The Intercultural Skills Graduates and Businesses

in Europe Need Today

Report on the surveys and interviews results as part of the ERASMUS+ Project

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Contents

1. Introduction

This ERASMUS+ funded project, "Developing the cross-cultural skills of graduates in response to the needs of European enterprise", is developed in response to recent research highlighting the importance of intercultural competencies for graduates wanting to work in Europe, the employers' needs, and the intercultural competencies and skills higher education institutions provide. This project aims to develop the intercultural competencies of graduates in the EU by enhancing the quality and relevance of their knowledge and skills to enable them to be active professionals in the European working environment.

Five Higher Education Institutions have participated in this study: University of Worcester (Project lead, UK), London South Bank University (UK), UC Leuven-Limburg (Belgium), Halmstad University (Sweden), and Bursa Uludağ University (Turkey). The diversity of these partners, their respective regional and national contexts, and their experience in working together with regional businesses are central to achieve the project aims.

As the first output of the project, this report presents results based on two types of analysis methods and data collected from four European countries (UK, Sweden, Belgium, and Turkey). Firstly, two surveys and the quantitative analysis of data collected from 585 student surveys responses and 403 employer survey responses and secondly, on an analysis of qualitative data collected through 50 interviews with employees in European organizations and 50 interviews with students studying in European universities.

2. Surveys: Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis

It was the aim of the two surveys with European graduates and employers respectively to investigate the importance of intercultural competencies and skills for student employability and business success for European enterprise, now and in the future.

2.1 Methods

Two cross-sectional online surveys were developed with established measures of intercultural competencies in two distinct versions: one for students in Business and Management (last year of undergraduate studies and master level students) and one for employers across all sectors. The surveys also asked for sociodemographic information about students and enterprises, and about the contexts in which intercultural skills were essential. Data was
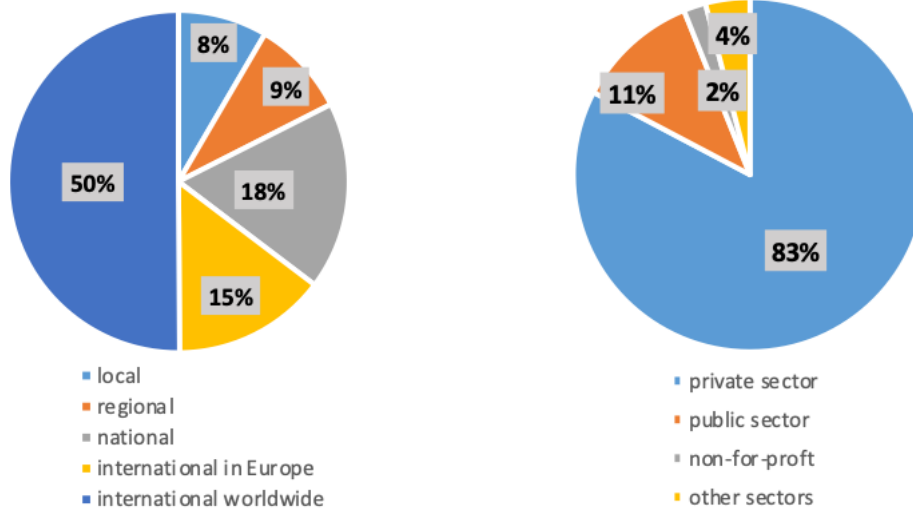
collected in spring 2020 in five universities and European regions in four countries: University of Worcester (UK), London South Bank University (UK), UC Leuven Limburg (Belgium), Halmstad University (Sweden), and Bursa Uludağ University (Turkey). For the student survey, all five universities invited students in their respective courses to participate. For the employer survey, the five universities used their established business networks to invite businesses in their region to participate. Ethics approval for both surveys was obtained from the London South Bank University Ethics Committee and in line with international ethical standards for business and management research. Study participation was entirely voluntary, and participants received no reward for completion of the surveys.

2.2 Results

For the student survey, 585 students took part, with an average age of 25.1 years (SD = ± 9.65 years). Slightly over half of the students were female (N=309, 53%). The majority were White (N = 306, 53.5%), followed by Asian (N = 126, 22.0%), Black (N = 72, 12.6%), Mixed (N = 28, 4.9%), and other ethnic backgrounds (N = 22, 3.8%), with some preferring not to disclose their ethnicity (N = 18, 3.1%).

In the employer survey, 403 employers took part, and the respondents were on average 38.3 years old (SD = ± 10.1 years). 168 respondents (42%) were female. Most were White (N = 331, 84.1%), followed by Asian (N = 20, 5.0%), Mixed (N = 20, 5.0%), Black (N = 5, 1.2%), and other ethnic backgrounds (N = 7, 1.7%), with some preferring not to disclose their ethnicity (N = 12, 3.0%). Employers largely represented the private sector (Figure 2) and were internationally active at European and worldwide levels (Figure 1).

