fantastic experiences of learning and growth.

Therefore, I have always considered myself a lucky person because I had the opportunity to meet and relate to different people. I truly do not know of a better way to learn and become who we are as individuals than this.

Later, I had the opportunity to co-ordinate "Ser Mulher" (Being a Woman), in Portuguese — a project that aimed to 1) introduce the faces, voices, and narratives of young people and women who could, on the one hand, constitute positive references for other women (inspirations in women) and, on the other hand, stimulate the identity awareness of being a woman in a Portuguese-speaking country, and 2) to establish the link between the academy, policymakers, the media, and civil society (advocacy strategy). Following this project, I was invited by the President of ISCSP to represent this higher education institution on the thematic commission on Education, Higher Education, Science and Technology of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPSP), in the role of Consultant Observer. One of the

---

[4]Until the 1990s, the Cape Verdean population represented the most numerous ethnic group in Portugal (they began to arrive massively in the 1970s, as a result of the decolonization policy).

topics that have systematically integrated the agenda is the mobility and integration of students from this specific community.

It was in this context that, one afternoon, I came across another protagonist of this episode — Maquilo Jamanca, who, at the time, was a pupil of mine finishing his master's in Strategy. He was born in Guinea (in Bissau, Bafatá) and came to Portugal at the age of 21, with the intention of continuing his studies in a Portuguese higher education university. Before entering university, he did his 12th year in languages and humanities at a school in Montijo. As you will observe, it was a meaningful experience for him:

Right on the first attempt to complete 12th grade here, I failed at the Portuguese language! I was always a good student in Portuguese! Failing for the first time in my life, deeply shook my self-esteem to the point of doubting my real abilities considering what had thus far been my journey in Bissau: a student who exceeded in assessments and behavior. In this context, I had very low self-esteem and was full of doubts about myself and what I could do.

The support given by his sister was what made him find the strength to overcome this difficult time. She gave him strength when he needed most and made him stay true to his goal.

- *You only failed at one subject: Portuguese. You were almost there! You failed with an 8 out of 20! You know what you're going to do?*
- *I don't know, Sis.*
- *You are not going to give up. You're going to finish your last year! You can do it and you can always count on me to help you with anything.*

That experience shaped him, and that is how he got accepted to ISCSP in 2013, in the International Relations course. That year, he heard several colleagues and teachers share episodes discussed by individuals in the African Students Nucleus, at that time an inactive group — discussing distinctive narratives about "African Week" with its cycle of conferences, African gastronomy shows, exhibitions, and fashion shows. In 2014, he shared with colleagues and teachers his desire to reactivate the Nucleus, to create a structure that, on the one hand, could serve as support for the newly arrived colleagues and, on the other hand, enable the sharing of positivity and diversity of the African continent. That is how, with the collaboration of colleagues and teachers, he assumed the role of president of the ASN between 2014 and 2016.

8.2.1 The Process

Returning to the moment of combined feelings of goodwill and duty — to the "informal conversation in the corridor of a university between a professor and a Guinean student" – we decided that the next step would be to contact the then president of the Nucleus of African Students, Airton César Monteiro (Cape Verdean, 3rd year student of International Relations). So, we did. Hence, the first meeting with African students (the first of several) was an apex. The goal was to realize what could be done to facilitate the integration and the academic success for these students. In a Human Centered Design[5] approach — using brainstorming, word association games, and autobiographies, the following difficulties were identified:

1) Communication in Portuguese
2) Communication in English
3) Study methods and strategies
4) Computing integration
5) Financial issues

These are some of the testimonies collected at the time:

My first day of lectures was tiring because I didn't know where ISCSP was. For me, all the universities in Lisbon were located in Cidade Universitaria (university city), and I had to walk all over Lisbon looking for ISCSP. As soon as I got to the class, I knew I had to make friends and had to sit in the front row to be able to understand what the teacher was saying because he spoke Portuguese so quickly, which made my integration difficult. It took me a lot of effort and dedication. (excerpt from the narrative by Mamadú Saliu, Guinean, student of public administration)

[. . .] The first difficulty I had was with Portuguese. [. . .] It is good to point out that I overcame all the difficulties I had thanks to the complementary relationship that existed between Guinean students [. . .]. (excerpt from the narrative by Bubacar Bari, Guinean, student in public administration)

I joined ISCSP in 2016, studying International Relations. I had a hard time integrating. At first, I found no support, neither from the board nor from my colleagues. I worked very hard to overcome this difficulty. Later I came to have some support from my colleagues from Guinea and Cape Verde. What I went through at university was an experience that I did not want others to go

