Workforce Diversity in the European Union

European Dialogue Project:
An Intercultural Student Project

Compendium 2016

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

Hochschule
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

This report is part of a collaboration project between Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia and Polytechnic Institute of Viseu which started in 2014.

The content of this document does not represent the official views or policies of the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University nor of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia and Polytechnic Institute of Viseu.

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The European Dialogue Project 2016 is a collaborative undertaking that is supported by the personal commitment and support of the faculty and administrative staff of the participating institutions of higher education.

A special thanks to the instructional designers of e-learning team of Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences for hosting the project on their platform LEA.

The results of the work and the comprehensive documentations of students' surveys was conducted in an international team of students from Germany, Italy and Portugal. The students from the University Modena and Region of Emilia compiled all the data form each country survey and wrote the final results in the following compendia. We want to thank them for their work.

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The authors views expressed in this compendium are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the participating institutions.

Regina Brautlacht   Prof. Dr. Franca Poppi   Dr. Lurdes Martins

Preface

It is a great pleasure for me to be able to write something about what the *European Dialogue Project* meant to our Department, as I would like to take this opportunity to thank the colleagues who undertook the initiative for the splendid opportunity they offered to our students.

The project has created authentic opportunities for dialogue between students from three European countries: Italy, Portugal, and Germany. Our students have been involved in getting to know and understanding the ideas, interests and worries of students from other countries, extending their own experience of the world and of other parts of Europe in particular.

Working in international teams was one of the most interesting aspects of the project from an educational point of view, as it gave our students an opportunity to explore collaborative forms of work, from designing to carrying out a survey. This mean working on sharing, negotiating, reaching a consensus: skills that will be relevant to any future working context, and that we need to develop further within Europe. The main task of the project was also a very useful research activity: students learnt how to build a questionnaire, how to present it, to collect and analyze the data and how to interpret them comparatively.

The activities of "European dialogue" have also given our students a chance to explore the use of English as a lingua franca while working online in international teams. On the one hand they have been able to explore their own language needs, challenges and opportunities in collaborative communication, seeing ELF in practice and experiencing its characteristics, beyond what they have studied in our linguistics courses. On the other hand, the use of Web 2.0 tools to communicate with each other has also extended their communicative and learning experiences: it has presented opportunities to explore new means of communication – such as Skype and Facebook tools – and new ways of working collaboratively.

All these experiences will surely be appreciated by the world of work when they get out of the University, as they are bound to have contributed highly to their intercultural skills. When looking at what the students produced at the end of the project, it is most interesting to notice how international comparison helped students understand their own country as well as the elements that are shared across countries.

Finally, I would like to mention the importance of the topic the students explored. Corporate social responsibility has been an excellent choice for many reasons. First of all it is an issue that brings together many different subjects and perspectives, including economics, law, ethics, thus developing the students' ability to tackle interdisciplinary issues. The focus of the project also involved awareness of human rights and of the need for environmental protection. The awareness and the knowledge were linked to the tradition and the history of each country. The whole project has led students through different tasks exploring issues such as recycling and reuse, organic and ethical consumption, social equality, corruption in business and government, responsibilities to local communities, positive and negative aspects of the impact of globalization, responsible tourism, the future of our world altogether. Students were

involved in reflecting over the world they live in and the world they want to experience in the future.

Overall, I think our Department should feel privileged for having offered our students such a rich experience and really look forward to further European collaboration

Prof. Dr. Marina Bondi
Professor of English Language and Translation
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

Participants

German Students

Last Name:	First Name:
Ballekens	Jeremie Dominique
Erny	Florian
Hecht	Daniel
Hoppe	Joe
Jamnicki	Michael
Joseph	Manuela
Krieg	Henri
Kugler	Loris
Link	Philipp Hubert Heinz
Ljachov	Dimitri
llolla	Blerim
Martin	Laura
Merz	Katharina
Nebgen	Daniela
Paul	Benedikt Ragnar
Rao	Riccardo
Slavicek	Lukas
Stanley	Felix

Italian Students

Last Name:	First Name:
Amici	Valeria
Bicchieri	Giovanna
Bonvicini	Giorgia
Crivillaro	Roberto
Crocetti	Rachele
Lucci	Andrea
Mammi	Lisa
Pineschi	Chiara
Querzola	Elena
Rubbiani	Silvia
Schamott	Martina
Stefani	Nicole
Tavaroli	Silvia
Tedeschi	Beatrice
Terzaghi	Caterina
Vella	Francesco
Vismara	Beatrice
Vitali	Francesa

Portuguese Students

Last Name:	First Name:
Peixoto	Joel
Chen	Maria
Gonçalves	Joana
Marques	Diana
Ribeiro	João
Figueiredo	Rúben
Lopes	Francisco
Martins	Cláudia
Piedade	Jéssica
Mendes	Gabriela
Ferreira	Joana
Filipe	Cátia
Miler	Marta
Lipowska	Blanka
Król	Eliza
Machado	Rita
Cosme	Inês
Diogo	Carina
Ferreira	Joana

Participating Universities

University:	Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University	Polytechnic Institute of Viseu	University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
Location:	Sankt Augustin, Germany	Viseu, Portugal	Modena, Italy
Contact Person:	Regina Brautlacht M.A.	Dr. Lurdes Martins	Prof. Dr. Franca Poppi

Goals and Tasks

Goals

Main Objectives:

The students will be participating in the "European Dialogue Project" that aims to encourage communication between students from three European countries in English - using English as a lingua franca. In this project you will discuss and compare data in Italy, Portugal, and Germany.

Students will work online in an international team online using various Web 2.0 tools to communicate with each other. The international teams will be in charge of designing and carrying out a survey to assess views on specific topics related to "Workforce Diversity in the European Union". The findings will be shared in a joint compendium.