Figures 1 and 2: Overview of employer survey business reach and sectors

- local
- regional
- national
- international in Europe
- international worldwide

- private sector
- public sector
- non-for-proft
- other sectors

The Context of Intercultural Interaction and the Intercultural Competencies of Students

For the students, the most important context in which intercultural skills are relevant is in student teams, followed by interactions with supervisors and lecturers and then peers (Figure 3, light blue bars). When comparing universities, results showed that at UC Leuven Limburg (Belgium) students indicated a significantly lower need for intercultural skills in student-lecturer interactions compared to Halmstad University (Sweden) and London South Bank University (UK). Other teaching-related interactions with peers or within student teams within a university were thought to have a similar need for intercultural skills across the universities.

For intercultural skills (Figure 4, light blue bars), overall students scored highest in cultural empathy, followed by open-mindedness, tolerance for ambiguity, cognitive flexibility, social initiative and emotional stability. The University of Worcester (UK) and UC Leuven Limburg (Belgium) both scored significantly lower on most intercultural skills, namely for interactions between students and lecturers (UC Leuven Limburg), cultural empathy (University of Worcester), cognitive flexibility (University of Worcester, UC Leuven Limburg) and tolerance for ambiguity (UC Leuven Limburg). At Halmstad University (Sweden) and London South Bank University (UK), students scored significantly higher on open-mindedness.

Figures 3 and 4: Perceived importance of intercultural skills in four teaching contexts (Fig 3) and student scores on six intercultural competence measures (Fig 4)
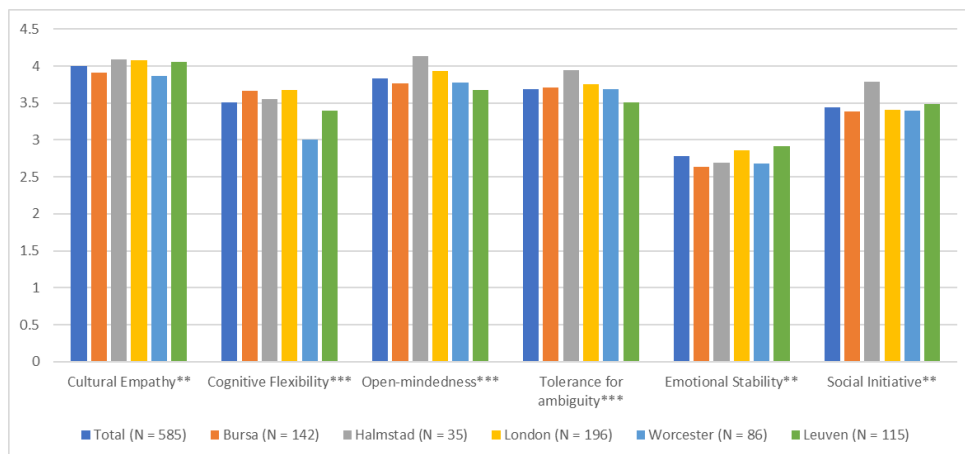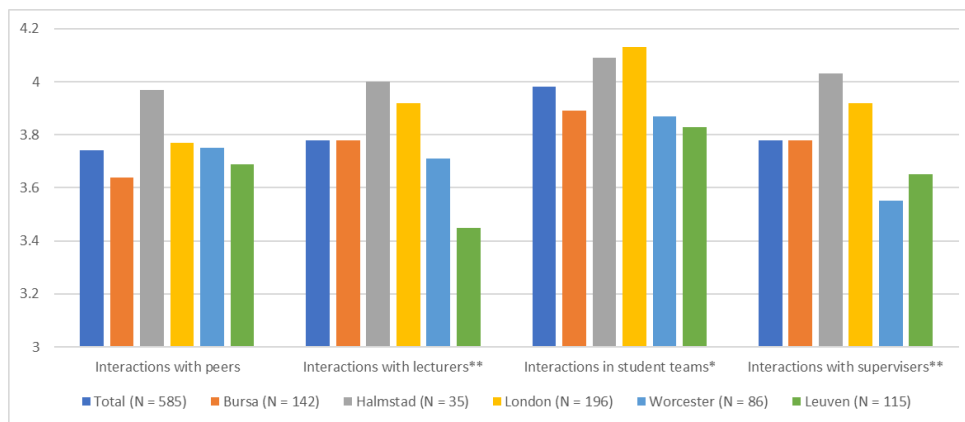
Note: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$; Figure 3 contains single-item measures; in Figure 4 all measures are scales.

At the University of Worcester (UK), students thought that intercultural skills were less important for their future field of employment, $F_{(4,504)} = 15.0$, $p = .000$, and also less important for employers than students at the other four universities, $F_{(4,504)} = 10.2$, $p = .000$.

