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Type of contribution: Presentation

Title: **(re)Th!nking cultural diversity from a students' perspective – a narrative approach**

Abstract:

An increasing number of students studying at the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences are bi- or trilingual and have roots in more than one culture. In the Department of Economics, for example, more than a fourth of the students is not German-born. International students coming to Hamburg on an exchange program for one or two terms or a whole study program add to this cultural diversity on campus.

The project to be presented aims at raising awareness of the issues surrounding cultural diversity. Through insights from the students' perspectives it opens minds to new ways of thinking about and dealing with cultural diversity. The project further fosters the way to new activities geared at creating a sphere of inclusion and a stronger notion that cultural diversity can be an added value for the students, the teaching staff and the university as a whole instead of a problem to be managed.

By reflecting on what diversity means to the students, their studies and in the context of their biographies, short stories evolving around a central theme are developed by each of them. These themes include issues such as ascribed versus avowed identity, self-perception versus other-perception; the notion of 'Culturalisation' through outsiders, valorising the ability to speak several languages and the need to develop the campus as a social and intercultural 'Lebensraum'. Altogether 15 to 20 bibliographical stories are being collected and complemented with photographs taken at the student's favourite place in Hamburg.

At the conference I wish to introduce the project, the methodological approach taken but also provide an analysis of some of the themes which were brought up in the course of the narrative interviews and sketch out some of the activities which should evolve out of these.

Keywords: Cultural Diversity, University



A word cloud of terms related to cultural diversity and social sciences. The words are arranged in a horizontal line and vary in size and color. The most prominent words include 'NARRATIVE', 'INTER-DISCIPLINARY', 'SOCIETIES', 'REALITY', 'DEFINITION', 'MULTICULTURALISM', 'DECADES', 'BORDER-CROSSING', 'NEW', 'CATEGORIZATION', 'GOVERNANCE', 'GENDER', 'AGE', 'PERSPECTIVES', 'MARKETS', 'ORGANIZATIONS', 'COMPLEXITY', 'DYNAMISM', 'SEGREGATION', 'STRUCTURES', 'LINKED', 'CONSTRUCTIONS', 'RIGHTS', 'CHANGES', 'IDENTITY', 'URBAN', 'MULTIPLE', 'POPULATION', 'PHENOMENON', 'VARIABLES', 'CULTURE', 'WORLD', 'INTEREST', 'MANAGEMENT', 'MINORITIES', 'IMAGES', 'MONO-CAUSAL', 'STUDIES', 'AWARENESS', 'GLOBALIZED', 'PLURI-METHODICAL', 'RECOGNITION', 'COMPLEX', 'NARRATIVE', 'CULTURE', 'INTER-DISCIPLINARY', 'SOCIETIES', 'IMAGES', 'MONO-CAUSAL', 'STUDIES', 'AWARENESS', 'DEFINITION', 'MULTICULTURALISM', 'DECADES', 'BORDER-CROSSING', 'NEW', 'CATEGORIZATION', 'GOVERNANCE', 'GENDER', 'AGE', 'PERSPECTIVES', 'MARKETS', 'ORGANIZATIONS', 'COMPLEXITY', 'DYNAMISM', 'SEGREGATION', 'STRUCTURES', 'LINKED', 'CONSTRUCTIONS', 'RIGHTS', 'CHANGES', 'IDENTITY', 'URBAN', 'MULTIPLE', 'POPULATION', 'PHENOMENON', 'VARIABLES', 'CULTURE', 'WORLD', 'INTEREST', 'MANAGEMENT', 'MINORITIES', 'IMAGES', 'MONO-CAUSAL', 'STUDIES', 'AWARENESS'.