Students will develop professionalism by:

- learning to collaborate in a virtual environment (be ethically correct, follow the code of conduct and remember general rules of business etiquette), meeting deadlines and learning to how to keep lines of communication open at all times
- explaining issues and giving solutions
- learning to work in an international team (be reliable, be responsible, and productive)

They will understand intercultural communication by:

1. Explaining: Being able to explain basics about ones own culture (customs, views, values etc.), setting standards in on learning to communicate with non-native speakers of English
2. Learning: Gain knowledge about students cultural backgrounds (different countries and nationalities)
3. Avoiding: Avoid being prejudice and be open-minded to new ideas, customs, beliefs and traditions
4. Using International English: Communicate with non-native speakers of English; avoid jargon, acronyms, abbreviations, and specific words not used in the other culture. Raise awareness of oral communication strategies for on-line communication.

5. Fostering Communication and Exchange: During the project ask questions, give constructive feedback and encourage discourse.
6. Adapting written communication: When publishing a written document for a specific international audience, meet the needs of the particular culture and clarify particular aspects unknown to the audience.

Tasks

European Dialogue Project

Task 1

Deadline: 27 March (Italian, Portuguese students) / 10 April (German students)

LEA Joint Online Platform:
https://lea.hochschule-bonn-rhein-sieg.de
Technical Support: eu-dialogue@bib.h-brs.de

Task 1
Orientation and Introduction

The overall topic of the European Dialogue Project is "Workforce Diversity in the European Union". The idea is that each international team conducts research about this topic in each country using the same survey. The team analyses the collected data from each country and afterwards the information is published in a joint compendium titled "European Dialogue Project: An International Student Collaboration".

Read the student guidelines to get familiar with the timeline, tasks and deadlines of the project. Since you will be working with students in different countries, you will be using several online tools to communicate and coordinate your research project.

Go to LEA, the joint online platform hosted by Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University and get familiar with the course materials. You have received access and can join the course. Your lecturer will provide the first orientation session during class.

You are member of international project team comprised of students from Germany, Italy and Portugal. Find your international workspace on LEA. There are around 8 international teams in total and you are a member of one team. If you do not have a Skype or Facebook account, create one for the project. Get acquainted with LEA, the platform where you will store your documents.

Portuguese and Italian students: Your first task is to schedule the first virtual meeting on Facebook. The German students start their first day of classes later and will add their names to the schedule proposed by the Portuguese and Italian students. Then, the Italian members will send out a message to all members by posting the meeting time and day to all the team members in their Facebook group. The Italian members of each team will chair the first meeting. Finding a time can be a challenge because each country has completely different schedules. In some countries students are in class the entire day and can only meet in the

late afternoon or evening. Trying to find a suitable day and time where everyone can attend, you will need to adjust your timetable. Another option is to meet during the weekend.

In general both team members from one country (country team member) should attend each meeting, however at least one member of each county must attend each virtual meeting.

Checklist for Task 1:

- Read and familiarize yourself with the Student Guidelines.
- Find your international working space on LEA.
- Familiarize yourself with Skype Conference Calling. Get a headset before the first
- Virtual meeting.
- Join the Facebook group created for your team.
- Italian team announces the date and time of the first virtual meeting. The Italian team will chair the first virtual meeting.
- Read task 2 before the meeting so that you are familiar with your country tasks.

European Dialogue Project

Task 2

1st Virtual Meeting 11 -17 April
"Kick-Off Meeting"

LEA Joint Online Platform:
https://lea.hochschule-bonn-rhein-sieg.de
Technical Support: eu-dialogue@bib.h-brs.de

Task 2
"Kick-Off Meeting"

Chairing: The Italian members of each team will **chair the first meeting**.

Minutes: The Portuguese members of the team will write the first **minutes of the meeting** and store them on LEA. The minutes are a record of what was said during the meeting and information that all the attendees agreed on and gives those members that cannot attend the meeting the necessary information to proceed with the European Dialogue Project. The minutes should also include the names of the attendees. See the section on Writing Minutes for useful hints as well as the template, which is stored in your team workspace on LEA.

Meeting Guidelines: ● Introduction:

Get to know each other and build rapport. Each member should introduce himself/herself and provide some details about the person and the university and degree program. It might be good to have an agenda for the meeting and to briefly go through the project schedule.

  ● **Online discussion:** Discuss the topic you have chosen for your survey, you

can discuss issues that might be worth including in the survey. The survey questions will be your assignment for task 3.

● **Schedule next meeting:** Schedule the next virtual meeting, agree with all members and the Portuguese members will announce the time and date in the meeting form provided on LEA and send out a message to the other members.

Checklist for Task 2:

- Before the meeting on Skype conduct a sound check. Use a headset and do not meet in any public area, but find a quiet place where there are no other noise distractions.
- Gather some information about your topic prior to the meeting.
- Italian team will chair the meeting.
- During the meeting schedule the next date and time for your second virtual meeting.
- Portuguese team will take notes during the meeting and write minutes about the meeting and will announce the date of the second virtual meeting.
- German team will record the Skype conference call and store the file on LEA.

Absentee Ruling: At least one member of each country needs to be present during each virtual meeting. If the other country member cannot attend he or she will work together closely with the country partner and is still responsible for all the tasks. It is required that all students have attended at least two of the virtual meetings and everyone must attend the virtual conference.

European Dialogue Project

Task 3
18 - 24 April

Second Virtual Meeting

LEA Joint Online Platform:
https://lea.hochschule-bonn-rhein-sieg.de
Technical Support: eu-dialogue@bib.h-brs.de

Task 3
Second Virtual Meeting

Before the meeting: You will be planning a survey and drafting a questionnaire. Each country member should draft at least 10-12 questions to share with the other team members that can be used for the survey. These questions need to be uploaded to the virtual meeting room before the meeting! The questions can be quantitative questions using a scale (e.g. 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= agree 5= strongly agree) or open questions. Due to the time restrictions, it is best to limit the use of open questions. For example, Google Drive has a questionnaire creating function with many different types of questions, which might be useful. If you have access to other survey software you can use these for your survey.

Chairing: The Portuguese members of each team will chair the second meeting or if there is no Portuguese member, Italian members will chair.

Minutes: The German members of the team will write the **minutes of the meeting** and store them on LEA. The minutes are a record of what was said during the meeting and information that all the attendees agreed on and gives those members that cannot attend the meeting the necessary information to proceed with the European Dialogue Project. The minutes should also include the names of the attendees. The German members of the team will compile all questions agreed on by the team for the survey and post it on LEA.