The Context of Intercultural Interaction and Intercultural Competencies of Employers

For employers overall, intercultural skills were the most important factor in the context of client/customer interactions, followed by leadership responsibilities, team and peer interaction, promotion and recruitment of staff, and setting strategic goals (Figure 5, light blue bars). Employers in Worcester (UK) indicated a significantly lower need for intercultural skills

for most business interaction contexts as well as for recruiting and promoting staff compared to all other regions and countries. In line with this, employer respondents in Worcester (UK) also scored lower in most intercultural competence measures. Also, they reported the least experience in intercultural collaboration compared to all other regions/countries.

For intercultural competencies (Figure 6, light blue bars), overall employers scored highest in cultural empathy, followed by tolerance for ambiguity, social initiative, open-mindedness, cognitive flexibility, and emotional stability. Although there are small differences between the different regions, all five are following the same overall pattern regarding strengths in intercultural competencies.

Figures 5 and 6: Perceived importance of intercultural skills in business contexts (Fig 5) and employer respondent scores on intercultural competencies measures (Fig 6)
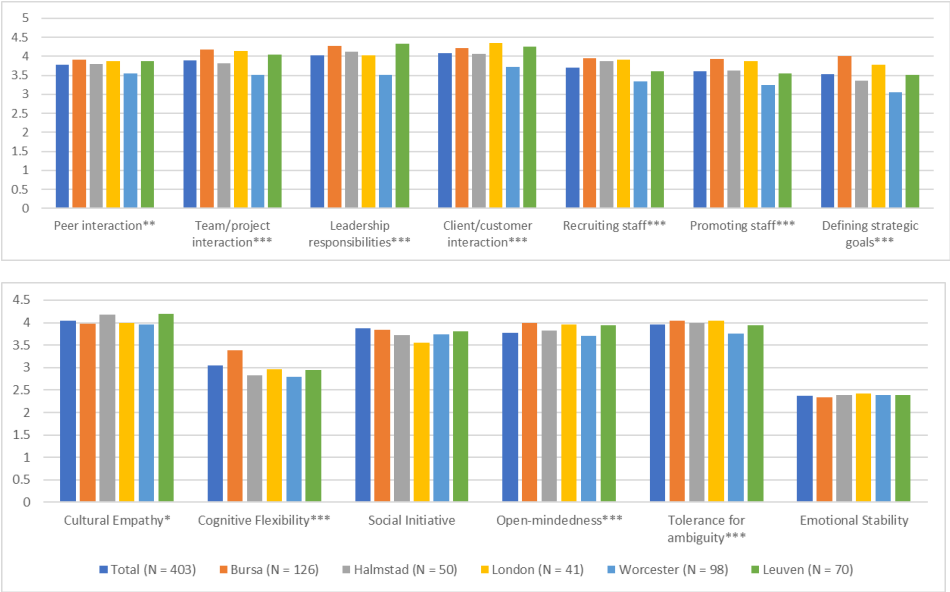
*Note: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$; Figure 5 contains single-item measures; in Figure 6 all measures are scales, items rated between 1 and 5.*

The Degree of Intercultural Interaction and Experience for Both, Students and Employers

Both the perceived importance of intercultural skills across teaching contexts (Figure 7) as well as the level of intercultural competencies of students (Figure 8) correlate significantly with the

degree of experience with people from different cultural backgrounds. Employers also show the same pattern for both, perceived importance of intercultural skills across business contexts (Figure 9) as well as the level of intercultural competencies of employer respondents (Figure 10) correlating significantly with the degree of experience with people from different cultural backgrounds. This was consistent across all five universities and regions/countries for students as well as employers.

Figures 7 and 8: The importance of intercultural skills in teaching contexts (Fig 7) and intercultural competencies of students (Fig 8) by frequency of intercultural interaction
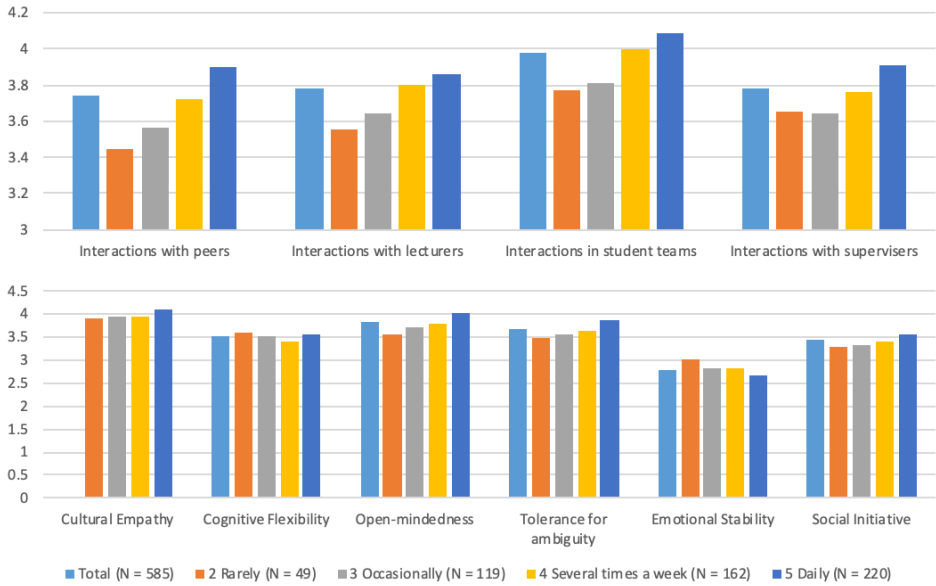

