ICCAGE: O1 Survey of ICC best practice

Transnational Report

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Introduction

This is a transnational report on best practice, prepared by Instituto Politécnico de Castelo Branco (IPCB), with the collaboration of ReCLes.pt (associated partner to IPCB), as part of **a survey on Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), on which to base innovative ICC educational materials and course development for *ICCAGE (Intercultural Communicative Competence. An Advantage for Global Employability)*** to develop an innovative ICC course through tele collaboration.

This report reads the four national reports **comparatively** for **convergences on** ICC themes, topics and pedagogical approaches. Its aim is to constitute **a research-based and inquiry-based background** to make decisions on the type of course ICCAGE wishes to develop. Therefore, this transnational report chooses to highlight the following aspects from the national reports prepared by project partners:

➢ General results of data collecting (numbers of people contacted; books and articles reviewed, etc.)
➢ Balance between **theory and practice** in teaching ICC
➢ Most common **topics** for teaching Intercultural Communicative competence (ICC)
➢ Practical suggestions, techniques, **pedagogical practices and approaches** for teaching ICC
➢ **Cross-cultural comparison** between countries (in what concerns the cultural networks of interviewees, issues and suggestions on ICC collected in each partner country from HE lecturers, etc.)
➢ **Define open questions for debate. Some of these are collected throughout the text in grey boxes and summarised at the end.**

The parts of this transnational report are the following:
1. Background to data collecting
2. ICC competences and topics
3. Cross-country comparisons
4. Questions raised/making it work

1. *Background to data collecting*

Instituto Politécnico de Castelo Branco (IPCB), Portugal, Ceské Vysoké Ucení technické v Praze (CTU), Czech Republic, Budapest Business School (BBS), Hungary and Universidad de León (ULE), Spain, used similar data collecting tools, adapted to their specific local contexts. Data were collected over three months, from October 2015 to end January 2016, either via online survey or face to face. Data combine questionnaires and interviews to employers (part A), with desk research (10 publications reviewed per partner country) in Part B, and interviews/questionnaires with higher education lecturers who teach foreign languages or other subjects, in each partner country (part C). See **table 1** for the number of employers/teachers interviewed or who answered the questionnaire and the number of publications reviewed.

ICCAGE Partner Countries	Employers	HE Foreign or L2 Language teachers	HE teachers of subjects other than languages	Publications reviewed			
				Books/ textbooks/ theses	Articles/ chapters in books/ position papers	Projects	Reports/ research reports
Portugal IPCB	10	7	4	8	3		1
Czech Republic CTU	6	20	5	6	1	2	1
Hungary BBS	6	4	2	4		6	
Spain ULE	6	18	10	3	3		2
Total	**28**	**49**	**21**	**21**	**7**	**8**	**4**

Table 1: Number of participants interviewed/answered questionnaire and publications reviewed.

1.1. Part A

The questionnaire to employers (which was also used as an interview protocol) aimed at understanding what kind of training is considered appropriate in the field of intercultural communication. **Table 2** details the educational training areas of the employers interviewed or of those who answered the questionnaires in relation to the type of company:

Areas	Type			
Management	Management consulting			
Manufacturing	Automotive + machinery			
Services	Business to business trade	Biotech	development	Logistics
IT	Print and software			
SCC/Energy				
Agriculture	Meat Exporter			
Engineering				
Tourism and Hospitality				
Banking	Investment & Analysis			

Table 2: Educational training areas of employers and types of companies

The countries mentioned as international partners for the multinational companies surveyed (Q1) are described in **table 3**.

Europe	Africa	Asia & the Middle East	North America & Oceania	Central & South America
France	Egypt	Russia	USA	Brazil
Austria	South Africa	Azerbaijan	Canada	Argentina
Slovenia	Namibia	Uzbekistan	Australia	Costa Rica
Germany	Ethiopia	Mongolia		Mexico
Greece	Mozambique	Georgia		Ecuador
Italy	Angola	Philippines		Other…
Netherlands	Moroccan	Indonesia		
Switzerland	Cape Verde	East Timor		
Poland	S. Tomé & Principe	Vietnam		
Spain	Other…	China		
Ireland		Japan		
Czech Republic		Thailand		
Slovakia		India		
France		Kazakhstan		
Norway		Turkey		
Ukraine		Jordan		
Other…		Israel		
		Syria		
		Other Arab and Asian countries…		

Table 3: Network of international relations of surveyed companies

In addition to identification (Q1), the questionnaire consisted of 5 open questions (Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5 and Q6) about the role of intercultural communication in the company and what employers perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of their employees in this particular area. The questions in the employers' questionnaire referred to the following topics:

Q1:   The respondent's company and his/her position within the company

Q2:   Intercultural diversity and intercultural contacts in the company

Q3:   Problems or misunderstandings in work due to cultural differences

Q4:   Strategic advice for employers working in intercultural context

Q5:   Intercultural preparedness of university graduates entering the job market

Q6:   Intercultural competences requirements for young recruits

1.2. Part B

All publications were selected with a view to defining innovative principles for teaching and learning languages (English and Spanish) from an intercultural perspective.

Two general conclusions can be drawn:

1) There seems to be plenty of ICC materials in English available on the market, written for different target groups (researchers, teacher trainers, teachers, students, company trainers etc.), but there is not one textbook that is used with HE students exclusively in the context of teaching and learning foreign languages. There is hardly any material written in foreign languages other than English available for HE foreign language teachers and students.

2) Several interesting international projects have been carried out in the field of ICC and in connection to teaching foreign languages (and/or supporting Erasmus students)

3) There are several 'Business language' textbooks for teaching languages for business both in English and in Spanish.

4) There are several resource packs for ICC and language teaching;

5) There are relevant recent pedagogical research contributions to bilateral and multilateral student communication in HE, which may serve the purpose of ICC.

The following table highlights the publications reviewed by category (see **table 4**). A full list of references can be found in **annex 1**.