During the meeting

Preparing the survey

Each country presents the 10-12 questions about the topic they are surveying. During the meeting the participants should agree on a final list of 15-20 questions they will be using for their research. The questionnaire should include information about age, gender and perhaps profession.

Define the purpose of your survey. What do you want to find out in your survey? A survey is used to gather data that can be represented in statistics and make generalizations (e.g. opinions, conditions, ratings), what issues are the most relevant and controversial?

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Schedule next meeting

Schedule the next virtual meeting, agree with all members and the German members will announce the time and date in the meeting form provided on LEA and send out a message to the other members.

Checklist for Task 3:

- Before the meeting go to your virtual room (Skype) and conduct a sound check.
- Prior to the meeting prepare a list of questions you would like to use for the survey.
- The Portuguese or Italian team will chair the meeting.
- During the meeting agree on a final list of 15-20 questions for your survey and schedule the next date and time for your second virtual meeting.
- The German team will take notes during the meeting and afterwards write the minutes.
- The German team will send an email with the final meeting time and date.

Absentee Ruling: At least one member of each country needs to be present during each virtual meeting. If the other country member cannot attend he or she will work together closely with the country partner and is still responsible for all the tasks. It is required that all students have attended at least two of the virtual meetings and everyone must attend the virtual conference.

European Dialogue Project

Task 4
Deadline: 25 April - 15 May

Carry out the survey

LEA Joint Online Platform:
https://lea.hochschule-bonn-rhein-sieg.de
Technical Support: eu-dialogue@bib.h-brs.de

Task 4
Carry out the survey

Decide who you want your audience to be (eg. friends, family, schoolmates) and ask them to complete the survey. You may choose any type of media. You can create an online survey on Google Drive or send it by email or via a social network, or give it out on paper. Your survey can be in your native language or in English.

This is how you should proceed:

● Write a short letter of introduction about the research your team is conducting send the questionnaire to your classmates, friends and other respondents. Please mention that the survey is anonymous and non-traceable and offer a contact person if questions arise. This letter can be written in the native language. Explain briefly that the survey should not take more than few minutes of their time. You can use the logo of the European Dialogue Project for your introductory email. Finally, thank the readers for their attention.

● Coordinate your country survey with the other classmates in your country. It would be counterproductive if you send out 10 surveys at the same time to your university classmates.

● Get approval to conduct the research at your university. Consult your lecturer or professor. **Sample Size:** Each country should sample at least 40 people. You are of course welcome to sample more if you wish.

Checklist for Task 4:

- You may want to get approval from your university to send out the survey to the students.
- Write an introductory email with the link of your survey.
- Get the results of the survey and analyze the data. The results will be posted in your workspace a few days after the deadline.

Useful Tools & Research Tips:

Sample Size Calculation Websites:

- http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm#one
- http://www.macorr.com/sample-size-calculator.htm
- http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html

European Dialogue
Project

Task 5
16 - 29 May

Writing a summary of the survey findings

LEA Joint Online Platform:
https://lea.hochschule-bonn-rhein-sieg.de
Technical Support: eu-dialogue@bib.h-
brs.de

Task 5
Writing a summary of the survey findings

Write an **objective summary** of your findings and **critical analysis** of your results. The findings should also include charts and graphs. Upload your summary report and graph(s) to LEA. Please make sure to upload the summary as a word document and the graph(s) as a jpg!

Layout Requirements	
Font	Times New Roman
Normal text	Size 12
Headings	Size 16, Bold
Subheadings	Size 14, Bold
Footnotes	Size 11
Line Spacing	1.15

Checklist for Task 5:

- Write a text for the compendium analyzing your country data; upload the text to your workspace.
- Prepare a presentation (some slides with graphs) explaining the data from your country's perspective. Present this during your final virtual meeting. The date is already known. If you do not remember the date, check the minutes of the meeting.
- Upload the graphs in your virtual meeting room and prepare to present your data to the group.

Any questions about the project tasks? Consult your professor or instructor in your country. Need technical help? Contact the technical support team eu-dialogue@bib.h-brs.de

European Dialogue Project

Task 6
30 May - 5 June

Third Virtual Meeting

LEA Joint Online Platform:
https://lea.hochschule-bonn-rhein-sieg.de
Technical Support: eu-dialogue@bib.h-brs.de

Task 6
Third Virtual Meeting

Before the meeting

Go on to the LEA platform and read the other members' summaries of their findings.

During the meeting Chairing: the German members of each team will **chair the third meeting.** Discuss the findings of each country, look for similarities and differences, discuss the findings critically.

Minutes The Italian members of the team will write the **minutes of the meeting** and store them on LEA. The minutes are a record of what was said during the meeting and information that all the attendees agreed on and gives those members that cannot attend the meeting the necessary information to proceed with the European Dialogue Project. The minutes should also include the names of the attendees.

Checklist for Task 6

- Before the meeting go to your virtual room (Skype) and conduct a sound check.
- Prior to the meeting read the summaries of the findings of each member country.
- German team will chair the meeting.
- During the meeting discuss similarities and differences between countries, analyze these critically.
- Italian team will take notes during the meeting and write minutes about the meeting and publish the compendium.

Absentee Ruling: At least one member of each country needs to be present during each virtual meeting. If the other country member cannot attend he or she will work together closely with the country partner and is still responsible for all the tasks. It is required that all students have attended at least two of the virtual meetings and everyone must attend the virtual conference.

Any questions about the project tasks? Consult your professor or instructor in your country. Need technical help? Contact the technical support team eu-dialogue@bib.h-brs.de

Task 7
6 - 12 June

Evaluation and Compendium

LEA Joint Online Platform:
https://lea.hochschule-bonn-rhein-sieg.de
Technical Support: eu-dialogue@bib.h-brs.de

Task 7
Evaluation and Compendium

Compendium

The Italian members of the team will collect all summaries of the international teams and will publish an edited version of the compendium. The details will be discussed in the Italian class and a deadline for publication will be announced by the Italian team. The final compendium will be sent to all participants via email once the compendium is completed. Please note that the final compendium has to be uploaded as a word document and please do not forget to upload the graphs.