Note: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$; Figure 7 contains single-item measures; in Figure 8 all measures are scales, with items rated from 1 to 5. Students reporting intercultural interactions as Never (N = 1) were not included in Figures 7 and 8.

Figures 9 and 10: The importance of intercultural skills in business contexts (Fig 9) and intercultural competencies of employer respondents (Fig 10) by frequency of intercultural interaction
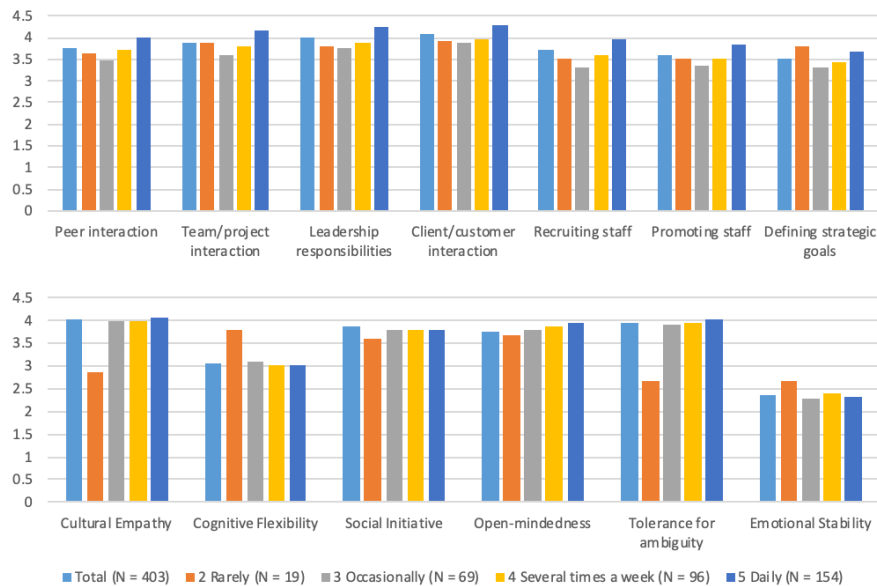
Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001; Figure 9 contains single-item measures; in Figure 10 all measures are scales.

The Importance of Foreign Language Competence for Both Students and Employers

Participants in both surveys were also asked whether they spoke any foreign languages and if yes, how many and at what level (beginner, intermediate, advanced). For the analysis below, participants were divided into three groups, one for those only speaking their native language, a second group for those speaking one or two foreign languages, and the third group for those speaking more than two foreign languages. Only participants reporting foreign language competence at intermediate and advanced levels were included.

Figures 11 and 12: The importance of intercultural skills in teaching contexts (Fig 11) and the intercultural competencies of students (Fig 12) by the number of foreign languages spoken.

Note: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$; Figures 11 and 13 contain single-item measures, in Figures 12 and 14 all measures are scales.