Textbooks	Dignen, Bob: *Managing Projects*
	Dignen, Bob with James Chamberlain: *Fifty Ways to Improve your Intercultural Skills*
	Camerer R. and J. Mader: *Intercultural Competence in Business English*
	Bowe, Heather, Kylie Martin and Howard Manns: *Communication Across Cultures, Mutual Understanding in a Global World*
	Huber-Kriegler et al.: *Mirrors and Windows. An intercultural communication textbook*
	Győri, A. et al.: *Entre culturas y negocios. Curso de communicación intercultural y management en español*
	Utley, D.: *Intercultural Resource Pack (for language teachers)*
	Bodolay, L.: *Interkulturelle Kommunikation für Studierende*
	Atabong, Aminkeng, Lut Baten, Luisa Bavieri, Ana Beaven, Claudia Borghetti, Neva Čebron, Miguel Gallardo, Sara Ganassin, Irina Golubeva, Prue Holmes, Lucia Livatino, John Osborne, Jan Van Maele and Basil Vassilicos: *Intercultural Education Resources for Erasmus Students and their Teachers*
Books	*Intercultural Education Resources for Erasmus Students and their Teachers*
	Průcha, Jan: *Interkulturní komunikace*
	Schroll-Machl, Sylvia and Ivan Nový: *Interkulturní komunikace v řízení a podnikání (Češi a Němci)*
	Hasil, Jiří: *Interkulturní aspekty mezikulturní komunikace*
	Schultheis Moore, A. and S. Simon (Eds.): *Globally networked teaching in the humanities: Theories and practices*
	Byram, Michael, Bella Gribkova and Hugh Starkey (2002). *Developing the Intercultural Dimension in Language Teaching: a practical introduction for teachers*
	Liddicoat, A. J. and Scarino, A. (2013). *Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning*
	Piñero, M. G., C. G. Díaz and J. M. Vez (2010). *Didáctica de las lenguas modernas. Competencia plurilingüe e intercultural*
	Lewis, R. (2002). *The Cultural Imperative: Global Trends in the 21st Century*

	Trompenaars, F. And C. Hampden-Turner (1998). *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business.*
	Trompenaars, F. and P. Wooliams (2003). *Business across Cultures.*
	Holliday, A., M. Hyde and J. Kullman (2004). *Intercultural Communication. An Advanced Resource Book*
	Guilherme, M. (2002). *Critical Citizens for an Intercultural World. Foreign Languages Education as Cultural Politics*
	Glaser, E., M. Guilherme, M. C. M. García and T. Mughan (2007). *Intercultural competence for professional mobility*
Theses	Vilà Baños, R. V. (2005). *La competencia comunicativa intercultural. Un estudio en primer ciclo de la ESO.*
	Török, J. (2012*). Cultures in the mirror of organisational storytelling. Culture contrastive research. (PhD thesis)*
Chapters in books	O'Dowd, R. (2012). *Intercultural communicative competence through telecollaboration.*
Articles	Ware, P. and C. Kramsch, C. (2005). "Toward an intercultural stance: Teaching German and English through telecollaboration"
	Nikleva, D. G. (2012). "La competencia intercultural y el tratamiento de contenidos culturales en manuales de español como lengua extranjera"
	Teixeira, A. P. (2013). "O desenvolvimento da competência comunicativa intercultural na aula de PLE: representações e práticas (inter)culturais. Um estudo de caso"
	Bizarro, R. and F. Braga (2011). "Educação intercultural, competência plurilingue e competência pluricultural: novos desafios para a formação de professores de Línguas Estrangeira"
Position papers/ presentations	Riccardi, Pellegrino: Cross cultural communication — TEDx Bergen
	UNICollaboration Research Group: Virtual Exchange in the European Higher Education Area
Projects	NIFLAR (Networked Interaction in Foreign Language Acquisition and Research)
	Vinagre Laranjeira, Margarita: El desarrollo de la competencia intercultural en los intercambios telecolaborativos
	Intercultural Communication Online Project
	Intercultural Management: Bridge Across Cultures
	Intercultural Education Resources for Erasmus Students and their Teachers
	Innovative didactics with information and communication technology: Russian-Hungarian-Dutch Collaboration in Teacher Education
	Intercultool Project: Adapting an assessment tool for intercultural competence
	ICOPROMO Intercultural competence for professional mobility
Reports	High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education (2014). *Report to the European Commission on new modes of learning and teaching in higher education.*
	Council of Europe (2008). White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: "Living Together as Equals in Dignity".
Research reports	Kostková, K.: Rozvoj kulturní komunikační kompetence

Table 4: Publications reviewed

1.3. Part C

In higher education for the four ICCAGE partner countries, language is taught as either a second language, in the cases of Portuguese, Hungarian, Czech and Spanish, or as a foreign language, in the cases of English, Spanish, German, French and Italian.

Higher Education subject teachers otherwise involved in ICC come from the following areas: Presentations Skills, ICC, Strategic Marketing, Marketing, HR Management, Corporate Culture, Applied Linguistics, Business, Engineering and Law.

The questions in the interview template for higher education teachers referred to the following topics:

Intro Type of institution and the respondent's position within the institution
Q1   Intercultural diversity in the institution
Q2   The role of culture and cultural competences in the respondent's teaching
Q3   ICC topics included or to be included in their courses
Q4   Teaching/learning activities to handle stereotypes and stereotypical thinking
Q5   Activities dealing with miscommunication
Q6   Opinion on introducing online intercultural projects into teaching
Q7   Intercultural competences requirements for graduates entering the job market
Q8   Innovation and good practice in ICC teaching
Q9   Recommendations for best practice publications on ICC
Q10   Recommendations for core content of an ICC course in higher education

2. ICC competences and topics

Definitions of Intercultural Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence are numerous in the literature. The one that is accepted in the present project is as follows:

"Intercultural competence can be understood as the necessary skills and attitudes to suspend one's own beliefs about cultures (both own and other) while learning about general processes of societal and individual interaction in familiar and unfamiliar cultures." (Dooly, 2006: 19)

2.1. Competences identified in general and in connection with languages

The overall competences identified in the national studies are listed in **tables 5 and 6**, respectively focused on personal competences and work-related competences in contexts of high mobility. Within each table, these competences are separated into general skills and skills connected with learning foreign and second languages.

Personal ICC Competences	
General skills	**Skills connected with learning foreign and second languages**
respect and impartiality for others; cultural sensitivity	sound knowledge of foreign languages
being aware of diversity and critical awareness of others: curiosity, empathy and tolerance; giving up egocentrism	good (language) proficiency (listening and speaking)
maturity and self-critical awareness	ability to make discoveries through personal involvement in social interaction or through texts
willingness to learn: revising experience and existing knowledge continuously	Verbal skills (telephoning etiquette, the importance of ranking and titles, mobile phone usage, correspondence, business emails and SMSs, business cards, the role of small talk, negotiations, business dinners, gift giving, and taboos) and nonverbal communication skills (e. g. greetings, space, gestures, mimic, polite requests)
	cultural clashes, proxemics and time management issues (polychromic vs monochromic working styles, for example)

Table 5: Personal ICC competences

Work-related ICC competences in contexts of high mobility	
General skills	**Skills connected with learning foreign and second languages**
ability to adapt to and to accept new contexts	ability to interpret text and cultural perspectives from a decentred position
independent thought and creativity	
business communication, competitiveness, mediation skills, team work	intercultural interaction competences whether these are linked to behaviour, situations, interpretation or management
curiosity, openness and reflexivity to others and their cultures; adaptation and cooperation	coping with being exposed to regular information about other countries and cultural groups, through television, through the Internet
	ability to identify needs, analyse problems,

| | negotiate and make compromises |
| | cultural awareness and ways of handling cultural differences |

Table 6: Work-related ICC competences in contexts of high mobility

2.2. ICC: Balance between theory and practice

There are several (sometimes clashing) concepts that must be taken into account when considering how to teach intercultural communication in Higher Education (HE) within the framework of teaching and learning foreign languages. Most reviewed authors would agree that intercultural communication is communication between cultures when the interlocutors do not share the same mother tongue and the same cultural background and that intercultural communication includes more than using a foreign language in communication. HE teachers tend to ascribe some importance to verbal and non-verbal communication as part of the culture/language approach.

