



## **iKULT Handbook**



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

**CREDITS**

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. The importance of intercultural competences

Intercultural competence is not given a priori at birth and similar to language, ethics and behavior has to be often painfully learned. Encounters with people from different cultural backgrounds offer the opportunity to gain information, knowledge and skills, but they can also lead to irritation or even to rejection of other cultures.

While the internationalised business world is becoming increasingly interdependent – keywords are globalisation, job mobility within and across the borders of the European Union –, the encounters of people supply all the reasons for the importance of intercultural competence, even though many protagonists of the discourses on interculturalism get to diverging views and estimations. An attribute of intercultural competence is certainly the ability to cope with the values of other cultures and personal experiences in a creative, critically reflected and flexible way.

To attach value to intercultural competences, it is necessary to accelerate the development of intercultural competences and to break stereotypes and clichés. It is crucial to free people from their role of passive observers in foreign cultures and bring them into the role as active users of newly acquired knowledge, to expand their knowledge in a creative dialogue with the respective opposite.

Stereotypes are often addressed through jokes, and sometimes demasked. Many a person will probably recognise themselves in these animals again, whether as a narrator or the reader or listener. The joke goes as follows:

A crocodile is strolling through a park one evening, when a bat suddenly flies towards him. “What are you?” asks the bat. “Take a guess”, answers the crocodile. The bat feels carefully along the crocodile’s body, ponders, and concludes: „A large mouth, short legs, and a long tail. You must be an ‘XYZ’”. We can insert any European or non-European person and have more or less laughter on the side of the joke teller. Stereotypes and intercultural understanding explain the metalanguage of the joke, the ambiguity of the words.

At the same time, the joke vividly symbolizes the interaction between the fundamental “tools” of intercultural competence:

1. the head as the symbol of intellectual analysis and critical reflection, the field of knowledge
2. the hand as an instrument, a tool of behavior, of feelings, touching, an instrument of execution
3. the heart, the location of a person’s emotional wiring, in this case, a bat representing a human being with feelings

Knowledge, emotion, and behavior make up the fundamental elements of intercultural competence (IC), which has shifted more and more into the focus of public interest, such as in political and business statements. Throughout Europe, the importance of intercultural competence is often proclaimed in the context of the catchword *globalization*. It is certainly a positive sign that dealing with business partners from non-European countries in a sloppy manner has become outdated. Nowadays, internationally operating companies have their employees trained. Students and tourists consult the Internet, searching for tips about destinations and people, browsing through travel guides and reference books. Brochures and books

are filled with general advice and scientific studies about the relevance of intercultural skills in light of globalization. People learn to eat with chopsticks in order to create a respectable impression for Chinese business partners.

“Intercultural competence describes the ability, based on certain attitudes and mindsets, as well as particular behavioral and reflection skills, to interact effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations”, states a publication from the Bertelsmann Foundation. Many definitions, models, and descriptions of intercultural competence reveal a western perspective.

### **Head**

Some would say that intercultural competence is based on knowledge. One acquires knowledge about other cultures through intellectual means. Self-proclaimed experts earn a fortune with training courses for intercultural skills. The European Union proclaimed 2008 the Year of Intercultural Competence. It has now begun, embedded with mutual understanding, errors, and misconceptions. Intercultural skills continue to gain importance in recruiting new employees. They are conducive to corporate communication in solving conflicts, are fundamental to interpersonal communication, and gain more and more influence both in the daily cohabitation of different ethnic groups and in international business relationships in particular.

In adult education center courses, managers as well as travelers participate in role plays and practice handing out business cards by holding the card in both hands, since it's a common practice in Southeast Asia. Anyone who wants to do business with China refrains from using a handkerchief if he has happened to read in a travel guide that this is frowned upon. As a matter of fact, the Chinese prefer spitting. Prior to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, the entire country is being included in a nation-wide intercultural training campaign in order to better understand foreigners. Taxi drivers are being trained on how to interact with Europeans. In the media, what could almost be called “user manuals” for interaction with non-Asian visitors are being imparted. Nevertheless, the Chinese still find it strange, even unhygienic, to blow one's nose with a handkerchief and then put the tissue back in one's pocket and use it again. Are they right? The danger of emphasizing the acquisition of knowledge is to accumulate sheer schematic information about a country and its people, which, however, cannot adequately be applied in everyday situations in a reflective manner.

Have we arrived at intercultural competence with the different views of Europeans' method of cleaning their noses? Or are those just different customs and conventions, norms and habits? Could it be possible that it is habits that account for intercultural differences, provide for misunderstandings in everyday encounters, and suddenly send the head of a delegation to the sidelines, just because he was the third to enter the conference room?

Studies and courses on intercultural competence point out that, in view of the many various lifestyles and wide range of communication patterns of people in daily interactions, it is a relatively young field. It has just begun to enter the focus of public attention in the last 40 years. Interculturalism is cool. Worldwide mobility and contacts of those mobilized already ensure encounters of a different sort in airplanes. Some people take off their shoes, while others find it impolite.

If we look for the root of culture in interculturalism, culture can be defined sociologically as a regional area, in which people with a large number of skills,

beliefs, morals, rights, needs, and other abilities and conventions live, which they have acquired as a member of society. People belonging to a certain region have developed a system of communication over time, with characteristics which can be viewed from outside of this region in comparison to a foreign system as being different and requiring a method of interpretation. North and South, East and West, as well as the Orient and Occident, Latinos and “Gringos” all differ from one another. The list could go on and on. We would discover different ways of thinking. People from the South are passionate; people from the North are rational and driven by common sense. However, the transition to clichés and stereotypes happens easily. In order to avoid this, the observer must take a different viewpoint, continuously change perspectives of everyday life, and be able to coexist among diversity.

## **Heart**

When we come to the heart and feelings, think of a Latin lover, and identify the geographic depiction of the weather in northern Scandinavian, can we conclude that the Finnish are all depressed? Let’s make an intercultural historical deduction. A fork was still considered a tool of the devil by the Christian Church in the Middle Ages, since humans were only supposed to take in food given to them by God using their hands. However, the mainly Christian-socialized Europeans view the still prevalent tradition in Arabic countries as unhygienic, even exotic. Depending on how one was raised, most Europeans dismiss eating with one’s hands as unappetizing and even shudder at the thought of eating couscous while on vacation in North Africa.

Here, not only does the “eye eat as well”, as the German saying goes, but the heart does too. Even in such simple situations, emotionality has a critical influence on intercultural competence. However, that one is not allowed to ask how the wife of the host is doing in Arabic countries is likely confronted with misunderstanding by travelers or business partners and must first be learned as a behavioral pattern. Cultural differences as well as religious boundaries also shape our daily life and have historical roots dating as far back as the Middle Ages. During the Gothic period, Christian women wore head scarves, and head scarves are even still common in orthodox communities, at least among the elderly. Can intercultural differences be derived from religious customs? Within and outside of the EU there is much discussion about the Islamic perception of women and the use of head scarves. Headscarves are considered by many people as a symbol of backwardness, oppression, and inequality. Such information enters our patterns of behavior, shaping our intercultural skills.