Figures 13 and 14: The importance of intercultural skills in business contexts (Fig 13) and intercultural competencies of employer respondents (Fig 14) by the number of foreign languages spoken.
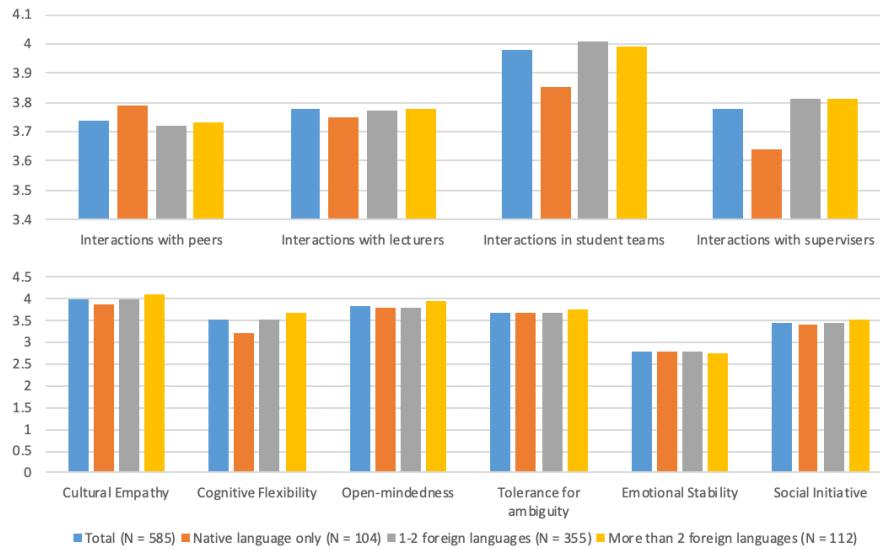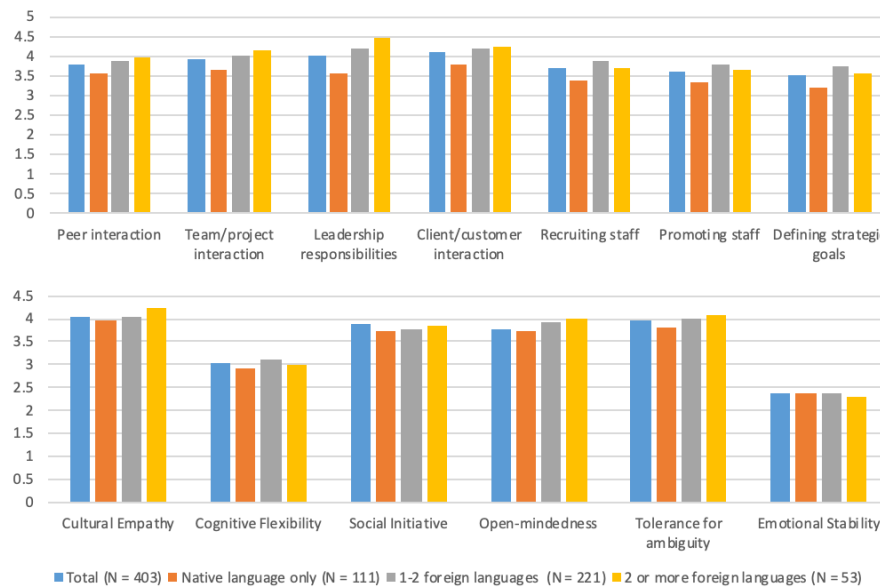

Note: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$; Figures 11 and 13 contain single-item measures, in Figures 12 and 14 all measures are scales.

Overall, both the perceived importance of intercultural skills across teaching contexts (Figure 11) as well as the level of intercultural competencies of students (Figure 12), correlate significantly with the ability to speak foreign languages at intermediate or advanced levels, with consistently lower levels for those speaking only their native language. Although slightly less pronounced, employers show the same pattern for both the perceived importance of intercultural skills across business contexts (Figure 13) as well as the level of intercultural competencies of employer respondents (Figure 14) correlating significantly with foreign language competence. This was consistent across all five universities and regions/countries for students as well as employers.

Results of the Thematic Analysis of Open Questions about the Benefits and Challenges of Intercultural Collaboration and Ways to Support Intercultural Skills Development

We included open questions for both students and employers regarding the main benefits, challenges, and useful support, with regards to intercultural skills and collaboration. In summary, the thematic analysis of responses showed that both students and employers find it often challenging to understand cultural differences and to deal with intercultural communication and people speaking different languages. Both employers and students see the main benefits in learning something new through intercultural collaborations and the high potential for creativity that can result from working or studying with people from different cultural backgrounds. In their view, both universities and businesses could benefit from foreign language classes to improve communication and support people's understanding of foreign cultures. Furthermore, they both highlight the importance of empathy, kindness, and respect in intercultural collaboration. Both students and employers suggest that social events organised by universities and businesses are a good way to enhance intercultural skills and get to know people from different cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, forming multicultural student teams and supporting international exchange programmes and internships are also suggested as important ways to improve intercultural skills and collaboration.

2. Interviews: Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

The aim of the interviews with European graduates and employers respectively was to explore and analyse the intercultural skills highlighted by the studied organisations operating in Europe and to study students´ actual and perceived skills intercultural skills.

2.1 Methods

To achieve the objective of this part of the project, a qualitative approach was selected. Two interview guides were developed, one for the students and one for the employers, and the data was collected, analysed, and presented. It is based on 50 interviews with students and 50 interviews with employers in companies and organizations operating in Europe. Interviews were conducted during spring 2020 in five universities and European regions in four countries: University of Worcester (UK), London South Bank University (UK), UC Leuven Limburg (Belgium), Halmstad University (Sweden), and Bursa Uludağ University (Turkey).

2.2 Results: Interviews with Employers

The employers interviewed in the project identified various cultural skills they believed were important to develop the employees and organisational workings and performance. The most important cultural skills that our respondents have highlighted are cultural empathy, cognitive flexibility, social initiative, emotional stability, and the ability to communicate.