However, among the authors reviewed there is a clash between those who hold an **essentialist view of culture** (Lewis, 2002; Trompenaars et al, 1998; 2003; Hofstede 1984/2001), who seem to address training models for business purposes exclusively, and those who base intercultural communication on **non-essentialist notions of culture** and also address ICC in connection to teaching and learning foreign languages. Within the first group, the Lewis Model (2002), for example, groups geopolitical structures into a manageable tripartite structure with a few hybrid cultures, covers observable behaviour regarding information gathering styles, space and time, the attribution of status and response to leadership as well as communication patterns, listening habits, and body language in a very essentialist view of culture. The author focuses on the potential problem of disparate worldviews by focusing on essentialist characteristics for national groups (e.g. the pedantic, linear German and the voluble, exuberant Brazilian). This is the view held by most employers that were interviewed, who stress the idiosyncrasies of specific cultures as something to be learnt, be they distance/proximity issues in communication; communication styles and the pragmatic aspects of communicating.

Non-essentialist views of culture, such as those put forward by Guilherme (2002), Guilherme et al (2007), Sarmento (2015), Holliday, Hyde and Kullman (2004), Bizarro and Braga (2011), Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) and Teixeira (2013) focus on cultures (in the plural) that communicate with one another in multiple ways and reject culture and the cultural identities of individuals as stable or immutable or tied to national identities. Cultural identities are processes of becoming, of making and interpreting meaning through multiple affiliations that transcend national characteristics (see Sarmento, 2015; Kramsch, 2008; and Liddicoat and Scarino, 2013).

This non-essentialist view of culture and of intercultural communicative competence highlights subjective and intersubjective meanings that grow out of the language but also of the 'memories, emotions, perceptions, experiences and life worlds of those who participate in the communication" (Liddicoat and Scarino, 2013:

1-2). This perspective is only slightly touched upon by employers, who refer to issues of gender and religion as paramount, as well of the history of the places they trade with.

Non-essentialist views of intercultural communication may additionally focus on **the critical roles of teacher and learners as intercultural speakers** who cross frontiers and are specialists in the transit of cultural property and symbolic values (Guilherme 2002: 124, modelled on Byram and Zarate, 1997). As 'Critical ICC', this involves a transformational engagement of the learner with the act of learning (Liddicoat and Scarino 2013: 28-29), through which the learner is able to critically evaluate practices, values, belief systems and products both in their own and in other cultures (Dooly 2006: 19).

One further contentious aspect in the literature reviewed in teaching and learning ICC through languages is the 'cultural' content to be taught. There seems to be a shift from cultural facts (socio-political information) to studying culture as a process (Liddicoat and Scarino 2013: 23) or even an attempt to sensitise language users to both approaches simultaneously to be able to bridge the gap between academia and the perspective of their future employers. This process of culture may be organized around the themes of identity, *otherization* and representation, as purported by Holliday, Hyde and Kullman (2004). This means that, contrary to essentialist views, there should not be descriptions of cultural differences in intercultural communication since this would be part of an *otherization* process (over-generalization, stereotyping, reduction) and of an essentialist view of culture (Holliday, Hyde and Kullman (2004: xv).

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2.3. Approaches for teaching ICC based on desk research

A summary of baseline approaches for teaching ICC (see **table 7** below) will highlight different emphases **that may be combined in diverse ways**, such as:

1. **Experiential approaches** that involve some kind of immersion experience for students in contexts where intercultural communication or multilateral partnerships are required or simulated. These may involve:
   a. Some kind of work between **partner classes** (as in **example 1**)
   b. Some kind of **online collaboration**. (**Tele collaboration** falls into this category and is the **example 2**);
   c. **Projects** developed among multilateral groups of students and teachers (**example 3; but also: example 2**);
   d. **Residential** courses (**example 3**);
2. Approaches that focus on how to work for ICC through **topics** that are developed with students, and on methods, such as:
   a. **Learning by discovery** by, for example, exploring real-life scenarios (**example 4**)
   b. **Learning by research and exploration** (**example 5**)
   c. **Experimental learning** through interaction (**example 6**)
   d. Scenario building (**example 7**)
3. Approaches that require some **theoretical input**, to be combined with practice.
   a. **Theoretical knowledge and self-reflection. See example 7**. See also **example 3)**.
   b. **Short theoretical inputs** after exploring materials (**example 9**, see also **example 8**).
   c. **Theoretical courses on ICC (example 10).**
4. **Task-based approaches**.
   a. **Authentic materials (Example 8)**

Table 7 gives some detail for the examples mentioned. Note that some descriptions may fall into more than one category.

1	**Experiential approaches that involve some kind of immersion experience for students in contexts where intercultural communication or multilateral partnerships are required or simulated.**	
Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
Develop online intercultural projects with partner classes in other countries in a course that conveys knowledge about societal ways of life, correlates	Tele collaboration, the activity of engaging learners in online communicative activities together. A collection of tele collaborative tasks or learning scenarios could be developed specifically for non-language learning subjects. These tasks could focus on important subject	Students and teachers participate in a residential course where they carry out classes and project tasks together. After introductory theoretical and practical classes for students to get

language and culture, facilitates a comparative analysis of beliefs and values of different cultures and ethnic societies, as well as the recognition that stereotypes are impediments that hinder intercultural communication and social relations.	areas related to Business Studies or Engineering and could outline how tele collaborative projects could be developed for these subject areas. Language teachers could benefit from a short online course which introduces them, in basic terms, to the different steps to take when setting up and running a tele collaborative exchange. This course could come in the form of a series of videos and links to connected materials. They could also be combined with case studies of tele collaborative exchanges which we run ourselves in this project.	acquainted with the basics of cultural studies, cultural dimensions and communication issues, students are assigned to international teams and given a project to do during the course. The intensive stay and work create a 'pressure cooker' situation in which all the experiences are magnified, thus giving participants the experience of a lifetime.