Students are required to use the template the template provided on LEA.

Layout Requirements:	
Font	Times New Roman
Normal text	Size 12
Headings	Size 16, Bold
Subheadings	Size 14, Bold
Footnotes	Size 11
Line Spacing	1.15

Project Evaluation

All students are requested to evaluate the pilot project "European Dialogue Project: An International Student Project". An online survey will be made available on LEA.

Thank you

The project coordinators thank all students for their hard work and research activities! A special thanks to the Italian students for publishing the compendium and all technical support offered by the German university.

Student Survey Reports on Entrepreneurship

Team One

European Dialogue
Project

European Dialogue Project 2016
Workforce Diversity in the European Union

Team 1: Youth and Employment

Italian team:	**Portuguese team:**	**German team:**
Querzola, Elena	Diogo, Carina	Llolla, Blerim
Vella, Francesco	Ferreira, Joana	Slavicek, Lukas

Date: 09th June 2016

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

Hochschule
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

Introduction

From April to June 2016, we have been involved in the European Dialogue Project, which brings together students from Germany, Italy and Portugal with a focus on building intercultural competencies and gaining first-hand experience in international teamwork. Our teamwork was composed by six people coming from different universities: two from University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, two from Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences and two from Polytechnic Institute of Viseu. The topics discussed were: "Youth and employment", "Working patterns", "Work-family issues", "Socio-demographic change", "Migration", "Human capital", "European values", "Labour mobility", "Working preferences: multinationals vs. domestic firms". These topics focused on different aspects of the European society. Our group worked on the first topic: "Youth and employment: Transition from school to working life, entry of young people into the labor market, youth unemployment".

The projects aimed to encourage the communication between students from different countries using English as Lingua Franca. Each group was required to meet the deadlines to complete different tasks. We had to meet the German and Portugal groups three times via Skype and we were required to record each meeting and at the end of them to fill a template schedule.

During our Skype meetings, we developed a survey made of 14 questions. We had to agree on the format, the number of the questions and the methods to conduct it. Then, during our last meeting, we collaborated to analyse the results in order to find similarities and differences between the three countries. The tools we used are LEA online platform and the social network Facebook to organize and support our work. To carry out the survey, we used the Google Docs platform.

The aim of this compendium is to show the results of our research and comparing them with the other two countries. In particular, the goal of the survey was to investigate on how young people conceive the transition from university to working life and the expectation about their future in countries with a different economic condition and cultural background.

In order to present our results, we will use the following structure. First of all, we will introduce briefly the content of the survey and the statistics about interviewees such as the age, the gender and the educational level. Secondly, we will analyse the results of our research divided into three categories: "Internships and university role", "Working domestic" and "Working abroad". Finally, we will focus on Hofstede's dimension and we will draw our conclusions.

In the appendix you will find the surveys of Italy, Germany and Portugal, and the transcripts of the Skype meetings.

The survey

During our Skype meetings, we agreed that every country should have written down about fifteen questions and upload them on our Facebook group. Then, we collected these questions and we selected the most interesting ones. Afterwards, we uploaded a final version and we discussed it during our second meeting. In this meeting, we also agreed on the format and we decided the tools for carrying out the survey. Because of different opinions, Portugal and Italy prepared an online survey whereas Germany preferred the paper format. The team agreed on the fact that despite the different format the questions have suit precisely.

We divided the survey into three parts: the first one is "Internships and universities role"; the second one is about "Working in Italy", and the last one "Working abroad". Finally, we asked some generic questions concerning age, gender and education. In this compendium, the analysis of the results is divided into three parts since the survey followed this division.

Statistics and target

The respondents were composed as follows:
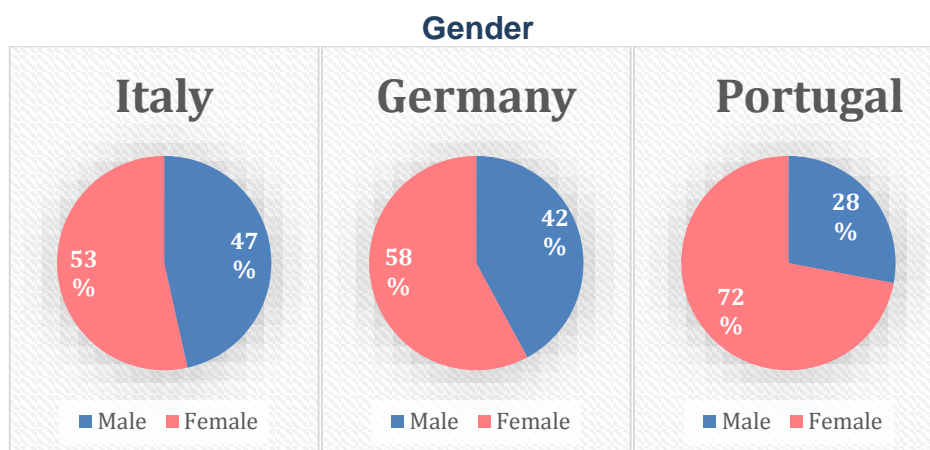
From these graphs emerges that the majority of the interviewees are female. In Italy and in Germany the gap between males and females is narrow, while in Portugal we can notice an overwhelming majority of female respondents.
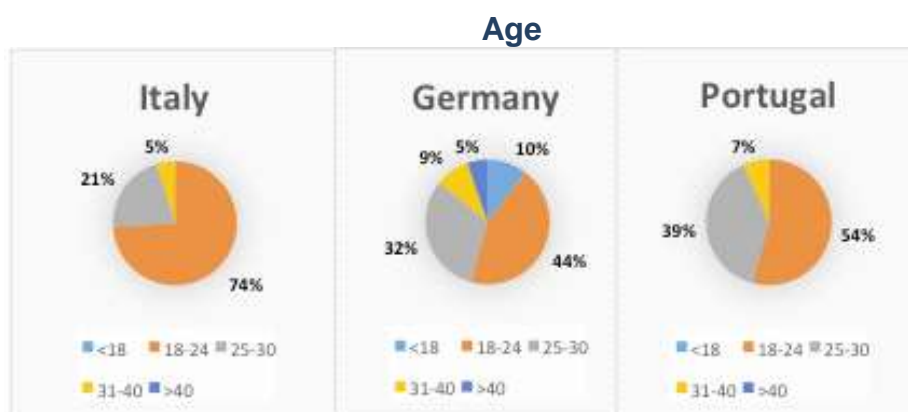
In all the three countries, the majority of the interviewees are from 18 to 24 years old. In Portugal and in Italy there are no people younger than 18 and older than 40. Furthermore, in all the three countries, few interviewees are between 31 and 40 years old.