Most Important Intercultural Skills

Cultural empathy: Involves having an understanding that there are specific cultural differences such as formal and informal interactions. For example, approaching people in some cultures is very formal and more casual in others. Such cultural differences can impact the efficiency of an individual's work.

It is also necessary to be aware of and accept the cultural norms and values. Also, it involves respecting diversity, being flexible and having tolerance. One of the respondents from Turkey described it in terms of:

> *"An ability to walk in other's shoes. In one of the workshops, everyone was laughing at a group member resembling my Indian colleague; straight away that guy feels isolated and cannot contribute to the topic anymore."*

Cognitive flexibility: Refers to a willingness to collaborate communicate and have an open mind-set. It is also about moving from a local mindset towards a mindset that fits best the company and customer needs. A respondent from the UK expresses this as:

> *"For example, we do not consume alcohol due to our beliefs. But a customer or partner from a different culture comes from outside, you adapt to it at business dinner. We like to be flexible especially in sensitive issues."*

Social initiative: This involves the tendency to approach social situations actively and to take initiatives. An employer explained this using the example of the differences between healthcare in the USA and Europe. Since healthcare organisations are public in Europe and private in the USA, the employer and employees need to take a social initiative to spread this information to other colleagues from different cultures to avoid misunderstandings. A respondent from Belgium stated that:

> *"For example, during lunch, it is common practice that people can join a table where a different language is spoken so they can practice that language. Another initiative is that annually volunteers are asked to set up support activities for a good social cause."*

Emotional stability: Is a measure of the tendency to remain calm in stressful situations versus a tendency to show strong emotional reactions under stressful circumstances. A respondent from Sweden explained it in this way:

> *"My reactions are generally emotional. However, I don't have any argument /disagreement or problem with a person from a different culture because it is about the professional work and you learn to control yourself, otherwise you will deal with consequences of your emotional responses."*

Open-mindedness: This is about having an open and tolerant attitude towards different groups and towards different cultural norms and values. In a multicultural workplace, employees from different cultures must respect one another and respect gender perspectives. Two respondents from Sweden and the UK commented:

"Often people judge LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) negatively. I am open to it even though it is not ok in my culture and religion. My own best friend is gay and I am happy to be part of his life irrespective of what gender they belong to"

"Being open-minded has led me to learn a lot from other backgrounds, see other colours, pull things from other cultures into my business…… every day it comes out new things, very creative and innovative."

In addition to the most important cultural skills discussed above, our analysis highlights other important emergent cultural skills needed in the future as well as the main cultural challenges from an employer perspective.

Cultural Skills Needed in the Future

Soft skills: Many of our respondents have experienced that more and more soft skills are important in the current way of doing business, such as continuous learning, being able to deal with constant change and uncertainty, and to understand what the requirements of companies in specific environments are. One respondent from Turkey with respect to China as a market stated that:

"There has been some investment in China in recent years so I guess this development requires much knowledge about the new culture (China). This requires staff learning new skills to support this."

Risk-taking and innovation: Some participants believed that knowledge related to risk-taking, experimentation and innovation are needed for the development of business. Companies have been going through a massive transformation recently and it has influenced the need for developing intercultural skills. We are moving towards a future which would require the capability of engagement within different contexts. One main context is related to the expansion of the organization in countries and regions which will become more and more predominant in the future like India, China, Africa, South America, and the Middle East. To have the cultural capability to cooperate with them becomes very important. A respondent from Sweden stated that:

"We are a technical companies and we tend to ignore cultural aspects of integration ….. so being able to build your skillset and being able to work with people from all over the world with different backgrounds is very important since globalisation has changed the way that we work."

Communication and languages: More or less, all employers from different countries admit that foreign languages are a must to facilitate communication. Language helps in dealing with difficulties and can also bridge communication barriers. Being international today is being English-speaking. Most of the country's official language is English so employers have to speak English fluently. Many of our respondents from Belgium, Turkey, UK, and Sweden described the need for languages in this way:

"Our working colleagues are from different countries, so one has to make good communication for developing intercultural skills."

"You can't treat Indians and Chinese as the same. The Chinese are more closed and reserved. It is important to be able to understand people in these matters; since the Indian is a bit more transparent… the Chinese don't want to make it very clear when they have a problem."

Digital skills: Many of our respondents felt that digital skills are, and will become, central as the whole world is moving towards digitalization especially in today's pandemic situation. Employees need to acquire knowledge of digital tools in general and more specifically those needed for communication. As a result of using digital skills, many companies tend to reduce travelling and translation costs and become cost-effective by using many online communication tools such as Skype, Zoom etc. A respondent from Turkey stated that:

"New Microsoft tools are imminent…maybe there is no need for physical offices any more or we won't need to come together face to face for meetings."