Cultural differences are varied and insightful for the coexistence of human beings. They enrich and allow access to other cultures if one is able to interpret the signs. In Arabic countries, it is common for men to hold hands in public, a gesture that would be interpreted in Western societies as homosexual. Facial expressions, gestures, body language, outer characteristics of clothing, and the symbolism of colors are all utilized variously and can lead to misunderstandings in one’s professional as well as private life.

A person who orders two beers in Germany with a thumb and an index finger orders eight beers in China. Without good Chinese language skills, this order would not be very easy to cancel. Even sign language is a system with intercultural differences, but as a coded system of understanding it is relatively easy to relearn. It would be suitable for e-Learning courses. Science relies on the fundamental characteristics of

intercultural skills and now delivers explanations that precipitate in reference books, films, and aforesaid courses like big question marks.

Just because there are people who only know the words for the numbers one to three in their language and describe further quantifications with the term “much”, doesn’t mean that they are lacking in vocabulary or mathematical systems or even that their language is underdeveloped. It just means that, historically, they had a different definition of property and acquiring property, so that a, from a Western viewpoint, rudimentary number system was sufficient. In Western societies, an evaluative number system will first be overridden when someone is at least a billionaire and his statement of revenues and expenditures can be mathematically calculated for the so-called normal consumer given a minimum interest rate of 3%, but can no longer be felt.

However, such perceptual patterns of “primitive counting systems” can influence business relationships. An Asian “yes” or “no” is also not quantifiable. In Germany, one “gets down to business quickly”, wants to “get to the point”, makes clear agreements, sign solid contracts, a signature is a signature. German partners adhere to agreements and are surprised or upset when things don’t go the way planned with the implementation of contractually agreed upon deadlines, delivery dates, payments, or, in short, the fulfillment of the contract. In Asia, the importance of written agreements and contracts is less respected, or at least valued differently. Not until partners have met each other, talked things over, perhaps even eaten together, since contacts are intensified during meals, is the point reached where there is no backing out for the Asian partner should the European business partner consider a business deal. Whether concerning private or business affairs, in the Asian code of conduct the so-called “loss of face” is by all means to be avoided. Even tourists are confronted with this avoidance strategy. It already begins when asking for directions. If a tourist asks someone on the street for directions, a local person feels responsible to help. He is more likely to give false information in order to not appear unfriendly than to shrug his shoulders regretfully. He will describe the route using large gestures, which in retrospect will turn out to have been fictitious. The traveler will likely view this behavior as disappointing and deceptive and will feel cheated. What can he do in order to avoid this problem? He can only rely on the rule of probability. By asking several pedestrians for directions and going in the direction that is most often suggested. Therefore, one rule is: avoid a loss of face. Nobody wants to lose face. Since paper isn’t in a hurry, a contract for cooperation will quickly be made, formally signed, and with a dignified gesture stamped in red.

Red is not just red. In old China, couples married in red clothing. The color can sometimes stand for joy and love, other times for grief. The most beautiful day for some couples taking pace completely in white would be a day of sorrow in China. Therefore, one should never give a business partner white flowers or write a letter to a Chinese employee in red ink. With white, we would be signaling to her that we wished her dead. Red would at the very least signal the irritation of the writer, since red used to be used for death sentences in the Emperor’s period.

The Asian cultural region, which is certainly described in a simplified manner here, is full of surprises and intercultural differences.

In the metropolises Shanghai and Beijing, it is still common for a CEO to be the first to enter a room. Should a western visitor hold the door open for a woman, as he’s

accustomed to doing, and let her proceed ahead, she will be identified as the leader, the big boss. The actual CEO will be put at a disadvantage.

Children learn at least four German songs in school. Does one want to give them a better understanding of the German culture or does this reflect a romantic world view of half-timbered houses and women wearing dirndl dresses? Or does the truth lie somewhere in between? In Germany, due to the National Socialist past, handling national songs in a light-hearted manner is markedly more difficult, and suspicion of nationalism can be aroused easily.

The ancient Greeks regarded all people with their own cultural region and language as barbaric and unworthy, while other ancient people tried to strengthen their identity and unite their nation by distancing themselves from other groups.

Does a German business traveler on a flight to Tokyo need to bring a few German songs in his suitcase? Does a traveler from Moscow need a few jokes in his repertory in order to win some laughter and, along with it, sales and success? In any case, it would be a psychological advantage.

It can be said that understanding for culture and the contemporary related intercultural competence demand a change in values. From the perspective of Europeans, countries outside of Europe were and still are regarded as exotic. Europeans prematurely use stereotypes and clichés to form perceptual codes of other countries and access their values and norms, mildly speaking, as curiosities, or more strongly stated, denounce them as banana republics with archaic societal patterns.

Models and academic papers about the hermeneutics of intercultural competence are complex and multifaceted. There are models which combine the ability to make decisions and to reflect with the ability to empathize, interact communicatively, and appreciate diversity. In this manner, they attempt to track down patterns of solutions for learning intercultural techniques.

### **Hand**

But why do we need intercultural skills and where do they begin? Is it the knowledge that one's neighbor with Islamic beliefs doesn't eat red meat? At a business dinner in Istanbul one then realizes that the Turkish host is secularized and doesn't adhere to the ban on alcohol, but still doesn't consume red meat, because it isn't produced in Turkey. Is it the everyday sayings learned in a language course that indicate that the tourist has adapted to the foreign culture in the vacation spot? Single learning experiences or language skills alone certainly don't lead to a gain in competence. We are behaving in a foreign habitat. "Untrained intercultural experts" conduct themselves without any reflection, attempt to order a "Jägerschnitzel" in a Turkish restaurant, or address the waiter in their own native language. He has to understand, right? Trained intercultural experts have worked out a code of conduct, participated in courses, and have learned to adapt.

Intercultural expertise depends on effective communication, be it during meals, conversations, or other everyday situations. Communication is, in turn, dependent on language abilities, knowledge of nonverbal communication patterns, and information about facial expressions and gestures and their interpretation. Body language presents an aspect of interactive communication which cannot be neglected.

Even the use of handshakes as a greeting can be a challenge. Whereas Americans robustly shake the outstretched hand of Europeans with a smile, in Central Asia one reaches his hand out rather hesitantly, which appears to be afraid of touching and not at all used to pressure. If the conversation partners are more familiar with one another, a hug is expected, especially among men, and a token kiss on the cheek.

Intercultural skills are culture-specific. From country to country there are large and small differences, based on mentality, language, gestures, and facial expressions. Whereas in Germany, the way to a man's heart is through his stomach, this principle doesn't automatically work in Russia, since this saying doesn't exist in the Russian language. In some Balkan countries, questions are responded to with the shake of the head. However, this apparent "no" signals agreement to the conversation partner, a short "yes". If unknown, such differing body signals can lead to amusing anecdotes. Due to a lack of knowledge, a purchase may be agreed to at the market, which then must be tediously reversed. The tourist didn't intend to buy a fattened goose, even though he shook his head.

