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Relevance of Intercultural Awareness and Competence from an Employability point of view

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Definitions:

Iceberg analogy“ (Brembeck): Only the tip is visible (e.g. language, food, appearance...) – biggest part: invisible (communication style, attitudes, beliefs, values, perception...)

Culture hides more than it reveals...“ (Hall, 1959)



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Some Definitions

- Enculturation: cultural learning in a native context
- Acculturation: cultural learning in a non-native context \Rightarrow „culture bumps“ and „culture shock“ may occur



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Some more definitions

- Multicultural (society): Different cultures exist side by side vs. pluricultural: A person becomes pluricultural when she/he has gained access to more than one culture
- Intercultural situation: two or more pluricultural individuals interact
- Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) = „the ability to cope with one’s own cultural background in interaction with others“ (Beneke, 2000)



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What does intercultural awareness mean?

Intercultural awareness includes an awareness of ... diversity.

Intercultural skills and know-how include:

- *Ability to bring culture of origin and foreign culture into relation with each other*
- *Cultural sensitivity/ability for a variety of strategies for contact*
- *The role of cultural intermediary*
- *Ability to overcome stereotyped relationships*

(Common European Framework of Reference, 2001)



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Challenge of Intercultural Competence:

- Note: *Cultural knowledge* is not the same as *intercultural competence* (Little/Simpson, 2003)
- Intercultural competence needs relevant cultural knowledge (including knowledge of culture of origin)
- Intercultural competence also depends on other factors (e.g. the individual's affective and attitudinal orientation and personal skills)
- It is difficult to judge one's own intercultural competence

THANK YOU

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein