



Portugal – Culture shock?

Raising intercultural awareness

Céu Martins

Cultural Identity – a definition

cultural identity is something that allows each individual to experience feelings of belonging and emotional attachment to a group, to whom he belong or feels part of; or recognize it as foreign, different or incompatible with their own way of living and being.



Population of Portugal



10.587,663 million



Cultural diversity

The many separate societies that emerged around the globe differed markedly from each other, and many of these differences persist to this day, despite globalization (*by the way, Portugal started globalization process with the “Descobrimentos” in 1415*) . As well as the more obvious cultural differences that exist between people, such as language, dress and traditions, there are also significant variations in the way societies organize themselves, in their shared Conception of morality, and in the way they interact with their environment.

The General conference of UNESCO (2001) asserting in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity that “*cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature*”.



Cultural Diversity

- With the onset of globalization, traditional nation-states have been placed under pressures! With the development of technology: information and capital are transcending geographical boundaries and reshaping the relationships between the marketplace, states and citizens. In particular, the growth of the mass media industry has largely impacted on individuals and societies across the globe. Although beneficial in some ways, this increased accessibility has the capacity to negatively affect a society's individuality. With the information being so easily distributed throughout the world. Cultural meanings, values and tastes run the risk of becoming homogenized. Resulting in the weakening of individuals and societies.



Cultural diversity

- Communication between different countries becomes more and more frequent. And more and more students choose to study abroad for experiencing culture diversity. Their goal is to broaden their horizons and developing themselves from learning overseas.
- Because each culture is different, each one has its own advantages and features, and those differences make our world more colourful!
- For students who go abroad for education, if they can combine positive culture elements from two or more different cultures to their self-development, it would be a competitive advantage in their whole career.



Cultural Differences – Some examples



- Family is defined differently by different cultures
- The concept of an exact time is not used or reinforced in some cultures
- Eye contact varies by culture
- Physical distance during social interactions varies by culture
- Culture greatly influences attitudes about physical contact, whether it's a handshake, hug or pat on the back
- Different cultures regulate the display of emotion differently
- Cultures may use different standards for loudness, speed of delivery, silence, attentiveness and time to respond to another's point

About portuguese way of being

- Always prepared to last minute plans
- Improvises a lot
- Warm and available to offer help
- Helpful to foreigners
- Someone always know someone who can help you with a problem
- Talks a lot (High-context of communication; this means that the main purpose of communication is to form and develop relationships; contextual information is needed)
- We have a lot of rules just to get over it!

About portuguese way of being

- Traditionally portuguese men greeting each other with a hand shake; women greet each other with two kisses on the cheek; men and women greet each other with a handshake or two kisses on the face depending on the degree of familiarity or context