Well good, most people think. Asia is of course a foreign culture, far away from Europe and a bit exotic. America and Europe, they seem more familiar. Americans are, however, only to a limited extent the Americans that we Europeans think we know. Whereas German managers tend to describe problems and emphasize the analysis process, American managers quickly perceive Europeans as sluggish, backward-looking, and not innovative enough. They will agree with the Chinese, who identify Europe as lacking in innovation due to the lack of skyscrapers, tranquil water meadows, as well as long decision-making processes. In turn, Europeans experience the arbitrariness of Americans in everyday contact as superficial and noncommittal and find the politeness of Asians with their constant smiles tiring.

Where does the growing interest in intercultural competence come from? Certainly, the medial attention on globalization is one reason. What is linked in some places to job loss and depletion of the sociological target of the middle class, has been reflected for quite some time in job positions with an increasing demand for employees with decision-making skills, the ability to work well in teams, all sorts of personal and professional skills, as well as the ultimate qualification of intercultural skills.

It may be true that the concept of intercultural skills has already existed for about forty years, the Latin word *competere* meaning "to come together". However, in the past, multiculturalism has been more sought-after than interculturalism.

In the past forty years, many experts have tackled the topic of intercultural skills. They've constructed list, structure, and process models, and come up with features and typologies, in which intercultural skills were given the honor of belonging to the classical domain of skills, including personal skills, social skills, academic skills, and methodological skills.

## **1.2. Why do we need a handbook?**

The handbook is primarily intended to provide an overview of the different facets and components of the iKulT project. It is intended to inform, but it does not provide detailed instructions of iKulT Trainingsmodules.

Specifically, the handbook will inform you on which educational considerations and concepts the project is based on. The differences between traditional and modern concepts are highlighted and their possible impact described. Apart from a brief description of the developed materials and their use in iKulT training, there will be an introduction on how to use the e-Learning platform.

Finally, the evaluation design of the academic scholars, which served as part of ongoing quality management in the project is outlined. The annex of the handbook lists all project partners with their internet addresses.

## **1.3. The iKulT project**

According to some theories, intercultural skills involve a synergic process in which individual, social, professional, and strategic behavior flows together into intercultural contexts. It is important to sensitize users of internet-based learning modules to intercultural boundaries and to train learners' awareness. Well-developed perceptual codes for intercultural differences are necessary in order to implement competent synergies between one's own and foreign goals or customs. Sending employees abroad, cooperating with foreign companies, studying abroad, or international training programs will continue becoming more common with increasing internationalization of the economy and science. At the same time, the need for services that make living abroad easier and prevent possible problems that could arise from cultural differences is increasing. This is not only the case for employees of internationally active companies, but also for individual travelers, students, and, in view of growing occupational mobility, teachers and part-time employees as well.

Up until now, courses have on the one hand offered a lexical transfer of knowledge, in which concrete inquiries are answered with a solution template. How should I behave at dinner in a Chinese restaurant? When is the meal finished? Answer: when the host stands up. An inadequate answer. A meal is a complex communication template, which is ended in China by the host, but is also influenced by the behavior of the guest. With iKULT, it is possible to learn intercultural skills in a "space of experiences". The aim of iKulT is to impart an orientation system that enables participants to find their way in a different culture based on orientation signs employing interactive and experience-oriented elements. In addition to comprehensive information, users will find practical role plays, simulations, etc.

The aim of the project should be that employees sent abroad also have the opportunity to evaluate their own experiences with specially developed software and to draw on the experiences of others.

## 2. Pedagogical approach

### 2.1. Traditional and modern concepts

There are basically three learning concepts, which influenced the development of e-Learning: behaviourism, cognitivism and constructivism.

#### **Behaviourism**

Behaviourism was very dominant in the 1950s and 60s. The behaviourists tried to explain learning without referring to mental processes. The focus was on observable behavior and how an organism adapts to the environment. The famous "Dog-Salivation-Experiment" by Ivan Petrovich Pavlov where he makes dogs salivate at the sound of a bell and later experiments by Skinner with pigeons in the so called "Skinner Box" are very famous examples of behaviouristic learning experiments. Despite these very "low-level" learning experiments focusing largely on reflexes, the behaviouristic theories have been generalized to many higher level functions as well. The important aspect of behaviouristic theories is that the learner is viewed as adapting to the environment and learning is seen largely as a passive process in that there is no explicit treatment of interest in mental processes. The learner merely responds to the "demands" of the environment. Knowledge is viewed as given and absolute (objective knowledge).

Many learning programs are built on behaviouristic theory. They are constructed as learning machines. Background information with the objectives are provided, then the content is presented followed by a set of simple questions, usually yes and no or multiple choice questions. Thus, the learning success can be "objectively" measured; the learners get feedback and are "conditioned". Then comes the next cycle.

These learning programs are popular, especially with many Training Managers in enterprises. A lot of people can be filled with knowledge, and they have an "objective" measurement tool how well or badly employees perform. Even many learners like those programs. They pretend a kind of security, which is important for weak learners to gain confidence. And for some learners it maybe fun to do the quizzes.

The problem with behaviouristic learning materials is that learning is not sustainable. The facts are usually forgotten after the first test, there is no transfer process, no problem solving, which enables deeper learning. The learners do not learn to communicate. The learning needs of the individual are not considered.

In iKulT we want more. We want to change mindsets and enable critical and creative thinking processes, innovation and change.

#### **Cognitivism**

The cognitivist school goes inside the head of the learner in that they make mental processes the primary object of study and try to discover and model the mental processes on the part of the learner during the learning-process. In cognitive theories knowledge is viewed as symbolic, mental constructions in the minds of individuals, and learning becomes the process of committing these symbolic representations to memory where they may be processed. The development of computers with a strict "input - processing - output architecture" from the 1960s and up to today certainly has inspired these "information-processing" views of learning.

The cognitive approach and cognitive theories emerged as a new perspective employing "information-processing ideas" rather than the behaviourist assumptions that the learner is determined by his environments and so passively adapts to the circumstances. This cognitivist view emphasizes the active mental processing on the part of the learner. However, knowledge is still viewed as given and absolute just like in the behaviourist school.

Learning programs influenced by cognitive theory provide an introduction and show the learner contexts and processes. There is often a tutor who guides through the learning materials. The learners gain knowledge by working with authentic situations and contexts. The architecture of the learning management systems on the market has been influenced by cognitivist theory. However, the problem of cognitive learning programs is that usually only one learning path can be taken. The learner does not have the opportunity to learn by association, break out and acquire skills by researching other paths.

It might be easy to design a learning scenario with a set of texts, a set of questions and tasks and provide a forum for discussion. But still, this system is appropriate to learn facts – for learners not used to e-Learning it is hard to learn this way, and it is difficult to initiate deep learning and critical thinking skills.

### **Constructivism**

Constructivism is the third pedagogical school, which influenced e-Learning. It is actually not one theory; it is a collection of theories based on cognitivism, neurology (how our brain works), social sciences. While the behaviourists view knowledge as nothing more than passive, largely automatic responses to external factors in the environment and the cognitivists see knowledge as abstract symbolic representations in the head of individuals, the constructivist school views knowledge as a constructed entity made by each and every learner through a learning process. Knowledge can thus not be transmitted from one person to another, it will have to be (re)constructed by each person. This means that the view of knowledge differs from the "knowledge as given and absolute" views of behaviourism and cognitivism.

