

BIT¹ Input N° 3/2014

About the Need of a European Project “Intercultural Competence Descriptors” (ICCD)

*Theses by Lothar Thiel
Deutsche Schule Bilbao & Intercultural Youth Magazine „trait d’union”
(Budapest, 9th/10th of January 2014)*

Context	Index	Kind of Need / Necessity	→ Relevant Conclusion for ICC / ICCD
	A	The free flow movement of capital demands internationalization of the economy (globalization).	
A →	B	The internationalization of the economy requires internationalization of the vocational cooperation especially in the fields of production and commerce, administration and scientific exchange.	
B →	C	The internationalization of the vocational cooperation needs Intercultural Competence (ICC) as a key qualification of people working with persons from other cultures.	ICC is economically necessary.
A,B →	D	The internationalization of the economy and of the vocational cooperation require/motivate international mobility of working and work searching people (migration).	
D →	E	The migration leads to an increasing multicultural composition of societies including the possibility of conflicts due to the cultural diversity.	ICC is socially necessary.
C →	F	Employing institutions (enterprises, organizations) are interested in employees with ICC.	ICC must be part of the general, academic and professional education.
F →	G	Having ICC must be individually verifiable.	An individualized certificate of ICC is required.

¹ BIT means Bilbao IcuDriving Team.

Context	Index	Kind of Need / Necessity	→ Relevant Conclusion for ICC / ICCD
G →	H	The individual verification of ICC has to be transparent, showing in what it concretely exists.	The ICC certificate is a report about the level of the individual IC by means of specified <i>ICC elements or descriptors (ICCD)</i> .
H →	I	Not being the result neither of natural processes nor of <i>intra</i> -cultural education, the establishment of a specifically intercultural learning process is required.	The individual ICC consists of learnable elements being defined by distinguishable descriptors.
I → J	J	The learning of ICC requires specific experience and learning methods, both based on real situations of intercultural communication and cooperation.	The learning environment of ICC is an intercultural cooperation project whose structure allows to achieve specific ICC elements by experience (intuitively) and systematically (in an organized way of learning).
J → K	K	In order to obtain the optimal ICC output, ICC learning environments shall be provided in all relevant sectors of education in a well-matched way (between these sectors).	<p>Relevant education sectors are the general education (school), university and vocational education. The sectoral definitions of the ICCDs may differ according to the specific needs and possibilities of the sectors. But if a well-matched and coordinated organization of intercultural learning in all relevant sectors is wanted, there has to exist also <i>a level of basic cross-sectoral ICCD definitions</i>; that means the common grains of ICC elements that exist in all (or almost all) sectors.</p> <p>[Denying the identity of the ICCDs on this basic level would mean, that IC learning at school does not prepare pupils for the – totally different - IC challenges in their later work life; it would be a kind of <i>l'art pour l'art</i>.]</p> <p>The cross-sectoral ICCDs are the base for the development/harmonization of intercultural learning methods and evaluation.</p>
B, F, K → L	L	The utility of an ICC certificate depends on its acceptance not only in one country but in a multitude of countries, e.g. in the European Union.	Once defined, the ICCDs must be related to relevant national and international frameworks e.g. the EQF, i.e. <i>standardized</i> . If needed some definitions have to be adapted.