Education level
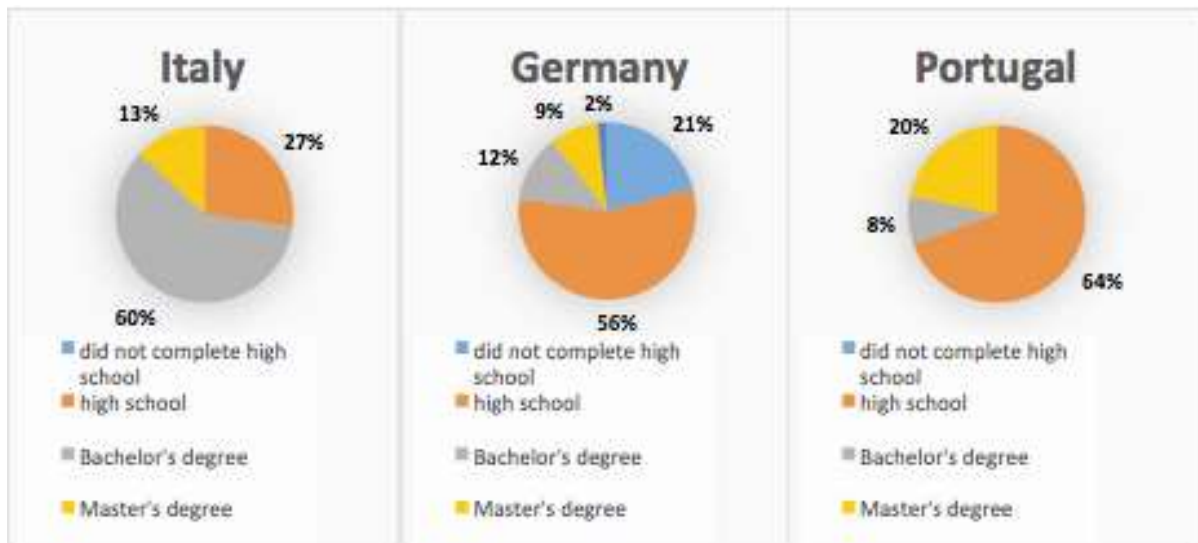
We can observe that in Italy the majority of the interviewees got a Bachelor's degree, while in Germany and in Portugal the majority only finished the high school. Furthermore, in Germany, many people interviewed did not complete high school yet. Probably, most of people who answered are attending a Bachelor's degree programme.

Analysis of the results
### Topic 1: Internships and universities role

The first set of questions concerned internships and the role of universities. Our aim is to understand the attitudes, reasons and expectations of young people towards internships and according to them, to understand how important the role of universities in this field is.

Internships and universities role

According to Italian people, the internship has a fundamental role in the educational path. Indeed, the majority think that all universities degrees must absolutely include at least one compulsory internship. Germans and Portuguese share this idea too. However, as the graph shows, Italy is the country where internship is highly considered important in the university programme. By contrast, in Portugal, we can observe that the percentage of people strongly agreeing on that is not particularly high. We can assume that in Portugal and Italy young people consider useful including a work experience in their educational path. In Germany the opinions are conflicting: indeed, we can see that a 25% disagree on the fact that universities should include at least one mandatory internship. Probably, some Germans students believe that the university should provide only knowledge and that it is their own responsibility to develop their practical skills. Another hypothesis is that students think that an internship is not

essential in order to find a job and for this reason, it is not necessary to include it compulsorily in the educational path. As a final point, we can assume that they want to have the freedom to choose whether do it or just to add a supplementary exam.


