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# Designing an intercultural peer mentoring project for Internationalisation at Home

Olivia Mair and Andrea Campisano

- Background and aims of the project
- Design of project with intercultural teams
- Intercultural training for Italian student mentors
- Five events over the course of the semester
- Reflective learning assignment
- Recommendations for practice

UCSC took part in NEAR, a European project financed by the Asylum, Migration & Integration Fund. CHEI coordinated WP6 – improving the experiences of international degree-seeking students:

<https://nearproject.eu/>

Focus groups with international students in 2022 showed students wanted more opportunities to improve their Italian language skills, make friends with local students, and participate in extracurricular activities and the local community.

Intercultural mentoring project is underpinned by the concept of Internationalisation at Home:

“Internationalisation at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students, within domestic learning environments.”

Beelen & Jones, 2015

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=201512021443531>

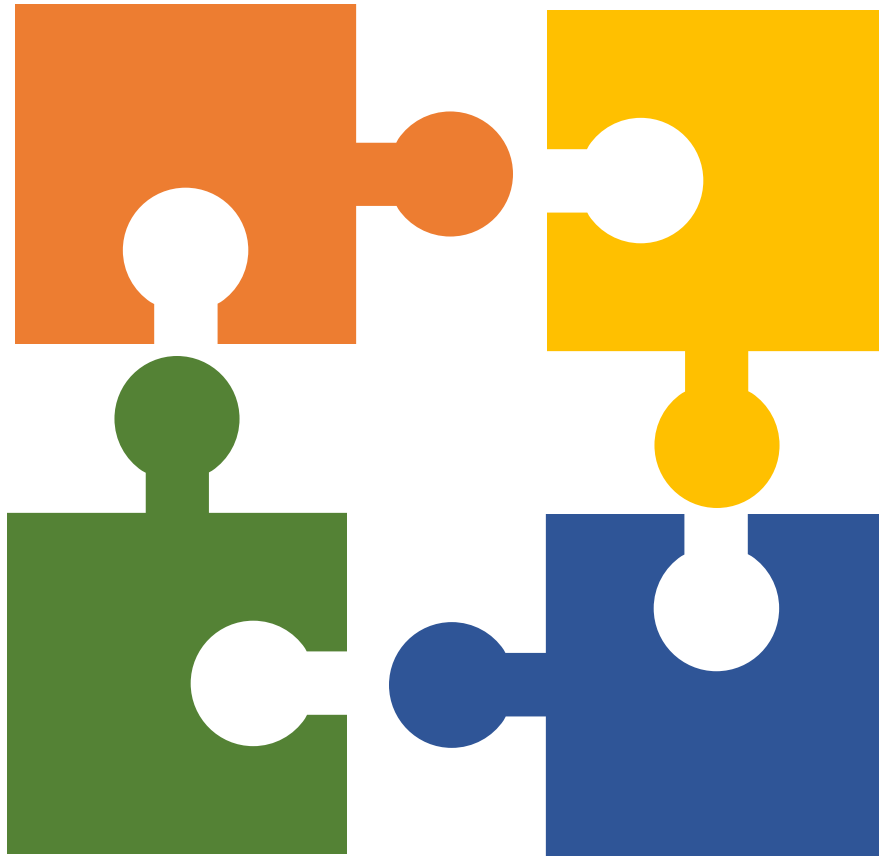
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## Project aims



- Create opportunities to improve communicative competence in the local language for international students
- Increase intercultural competence of all students
- Facilitate friendship and inclusion through the *informal* curriculum
- Provide an internationalisation experience for Italian students without the need for mobility

A bilingual project in which local and international students can get to know each other while exploring the local community in intercultural teams.