2	Approaches that focus on how to work for ICC through topics that are developed with students	
Example 4 In ICC courses students may receive the stories from different organizations as raw material for further research. By analysing these stories, students can reveal primary identification keys of various cultures and can easily discover and identify Hofstede's dimensions, time and space approaches, etc. In this way students can describe organisational cultures and can set up national culture profiles. As a result of the analysis, students will also recognize that, since national cultures may have a significant impact on organisational cultures, even multinational companies cannot apply standard management solutions worldwide. A further aim of this method is to show students that organizational storytelling is a successful way to learn about a company and may help recruits adapt to their work environment.	Example 5 Introduce the topic, reflect on one's own culture, discover other cultures and do related language work.	Example 6 Do various short activities which provide information, explain opinions, present short texts, contain exercises, and provoke discussion and pair or group activities. Interactive activities generate experimental learning: learning by active listening, sharing information, carrying out activities and discovering things. The teacher's role is to present and monitor the activity, and mediate the discussion if necessary.

3	Approaches that require some theoretical input, to be combined with practice.	
Example 7 Combine theoretical	Example 8 'Reflective observation':	Example 9 Combine different aspects of

knowledge with self-reflection and immersion experiences in different multinational cultural scenarios.	reflecting on the previous task in a plenary session with the support of specific materials (grids, guidelines, etc.). 'Abstract conceptualisation': interactive lectures, for which teachers can refer to the slides provided	efficient intercultural communication: include in each unit a short introduction, useful language tips, listening followed by thought-provoking questions and 'hot tips' on intercultural skills.

<u>Example 10</u>

Combine culture, communication and context

Part I. Contextual Felicity across Cultures

  2. Direct and indirect messages

  3. Schema, face and politeness

  4. Speech acts and politeness

Part II. Structure and Contextual Update across Cultures

  5. Conversation across cultures

  6. Positioning the self: role, power and gender

  7. Positioning the other: naming, address and honorifics

  8. Cultural differences in writing

Part III. Professional Communication across Cultures

9. Translating language and culture

10. Intercultural communication in the workplace

11. Successful intercultural communication.

4	**Task-based approaches**

<u>Example 8</u>

Learning-by-doing approach, task- based activities and phases:

- 'Concrete experience': individual or collective exploration of several different types of authentic materials (videos, brochures, blogs).
- 'Reflective observation': reflecting on the previous task in a plenary session with the support of specific materials (grids, guidelines, etc.).
- 'Abstract conceptualisation': interactive lectures, for which teachers can refer to the slides provided.
- 'Active experimentation': students have to produce something (a video interview, a workshop for future Erasmus+ students, etc.).

Table 7: Approaches for ICC courses

2.4. Suggestions of topics and subtopics for course development

Not all authors and interviewees agree that ICC should be taught through topics. Some prefer a focus on ICC competence development, even though, in practice, ICC competences may be illustrated by specific topics.

ICC competences may be described as follows:

- Savoirs (Byram 1997);
- Intercultural attitudes;
- Explore Identity, Otherization and Representation;
- Understand:
    o What is culture?
    o Cultural references;
    o Why does culture matter?
    o Types and stereotypes
    o The profiles of national cultures
    o The profiles of corporate cultures
    o The profiles of group cultures
    o Culture and communication
    o The cultural programming of an individual (developing identity and realizing how a culture is built up)
- Understanding what it implies to arrive in a new culture and having to learn a new language:
    o culturist language, political correctness and stereotyping
    o connections made between people, their behaviour and generalizations of categories

These competences may be **further described in the following terms**:

- Projecting and otherizing, and inter-competence through an analysis of tourist culture and trading-with-tourists culture;
- Combining media representations, popular opinion and tastes and each person's ability to see through images and fictions;
- Analysing travelogues and tourist guides (as influential parts of media) and/or short news programmes for essentialist ideas that may be deconstructed and rendered culturally sensitive;
- Raising awareness of similarities and differences of mentality and behaviour based on diverse value systems, time and/or space;
- Providing/ researching global and regional factual knowledge of cultures with a comparative approach regarding globalised culture elements as well as the participating countries' specific cultures;

- Developing 'culture at work' skills, enabling students to find their roles in a team, communicate efficiently, resolve conflicts and collaborate successfully in order to accomplish tasks at work in a multi/intercultural working context;
- **Working towards developing a common project to oblige participants to understand and appreciate each other's didactical practices in teaching language and science before they identify the common goals of the project and collaborative ways to achieve these goals**.

> ICCAGE faces one particular challenge: to work towards developing a common project that will lead participants to understand and appreciate each other's didactical practices in teaching language and ICC.
>
> Then it will be time to identify the common goals of the project and the collaborative ways to achieve them.

Table 8, in the next page, shows some of the **topics** mentioned in literature and surveys, or suggested by research and questionnaires, which may be used as a basis for course development. This list is by no means exhaustive and has been organised in four categories. Several of these topics could be approached from either of the categories: identity, representation, communication and miscommunication, which seem to constitute the umbrella terms for ICC.

Topics for ICC course development			
Identity	**Representation**	**Communication**	**Miscommunication**
Spaces and places (factories, hotels, airports, etc.), institutions (enterprises, museums, trade unions, etc.)	The intercultural multi-dimensions of organising events	Conflict and conflict resolution	Business negotiation misunderstandings
People (employees, colleagues, clients, etc.), objects (machinery, arts and crafts, specialized literature, etc.)	Cultural habits of specific groups	Verbal and non-verbal language	Stereotypes of national cultures
Time and time schedules "Rock around the clock"	Food habits in relation to religion and cultural stereotypes	Texts (business letters, safety instructions, product labels, etc.)	
Eating habits: You are what you eat (?)	Concepts of love and friendship: All you need is love (?)	Conversation and silence	
Education: Up in the morning and off to school	The meaning of flexibility and stability	Meeting new people	
Men and women, girls and boys	The issue of refugees	Dealing with change	
Education: Bringing up baby		Listening effectively	
History, politics, geography and cultural heritage of specific nations/regions/locations		Speaking clearly	
Understanding how others see me			

Table 8: Topics for ICC

Suggestion: to compile more topics for this list.

2.4. Suggestions on how to develop ICC in class

In the table (**table 9**) below some suggestions are compiled on **effective approaches and practices** for ICC development in class:

Research for portfolios
Analysis and debate
Collecting critical incidents and solving/proposing to solve them
Cross-cultural in-depth analysis of some culturally-marked event
Presentation of an experience/situation/example that is an intercultural communication event. This could be about looking at documents, observing behaviour or appearance or an interview/conversation
Deconstruction/analysis of the experience/situation/example (the people involved; the setting, the cultural circumstances, the social or linguistic angle)
Active construction (encounters with language and culture). • Making connections (connect the new to what is already known; intra-cultural aspects; similarities and differences between the known and the new). • Social interaction (dialogue to negotiate meanings and diversity, understanding, accommodating, distancing from understandings presented by others, agreeing and disagreeing, challenging ideas, renegotiating). • Reflection (on how we think, know, and learn about language, culture, affective and cognitive knowing). • Responsibility (attitudes, dispositions and values of the learner).
Reading and listening comprehension activities about stereotypes (e.g. The British are polite but cold and reserved, or Spain is all about 'fiesta' and 'siesta'.) Debates and exchange of ideas, especially about students' expectations before getting to know other cultures and how they change their minds afterwards. E.g. facing stereotypes and contrasting them with real facts

Table 9: Suggestions on ICC practical approaches

3. Cross-country comparisons

Addressing ICC across the four countries involved embraces not only Portugal, Spain, Hungary, and the Czech Republic but also includes reference to the cultures of the countries that interact within them as reported in the ICCAGE National Reports. This section of the ICCAGE Executive Report, then, aims to understand the most commonly shared topics and characteristics of intercultural competence identified as well as other relevant issues that may have been raised.

