



UNIVERSIDAD  
DE BURGOS

Vicerrectorado de Internacionalización,  
Movilidad y Cooperación



*“Sustainability, Resilience, Ethics and Social Responsibility in Eurasia Community amidst a Global Covid Pandemic”*

**Objective:** Proposal that contributes to facing one of the global challenges included in the 2030 Agenda.



**Proposal:** Teaching kids to embrace diversity

**Group members:** Lidia Viana Labarga and Yadira Murcia Maldonado.

**Which Sustainable Developing Goal from 2030 Agenda will you like to help to find a solution to?**

ODS 4: Education

**Description of the challenge you will be working with and its context**

**Target 4.7:** *By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, **promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.***

We want to contribute to the knowledge of Asian people's traditions, habits, ideas, feelings, and fears, as part of children's cultural education to place value on the existence of different cultures and point out the similarities of our characteristics as citizens of the same world.

To narrow the issue down and carry out a more realistic project, we have focused on Spain's Chinese community, which has highly increased in the last years, occupying, in 2020, the sixth position within the immigrant population in Spain (1).



Nowadays, we are living in a very globalized world, which entails a constant flow of people traveling and the coexistence of different cultures in the same area. Nevertheless, it is paradoxical that in the kind of world we live in, we know almost nothing about our planet neighbors. East and west populations are unaware of each other's features. We have noted, for example, that in western countries many people truly believe that the entire Chinese population eats animals like dogs, insects, or rats, or that they are a very close-up society... In fact, it is a generalized belief that in many occasions is used to cause division and encourage segregation and nationalism.

Likewise, as we have discovered during the lectures of the course "Sustainability, Resilience, Ethics and Social Responsibility in Eurasia Community amidst a Global Covid Pandemic", although we have many differences, we have more in common than we thought. That's why we have seen the need of improving the general knowledge about Chinese people and their culture and breaking some of the stereotypes that Spanish society has about them.

In conclusion, these premises must be known by many children as possible, to create a culture of global peace, which allows us to know our cultural diversity, and most importantly, to love and welcome our similarities.

### **What specific measures will be implemented?**

In order to achieve this goal, we have devised a two ways action plan which requires collaboration between some primary schools, the University of Burgos and the support of the Eurasia Foundation.

On one hand, we would organize some lectures about Chinese culture, history, and behavior. And on the other, we would like to edit and print short stories and/or comics, as well as develop a web application, which focuses on Chinese culture. It would also focus on some of our common features, behaviors, and ideas, to help the learners:

- Fight ignorance
- Embrace diversity.
- Understand cultural diversity as a world human heritage.
- Break prejudices and stereotypes
- Enhance a feeling of belonging to a global community
- Verify and use reliable information sources.

### **What are the reasons you would give to find a solution to the problem?**

As we have pointed, in Spain exists a large Chinese community, that since 2009 up to now, has reached 230,000 residents according to INE database. However, despite this large number of Chinese inhabitants, there is a visible social division between



Chinese residents and Spanish society. Something that does not only occurred in the first generations of immigrants, but it is also happening today to children of these Chinese immigrants in Spain.

For this reason, we believe that Spanish society must make a cultural approach to the Chinese community, to enable greater integration and to help in erasing the main stereotypes and prejudices that frequently circulate in Spanish society regarding Chinese people. An example of this are the following statements, which to a greater or lesser extent, we all have heard at some time: "Chinese people live isolated from the rest of society", "they do not speak the language correctly", "They belong to a Chinese mafia" or "the Chinese do not pay taxes" (2)

To all the above we must add the problems of Covid-19, that far from improving this situation has made it worse. The initial misinformation and rumors about the origin and the possible intentional creation of the virus spread across the world. And soon, Asian communities and specifically Chinese people around the globe, started to suffer violence and racism, especially in the United States where violence and hate crimes were encouraged by fake news and certain statements like "the Chinese virus" (3) made by President Donald Trump.

In Spain, this situation was not better. Asians have also been suffering violence and rejection, phenomenon that grows faster than the own virus. However, this issue has been the cause of protests and demonstrations of support to the Chinese people. Even the Spanish President Pedro Sanchez joined the Twitter campaign against xenophobia. "*Me he reunido con la Asociación de Chinos en España para trasladarles nuestra solidaridad y apoyo ante el brote de #coronavirus que padece su país. Lamentamos la posible estigmatización que la comunidad china pueda estar sufriendo. Las personas no son un virus, la xenofobia sí.*" (4)

### What is your target group?

Our main target group are Primary Schools, where students are taught social sciences. Due to the topic this project deals, it will be mainly aimed at those who are studying 2nd,3rd, and 5th, to make it compatible with the curriculum of the subject.

On the other hand, due to the youth of these students, we believe that stories and comics can be of great help when it comes to understanding issues as complex as multiculturalism or diversity. This, together with the lectures, will provide them a solid base of knowledge and respect for different cultures, and in the future, they will be less influenced by racist ideas.

In addition, if this plan succeeds, and changes in people's tolerance and acceptance of different cultures are shown; it could be possible to implement this plan in secondary schools or even include other cultures and communities in the project.



### Which European and Asian actors will be involved in the execution of your proposal?

- Eurasia Foundation: As a group that knows the main characteristics of Asian countries and works to find solutions to global understanding challenges
- Burgos University: The university, and especially the faculty of education, could work together with the Eurasia Foundation again, and create and supervise those lectures and comics, applying their pedagogical knowledge.
- Primary Schools: Including complementary activities, within the didactic program of the subject social sciences.
- Experts in Chinese culture that provide objective theoretical content and give some of the lectures.