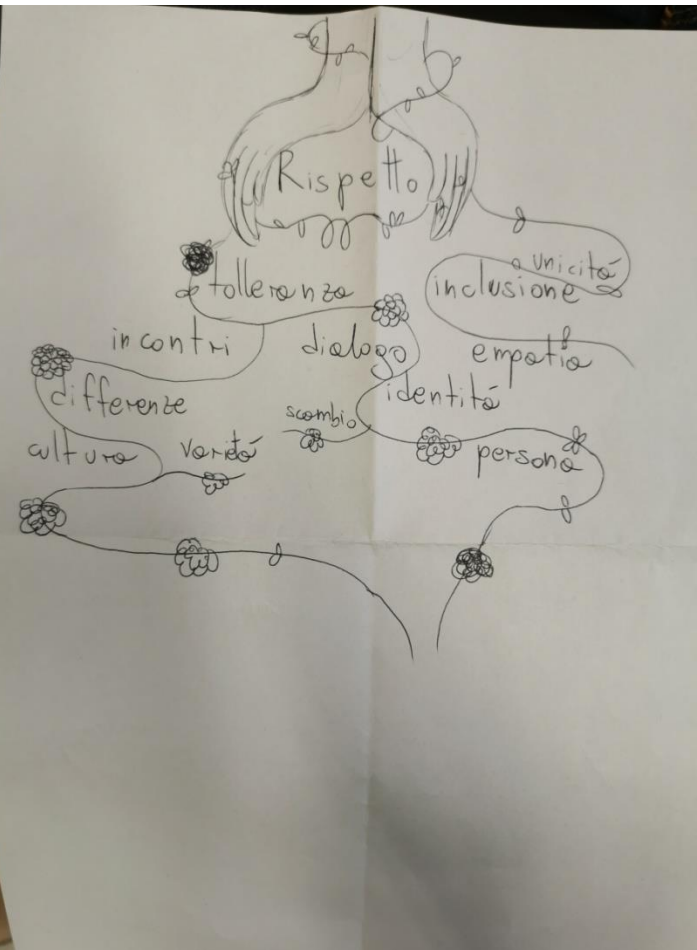
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# Intercultural mentoring: workshops

Student mentors took part in four workshops:

1. Creating an intercultural work and friendship group. How to encourage socializing and cooperation.
2. Planning and organising intercultural activities in the local community.
3. Reflection on intercultural competence. The concept of identity and diversity, communication and empathy, respect of otherness, capacity to include.
4. Language learning activities through images and play. How to promote communicative competence and incidental language learning.



1. Students interview each other
2. Treasure hunt through the streets of Milan: team building and getting to know the local community.
3. A visit to San Maurizio and the Archeological Museum with Touring Club Italiano
4. Milan Design Week 2023 photography competition and design displays.
5. Biodiversity and diversity in the Botanic Gardens, Città Studi. Students 'choose' plants for each other.





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# Activities



Teams followed clues to find sites associated with Leonardo da Vinci in central Milan





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# Activities



Teams documented design display during Milan Design Week, exploring hidden courtyards and spaces and getting to know the local area.



## **Glocal Connections – intercultural mentoring project Critical reflection assignment for mentors.**

For your final assignment, you will write a **critical reflection** on your experience in the project.

Your final assignment must show an **in-depth analysis and personal reflection** of these questions:

What challenges and opportunities are faced by international degree-seeking students in an Italian university?

What can local students learn from interacting with international students?

- Allow time and resources for finding participants.
- Rather than a one-on-one buddy scheme, having intercultural teams helps avoid communication breakdown and stimulates teambuilding.
- If students participate as part of the formal curriculum, it is highly motivating (they receive a credit or partial credit)
- Reflective learning opportunities need to be embedded through assignments /blog.
- Local volunteer organisations can be involved in planning activities.





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[olivia.mair@unicatt.it](mailto:olivia.mair@unicatt.it)

[andrea.campisano@unicatt.it](mailto:andrea.campisano@unicatt.it)

Follow the project on:

Twitter: @CHEI\_Unicatt or @OliviaMair4

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Thank you / Grazie!