---

[5]The solution to the problem is designed with the target of the problem in mind. It is also called design thinking, a process characterized by the following moments: empathizing, defining, thinking about the solution, prototyping, and testing.

through, so I am an advocate for more support in the domain of Portuguese and English. (excerpt from the narrative of Eufragio Sami, Guinean, student of international relations)

I'm Anaximandro Monteiro, I'm 23 years old, I'm from Guinea Bissau, I'm a Guinean national, I've lived in Portugal for almost 6 years, with a temporary residency and a study visa [. . .] I speak here in the first person and from my own experience, when I arrived in Portugal I felt many difficulties of a social and technical nature, in fact, I still do today - from integration in the Portuguese community to university results, but little by little I am overcoming the fruit of my persistence. ISCSP welcomed me as well as my colleagues from different PALOP countries, but we have a clear sense of our difficulties (the result of poor preparation in our countries of origin and poor quality of education). Therefore, mine, our concern, is to give us regular attention in order to be able to live up to expectations and overcome barriers, because I believe we are capable. If some succeed, others can also. (excerpt from the narrative by Anaximandro, Guinean, management and human resources student)

At the time, given the location and our available resources, we thought, naturally and linearly, to create support spaces for matters in which students had the most difficulties (Portuguese, English, IT, and study methods). However, we soon faced a question: what about "not feeling integrated neither inside nor outside of the Institution?" If we insisted on that path, probably we would be contributing to accentuate their feeling of not feeling integrated in an academic life. It was in this logic that we started the effort to look for other alternatives, other less conventional solutions. We had to think "outside the box," use lateral thinking.[6] How to involve African students and others? And involve them in what exactly?

We started by trying to find out what others, in a similar situation, would do. We came into contact with several organizations — non-governmental organizations, student organizations, and university projects. The important thing was to identify solutions to identical problems.

Three of the contacts with the greatest impact for the prototype creation phase and who later became partners of Starting Point were the Debate Society of the University of Lisbon (SDUL), AIESEC (global student

---

[6]The term "lateral thinking," created by Edward Bono (in 1967), consists of looking for different ideas, ideas "outside the box." It is the process of solving problems through a creative and indirect approach.

organization dedicated to leadership),[7] and Magna Tuna Apocaliscspiana[8] —
1) because they were already involved and had contacts with other faculties
and institutes at the University of Lisbon, they gave us the possibility to
"gain scale," reach more students; 2) for its time of existence, the sharing
of methodologies, experiences, and purposes; 3) in the case of Tuna, the
possibility of integrating students also through music (universal language,
capable of uniting different people, from different places, and with different
experiences).

Another equally relevant contact was with the "Academia de Líderes
Ubuntu" (Ubuntu Leadership Academy), a non-formal education project
aimed at training young people with high leadership potential who have come
from challenging backgrounds or who have had sincere interest in working
there.[9] Even if the target was not the same, the Ubuntu methodology (similar
to the AIESEC methodology) provoked a deep reflection around the leaders.
Why not think about bringing this perspective to the project we were creating?

In this journey (which lasted approximately nine months), we had the
opportunity to read a series of books and articles about today's world —
global and VUCA, the centennial generation and the need for soft skills as
a necessary instrument for success in almost every aspect of our life. We also
had access to tools used in business creation, such as the Business Model
Canvas (which we later adopted as one of the Starting Point mindsets).[10]

Basically, what we did during this incubation time was "to think about
people who are and think differently" — what Markova and McArthur (2011)
call a *collaborative intelligence approach*. What we ended up creating was
the Starting Point — IN Educational Experiences (INclusive, IN[non]formal
and INspiring), and is thus the result of a process of synergy and interests.
Included in this process were our experiences which, what we believe, created
a *3rd alternative*, in the words of Covey (2013), a *new box* in Brabandere and
Iny (2013), a *cosmopolitan model* for the development of human potential for
a global society of tolerance and peace.

---

[7]For more information about this organization, please consult https://aiesec.org/

[8]Magna Tuna Apocaliscspiana is a group of university students, dressed in a traditional
academic uniform, who play instruments and sing various traditional songs. The tradition
originated in Spain and Portugal in the 13th century as a mean to students to earn money or
food. Nowadays, students do not belong to a "Tuna" for this purpose but rather seeking to
keep the traditional alive, as well as for fun and to meet new people from other universities.

[9]For more information about this project, please consult https://academialideresubuntu.or
g/en/

[10]The other, as already mentioned, is the Human Centered Design or Design Thinking.