Do you believe that all university degrees should include at least one mandatory internship?
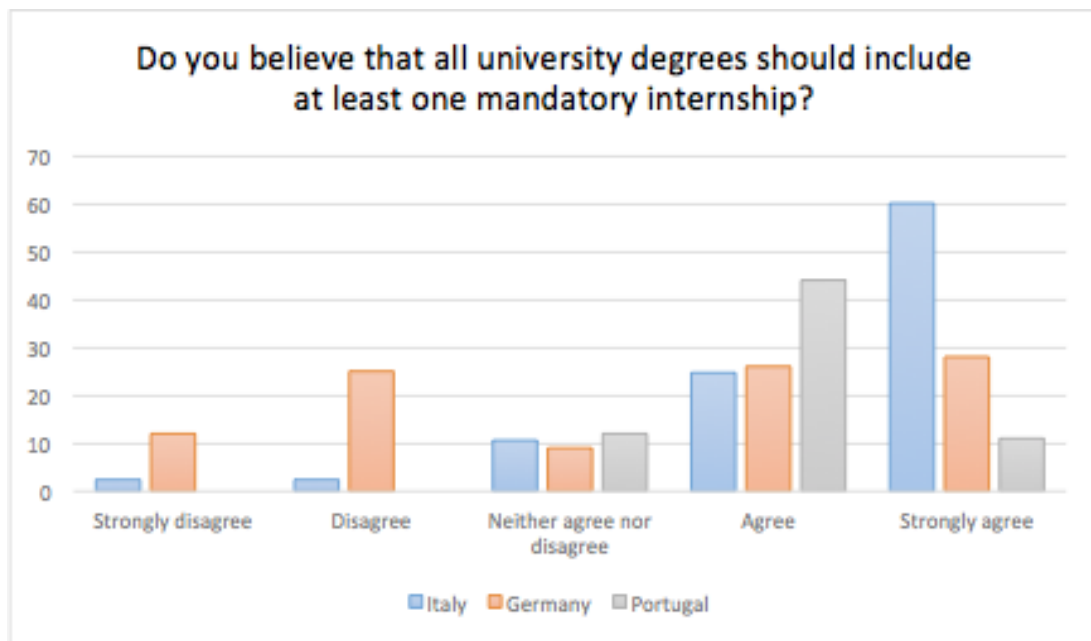
At the same time, the majority of the students of the three countries that answered the questionnaire strongly agree or agree that an internship can increase the chances for employment after studies. This suggests that most of the interviewees would like to work a few months in a company with the hope of being employed afterwards. It is evident that people have an overall positive opinion towards the
influence of internships in order to find a job and to be integrated in
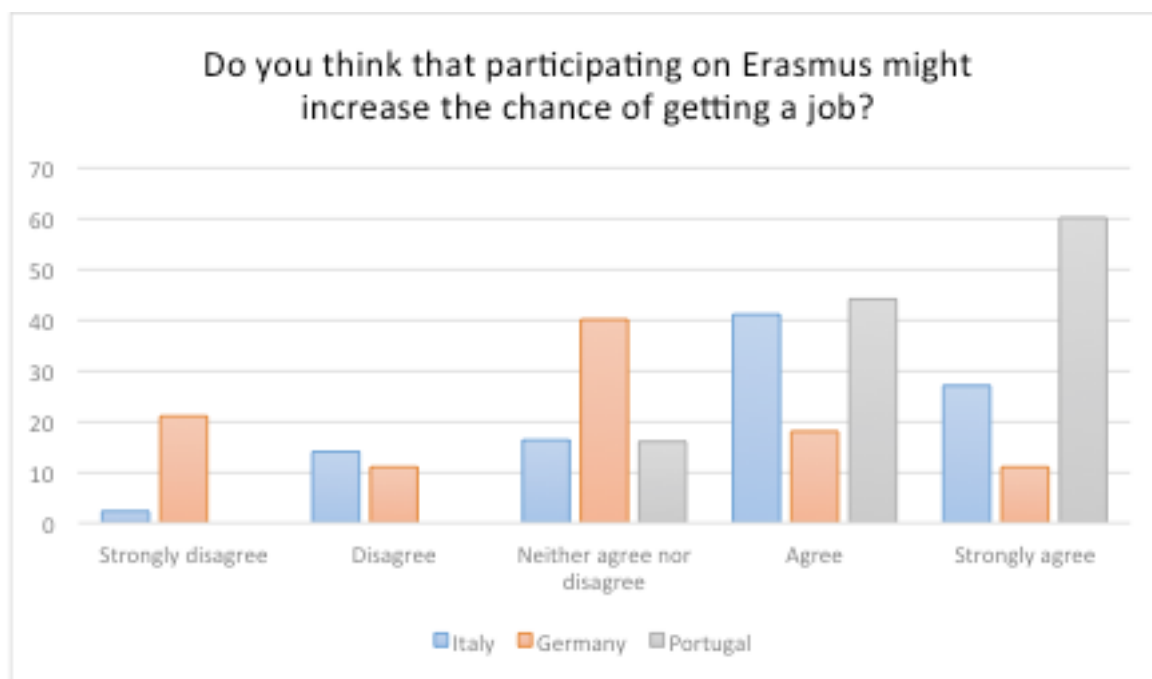the labour market.
From these results, we can observe that the three countries are
having very positive experiences with internships and they consider them fundamental for their working and their personal background. Furthermore, it seems that according to young people internships are useful to develop their own skills and to prepare them to face the labour market and as a consequence to be totally integrated into it.
As far as Germany is concerned, we can observe that the answers to this question are in contradiction with the previous ones. Actually, in the previous graph there was not a striking gap between "agree" and "disagree", while in this one we can observe a pitch of young people considering traineeships essential to increase the chances for employment after studies. Probably, Germans consider internships not so important in the university field but only in the labour market.

Do you believe that all university degrees should include at least one mandatory internship?
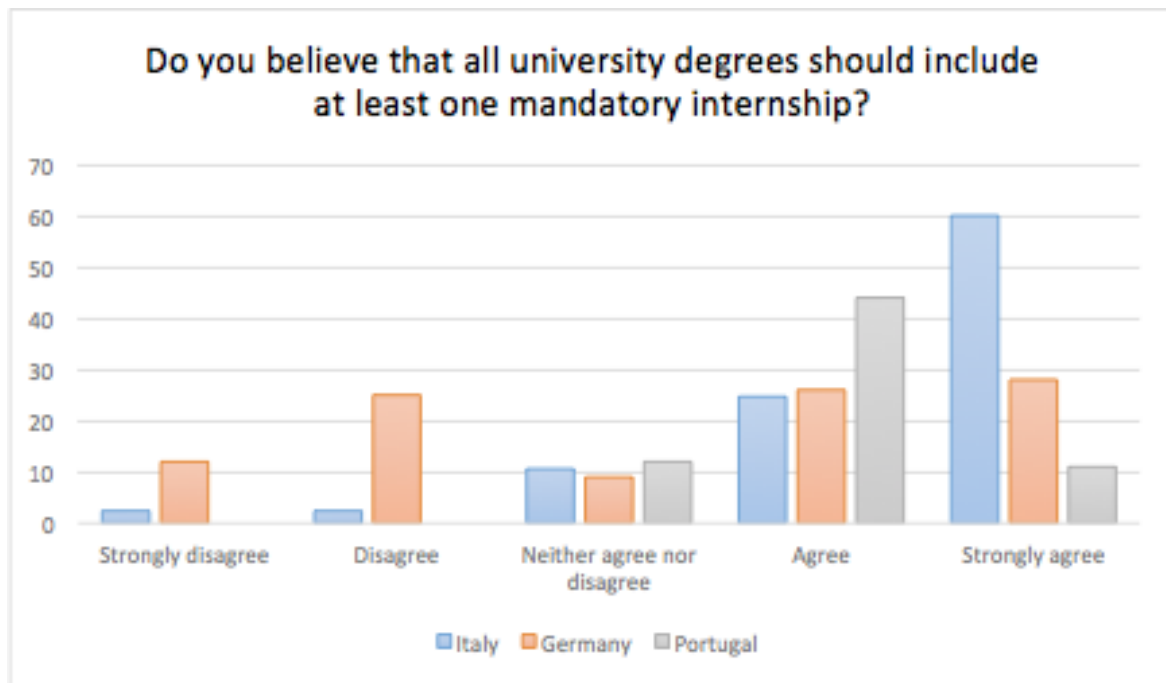
The role of the Erasmus for employment