In constructivism knowledge is seen as relativistic - nothing is absolute, but varies according to time and space. There are different varieties of constructivist theories, basically the "Cognitive oriented constructivist theories" and "Socially oriented constructivist theories".

Cognitive oriented constructivist theories emphasize the exploration and discovery on the part of each learner as explaining the learning process. In this view knowledge is still very much a symbolic, mental representation in the mind of the individual. The socially oriented constructivist theories stress the collaborative efforts of groups of learners as sources of learning.

Constructivist learning programs do not have the role to guide through knowledge, they provide prompts, stimuli, coaching, and support. The learners are taken into complex environments, where they gain experience, construct knowledge, and acquire skills. Authentic experiences and situations are provided. The learners have a high degree of freedom and responsibility for their learning progress and gain a greater satisfaction.

## 2.2. Didactical considerations, motivational aspects and useful methods

Most of the learners may be exposed to e-Learning for the first time. Therefore a blended e-Learning approach is recommended starting with a kick-off workshop, continuing with intensive online coaching and collaboration, followed by project work. Sometimes a workshop during and/or at the end of the course is useful as a motivation to encourage social interaction.

The objective of the kick-off workshop is that the learners and teachers

- get to know each other
- become aware about the issues, challenges, objectives
- gain confidence (hands-on-experience) with the new technologies and learning environment
- learn to learn
- get motivated
- do practical experiments, if the course requires this.

This meeting can last between four hours, one day or two days, depending on the background of the learners and the time available. At the beginning of the e-Learning phase there should be a warm-up or icebreaking activity with some exercises for the learners to present themselves, maybe with chat exercises or Skype meetings, so that the learners very soon learn that it is fun to learn and work online, and that social interaction can indeed become very intensive online.

In the warm-up phase the learners explore the functions and tools by using them. They should also learn a kind of “netiquette” how to communicate in a supportive way, to “listen” to each, encourage each other, and respect each other.

The learners should be encouraged to communicate spontaneously in chats and in collaborative classrooms – not bothering about making spelling mistakes. They should be stimulated and learn to explore, find information they need or are interested in by using the resources of the World Wide Web.

Our experience is that two time models have been the most effective:

- Several weeks online phase. One week to get everyone connected and used to the e-Learning environment. Followed by new material on the web platform each week, with questions and links to find answers. Once every week there are meetings with in the learners groups where mentors lead discussions about the course.
- One the online phase should last about two weeks – not longer, since the rate of interaction – responses/feedback – should be very high, in order to keep up motivation. Online coaching is intensive and very time demanding for the mentors, the experts, and the students, but also very rewarding.

The following resources are available for online learning:

The e-Learning course environment on <http://www.ikult.eu>

with the course, structured in different lessons with digital materials and tasks.

The forum/classroom: This is the most important room for interaction between the teachers/tutors and the students. It is important that the teachers/experts/moderators provide feedback within a time agreed (usually 24 hours). Fast feedback and involvement of all the learners is the major key to motivating the students, stimulating high interaction, and skills acquisition.

### **The Internet**

In all learning scenarios the students should be encouraged to search for additional information on the Internet, in libraries, in online bookshops and share this information with the rest of the class.

In fact, the learning laboratory is the real world of the learners. So resources from the environment of the learners, real books, experiences, case studies, stories, can be included in the learning scenarios.

Assessment should be integrated into the courses. But instead of simple tests, it is more useful to encourage the elaboration of a project, if possible in teams, where the learners find solutions to issues, and develop innovative ideas. There should be a final session – online and/or onsite to present the results and provide feedback.

A final evaluation is recommended in the form of a mediation, reflection about what has been achieved. Evaluation questionnaires should not be too long, and encourage free comments. Examples are provided further down in this handbook.

Using the iKulT approach based on constructivist thinking, each course starts with the same structure, some tasks, and some materials. But this is just the shell. Each course emerges differently, depending on the needs and interests of the learners. And in each course further valuable resources are provided, which should be shared in a virtual library integrated into the learning environment.

### **The Idea-Café**

Although communication and interaction can be very intensive in the e-Learning environment, people need interaction in actual spaces. So it is useful to invite your learners to meet a few times as needed. Useful tools are an overhead projector, where you provide inputs and the learners show their results from their work and an idea-café, where you provide pens, pencils, paper and of course share coffee, drinks, and food and ask the learners to develop creative ideas, starting out from a problem or issue.

Mindmapping is a good tool, where you start from an issue, and everybody around the board can add ideas. All kinds of ideas are welcome. This way, also the learners, who are shy and do not like to speak in a group, have the chance to express their ideas. And all ideas are welcome and must be appreciated.

### **Learning tools and resources**

iKulT provides a number of tools, instruments, and resources to facilitate networking, learning, and communication for the iKulT team, the learners, and maybe some external experts.

Furthermore, suggestion for further innovative tools are provided, which contribute to improve communication between the learners in remote regions.

Most of the software used in iKulT is “Open Source”. This means the software is free-of-charge. A community of programmers works world-wide to make the software unique, and improve the software.

There are still some bugs or problems with most of the software, though not more than with software, where expensive license costs have to be paid. And unfortunately, most of the programmers still are male. So the feedback of the key learners and learners is urgently needed. All the bugs, suggestions to make the software and learning environment more user appropriate for our learners should be reported. We will provide sufficient room for evaluation, meditation, and feedback, and will provide tools for the mentors/Key learners for evaluation (see below).

The iKulT team will then adapt what they can, and pass on to the open source programming community to enhance the tools, so that the iKulT Campus emerges as the most user-friendly for the needs of the learners.

### The website

The iKulT website on <http://www.ikult.eu> is your gateway to all information in iKulT and to the classroom or campus. You can register your e-mail address to get newsletters with information on new courses and events, you can contribute with information to these newsletters, and can go to the classroom and register. A number of resources for self-study are always open in the classroom.

The screenshot displays the iKulT website interface. On the left, there is a 'Main Menu' with links for 'About iKulT', 'iKulT Partners', 'Login / Register', 'Contact', and 'News'. Below this is a 'iKulT Country Reports' section listing Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Turkey, and Denmark. The main content area features a news article titled 'iKulT - Intercultural training modules for SMEs in Europe to promote mobility and transfer of knowledge'. The article discusses the importance of intercultural competences in the European labour market. Below the article is a section titled 'Available Courses' which lists several courses for different countries, each with a teacher's name and a small iKulT logo. The courses listed are: Deutschland (Teacher: Michael Sauer), Italien (Moderatorin: Michael Sauer, Moderatorin: Senad Hadzic), Slowenien (Teacher: Senad Hadzic, Teacher: Michael Sauer), Türkei (Teacher: Michael Sauer, Teacher: Senad Hadzic), Danmark (Teacher: Michael Sauer, Teacher: Senad Hadzic), Germany (Teacher: Senad Hadzic, Teacher: Michael Sauer), Italy (Teacher: Michael Sauer, Teacher: Senad Hadzic), and Slovenia (Teacher: Senad Hadzic, Teacher: Michael Sauer). On the right side of the page, there is a login section with fields for 'Username' and 'Password', a 'Login' button, and a 'Create new account' link. Below the login section is a 'Calendar' for March 2010 and a 'Multimedia Links' section with a link to 'Ita | iKulT.ch'.

