The project “Zwischentöne (Nuances) – Teaching Materials for Classroom Diversity” provides teaching resources on the Internet platform www.zwischentoene.info, which has been developed by the Georg Eckert Institute. The project, which is supported by the Robert Bosch Stiftung, hopes to promote diversity and pluralism as social norms in schools. Incorporating these themes and questions into lessons creates an additional burden of work for teachers, therefore these pre-prepared materials not only reflect current public debate, also prominent in the media, they also correspond to federal curricula and provide in depth background information. The project team endeavours to provide a broad range of multimedia resources and make them available online – be it audio or video clips, press articles or interactive blogs.

Modules have been developed for political studies, history, ethics and religious studies. They expand upon the topics addressed in the curricula augmenting them with an up-to-the-minute, socio-political discourse. The materials are designed to stimulate discussions on a range of subjects such as issues of identity, community and social cohesion. Pupils’ views are discussed and strategies are developed to counter phenomena such as group-related hostility. The latest modules on racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and homophobia explore the mechanisms of discrimination and exclusion in order to illustrate the notion of moral courage for pupils and make them more aware of prejudices and to sensitise them to their own behavior in critical situations. The modules have been developed in cooperation with the German Federal Agency for Civic Education. Other modules currently available address diversity in the older population, social responsibility in Islam as well as radicalism, Salafism and humour in Islam. By the end of 2015 approximately 40 German-language modules will be available to download from the Internet platform. The finished material is presented at workshops held in cooperation with teacher training and further education institutions.

Whereas previous education policies focussed on the integration of various heterogeneous groups, current policy seeks to encourage inclusion, which focusses primarily on the opening up and diversification of mainstream society and social institutions. The paradigm shift from concepts surrounding heterogeneity and integration, which focus more closely on problems and shortfalls, is becoming more prevalent in Germany as there is a move toward diversity concepts. Since the ratification of the UN convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2009 the concept of inclusion has been implemented at Federal level. Concepts from the educational sciences on diversity education and diversity value the differences between individuals and groups in society and view these distinctions as an asset. In this way inclusion transitions from being a political requirement and becomes a reality in educational practice.
“ZWISCHENTÖNE (NUANCES)” is a central transfer project in the “Textbook and Society” department, which is responsible for its conception and refinement, and is implemented within the key research area “Religion and Diversity”.

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