Before moving on to the presentation and exploration of the model, we consider it important to emphasize that this option for sharing the process itself is due to the fact that we believe that, similarly to what we observed in relation to people — carriers of unique narratives — the projects, are also the result of singular processes and they too contain unique narratives. Thus, understanding the model specifically involves understanding its creation process.

8.2.2 The SP-EEI Model[11]

Like any other model, this must be understood as an image that serves as a reference, as a standard, for similar situations. The originality of this educational model is based upon four factors.

1) Hybridism — results from the combination of two other models (Human Centered Design and Business Model Canvas).
2) Collaborative, synergistic character — solutions that are always thought of together.
3) Flexibility — the option to organize around four social laboratories was the solution found for the problems initially identified. Different problems, quite possibly, would pass for solutions other than these (and the model has this possibility).
4) It is "a means" and not "an end" in itself — the soft skills developed here are a means, a path for the development of more humane people (more knowledgeable and respectful of others) who are better prepared for the labor market in a global and volatile world.

As mentioned previously, the main concern of this project has always abided to the development of human potential, both in terms of skills valued in the job market or in terms of training people to be more human and, as a result, has led to vehicles of peace and tolerance. So, it is understood that our "value position"[11] is precisely *tailor-made* to educational experiences in a cosmopolitan context, addressing triggers to a successful integration and to emotional competence.

It is within this conceptual framework that the *ideation* of the four social laboratories can be understood. They are EmpathyLab, StorytellingLab, CityLab, and VUCALab.

[11]SP-EEI is an acronym for Starting Point — Educative Experiences IN.
[11]See Figure 8.2.

Our World
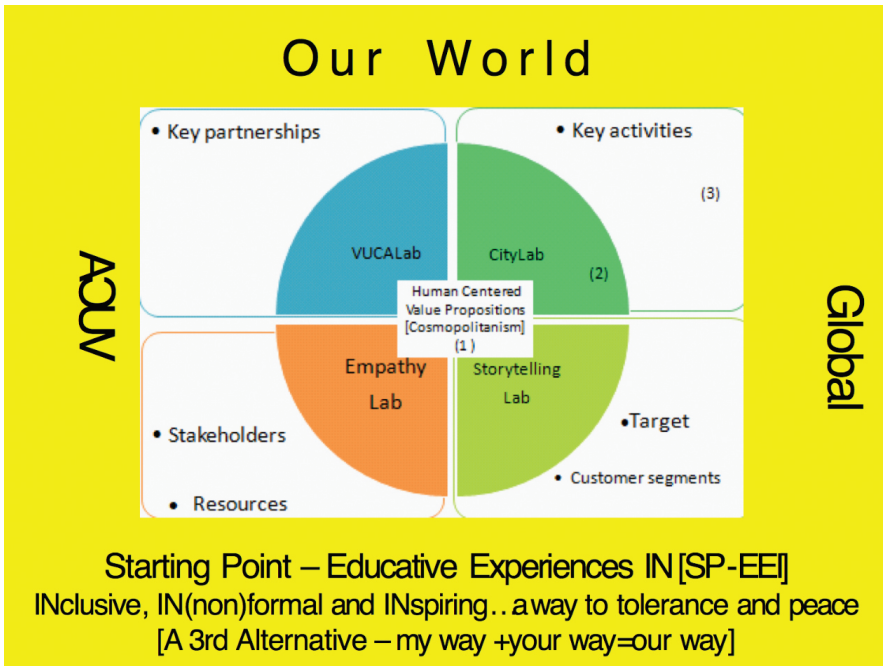
Figure 8.1 The SP-EEI model results from the combination of two apparently paradoxical models — the Human Centered Design, with a focus on the human person and the Business Model Canvas, with a focus on sustainable business. The underlying idea is to make a humanist project sustainable whose mission is to develop human potential. In this case, the solution was to create four laboratories from which all educational activities are designed and organized.

EmpathyLab: The beginning of any relation involves empathy. With these activities, the students have had the opportunity to put themselves in someone else's shoes in order to understand these individuals' attitudes and feelings. Examples of activities include the Human Library and solidarity actions.

Storytelling Lab: Not all stories start with "Once upon a time…." In this lab, students have the opportunity to discover new practices of communicating creatively and in an effective way. Examples of activities include "short storytelling courses," "Book Store Talks" (consisting of personal stories in a bookshop, with inspiring projects led by young people) and public speaking courses.