**Do you think that participating on Erasmus might increase the chance of getting a job?**

As the results show, Portuguese and Italian students find Erasmus programme useful for their future employment. In particular, the Portuguese answers reveal a strong attitude to get involved in the project. By contrast, young people in Germany do not have a clear opinion about it, since 40% answered "neither agree nor disagree". In any case, the percentage of people who strongly disagree is higher than people who strongly agree or agree. Probably, Germans consider having an experience abroad not so significant to increase the chances of getting a job.

Topic 2: Working domestic

The second set of questions focused on the working patterns in the respective home countries. The aim of this section is to understand from young people's point of view if there are good chances to get a job in Italy, Germany and Portugal. Moreover, the questions try to investigate whether the government should play an active role in youth employment and if it is easy to reconcile work and studies.

Students' expectation in getting a job after studies
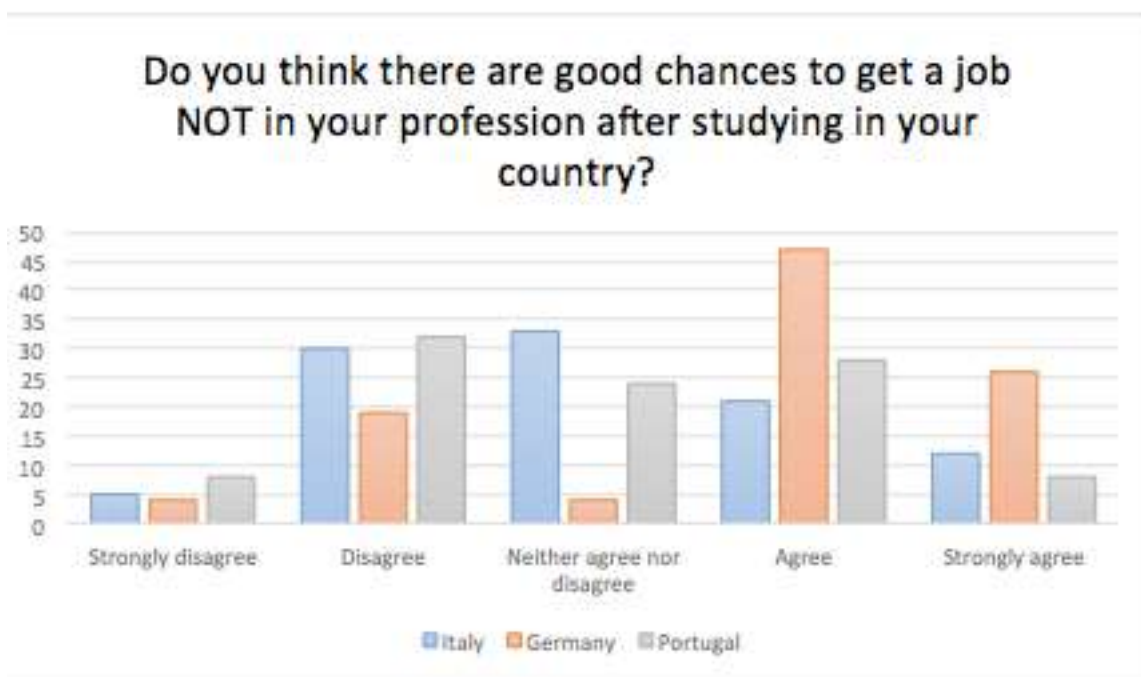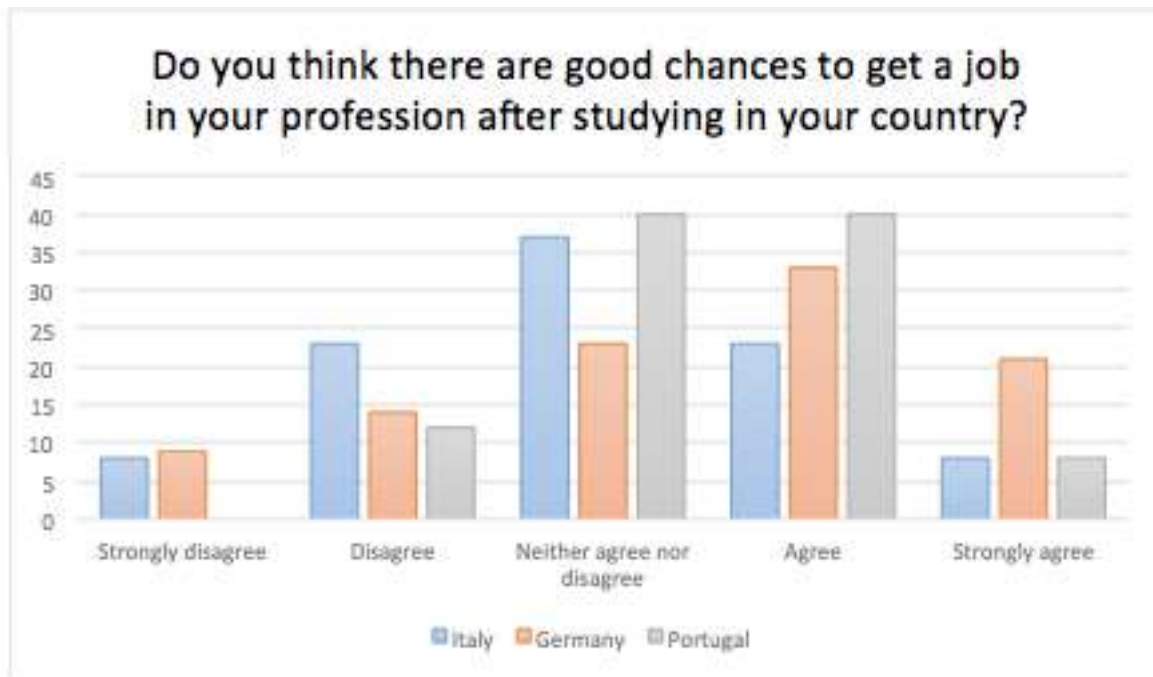
We asked a question about finding a job in one's profession and another question about finding any job in general. The Italian answers are quite heterogeneous and there is not a preva-