It would also be a great opportunity for the success of this project, if it receives the support from the "Consejería de Educación de Castilla y León", official institution of education in the region, as well as the collaboration of some Chinese associations, or if possible, the Confucius Institute, in order to create a more inclusive project, that not only speaks about Chinese community but also include them.

### In which way university students will collaborate in the development of your proposal?

As the University of Burgos has a wide curriculum of studies and multiple research and workgroups, the existing groups on education and/or humanities and communication, could carry out different investigations on the main topics, stereotypes and prejudices against which to fight and actively participate in the design of cartoon strips or short stories which highlight our cultural similarities and help to erase stereotypes of Asia inhabitants.

It could also be a good option, promoting the participation of students of some degrees and/or masters such as audiovisual communication, heritage and communication, pedagogy, or primary education teacher. These students could participate in this project through their final degree/master's projects or collaboration scholarships.

For example, one of the topics they could investigate could be how Chinese people like to spend their free time, what their daily life is like, what kind of tv programs they like to watch.... Through researches on these everyday topics, we could get much closer to Chinese culture and realize that besides the differences, we also have many things in common. This would contribute enormously to leave behind the existing prejudices about this community, while we learn about their culture and indirectly, ours.

After this, they could create stories based on these researches and real events, like for example, the grief of a little boy who during the lockdown could not visit their cousins



and friends. In short, stories in which they could feel represented and that in turn, teaches them different values and knowledge about both cultures.

Students could also look for reliable, contrasted, and easy to explain information about Chinese culture and participate in the lectures. Plus, with the information collected, they can provide ideas for setting up and running a future application.

### **Briefly explain the viability of the project**

From the point of view of primary schools, this project is perfectly applicable if a collaboration agreement is set. Since, according to the law, schools can carry out complementary activities in which other institutions participate to deal with topics that appear in the curriculum. As the topics to be dealt with, both in the comics, application, and lectures are multiculturalism, coexistence, migration, respect, and tolerance for other cultures, specifically Chinese, it can fit perfectly within the curriculum of the subject Social Sciences, especially in the contents of block 3, which deals with living in society (5).

As indicated in another of the previous points, it would be designed especially for the 2nd, 3rd, and 5th-year courses, stage in which the previous topics are dealt more widely.

In fact, an example of the viability, is the project "Frieda" (6), from the Namibia delegation of the United Nations. They worked on a project to create the character "Frieda", a local girl, who by telling amusing and interesting stories, approach the Sustainable Development Goals to children in the country.

And for the rest of actors that are needed to develop the project, It would also be viable if an agreement is reached, and this project is promoted from the University of Burgos.

### **What is the expected "positive social impact"?**

With this project, we seek to have a greater knowledge of Chinese customs and culture, because of its wide presence in Spain, that will probably grow more, and because of the commercial relations between China and Spain. It is necessary to promote more and more education in respect and tolerance towards all countries, and reduce the gaps between western and eastern cultures, promoting a real integration of Chinese immigrants within Spanish society, as well as disapproving the most prevalent myths and prejudices about them.

To achieve this, we believe that it is of great importance to act in the primary schools, where the student is still young and, on many occasions, they still do not



have these prejudices. Educating them on issues such as tolerance or cultural diversity, they will embrace this diversity, will be able to find points of union between different cultures and will reach agreements despite differences looking for common solutions to global problems. In other words, they will create a global citizenship.

Therefore, if children recognize that Asia is not just China, Japan or Korea; that no community is responsible for government's actions; that we as human beings are facing common threats such as viruses or environmental problems that we can no tackle alone; if children learn about cultural diversity and are aware of our common concerns, it will have a positive impact in international relationships and will contribute to reduce xenophobia and racism feelings.

Additionally, we think that this project would help to motivate a greater collaboration between the schools and other institutions, such as the university, something that hardly happens today. We must keep in mind that education should not be received only from the institutional context, but it also received from others, such as the family and the society. In short, to achieve quality education, we should work on the construction of a wide learning network in which it is possible to participate from the different contexts in which education occurs.

### Bibliographical references

1. Instituto Nacional de Estadística. INE. Población extranjera por Nacionalidad, provincias, Sexo y Año. [consulted 01/05/2021]. Available in: <https://www.ine.es/jaxi/Tabla.htm?path=/t20/e245/p08/l0/&file=03005.px&L=0>
2. Wang. L. La mediatización de la experiencia de la comunidad china en Madrid [Memoria para optar al grado de Doctor]. Universidad Complutense de Madrid. 2019.
3. San Cabral. Covid 'hate crimes' against Asian Americans on rise. BBC News. April 22<sup>th</sup> 2021. [consulted 01/05/2021]. Available in: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-56218684>
4. Pedro Sanchez Castejon. Me he reunido con la Asociación de Chinos en España para trasladarles nuestra solidaridad y apoyo ante el brote de #coronavirus que padece su país. Lamentamos la posible estigmatización que la comunidad china pueda estar sufriendo. Las personas no son un virus, la xenofobia sí. [Tuit]. [consulted 01/05/2021]. Available in: <https://twitter.com/sanchezcastejon/status/1224756296022482946?lang=es>
5. Decreto 26/2016, de 21 de julio, por el que se establece el currículo y se regula la implantación, evaluación y desarrollo de la Educación Primaria en



UNIVERSIDAD  
DE BURGOS

Vicerrectorado de Internacionalización,  
Movilidad y Cooperación



la Comunidad de Castilla y León. (Boletín Oficial de Castilla y León, numero 142, de 25 de julio de 2016)

6. Frieda and the SDGs: The Power of Storytelling. United Nations Sustainable Development. December 14<sup>th</sup> 2017. [consulted 01/05/2021]. Available in: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2017/12/frieda-sdgs-power-storytelling/>