It is interesting to note that partner states Portugal, Hungary, and Spain were not international contacts for the participating Czech employers although the Hungarians had contact with all partner countries: Czech was reported only in higher education, while and the Portuguese and Spanish reported intercultural exchanges.

Of the four home languages, Spanish is the only language being taught in all partner countries.

All HE teachers were asked to indicate the cultural diversity they perceive in higher education, which is shown for all four countries in **table 10**.

Europe	Africa	Asia & the Middle East	North America	Central & South America
Slovak	Moroccan	Russian	**American** (USA)	Costa Rican
Bulgarian	**African**	Ukrainian	Canadian	Mexican
Polish		Kazak		Ecuadorian
British		Azerbaijan		Argentinean
Portuguese		Uzbek		**South American**
Spanish		Vietnamese		
Italian		Mongolian		
German		Georgian		
Spanish		Syrian		
Regional cultures in Spain		**Asian**		
Romania		**Arabic**		

Table 10: Cultural diversity in higher education as indicated by HE teachers

For the teachers surveyed in the Czech Republic, five from both Russia (4) and the Czech Republic (5) taught Presentation Skills, Strategic Marketing, Human Resources Management, and Corporate Culture. The 20 foreign language teachers surveyed represented sustained contact with the countries related to the languages taught, namely English, Spanish, German, French, and Czech as a foreign language (CFL), and were from a variety of countries, representing the diverse cultures of Slovakia, the Czech Republic, the USA, Canada, Morocco, and Great Britain. These FL teachers interacted with students from Russia, the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Syria, Costa Rica, Mexico, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Vietnam, Poland, Ecuador, and Africa.

In addition to Great Britain and other unspecified African countries, specific contact for work in the Czech Republic was mentioned with the following country cultures in **table 11**:

Europe	Africa	Middle East	Asia	North America	Central & South America
Slovak Polish Czech Slovakian Portuguese French Spanish Italian German Spanish Romania England	Moroccan	Syrian	Russian Ukrainian Kazak Azerbaijan Uzbek Vietnamese Mongolian Georgian	American (USA) Canadian	Costa Rican Mexican Ecuadorian Argentinean

Table 11: Cultural diversity in higher education as indicated by HE teachers in the Czech Republic

The map in **figure 1** below provides a visual interpretation of the range of home cultures covered in the ICCAGE National Study submitted by the Czech Republic. The red stars indicate intercultural contact with employers in the Czech Republic, the yellow indicates the home countries and target cultures of the foreign language teachers in the Czech Republic and their students, and the orange indicates both contact with employers and students or teachers, namely those from the USA, Argentina, Italy, Russia, Poland, Germany, and the Czech Republic.
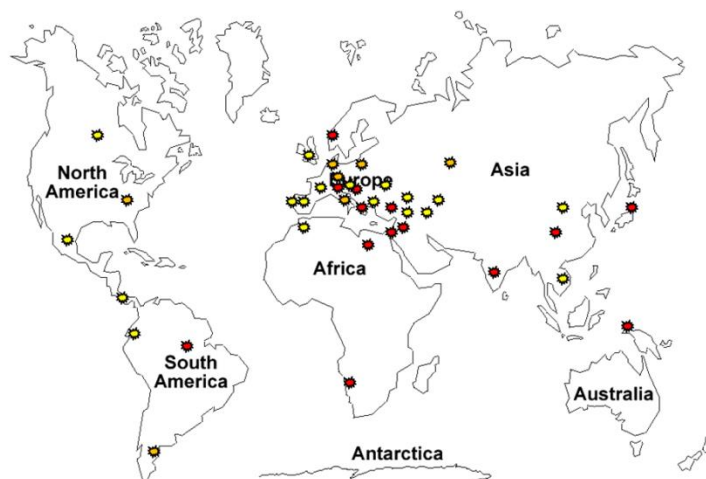

Figure 1: The breadth of countries and cultures involved in **Czech** industry and higher education

The ICCAGE National Study submitted by Portugal reported cultural contact for both employers and higher education teachers with the EU Erasmus+ countries but also referred to other Portuguese-speaking countries as well as their multiple cultures and those from within neighbouring Spain. Arab countries as well as the USA and Ireland were also mentioned. This range of home cultures can be located in the map in **figure 2**.

Figure 2: The breadth of countries and cultures involved in **Portuguese** industry and higher education

The ICCAGE National Study submitted by Spain reports a wide range of intercultural contact for employers in Spain, where the participants represent six multinational companies ranging in size from 4,000 to 35,000 workers in the Biotech, Automotive and Energy industry. EU countries were the most common contact but South American (perhaps also Central American??) and Asian markets were also a source of intercultural exchange. The diversity of cultures within Spain – Basque, (Catalan? Galician?) South American, Moroccan, Romanian – is indicated as a growing trend in Spanish higher education although most teachers of English are Spanish. These contacts can be visualized in **figure 3**.

Figure 3: The breadth of countries and cultures involved in **Spanish** industry and higher education

The ICCAGE National Study submitted by Hungary also reports a wide range of intercultural contact for employers in these and other unspecified European countries. Specific contact for work was mentioned with the cultures of the following countries in **table 12**:

Europe	Africa	Asia & the Middle East	North America & Oceania	Central & South America
Slovak Bulgarian Polish British Portuguese Spanish Italian German Spanish Romania French Greek Dutch Irish Swiss Other…	Moroccan Egyptian South African Other…	Russian Ukrainian Turkish Syrian Kazak Azerbaijan Uzbek Vietnamese Mongolian Georgian Chinese Thai Indian Philippines	American (USA) Australian Canadian	Costa Rican Mexican Ecuadorian Argentinean Brazilian Other South American…