### The e-Learning environment

The learning environment is based on the open-source e-Learning platform Moodle. It is a learning management system. It is as good and bad as any learning management systems. It has been made mostly by programmers and helps to organize courses, learning sequences, and materials. It has course and student

management facilities, you can build in tests and evaluations, there is a calendar, a forum, and wikis, a tool, where the students can publish their materials ready for the web.

The most important tool for learning is the forum, where the teachers, the mentors, and the learners discuss the topics, share knowledge, and collaborate. This is the most important space for learning. The learning success, motivation, learning satisfaction is often based on the intensive work of the tutor/mentor. It is here where the tutor/mentor injects stimuli, critical questions, encourages responses, gives feedback, and invites for collaboration.

### **The Forum**

There is a forum built into the e-Learning environment, which functions as a classroom. But the forum can also be used for other activities, as a Café for the learners, as a place to exchange general ideas.

### **Technical problems**

The system is quite easy to use. Still many learners have problems getting online. In most of the cases the reason is that they made a little spelling mistake when signing-up. Then they will not receive the confirmation mail and cannot get started. So tell your learners to be careful and check the spelling, when registering, and reassure them that it is not them, who are stupid, it is the system. If there are still problems contact the iKulT Administrator to find a possible error.

If your learners have problems with the Internet it is sometimes the Firewall, which blocks the access to the system. This can be adjusted in the computer. If the Internet does not work, the network provider must help. It is useful to provide a place with just one or a few computers, like computer rooms in local schools or the Learning House in Nymindegab, where the learners can come and use the systems and help each other.

But the most frequent reasons why your learners are silent is that they do not dare to get started with saying something online. As tutor or teacher you should get started with a good example. Introduce yourself, provide a photo, say something interesting about yourself, and invite the learners to follow your example. In the beginning you should provide feedback as soon as possible, when the learners say something and encourage them to say more with more examples and questions.

You should also make clear that spelling and language errors do not matter at all. It is important to communicate, not how we write something. Of course, we should all be polite, “listen” to each other, and encourage each other.

### **Further communication tools**

There are numerous instruments and tools on the market, which makes it easier for the learners in the remote regions to communicate with each other. The iKulT platform provides more asynchronous communication tools, where you send a message, and maybe some our later you get feedback.

Sometimes it is useful to chat or communicate directly with each other, and the telephone might be too expensive.

**Skype**

Skype is a software, free-of-charge, which allows you to phone free-of-charge across the world, arrange telephone conferences, chat conferences, and even video-conferences. For making a phone call you need a microphone switched to your computer, for video-conferences, a web camera, or a digital camera.

The software can be downloaded from <http://www.skype.com>.

You get the software and instructions in many languages. It is a powerful way to communicate.

**WIKI**

A WIKI is a type of Web site that allows the visitors themselves to easily add, remove, and otherwise edit and change some available content, sometimes without the need for registration. This ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for collaborative authoring. The term wiki also can refer to the collaborative software itself (wiki engine) that facilitates the operation of such a Web site, or to certain specific wiki sites, including the computer science site (an original wiki), WikiWikiWeb, and on-line encyclopedias such as Wikipedia.

There is a Wiki tool build into the iKulT classroom. You will learn how to use this in the introductory course to e-Learning.

But you can also use the public wikipedia site, a free encyclopedia on the net, made by everybody who is interested to contribute. You may contribute with information about your region, your network, your culture, etc. and make yourself visible.

More information can be found on: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki>.

**Blogging**

Blogging is another possibility of making yourself visible. A blog is a website where entries are made in journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order.

Blogs often provide commentary or news on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. Most blogs are primarily textual although some focus on photographs (photoblog), videos (vlog), or audio (podcasting), and are part of a wider network of social media.

The term "blog" is derived from "Web log." "Blog" can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

Many politicians, sports and TV stars nowadays use blogs to make themselves visible. iKulT will offer some courses, where you learn how to build blogs and can experiment with your own blogs.

**Podcasting**

Podcasting is another way for mobile learning. A podcast is simply a multimedia file distributed over the Internet using syndication feeds, for playback on mobile devices

and personal computers Like 'radio', it can mean both the content and the method of delivery; the latter may also be termed podcasting. The host or author of a podcast is often called a podcaster.

Many universities now record lectures as podcasts, radio and TV stations provide podcasts. You can download them to your computer, and from there even to your MP3 players or I-Pods. And maybe you want to make your own podcasts as part of your mentoring work.

You find more information on <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting> and <http://www.podcast.org>.

In the iKulT course “Introduction to e-Learning” the iKulT team helps you to use all these tools, and may be new emerging tools, critically and creatively, to improve your communicative power and thus your and the learners’s visibility.

### **Evaluation and mediation**

Evaluation of the course is very important for the iKulT team to get feedback and continuously improve the learning environment and for the key learners, tutors and teachers to improve their work.

There are different factors, which influence the success of the mentoring, coaching, and/or learning process. One factor is the learning environment, the software, the way courses are organized. This should be as intuitive and user-friendly as possible.

The iKulT team will provide usability evaluation sessions during the product, and will adapt what they can adapt. Sometimes there are restrictions in the software, which the iKulT cannot change, but then instructions can be changed to facilitate the use.

The design and the organisation of the materials can be changed to a certain degree. The courses available so far were developed in different European countries. Maybe, even when the courses are translated and localized to a certain degree, the issues may not be relevant and the learning design may not be appealing to your user group. So we will have to change. Often small changes help to make the learning experience successful. So ask for feedback from the beginning, and you can adapt the inputs during the course for the benefit of the learners.

Often the learners are new to using information technology for learning and are even reluctant to using technologies for learning. Then you should make them aware of the benefits of communicating across borders, and show them how easy it is to communicate, and how much fun it is. Experience has shown that the most “computer illiterate” and most reluctant learners become the most communicative, when they experience how easy and powerful it is to communicate across borders. Try to listen to the students, learn about their interests and experience, get their feedback, and adapt the learning process. So the course will be a positive experience for all – for the teachers and learners.