CityLab: "Lisbon is always a good idea." The goal is to activate the senses — learning to see, to listen, to taste, to smell, to feel, etc. in the city — and with (other-different-and-similar.) Examples of activities involve treasure hunts,
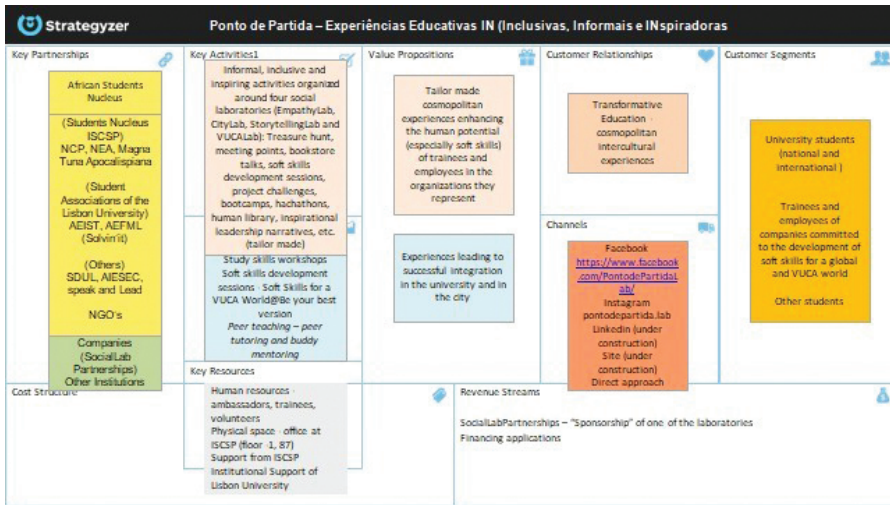
Figure 8.2   Business model canvas.

meeting points (with different themes — music, gastronomy, languages, traditional games, etc.), and "conversations around the table" (a guest, usually a young artist, shares narratives, arts, and some gastronomic flavors).

VUCALab: It provides the development of soft skills in a VUCA and global world so that the student can be "their best version," in multi-cultural spaces. Examples of activities are "Skills for a VUCA World," lectures by young leaders (aiming to the development of skills, with an approximate duration of 1 hour 30 minutes each) "bootcamps," "hackathons" (oriented to reach sustainable development goals), peer teaching, and buddy mentoring.

In regard to the elements designed from the Business Model Canvas, which is also essential to the construction of the project, we can see them in Figure 8.2.

It goes without saying that, despite the short existence of the project, it has been a very enriching experience. Personal social interaction, also called face-to-face interaction, with people who are different from us — (they are not better or worse, they are simply different) who have revealed themselves to be the engine in moments of empathy, compassion, self-knowledge, new friendships, and creativity. Here, we share some sentences from participants in the SP-EEI experiences.

8.2.3 About "What I Enjoyed Most" (Students Quotes)

"You are all so lovely and inspiring. I really loved how you talked about things you do with passion."

"The city tour and all challenges, will help us interact with you guys and others. It was a great experience. I also liked Man talks, which encourages men to express their feelings."

"City game was an opportunity to sit and talk with involved students."

"That we walked together as a group and could share our experience, knowledge and etc. with others."

"Walking in Lisbon, and the talks we had."

"What I liked the most was your energy. Your joy. Activities you prepared for us. Experience you gave us was very important. I'm grateful."

"I liked this meeting because it helped me with getting out of my comfort zone. I'm afraid of meeting and speaking to new people. You are doing a great job. You are really great people and I would like to thank you for that meeting."

"That you are focused on these soft skills that are often forgotten during education. Also, I'm impressed because of your great preparation towards the workshop."

"People, great atmosphere, the way how you were prepared to meet us, to take care of us. It was a really excellent experience. Thank you."

"What I liked most about the activity was having the notion that regardless of our personal difficulties and obstacles, the groups were able to come together, overcoming, for example, language barriers that seemed to be the most prominent in the activity. A good connection between the elements was established in relatively little time, which allowed us to remove from this activity good moments in which, even without having a direct notion of such, we developed several soft skills!"

"Last November 6th, I participated in the activity organized by "Starting Point" I was the leader of Group A - The Smurfs. I really enjoyed taking part in this activity, because I managed in one day to create very strong ties with Dutch students, which seemed like something unimaginable because we didn't know each other before this day. This feeling was the result of the well-organized activities by the co-ordinators. In my opinion, the IN educational experiences (inclusive, informal and inspiring) have been fulfilled. Nowadays, the development of soft skills is very important for any student, including for Political Science students. I am very pleased to have a project

as "Starting Point" at ISCSP, which allows the development of this type of capabilities."

8.2.4 About "Ideas that I Take with Me" (Students Quotes)

"I learned that informal ways are essential in improving people, and helps one become useful and successful."