"People cooperate across cross borders – Bangalore – Belgium – the Netherlands for example. Location is not so important anymore now: videoconferencing is much more common, and communication has become virtual."

Cultural Challenges

Communication and language challenges: Being international today is being English speaking. Most of the country's official language is English so employers have to speak English fluently. But speaking only English can be difficult in some countries or when you are working with a team involving people from different nationalities. One respondent from Turkey described it this way:

> *"You have a hard time speaking English when you go to France. It is important to be able to understand people because they are coming from different backgrounds."*

Another respondent from Sweden stated:

> *"Speaking English won't be enough…They should also speak the parent company language (…) all the paperwork has to be made in Swedish as the regulations says especially when it comes to governmental and political issues."*

Trust: Another cultural challenge that has been underlined is the skills required to build trust in an organisation. Trust is perceived as an important factor by the employers and can have different aspects. One is to have trust between employees in the same organization and another is to trust, or not trust, a foreign partner. Many of the respondents from the four countries raise trust as an important cultural challenge. As two of our respondents (one from Sweden and one from the UK) stated:

> *"Our foreign partners are having trouble trusting us. They are prejudiced against us and they doubt our technical competencies."*
>
> *"In Europe when selling a product, it takes longer to gain trust from one country to another. ….. Earning trust even within Europe is difficult."*

2.3 Results: Interviews with Students

The students we have interviewed in our project identified various cultural skills they believed were important to improve the opportunities for employment and the ability to succeed in their future workplaces. The most important cultural skills that our respondents have highlighted are cultural empathy, cognitive flexibility, social initiative, emotional stability, open-mindedness, and a willingness to tolerate ambiguity.

The Most Important Intercultural Skills

Cultural empathy in terms of social understanding and empathy are essential. For example, on how other students' religious festivals and beliefs can have an impact on their working patterns. It is also essential for students to be aware of the host country's culture and customs. A student from the UK addressed this:

> *"It can be stressful sometimes when you work with people from different backgrounds….. she was a bit stressed and she was scared because I'm black…(and)… a bit aggressive… I know it's just about the way…. (communicate)…. I think when we put the work aside then we kind of sorted out the differences."*

Cognitive flexibility or a person's awareness that in any given situation there are options and alternatives available. In some cases, managers are very friendly and flexible. However, some are very strict and disciplined. In the latter case, flexibility may be difficult. One of the students from Sweden say that being flexible with different cultures is a challenging task, at least in the beginning, and describe it in this way:

> *"I would say at the beginning it was quite difficult, meeting other cultures, people coming from other religions. We were not as flexible as we have to be. We may do some things which are ok for us but may offend them, and there is also them doing things which are ok for them but offend us."*

Social initiative or the tendency to approach social situations in an active way and to take initiatives. Students from all four countries think that social events are the easiest and most convenient way to better understand each other. They make conversations about off-stage events in education, similar context topics, start-ups or consulting, easier; it does not need education or work. A respondent from Turkey stated that:

> *"If you are taking social initiatives it improves your self-growth as well, and you will adapt much more easily and make friends from different countries. How they bring their different aspirations and goals and they kind of give you that awareness of what they expect."*

Emotional stability is about remaining calm in stressful situations rather than a tendency to show strong emotional reactions under stressful circumstances and to have stable reactions in different situations. As one respondent from Belgium stated:

"In order to better respond and react to people in different emotional situations we need to have good listening skills and patience …. to hear for a reason in that order means we listen to people before we actually communicate with them."

Open-mindedness involves having an open attitude toward different groups and towards different cultural norms and values. Being open to new working environments will lead to good international relations and can be considered to be a continuous strategy. A student from the UK stated:

"Some Asians don't socialize much with people from other cultures. They want to stay in their own groups. An individual in a society might need to have a more open-minded behaviour."

Willingness to tolerate ambiguity is how an individual perceives and processes information about ambiguous situations when confronted by an array of unfamiliar, complex or incongruent cues. As one of our respondents from the UK stated:

"Tolerance always has a limit; when it comes to cultural events, we have to be tolerant with behaviour, but when it comes to professional situations it is rather good to be strict."

In addition to the most important cultural skills discussed above, our analysis highlights other important cultural skills needed in the future as well as the cultural challenges from a student's perspective.

Technology and Intercultural Skills

Technology skills are becoming more important than wider education skills, regardless of cultural background. The education is different from country to country and also teaching techniques in the level of technology are different in developing and developed countries. Developing technology skills to deal with, for example, coding and programming as well as

interaction via online tools will improve the student employability. An international student from the UK stated:

"I am coming from a developing country, so to keep up with employment here I will need some more technological knowledge."

Another student from Belgium stated:

"The most important talent that will affect the future will be technology management."