The evaluation should not be meant as a control tool, it is rather a coaching and consulting tool. It is important to invite constructive criticism continuously and build in mediation phases regularly, where you invite for, comments what went well and what went not so well, feedback, ideas for improvement. For mediation, continuous

feedback, the forum can be used. For evaluation after each course, there is an evaluation tools integrated in the learning environment. The evaluation should be short and efficient and invite for open answers. The following set of questions has proved useful:

Example of an evaluation questionnaire:

**Name and email:**

**Course:**

**Date:**

**Please give evaluation for the following factors in the course**

*(5= very satisfied - 4- satisfied - 3= OK - 2 = less satisfied - 1 not satisfied)*

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.</b> How satisfied were you with the course?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>2.</b> How active where you, going through the material	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>3.</b> How useful where the meetings?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>4.</b> How was the web platform?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>3.</b> Quality of written material	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>4.</b> Service regarding the course?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>5.</b> Overall evaluation of the course?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>6.</b> The most positive sides of the course					
<b>7.</b> Negative sides of the course					
<b>8.</b> Further remarks and recommendations					

**Thank you!**

## **Empowerment Scenarios**

There are many different ways of working with the platform, the forum, the course curricula and the materials. In the “Introduction to e-Learning course” you will learn how to set up and teach and learn via e-Learning in different scenarios, i.e.

- Onsite workshops combined with e-Learning
- Moderated e-Learning (without meetings and onsite workshops)
- Self-paced learning (useful to retrieve certain information)

A blended learning form is always recommended, since most learners need a social and emotional context, which is easier to create, when you first meet the people. Also if the learners never used computers before, it is important that they can experiment and explore onsite, with your support or the support of other learners or experts.

You are free to use, adapt, localize any of the curricula and materials, in the learning environment provided by iKulT, or in any other learning environments.

The iKulT team invites you to document all the workshops and courses with photos, experiences, evaluation results. In the final version of the handbook your best practice case studies will be documented in this chapter so that all the other teachers and learners can learn from it

## **Further steps to empowerment**

The iKulT project team invites you to use this handbook and the resources on the CD-ROM and on <http://www.ikult.eu> creatively and critically. Encourage your learners to register at the site and contribute with news and to the International Exchange Forum.

The iKulT project team is committed to carry on the work, maintain the website and classroom, and organize European mobility programmes so that learners in Europe can visit each other, share knowledge and maybe build bridges to long-term collaboration.

### 3. iKulT course structure and learning materials

#### 3.1. The learning materials

For each learning module, specific didactic material has been developed. Well aware that the knowledge of a foreign language must include the knowledge of the country, its culture and its way of leaving, the learning course provides short information covering all this areas.

#### **Video**

The e-Learning module starts with a video that will serve as an easy and unformal introduction to the learning material and question stereotypes of the project countries.

#### **Country report**

The country reports which are available for download offer useful information about the country.

#### **Text modules**

Comprehensive texts with a list of links covering following issues:

##### *Language*

In this module you can find a list of the most used words and useful common phrases in everyday life. Moreover there will be business language phrases and useful links to explore free resources available on the internet for self-learning of the project languages.

##### *Facts and figures*

This section aims to provide some basic information about the countries of the project. Links are provided to help the search of students who are interested to get to know more.

##### *History*

We might know how the countries are shaped now but there is a thousand-year history behind it, and it is important to get to know at least the most significant facts.

##### *Economy*

Usually you know a bit about a countrie's economy, but it becomes a must if you want to do business with a foreign company.

##### *Etiquette*

Etiquette is a code of behaviour that influences expectations for social behaviour according to contemporary conventional norms within a society, social class, or group. Rules of etiquette encompass most aspects of social interaction in any society.

##### *Food and drinking*

What we eat and drink, how we acquire it, who prepares it, who's at the table, and who eats first is a form of communication that is rich with meaning.

Beyond nourishing the body, what we eat and drink and with whom we do it can inspire and strengthen the bonds between individuals, communities, and even countries.

### *Stereotypes*

Stereotypes are generalizations that people make about the characteristics of all members of a group, based on an image (often wrong) about what people in that group are like. If you assume you know what a person is like, and don't look at each person as an individual, you are likely to make errors in your estimates of a person's character.

### *Cultural Highlights*

Culture, as defined by Edward Burnett Tylor, is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society".

Every culture is characterized by tales, legends, traditions, religious rites: this section aims to provide some information about cultural habits in the countries of the partnership.

### **Forum**

In the course forums there is the opportunity to exchange experiences about your own stay abroad and to make own contributions concerning the overall topic.

### **Online-Quiz for self-monitoring**

By using the online-quiz you can evaluate your learning progress. The test can be repeated as often as the learner like.

## 4. Description of the e-Learning platform (Beate Haussmann)

### 4.1. Moodle

Moodle is one of a number of new developing Virtual Learning Environments (VLE). Simply, VLEs are software that is designed to add to traditional learning methods in order to enhance the learning experience of their users. Moodle runs as an interactive website with a number of features and activities designed to engage learners and promote collaborative, student-centered learning.

Our experiences of Moodle tell us that it is a pretty intuitive tool to use. How easy *you* find it will depend on your own background. That said, a general rule of “have a go and see what happens” can be applied in most cases.

This document will guide you through:

- how to log in
- how to edit your profile
- page layout including blocks
- basic navigation around the site and your courses
- activities and resources

First of all though, let’s look at the most basic – logging in.

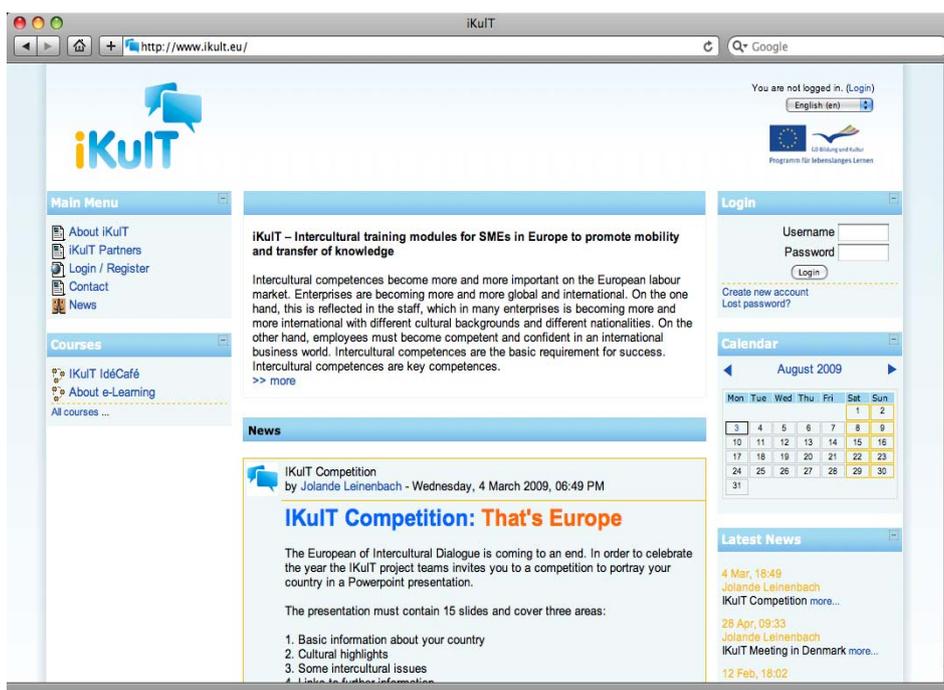
### 4.2. Logging in

Moodle is basically a website like any other and is therefore available wherever there is an internet connection. To get to the Moodle website open your web browser and go to: <http://www.ikult.eu>. This will take you to the start page where you can login (Figure 1).