"Learning how to make integration more creative. How to talk to people, how to get closer to them, truly understand them."

"To spread joy to everyone."

"That I should always remember, that we are all equal and everything starts with love."

"The idea to organize Men talks. I'm the organizer of human library, but it's quite different idea."

"That it's good to try to be in a group not alone and be more open for other people and culture."

"Informality of meetings that provide more integration."

"That everyone could learn a lot more if they listened to people from different places and cultures."

"I learned from you about awareness, who I'm and what I can do, that everything depends on me."

"Idea of city walks. I think it's a great way of exploring the city."

"Doing things of importance like social activities. The non-formal way is a good idea and brings a lot of new things, I did 2 pages of notes!"

"Doing everything with Kindness, love."

Having presented the context, the process and the model, it is now time to ask ourselves about the responsibility of universities in creating agents that promote a culture of tolerance and peace. How can models like the SP-EEI become integrated and not just exist at a university? How can they be an integral part of a more socially responsible educational culture?

Having presented the context, the process, the model, and "feedback from experiences," it is now time to situate the model's assumptions within the scope of Education for the 21st century.

8.3 Assumptions of the Model and Pillars of Education — An Analogy

The Report for UNESCO from the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century, chaired by Jacques Delors (1992–1996), is an important

contribution to the reflection on the role of Educational Institutions, including the University, in terms of building a culture of peace and tolerance. It is a document of hope, which gives new values to the ethical and cultural dimension of education throughout life.

There are four pillars identified as essential for a successful learning, mainly: learn to know (acquiring instruments of understanding); learn to do (to be able to act on the environment); learn to live together, to live with others (co-operation in all human activities); learn to be (main concept that integrates all of the above).

In terms of facing a global, diverse, complex, uncertain and interdependent world, education is not just used to supply qualified people to the world of economics: it is not intended for human beings as an economic agent but as the ultimate end of development. Developing the talents and skills of each person corresponds, at the same time, to the fundamentally humanistic mission of education, to the demand for equity that should guide any educational policy, and to the real needs of endogenous development, respectful of the human and natural environment, and diversity of traditions and cultures (Delors, 1997: 85).[12]

This is the spirit of the four assumptions integrated by Starting Point — Educational Experiences IN. Let us take a look.

Assumption 1: *We believe that Starting Point's activities, as true cosmopolitan experiences, are places for personal transformation because they mirror the "other," the individual that is different from oneself and those who are closest.*

First of all, it is important to define cosmopolitanism. For Appiah (2008: 13), it is defined as taking the value of not only human life but human lives as a serious subject of great importance, which means taking an interest in the practices and beliefs that give them meaning. People are different, the cosmopolitan is aware of this, and there is much to learn from our differences. Since there are so many human possibilities that are worth exploring, we do not expect or wish that each person or each society will become a unique lifestyle.[13]

Beck stated, regarding the *cosmopolitan moment* we live in, that: "We all live in a direct neighborhood, therefore in a world with others that cannot be excluded, whether we want it to be so or not" (2016: 112). Beck

---

[12] Author's translation.
[13] Author's translation.

further states that more than an issue of *Appiahna* ethics, "cosmopolitanism transforms the inclusion of the other into reality and/or into a maxim" (2016: 113).

In a normative sense ("maxim"), cosmopolitanism means the recognition of cultural differences, both internally and externally. Differences are neither hierarchically classified nor eliminated but accepted as such or even considered positive. However, there is a part of the world in the early 21st century that is far from a situation in which these conditions are accepted. But is there anything that unites people with different skin colors, religions, nationalities, situations, past, and future beyond recognition? The theory of global risk society offers the following answer: traumatic experiences of the community are created forcibly by global risks that threaten everyone's life (Beck 2016: 113).[14]

Thus, in Starting Point — Educational Experiences, "true cosmopolitan activities" are educational and ethically designed for students to learn the meaning of cultural differences and to look at these as something positive, as the scenario of excellence for learning is not just "being" but rather being present. How? This occurs through common projects and objectives.

This assumption is directly related to what is one of the biggest challenges in education — learning to live together, the Third Pillar of Knowledge. For this "relationship-learning" to fulfill its function, it is essential that contact between students is made in an egalitarian context.

If there are common goals and projects, prejudices and latent hostility can disappear and give way to more serene co-operation and even friendship. [...] participation in common projects seems to be an effective method to avoid or resolve latent conflicts (Delors, 1997: 97)[15].