Digital skills: The world is moving online, and technology allows online interaction with other cultures in a business and academic environment. Digital knowledge will be needed in the future and the most important talent that will affect the future will revolve around how to manage the new field of digitalisation. A student from Sweden stated that:

"Digitalism, entrepreneurship, sustainability, and creativity are new developments in industry. Advanced intercultural digital communication skills will be needed."

Another student from Turkey commented:

"When we look at the last generation, the computer and digitalization are important. Therefore, I think it is advantageous for those who train themselves on these issues."

Cultural Challenges

There are many challenges to be considered in cultural differences. We have tried to highlight the most common and important challenges and opportunities for the students in this report that are "communication and language" and "networking".

Language and communication: Communication and language are two factors that are both interlinked and important. It is important to communicate with each other to gain knowledge and understand each other better. Communication and language are important to incorporate into the local culture. It is important to incorporate and integrate into the local culture to develop communication and language skills more effectively. This can be a challenge within universities as there is not always the platforms and systems to bring students from different

cultures to together to talk and learn from one another. All our respondents say that communication and language is a challenge and our respondent from Turkey stated that:

"We have many foreign students, but nobody has many foreign friends. No program brings us together."

Another student from Sweden stated:

"Definitely communication is one of the main challenges in helping to interact with the local community. The University is helping a lot in developing communication skills but it is not sufficient."

Networking: Establishing networks is one of the most important and difficult challenges to deal with while studying abroad, especially in a different country with a different cultural background. It would be very difficult to find an opportunity without networking. One student from Sweden responded:

"Networking is important in terms of career development so this would allow me in figuring out what career prospects I can have."

Another from Belgium responded:

"If we can have networks all over the world, it would help us to develop our career in a very easy and better way."

3. Conclusions and Implications for Practice

The objective of this report is to investigate and analyse the perceived intercultural competencies needed by both Higher Education learners and employers in four European contexts (UK, Sweden, Belgium and Turkey). The analysis is based on both quantitative and qualitative data.

3.1 Quantitative Findings

The two surveys gave important insights into key factors that support the development of intercultural skills and competencies for graduates and employers across four countries and five different European regions, as well as five distinct universities.

Our analysis shows clearly that one of the most important factors is the key role of experience with, and exposure to, people from different cultural backgrounds. Both students and employers scored much higher on important intercultural competencies such as cultural empathy, cognitive flexibility, open-mindedness, and tolerance for ambiguity, if they had frequent interactions with people from other cultures. This was also true for speaking at least one or more foreign languages at an intermediate or advanced level. Foreign language competence is an important intercultural skill not only for communication but also an important way in which cultural empathy and cognitive flexibility are learned and trained. In line with these results, both students and employers who had more exposure to different cultures also felt there was more need to pay attention to intercultural issues and support the development of intercultural skills than those with less experience of different cultures.

Furthermore, our results from both the student and the employer surveys seem to reflect differences between more urban/metropolitan centres and more rural areas with smaller towns. London and Bursa are the two largest cities and the most metropolitan areas in our sample with a more multicultural population, whereas Worcester and Leuven are both smaller cities and the regions with the least ethnic diversity. Halmstad falls somewhere in between with a similar size and ethnic composition of the city and region as Worcester and Leuven, but the university itself has a very multicultural and mature student body that is very similar to LSBU in central London. While we cannot directly influence these regional differences in urbanisation and multiculturalism it is certainly important to be aware of them.

3.2 Qualitative Findings

The analysis of the 50 interviews with employers in organizations in the participant countries and the 50 interviews with students studying in European universities highlights the most important cultural skills that are needed for students and employers. Other issues that have been discussed during the interviews with the employers and students are the cultural skills

that need to be developed in the near future, as well as the most important cultural challenges faced by students and employers.

Cultural empathy, cognitive flexibility, social initiative, emotional stability, and ability to communicate are important competencies for employers. For students, in addition to these skills, open-mindedness and willingness to tolerate ambiguity are also significant cultural skills needed during the job search process after graduation.

Our analysis also shows that according to the employers, risk-taking and innovation, communication and languages, as well as digital skills, are the kind of soft skills that employees need to develop in the future. On the other hand, for the students, technology skills and digital skills will play a major role in the future.

Cultural challenges were another issue that has been underlined by both employers and students. While the employers in our study consider communication, language and trust as challenges that need to be handled with a deep understanding to improve the competitiveness of European companies, students also point out the need for developing new multicultural, social and professional networks as one of the most important challenges.

Concerning practical implications, the most important take away from the survey and interview results is the importance of experience with foreign cultures and foreign language competence for the development of intercultural competencies and skills, both for businesses and universities. We should therefore look to increase these opportunities for both graduates and employees, e.g. by supporting foreign language training, exchange programmes and internships abroad, by explicitly building multicultural teams for study and at work, and by supporting social events that expose students and employees to different cultures and people from different cultural backgrounds.

4. Acknowledgements