You should be able to log in using your iKulT *username and password*. If you encounter any problems, contact the iKulT helpdesk ([info@ikult.eu](mailto:info@ikult.eu)) or follow the link on the Moodle login page.

Once you have logged in you will be taken to your *Home* page (Figure 1). This is personalised for each student and will contain some *blocks* and a list of your courses. We will refer to blocks later. Once you have logged in we strongly recommend that you first *Edit your profile*.

Fig.1: Home Page. Logging in.



### 4.3. Editing the profile

Now that you are logged on to Moodle we would advise that you go straight to *Edit your profile*. Editing your profile will allow you to become familiar with the options available to you in order to personalise your environment.

To edit your profile from your Home page, click on your name on the banner at the top of the page. (Figure.2)

From here you will be taken to your profile page. Select *Edit Profile* from the middle tab under your name. You will now see a page containing a series of options. If you are unsure about the selection, just use the questionmark symbol beside each option.

Whilst you may alter any of the setting most should be left as they are in order to ensure that Moodle functions for you at its best.



Fig.2: Editing Your Profile.

### 4.4. Course participation and navigation

#### Layout and Blocks

The course page you see as a student has Blocks on both sides and the main content through the middle. There are a number of blocks available for your tutor to include or leave out as they see appropriate. Blocks can also be customised (e.g. moved to a different location by your tutor). This means that your courses will all

appear slightly different to each other but you should soon become familiar with each.

There are two ways to access your course resources and activities. The first is through the main course content in the middle of the page. Clicking on these links will take you directly to the activity or resource. The second is to use the activities block. Here the links take you to a list of activities/resources organised in their categories e.g. all the forums or all the quizzes. You can then select one. Once you have opened an activity/resource, where appropriate further instructions should be given. For example when you enter a forum you will be given the option to add a new discussion or click on an existing discussion to read postings. It is important to remember that you cannot break anything in Moodle so if you have any doubts just click and see what happens. N.B. you may wish to exercise caution if you are taking part in assessed work.

The *calendar* is one of the more interactive blocks. It allows you to see events created by your course tutors and peers but it also allows you to add your own entries. This means it can be used as a personal organiser that has the benefit of being accessible anywhere you can get online.

### Navigation

Once you are in your Moodle courses we think it is best not to use your browser's navigation buttons (the forwards and backwards arrows) as they may get you lost. A better way would be to use the navigation tools that are built into Moodle. These are the *Breadcrumbs* and the *Jump to* menu.

The breadcrumbs are a trail showing the pages you have passed through to get to your current location. They are shown in the top left corner of the page and clicking on them will take you to that point in the course. Note that on the example below there is a *Resources* link (Figure 3). This shows that the page you are in at the moment is a resource and clicking on the link will take you to a list of all resources for your course. The same principle applies with each of the activity types, so if you were in a *quiz* you would have a link to a list of all quizzes in your course.

The *Jump to* menu is a simple way of getting to any point in the course. Click on the down arrow next to *Jump to*, to open the drop-down menu. From here you will see the full list of all activities and resources in your course. Clicking on them will take you to that page. Alternatively you can use the left and right arrows to move one step backwards and forwards through the course.



Fig. 3: Breadcrumbs.

#### **4.5. Moodle activities**

Moodle offers a large variety of activities that are designed to help your learning. When your tutors create activities they will name them. This means that they will not appear as simply Assignment or Wiki etc on the course page. However, an activity's icon will always remain the same. This will help you to determine which activity you are about to use.

## 5. Documentation of the evaluation approach

### 5.1. Role of evaluation

The evaluation of www.ikult.eu pursues the following aims:

- survey of the user contentedness with the platform regarding to:
  - learning process: motivation, learning success, learning aids
  - contents: comprehensibility, vividness, actuality
  - technology: supporting of the learning process, which functions have been used
  - organization: study time
  - (tutor casually: supporting of the learning process, expertise, commitment)

An evaluation fulfills different tasks. One can discern between the function of cognition, monitoring function, conversational function and legitimacy function.

#### 1. Function of cognition

By an evaluation you can obtain and review crucial data about the project progress and the project results. Therefore should be identified:

- Requirements of the target group
- Attainment of the target group
- Acceptance of the project resp. the project aims
- Capability of the project executing organizations to realize the project efficiently
- Change of basic conditions

This information shall support decision making within the project process. Furthermore it should show alternatives for a preventive adjustment of the project design to assure the project success.

#### 2. Monitoring function

One of the major aspects of a software evaluation is identifying its deficits to intervene at an early stage. Otherwise one gains information about the successful task fulfillment by the project partners. Thus evaluation has also a monitoring function.

#### 3. Conversational function

The evaluation data also support a fact- based dialog between the 'stakeholders'. By stakeholders are meant generally the financiers, the project running organizations, the target groups and other affected people. On the evaluation data one can strike a balance for every participant about the success and the deficits of the collaboration. This allows drawing consequences for the future cooperation.

#### 4. Legitimacy function

With the evaluation data can be proved over the long-term perspective by which input what output and impact has been achieved. By an ex- post evaluation you can also state the sustainability of the project impacts. Thereby financiers and project

organizations can point out how the finances were used and which impact the project had.

By the evaluation perspectives described above the following tasks and specific questions arise:

- Process- and result- oriented observation of the project
  - Where are problems arising that hinder the project progress?
  - Which pre-conditions should be given to reach the project aims?
  - How to intervene if obstacles occur?
- Review of the aim achievement?
  - Were certain project aims during and afterwards achieved?
  - What objectives had been given up for which reasons?
- Impact survey (of intended and non- intended effects)
  - Did the expected impacts appear or not?
  - Could not- expected counterproductive effects be observed?
  - Could not- expected impacts support the project aims?
- Cause- Effect- Examination
  - For what reasons were certain results achieved and others weren't?
  - What consequences should be drawn out of certain impacts?
  - Could counterproductive effects have been noticed earlier?

## 5.2. Evaluation objectives

The evaluation of [www.ikult.eu](http://www.ikult.eu) should be focused on the *basic conditions of the training* and the *learning environment* as context factors. Furthermore the *learning outcome* should be examined. These aspects are detailed below:

### *Basic conditions of the training*

The implementation of E- Learning requires special conditions to become successful. These contain personnel measures that consider the users demands as well as organizational measures that serve to adjust the company structures and communication processes to E- Learning. Therefore it is useful to evaluate the implementation of these personnel measures e.g. the information of the participants about the training, the allocation of study hours on the job, and the encouragement by the management.

### *Learning environment*

The evaluation of innovative E- Learning Programs should also investigate the appraisal of the learning environment by the participants. As surveys about the acceptability showed, the environment of the learner is an interacting factor with outcome criteria as motivation and acceptance. Within this evaluation approach the factor learning environment contains the training concept, the learning platform and the training contents.

### *Learning outcome*

According to the latest literature about E- Learning evaluation the increase of knowhow and the knowledge transfer into practice are the most important criteria for the learning outcome. The acceptance of the training by the employees is also a strong variable which can influence the learning outcome negatively. Motivation as another variable is closely linked to acceptance. The intention to use the E- Learning platform in the future should also be sampled.