What we observed in the activities carried out was that, as they were united by common goals, national and international students who participated in the activities proved to be highly capable of exploring their similarities, learning from one another. "Everyone could learn a lot more if they listened to people from different places and cultures" (from About "Ideas that I take with me").

It is important to remember that knowledge of the other's culture, or even the recognition of a global identity that brings this sense of belonging, is not in itself sufficient for the student to question his local culture.

---

[14]Author's translation.
[15]Author's translation.

In fact, "when working together on motivating and unusual projects [...] a new form of identification is born, which makes it possible to go beyond individual routines, which value what is common and not differences"[16] (Delors 1997: 98).

In this sense, cosmopolitan places enable the progressive discovery of the other, an effective way of learning without judging, without questioning. It is not easy learning — but who said growing up is easy?

Assumption 2. *We believe that these places, designated here as cosmopolitan places, facilitate essential learning, designated as soft skills that are crucial for personal, social professional and environmental success of millennials, centennials, and other generations.* We had the opportunity to hear from some participants, "(...) The non-formal way is a good idea. And loads of new things, I did 2 pages of notes!" In fact, the presence of the others is an enhancer of human personal development, as it acts as a trigger for the development of skills such as emotional intelligence, empathy, intercultural communication, problem solving, creativity, and critical thinking. It is a privileged way of *learning to be*.

The experience was positive in the sense that I was able to have contact with another culture and I was forced to leave my comfort zone and speak English with people, which was something that I always had difficulty in. Eventually, my English was flowing and I managed to create a pleasant dialogue with the Dutch colleagues (Card4B intern).[17]

We have been aware of the positive effects of non-formal education on the development of human potential for a long time. The added value here is the validation of the importance of non-formal education in the training of more competent people in a university context.

Assumption 3. *We believe that the University, as an institution of higher education, is responsible for producing high-level professionals ready to tackle market challenges and a global world. Moreover, for producing researchers and cultivating human and environmental knowledge. In addition, it also has the responsibility to incorporate and support cosmopolitan programs for developing soft skills in order to guarantee the development of human potential in this Baumanian liquid modernity, which characterizes today's world.*

---

[16]Author's translation.

[17]Company that collaborates with the project as Social Lab Partnership.

Higher education is, in any society, one of the engines of economic development. Traditionally, teaching and research has been the two missions of universities (committed to *learning to knowing*). However, in view of the changes that we have been witnessing, another mission is being considered to reflect the contributions of universities to society. It is generally called the "third mission." This contribution, in general, encompasses three areas: the transfer of knowledge; lifelong learning (that aims to respond to rapid technological developments); and the socio-economic impact on the economic development of the region in which it operates.

In view of the growing and desired internationalization of Universities and their most recent mission — the relationship with society, we believe that the integration of soft skills learning into their curriculum is essential to better adapt them.

Assumption 4. *We believe that a humanist education about, and with, humanity is the path to "constructing the bases" of a culture of tolerance and peace. During this process, it was interesting to understand the role of inspiring narratives and its influence in forming positive beliefs and values* (related with the four pillars).

Regarding the last assumption, now is the time to ask ourselves about the responsibility of universities in creating agents of a culture of tolerance and peace. How can models like the SP-EEIC be an integral part of a more socially responsible educational culture? How can universities contribute to a culture of peace and tolerance?

8.4 "The Responsibility of Universities to Nurture a Culture of Tolerance and Peace"

In order to answer the questions posed previously, we have created an image that reflects our experience and our humble collaboration in this global reflection around paths toward a culture of tolerance and peace. As you can see, this is a multilevel educational approach, as it considers the complexity, multiplicity, and interconnectivity between the dimensions of learning and behavior between various actors at different scales — from the individual to international organizations; from the individual, to planetary consciousness; and from the person | singular group, to humanity.
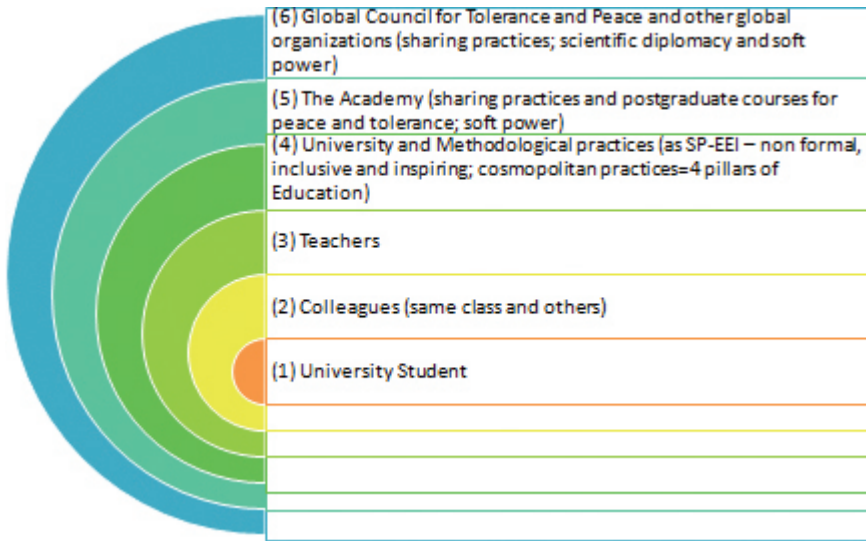
Figure 8.3   The responsibility of the university, the responsibility of all of us.