Table 12: Cultural diversity in Hungarian industry

The diversity of cultures within Hungary is sustained by the Erasmus+ programme with up to 300 students per year at one of the surveyed schools. Commonly from the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Italy, Spain, Croatia, Slovakia, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland and Portugal. Another 150 students per year at the same school are from Japan, Thailand, China, Israel, Kazakhstan, Korea, Nigeria, Russia, Ukraine, the USA and, notably, Brazil, whose students arrive through the support of the Science without Borders Agreement. This cultural diversity in Hungarian higher education in common with Hungarian industry (the overlap is indicated in orange) can be seen in **figure 4**, where the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Croatia, Sweden, Belgium, Japan, Israel, Korea and Nigeria are countries whose cultures are exclusively present in higher education (in yellow) and those that are exclusive to the employers' ICC experience are indicated in red. It is important to note that these data were collected in the framework of the present project and cannot be considered a comprehensive study of either Hungarian businesses or HE institutions.
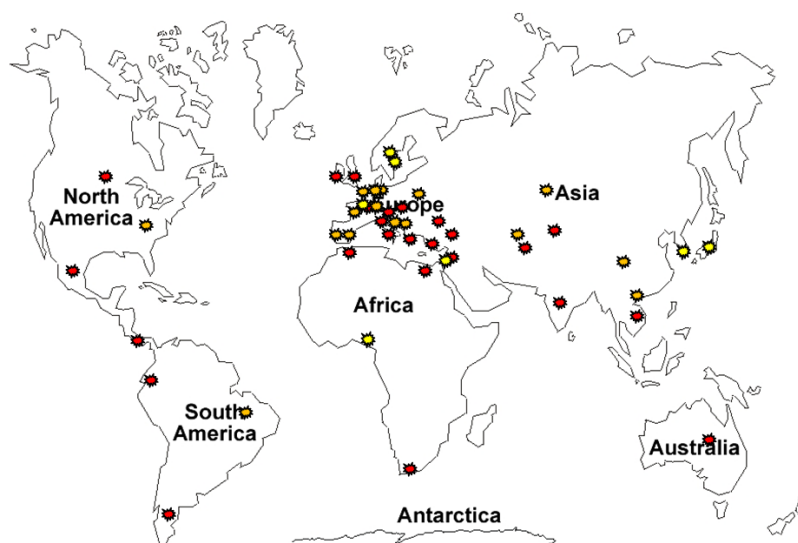
Figure 4: The breadth of countries and cultures involved in **Hungarian** industry and higher education

For comparative purposes with a better visual perspective, the four maps in figures 1-4 are grouped here.
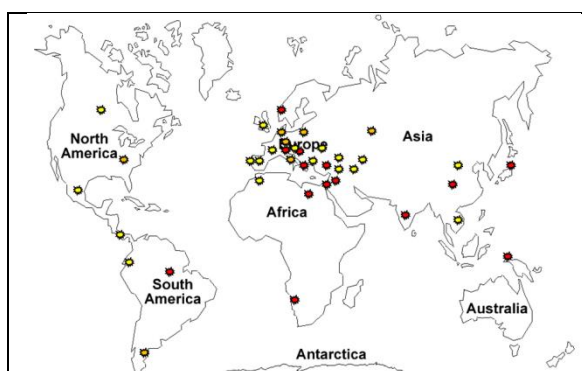

Figure 1: The breadth of countries and cultures involved in **Czech** industry and higher education

Figure 2: The breadth of countries and cultures involved in **Portuguese** industry and higher education

Figure 3: The breadth of countries and cultures involved in **Spanish** industry and higher education
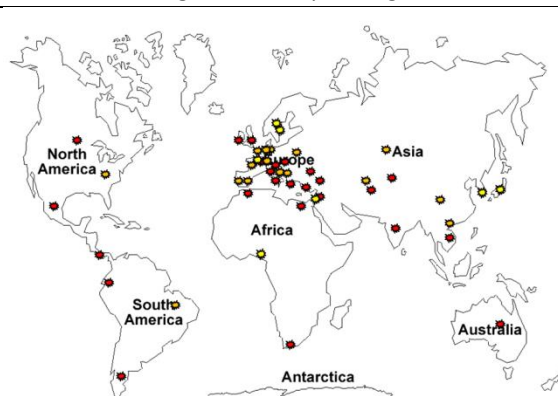

Figure 4: The breadth of countries and cultures involved in **Hungarian** industry and higher education

Given the global scope of cultures and countries being referred to in this small sample, it is worthwhile considering whether it would make sense at all to go into analyses of national/ cultural values or adopt a specific cultural focus. ICCAGE approach will probably have to focus on **a general intercultural awareness communication course**. This would certainly require emphasis on:

- Knowledge of own culture;
- Development of intercultural skills;
- Analyses of critical ICC incidents;
- Experiential activities in multilateral teams (real communication, scenarios or simulations).

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3.1. The role of culture and cultural competences in the classroom/workplace

In the four countries, the teachers and employers reported issues to overcome based on intercultural differences and some concrete solutions in the following areas in **table 13**. Although the proposed solutions are not all the same, there are similar concerns related to language-induced problems, communication styles, attitudes toward work itself, and varying perceptions of socio-pragmatic issues.

Employers and higher education teachers in the Czech Republic	
ISSUES TO OVERCOME	CONCRETE SOLUTIONS
Dealing with conflicts – imposing one's methods and values on other cultures	Adopt a neutral/unbiased approach Support the experience of local employees to serve as a model Prepare previously to guarantee structured communication to clarify about roles and tasks
Language barriers based on insufficient language accuracy	Group culturally similar students
Perception of time	Be prepared to heighten student awareness of possible culture clashes
Difference in learning and teaching styles	Mediate student knowledge and experience of other cultures through newspaper articles, language textbooks and TV and ne social and online media Recognize that some students can be more active or passive according to familiarity with the topic and cultural orientation Attribute more time to allow students to understand the subject matter
"safe" v. more challenging topics	Promote safe activities that compare and contrast customs and habits from one culture to another (include the home countries of students and teachers) Contrast the comparison of habits Be very well-prepared for challenging topics related to politics, social issues and culture (e.g. homosexuality and gender) Choose the study material carefully
Differences in understanding of practices in HR Management, Personal Management and Corporate Culture	Focus on the importance of topics on cultural difference for quality language education
Attitudes toward work itself	Prepare a backup plan and establish clear priorities Emphasize lifelong education and employee training to optimize activities within the local context Prepare students for the possible differences Examples: • German systematic attitude focused on aim vs. Russian jovial attitude without clear aims; • German discipline v. Czech creativity – Czechs see Germans as strict, inflexible, and rigid in task fulfilling (though these may be wrong solutions approved by the management) whilst Germans complain about Czechs for lacking discipline when

	they are constantly changing and improving solutions
Perceptions of concepts such as freedom, fear, hope, tradition, family	Take advantage of opportunities to use "intensive informal communication" to clarify concepts
Styles of communication	Prepare students for the possible differences Example: • Czechs vs. Indians – Czechs are too informal preferring an individual style while Indians prefer more formality