### **5.3. Evaluation instruments**

As enquiry instrument can be used a questionnaire that contains standardized questions as well as open ended questions with text input. Specific aspects can be asked directly online or rather in personal meetings/ in- class lectures.

The following paragraphs contain example questions for the indicators outlined above.

#### **Basic conditions of the training**

Information about the training

- “I’m informed about the new training approach.”
- “I’m informed about the purpose of the new training approach.”
- “I was informed by a presentation.”
- “I still have questions about the platform.”

Qualification

- “I was instructed sufficiently about how to work with the E- Learning platform.”
- “The instruction course was helpful for the work with the platform.”
- “I would have needed more information for the successful processing of the training.”

Study time

- “I was conceded enough free time to work on the platform.”
- “I was conceded enough free time to work out the E- Learning offers.”
- “I felt comfortable with the individual time management.”

Encouragement by management

- “The new training concept is supported by the management.”
- “The management informed about the necessity of the new training concept.”
- “The aim of the new training concept has been communicated by the management.”

## Learning environment

### Training concept

- In-class lectures and virtual lectures
  - “I was pleased with the training concept as a whole (in- class and virtual lectures).”
  - “The in- class lectures were a reasonable completion to the virtual lectures.”
  - “I expected more information from the in- class lectures.”
- Combination of the WBT and the learn platform
  - “The contents of the online- phases of the WBT and the communication tools of the learning platform were well modulated and fit together.”
  - “The online- phases of the WBT and the communication tools of the learning platform were well scheduled.”
  - “I would have needed more time for the work on the E- Learning tools.”
- Evaluation of the whole training concept
  - “The organization of the training concept was well-done.”

### WBT

- Media design of the WBT
  - “Visualization helped to consolidate the newly acquired knowledge.”
  - “The media design of the WBT was helpful for the learning process.”
  - “The pictures were helpful to understand the text comments.”
  - “The editing of the contents with the WBT- tools helped to comprehend the context.”
- Usability of the WBT:
  - “I got along with the WBT easily.”
  - “The user interface is designed attractively.”
  - “The menu is self- explanatory.”
  - “The functionality of the interface is very good.”
  - “The buttons are well explained.”
  - “The navigation in the WBT is easy.”
- WBT- technology
  - “During the work with the WBT I had no technical problems.”
  - “The celerity of the page construction was satisfying.”

### Learning platform

- Usability of the learning platform
  - “I got along with the learning platform easily.”
  - “The user interface is designed attractively.”
  - “The menu is self- explanatory.”
  - “The functionality of the interface is very good.”

- “The buttons are well explained.”
- “The navigation in the learning platform was easy.”
- “I always knew my location on the platform.”

➤ Technology of the learning platform

- ““During the work with the learning platform I had no technical problems.”
- “The celerity of the page construction was satisfying.”

## **Learning outcome**

### Acceptance

- “I want to continue using the learning platform in the future.”
- “If I had the access to the WBT I would use it in the future.”

### Motivation

- “The training concept was helpful during the learning process.”
- “The contents I had learned in the training I could have studied also with a book.”
- “I would consider the training to my colleagues.”

### Subjective learning success

- “The training helped me to comprehend the context.”
- “I could enhance my knowledge with the training.”
- “In the training I acquired a lot of new knowledge.”

### Transfer in the daily work

- “Because of the training I feel more confident when I’m abroad.”
- “I can use the new knowledge in my daily life.”
- “I can employ the newly acquainted knowledge at my daily work.”

## 5.4. Questionnaires and interpretation (samples)

The questionnaire can be completed with knowledge checks, e.g. multiple choice tests.

### Questionnaire design

#### 1. Graphic Answer Possibilities

This method is especially in meetings or in- class lectures useful. You can use the pin board (white board) or also a questionnaire. Graphic answers are a good alternative to 5- step answers (very good-... bad).



#### 2. Multiple Choice

These are applicable for simple knowledge tests. They are easy to insert into E-Learning programs.

Example: Screenshot ([http://tac-soft.de/spgm/indexmc.php?spgmGal=Teaching\\_Templates\\_Quiz\\_Maker&spgmPic=1#spgmPicture](http://tac-soft.de/spgm/indexmc.php?spgmGal=Teaching_Templates_Quiz_Maker&spgmPic=1#spgmPicture))



- Example for the elaboration of a “multiple choice- test”

Subject	#	One question	Three possible answers	One right answer	Additional explanation
I. Basic language skills/ survival training	1				
	2				
II. Business language	1				
	2				
III. Facts and figures	1				
	2				

(population, religion, government etc.)	3				
IV. History	1				
	2				
V. Economy	1				
	2				
VI. Etiquette (how to behave) incl. not to do list	1				
	2				
	3				
VII. Food and drink	1	Which country is the top potato consumer?	Germany, Poland or UK?	Poland	Per capita consumption in Poland is 127,75 kg, in Germany 73,73 kg and in UK 114,24 kg (source: FAOSTAT 2005).
	2				
VIII. Stereotypes	1				
	2				
IX. Cultural highlights	1				
	2				

### 3. Open questions

These can be used to get a user feedback. As advantage of this question design should be noticed the possibility to add the notes with their own words. Therefore the analysis of the very diverse answers is more complex.

Example:

#### **What made you join this course?**

No.	answer	Key words/answers	new ideas
1	Curiosity (Chance to get to know to new people, to exchange views, gain knowledge about new things, etc.)  Improve the PC, resp. Internet handling and get to know new software.	Get to know to new people	
2	Broaden and optimize the knowledge- 2 foreign languages at a time- unique	Improve my language knowledge	
3	I'm interested in language teaching and learning (professionally and personally!), also Language Teacher Education, and am also involved in an EU-funded project, which is exploring ways of training language teachers to teach synchronously online – I see that project as the 'first step on the ladder' – it throws up more issues and areas that you can hope to 'resolve' or address in a preliminary project	Get to know to new people	Possibility fort train the trainer

## 6. Appendix

### 6.1. List of the partners and contact information

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**Co-ordinator:**        **Stiftung Bildung & Handwerk, Deutschland**

[www.stiftung-bildung-handwerk.de](http://www.stiftung-bildung-handwerk.de)

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**Partner 1:**            **Leading Interactive GmbH, Deutschland**

[www.leading-interactive.de](http://www.leading-interactive.de)

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**Partner 2:**            **Isw Gesellschaft für wissenschaftliche Beratung und  
Dienstleistung mbH, Deutschland**

[www.isw-gmbh.de](http://www.isw-gmbh.de)

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**Partner 3:**            **ed-consult, Dänemark**

[www.ed-consult.dk](http://www.ed-consult.dk)

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**Partner 4:**            **Eurocultura, Italien**

[www.eurocultura.it](http://www.eurocultura.it)

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**Partner 5:**            **Pro-Eco, Slowenien**

[www.pro-eco.si](http://www.pro-eco.si)

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**Partner 6:**            **Cannakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, Türkei**

[www.comu.edu.tr](http://www.comu.edu.tr)

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