8.4.1 How Can Models Like the SP-EEIC Be an Integral Part of a More Socially Responsible Educational Culture? (Level 4 of Figure 8.3)

In our perspective, the essence of projects of this nature is the involvement of all students, (national and international). How can we do this? We can achieve this through empathy. In this sense, the Human Centered Design model is shown to be effective — students are involved in the whole process, which gives them both the feeling that they are heard and that they belong to something higher.

The connection with student associations and organizations (internal and external to the university) is also essential: 1) for their experience in non-formal education, 2) for their joy and motivation, and also 3) because these actors are our target (most are still students).

It is also essential to have good support in digital marketing to ensure an effective presence on social networks (Instagram, Facebook, website, etc.). Without this tool, a project of this nature will hardly be able to fulfill its purpose.[18]

It is important to reinforce the idea that in addition to these issues related to structure and organization, if the activities are not truly inclusive and if

---

[18]This is one of the main tensions that we are currently facing.

the practices are not imbued with a cosmopolitan ethics (mentioned in the previous section), we will not be contributing to a socially more responsible society. It is not enough to gather different people in a space and make them play, talk, and have fun. There needs to be a clear purpose with which everyone identifies.

SP is a project that was born in a university; however, it is clear that, for us, the role of these institutions is far from being limited to being the locus of projects like this. When this happens — and it happens more often than would be desirable — the university is not, in fact, contributing to a culture of tolerance and peace. Universities often confuse these methodologies with mere informal activities to welcome international students. As such, they do not benefit from the opportunity to be cosmopolitan spaces where students, involved in common projects and goals, learn to live together, learn to be, and, later, to make society a more humane place.[19]

8.4.2 How Can Universities Contribute to a Culture of Peace and Tolerance? (Level 5 and 6 of Figure 8.3)

Still internally (level 5), and in line with its teaching mission (the transmission of knowledge), several universities offer postgraduate studies in Education for Peace, which is essential for the theoretical and methodological reflection of these themes as well as for the transfer of knowledge to civil society.

However, the university's action on the road to a culture of peace and tolerance is not just internal (nor could it be).

Here, we draw attention to the role of co-operation between scientists, "a powerful instrument for the internationalization of research, technology, concepts, attitudes and activities" (Delors, 1997: 145). Still, in this regard, Varela, Costa, and Godinho (2017) state that scientific knowledge has been used as an instrument of soft power, of inter- and intra-peer negotiation.

Despite this lack of academic attention, co-operation and scientific policies between countries have been of increasing value as a factor in solving global problems. An example of important fields of international scientific co-operation is the fight against climate change, prevention and intervention in the health area [...]. Also, for private agents, scientific and technological knowledge, in addition to functioning as a factor of competitiveness, have been used in co-operation between companies as an asset to influence negotiations and reach new markets. In this sense, we can say that knowledge

---

[19]Approached in Section 8.2.

has been used as a soft power instrument. Soft power is originally defined in international relations as the ability of individuals or a given country to influence others through its virtues (Nye, 2004), which stem, for example, from a country's cultural, musical, sporting, or linguistic influence.

In this context, we can apply these concepts to the theme of science, technology, and innovation (CTI), in which scientific diplomacy is co-ordinated at a national level by the ministries of science and technology of the respective agencies (in the case of Portugal, the Foundation for Science and Technology — FCT) and soft power is managed by institutions linked to research and knowledge, as is the case with Universities and, more recently, other multilateral organizations as we will mention below. Thus, we can say that in the case of scientific diplomacy, academic knowledge, transferred in pedagogical and scientific research terms, functions as an important tool for political soft power (Varela, Costa, & Godinho, 2017: 60).[20]

It is in this sense that we affirm that initiatives such as the one in this book "Paths to a Culture of Tolerance and Peace," under the responsibility of the Global Council for Tolerance and Peace, are fundamental for universities to fulfill their three missions and, in this way, be useful to society.