Employers and higher education teachers in Hungary

ISSUES TO OVERCOME	CONCRETE SOLUTIONS
Power and hierarchy in different cultures • Working style (e.g. hierarchy issues, punctuality, deadlines) • Religious or national habits/holidays (e.g. local priest's blessing on new factory in India)	Plan to teach cultural habits and raise students awareness of culture models or dimensions and culture and communication (including non-verbal communication) Ask students to analyse how they themselves may accomplish their tasks in a culturally-determined way (keeping deadlines, power distance between teacher and student, etc.) Teach the intercultural theories from the 'great names', Hofstede, Hall, Trompenaars, etc. Make deliberate efforts to make students consider cultural diversity through team work and case studies that give opportunities to students to • realize differences • reflect on their own and other cultures
Differences that can lead to lack of respect (e.g. Europeans vs. Asians) • Stereotypes (for both parties)	Plan to teach body language comparisons Create learning activities so that students can strengthen their knowledge of history, culture and religion to avoid the simple characterisation of different peoples Plan activities to deal with cultural stereotypes that include games, presentations, video analysis, films, dramatisations Discuss jokes on national stereotypes and the positive and negative sides of stereotypes Use texts/articles to describe nations and produce short country profiles Cover a variety of topics for awareness raising for culture definitions, cultural values, priorities, culture shock, stereotypes, comparative culture studies, cultural metaphors, multicultural teams, identity building, country images, and emotional intelligence Follow up with activities where students reflect on each others' behaviour and peer evaluate in mixed classes
Language problems: • listening difficulties (pronunciation) • ambiguous vocabulary (e. g. negative connotation of words) • simplified grammar in e-mails • communication style	Plan activities for language work as well as role-play activities, training games, video analysis, illustrating high- and low-context communication, exercises on asking for clarification

(e.g. directness v. shyness from Asians) • conventions in written communication (e.g. the use of exclamation marks)	
Employers and higher education teachers in Spain	
ISSUES TO OVERCOME	**CONCRETE SOLUTIONS**
a lack of flexibility	Encourage language users to be sensitive to cultural differences Provide learning activities that give language users the opportunity to practice adapting to these different cultural norms and practices Alternatively, avoid taboo topics like politics and religion Provide specific training modules for staff members that work with certain cultures
socio-pragmatic differences and issues of directness	Teach Spanish students to adopt other less direct ways to express "I do not want this" such as, "I was imagining another solution", "What about…?", "Have you considered…?"
differences in social norms and practices	Provide opportunities to make conversation over a meal or in other social contexts
Employers and higher education teachers in Portugal	
ISSUES TO OVERCOME	**CONCRETE SOLUTIONS**
gender and religious differences	Pay attention to the differences between countries and regions
different degrees of assertiveness and various tones of communications	Learn the particular terminology of the area involved to accommodate to the tone of communication Learn about the idiosyncrasies of the specific culture Have a good knowledge of the language of the partners (e.g. German and Spanish are more direct while English and Indian are less direct)
the importance attributed to hierarchical levels according to the countries	Introduce new cultures by meeting with people who are already familiar with the cultural differences
the commitment to schedules and time constraints	Practice flexibility on deadlines Clarify every single detail so as not to leave any pending doubts or unclear commitments
food	Be tolerant and friendly
proximity/distance in physical contact	Begin by analysing the particularities of any given situation Understand international protocol in terms of what can and cannot be done
political issues	Learn about history, habits and the culture of the country

Table 13: ICC-based sources of misunderstandings and concrete solutions

The issues to overcome and possible solutions are presented separately, for each partner country report, but a near common denominator is the very few respondents who reported NOT having noticed any cases of intercultural communication breakdown.

3.2. The need for development of ICC for the workplace

Among the competences identified as lacking in young people starting to work in a multi/intercultural context, the following skills, knowledge, awareness and personal factors were mentioned for the four partner countries in **table 14**. Significantly, many respondents reported that they had found that young graduates were generally lacking in intercultural awareness and intercultural communication skills. It is also clear that few students get ICC training at university, as this is usually not a compulsory subject in the curricula, though HE teachers and employers agree that ICC competences are of crucial importance. It is also true that few companies provide any standard preparation in ICC for their newly recruited employees. They usually expect their employees to learn from their colleagues' and their own experience.

Skills to...
communicate efficiently
understand and communicate in at least one second language
use English to successfully communicate verbally and non-verbally
be prepared for ICC
adapt to a different context
be well-mannered
accommodate your language to different text-types, situations and registers
communicate across cultures and languages
listen and accurately interpret other cultures' habits
make plans
make abstractions
collaborate on projects
handle conflicts
deliver tasks on time
use IT tools
organise
Knowledge about...
cultural-religious studies
social psychology
history
life outside of your own country gained through at least 6 months experience abroad (Erasmus+ only makes students slightly prepared)
how to avoid prejudices and misconceptions
Awareness of...
differences even if surface attributes are similar
divergent cultural values
different beliefs
ICC in general
Intercultural issues
body language
intercultural and social competence
cultural clashes, proxemics and time management issues (polychromic vs monochromic working styles)
different connotations of both non-verbal communication as well as some linguistic

expressions that might not work equally across cultures (e.g. requests, complaints, etc.)
Personal factors
Self-confidence
Flexibility and adaptability
Open-mindedness
Interest in and curiosity about the new culture
Collaborative work, ability to
Tolerant, flexible, open-minded and cooperative
Willingness to learn
Empathy for other cultures
Understanding of others

Table 14: Intercultural competences required at work:

3.3. Recommended topics for an ICC course

Higher education teachers in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Spain and Portugal recommended topics for a new ICC course in **table 15** to better prepare language users for working in a multicultural/intercultural environment.

Business expertise
Examining what cross-cultural leadership means in practice
Payment methods and trade terms from country to country
Promoting simulations of responsible leadership in a multicultural environment
Promoting intercultural dynamics in an international company
Carrying out a cross-cultural in-depth analysis of some culturally-marked event
Collecting critical incidents and solving/proposing to solve them
Promoting opportunities to examine the components of international negotiation and exercise nnegotiating skills in international marketing situations/simulations
Understanding the multicultural team: improving collaboration attitude and skills
Comparative studies between cultures
Raising intercultural awareness
Debates and exchange of ideas, especially about students' expectations based on media-induced stereotypes, before getting to know other cultures, contrasting them with reality and noticing their changing perspectives afterwards
Developing sensitivity
Research for portfolios, analysis and debate to compare and contrast ideas, including class and gender in politics, in publicity and in religion
Reading and listening comprehension activities as well as quizzes about stereotypes (e.g. The British are polite but cold and reserved, or Spain is all about 'fiesta' and 'siesta'.)
More traditional topics like festivals, cultural events on certain dates, different meals/food, traditions, historical or geographical data, education, lifestyles, habits, stereotypes, jobs, etc.
The role of culture in communication
Various communicative styles
Pragmatic aspects such as politeness - polite behaviour from culture to culture
Enhance awareness of the super-polite expressions used in English which may be a bit cliché (example: would be kind enough to do this…)
Letter/e-mail writing and compositions to deal with cultural stereotypes within the scope of other activities
Video from Catherine Tate on offensive translating https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vc8tfioOKvU to make them guess what was going to happen
The main phonological features of English and those that make other languages recognizable, and how we can use them for the better
The media as an important global source of communication
Communication skills and expertise
Promote essential skills for the development of critical self-analysis

