

# Teaching “Geography” in English at Austrian Schools

## Models, Practice and Intercultural Gain

# Political Interest in the Use of English in „Geography“

- Recommendation of the **Council of Europe**
- the **European Commission's**  
*1996 White Paper*

# Models of teaching “Geography“ in English

- Use of the foreign language over a limited period of time

- „Bilingual“ schools



# “Geography“ in English is popular

- 30 „bilingual“ schools
- English used as a medium of instruction at about 200 schools
- In 2003/04 ~16% more students than in 2002/03



# Teacher qualification

- 82% of the teachers have a language diploma
- „every“ teacher is entitled to teach these special classes

# Teacher training

- 3 Austrian teacher training colleges offer special training
- In-service teacher training
- Teacher training at universities has so far offered very little in that field
- Now courses at the department of geography

# Teacher training in Salzburg



- theoretical didactic background
- designing lessons
- practical teaching of geography in English

# Additional Value – Intercultural Competence

- Certain thematic fields have to be dealt with
- Authentic material (Statue of Liberty)
- Multiperspectivistic Approach
- Role of the internet

# Counter Arguments?

- ✓ Unnatural for a student to speak with friends in English
- Preparation for international activities in English
- Multiperspectivistic Approach
- No necessity to switch between languages