In conclusion, it is likely that, during the reading of this article, perhaps you have come across and established some parallelism between the assumptions and practices of the model presented with other models and other practices, especially those that are related with education for peace, tolerance, or even global citizenship. After all, the concern with contributing to the construction of a culture of peace and tolerance is not new. We have even gone so far as to affirm that the ideation of the model presented, in the first phase, involved a careful look at "other boxes" (Brabandere & Iny 2013), that is the models, concepts, and methodologies that already exist and that serve similar purposes. So, our creative process went through the creation of a "new box" — the university context, but now from the "outside" (non-formal education) and with "bridges" — a common project — that connect this place to other places that can be nearby or even far away, but all in a diverse, global world.

It is thus a method of learning to be a global peacemaker. Still, in this regard, we can look at what Delors states:

"This organization [UNESCO] will be serving peace and understanding among men, by valuing education as a spirit of harmony, of the emergence of a desire to live together as militants of our global village that must be thought

---

[20] Author's translation

Figure 8.4   We consider this metaphor of a "new box" interesting because it communicates the idea that more than creating, what we do is recreate — adapt what already exists to the context and purposes in question. In this process, it is essential to take into account existing resources (present) and the sustainability of the project (future). The line that combines these elements — the idea, the purpose (= assumptions), the resources, and the sustainability — is the same mindset (in this case, as mentioned in the previous section, it results from the intersection between Human Centered Design and Business Model Canvas). Collaborative intelligence, the way we communicate with not only others but all agents, at different levels.

and organized, for the benefit of future generations. In this way, you will be contributing to a culture of peace." (Delors, 1996: 31)[21]

Universities, on the one hand, with the creation of a social space for their students to learn to know, to do, to live together and to be, and, on the

---

[21] Author's translation.

other, with the management of their political soft power within International Relations, will certainly be contributing to a culture of peace and tolerance.

References

Appiah, K. (2008). *Cosmopolitismo. Ética num mundo de estranhos.* Publicações Europa-América.

Beck, U. (2016). *Sociedade de Risco Mundial.* Lisboa: Edições 70.

Brabandere, L. d. & Iny, A., 2009. Thinking in New Boxes. How to bring fundamental change to your business.. *The Boston Consulting Group,* pp. 1–3

Covey, S., 2013. *A Terceira Alternativa.* 2a edição ed. s.l.:Gestão Plus.

Delors, J., 1997. *Educação. Um tesouro a descobrir. Relatório para a UNESCO da Comissão Internacional para o Século XXI.* São Paulo: Cortez Editora.

Kant, I. (2018). *A Paz Perpétua e Outros Opúsculos.* Lisboa: Edições 70.

Kant, I. (2019). *Fundamentação da Metafísica dos Costumes.* Lisboa: Edições 70.

Markova, D. & McArthur, A., 2011. *Collaborative Intelligence. Thinking with people who think differently.* 1st ed. New York: Spiegel & Grau.

Nussbaum, M. (2003). Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice. *Feminist Economics, 9 (2/3)* , 33–59.

Nussbaum, M. (2012). *Women and Human Development. The Capabilities Approach.* Cambridge Univesity Press.

Ozdemir, I. (24 de Abril de 2016). *Peace and Tolerance through Education - A New Role for Universities.* Obtido em 17 de Dezembro de 2019, de Global Campaign for Peace Education: http://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/peace-tolerance-education/

Popkewitz, T. (2009). *El Cosmopolitismo Y La Era De La Reforma Escolar .* Morata.

Reardon, B. (2001). *Education for a culture of peace in gender perspective.* França: Unesco Publishing.

Reardon, B., & Snauwaert, D. (2011). Reflective pedagogy, cosmopolitanism and critical peace education for political efficacy: A discussion of Betty A. Reardon's assessmemnt of the field. *Factis PAX, Vol.5, N 1* , 1–14.

Roth, K. (2015). The role of examples, current designs and ideas for a cosmopolitan design of education. *Policy Future in Education, vol.13 (6),* 763–774.

Sen, A. (2009). *The Idea of Justice.* Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA.

Sen, A. (1985). *Commodities and Capabilities.* Amsterdam: North-Holland.

Serres, M. (2019). *Tempos de Crise.* Lisboa: Guerra e Paz.

Singer, P. (2019). *Ética no Mundo Real.* Lisboa: Edições 70.

Varela, C., Costa, C. & Godinho, M., 2017. Diplomacia científica: do conhecimento académico ao soft power político. *JANUS,* pp. 60–61.