Table 15: Topics to be included in a new ICC course

3.5. Specific points highlighted in common from among the four ICCAGE partners in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Spain and Portugal

Real-life exposure/simulation to cultivate ICC

The ICCAGE partners from Spain, Hungary and Portugal reported evidence that supports the need for not only improvement in ICC but also in teaching methodology. Along these lines, Spain

- Real-life exposure/simulation to cultivate ICC
- Digital learning tools
- Classroom composition

proposed a number of interactive ICC-related activities which may be new to some teachers, with a focus on engaging students through online activities and bringing the language class more like real life. In fact, this concern for true to life practice is clear from the responses from multinationals and higher education teachers, who note the pressing need for **exposure to and simulation of real life** as a way to acquire ICC skills for the intercultural contact that is inevitable in the workplace. Nevertheless, both Hungary and Portugal found that the reporting multinationals do NOT pro-actively prepare their employees for ICC; instead, new experiences in contact with other cultures are expected to provide sufficient guidance when other staff members cannot.

Digital learning tools

Although it is not mentioned by the Czech Republic, Spain, Portugal and Hungary note that intercultural communication in the business world takes place primarily online. The similarities of this tendency at work and the implementation of **online projects and tele collaboration** to develop ICC in higher education are clearly supported by the characteristics of these developmental activities. Nevertheless, and despite recognizing the possibilities, Spain and Hungary report a general lack of experience in implementing this sort of activity, which is perceived as difficult to organize and far too complex. And while Hungary suggests a number of topics for innovative ICC courses – related to time and space as well as global and regional culture, Spain focuses more on the need for exposure to useful links, case studies and selected material via tele collaboration, even for non-language teachers. It is also noted that participants will need to be taught how to make the most of tele collaborative learning opportunities, as underscored by Hungarian teachers who claim that "blended learning is the future".

Classroom composition

Portugal and the Czech Republic reported cases that identified the homogeneous classroom itself as a barrier to relating to others and characteristics of other cultures within the context of higher education. Portuguese teachers, however, have developed strategies that include student research for portfolios, analysis and debate and which take advantage of the cultural diversity – regardless of its relatively homogeneous nature – in the classroom to compare and contrast ideas.

4. Questions raised

A number of overall concerns about ICC education have been identified by the ICCAGE partners in **table 16**.

Problems identified	Recommendations
Intercultural communication and negotiation in the workplace takes place online	Tele collaboration makes sense as a teaching/learning format that engages learners in online communicative activities Develop material for tele collaborative learning to use for an ICC training course: tasks and/or learning scenarios ➔ Develop a short online course specifically for non-language learning subjects which introduces them to tele collaborative projects for introducing ICC into their respective areas (e.g. Business Studies, Engineering, etc.) ➔ Develop a short online course specifically for language teachers to learn to work with tele collaboration to include case studies of successful tele collaborative ICC activities.
Non-language teachers do not see it as their responsibility to teach ICC	Multicultural groups of students who are being taught in a foreign language (such as English), regardless of the subject area, require ICC training. ➔ Develop materials for an ICC training course for non-language teachers ➔ Teach non-language teachers about the role of culture in classroom interaction and education in general so they can • become aware of the importance of cultural differences in communication styles and student behaviour • train their own students for ICC • include the development of 'soft skills' related to ICC in their own lessons
English as a medium of instruction (EMI) is becoming very important in European universities	Change the paradigm: it is vital that teachers do not believe that English is only a vehicle for instruction and that teaching in a foreign language is simply a matter of translating materials into English Introduce CLIL to higher education – see the ReCLes.pt CLIL publication at http://recles.pt/ under Publications (Morgado et al. (2015). *ReCLes.pt CLIL Training Guide Creating a CLIL Learning Community in Higher Education*
Reliance on more experienced employees and experience itself in the absence of ICC courses, companies	A targeted ICC course could provide more appropriate outcomes since this reliance on other employees within the company and on learning from experience may not result in the lessons that are intended.
Need to diversify cultures within the classroom	Including Erasmus+ students in the language classrooms would be a step to breaking down the homogeneous classroom itself as a barrier to relating to others and characteristics of other cultures.
Need to develop courses which explore alternative and 'non-traditional'	These activities should • include interactive and cutting-edge uses of the Internet (see the EU-funded PETALL Project (Pan European Task-based Activities for Language Learning) at

culture learning activities	http://petallproject.wix.com/petall for motivation and ideas for activities • link the classroom with 'real life'
Many materials designed for ICC training are based on closed and predictable communication	Create ICC learning activities that open up the space for creative use of the target language within a realistic and true-to-life context of intercultural communication to better boost ICC competences. Anything related to real life will inevitably involve a high degree of the unpredictable and the numerous possibilities will enrich the learning situation
Need to increase exposure to intercultural situations related to real life	Bring international students to the lessons Assign interviews with someone from another culture or with high levels of ICC competence Analyze real cultural clashes in class, both explaining and resolving the situation Enhance the benefits of tele collaboration by helping students become aware of the truly intercultural nature of their interaction through creative and innovative communicative activities Use Web 2.0 tools as well as human contact in communities of practice, seminars, reading groups, and flash mobs to share music and poetry and generally get in contact with people from other cultures
Clash of perspectives on culture from the employers (essentialist) and the higher education teachers (non-essentialist)	Include both essentialist and non- essentialist perspectives in teaching so that students are better prepared to communicate on the same level as their employers and, simultaneously, introduce new ways of thinking into the working world, enriching themselves as well as those around them in terms of Intercultural Communicative Competence and building this advantage for global employability.

Table 16: Questions raised related to ICC training

In terms of making it work, the ICCAGE project partners are preparing a specialist training course on ICC and tele collaboration at the Universidad de León, Spain, in February 2016, and an International Specialist Seminar on *Intercultural Language Education and Globalisation: Current Practice and Trends* at the Budapest Business School, 16-17 June 2016. These intensive events will provide opportunities for the partners and other interested researchers, teaching practitioners, and even motivated leaders in the international labour market to begin to implement changes to respond to the questions raised throughout the study, with the expected outcomes to include an ICC course based on innovative teaching methodology and a growing team of teachers more prepared to promote ICC in higher education in the four partner EU countries and beyond, both in language and non-language classes.

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