lent opinion. Actually, the majority neither agree nor disagree on these statements. If we compare the results of the two questions, we notice that concerning the chances to get a job in one's field of study, the percentages are exactly equal in agree and disagree. By contrast, the survey reveals that Italians have a greater tendency to disagree as regards finding any job.

In Portugal, the answers are heterogeneous as well. As a matter of facts, in the first graphic we observe that a great percentage of the interviewees does not really know whether there are good chances to get a job in one's profession. In parallel, the same percentage of answers reveals a positive attitude on the topic, as the results show. Concerning the question about finding any job, the results in Portugal are quite different because the greater tendency is towards "disagree".

The most respondents in Germany claimed that they could easily find a job in their profession. There is a significant change in that percentage when the answers of getting any job are being reflected. An overwhelming majority is of the opinion that they could get any job after studying in their country. Therefore, only a small number of interviewees expressed negative expectations concerning their future employment opportunities.

By analysing the results, we can observe that Italians show a sense of incertitude, as an overwhelming majority of the respondents answered to both questions "neither disagree nor agree". We can speculate that it is due to the difficult economic situation that affects the country. In Germany, the situation is completely different since results show an optimistic attitude, probably thanks to its favourable economic situation. As far as Portugal is concerned, the results illustrate an intermediate situation. Actually, young people have difficulty to find any job perhaps because of the relative economic weakness. By contrast, the graph shows that young people's expectations to find a job in their field of studies are more positive since the percentages of "agree" and "neither agree nor disagree" are equal. Additionally, these percentages are considerably high. We have to take into consideration that the questionnaire has probably been filled out by students of the Tourism School of Technology and Management at Polytechnic Institute of Viseu. Therefore, since the tourism sector in Portugal is one of the driving economic fields, people have still good expectation in getting a job in their profession. However, also the percentage of people who answered "neither agree nor disagree" is high. For that reason, we can assume the there is still a great level of uncertainty due to the current economic crisis.

The government's role

Do you think that your government should provide incentives for firms to hire young people?
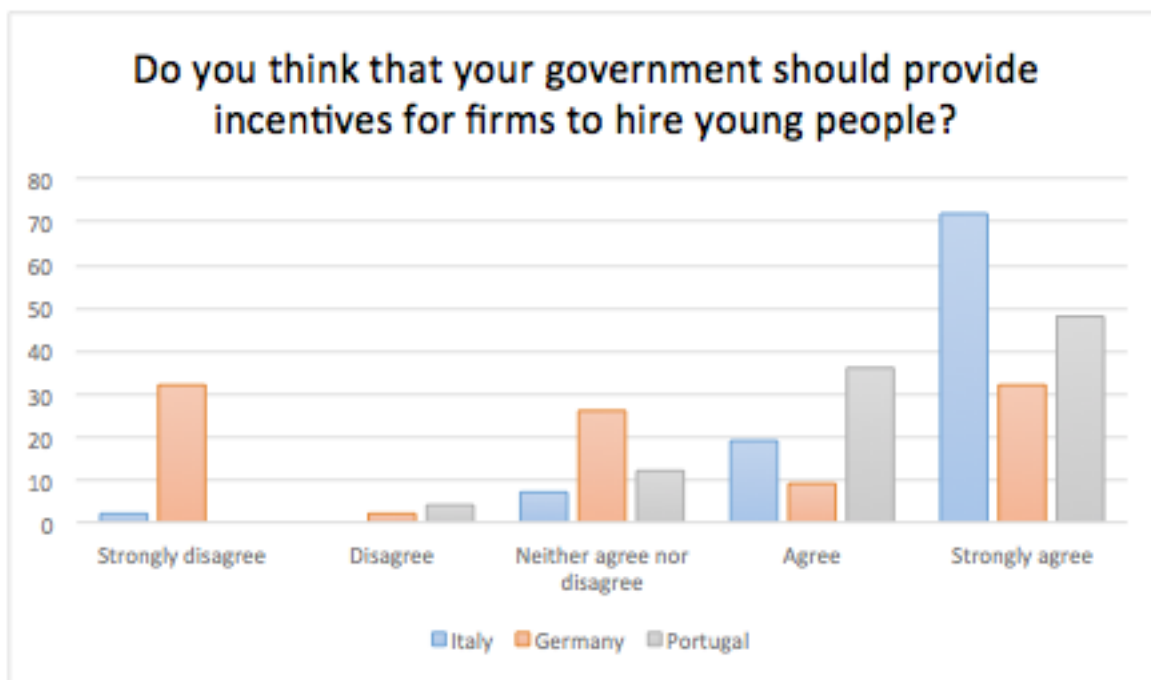
The data demonstrate that a striking majority both in Italy and in Portugal claimed that their government should play an active role by providing incentives for firms to employ young people. We can suppose that in these countries, people generally affirm that it is a task of the government to help enterprises in hiring young people.

In Germany, the situation is quite particular since the percentage of "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree" are equal. Moreover, from the graphic we can notice that Germany is the only country that strongly disagree on the topic. Maybe, we can suppose that according to Germans, it is the enterprise itself which has the responsibility to foster youth employment. We can also speculate that the main difference between on the one side Germany and on the other side Italy and Portugal is that Germany has the lowest youth unemployment rate in European Union. As a matter of facts, the problem with unemployment is not with young people but with older ones. For this reason, the government does not focus on young people and this is probably a reason why they do not think that incentives are great for hiring young people in Germany.

Work and study

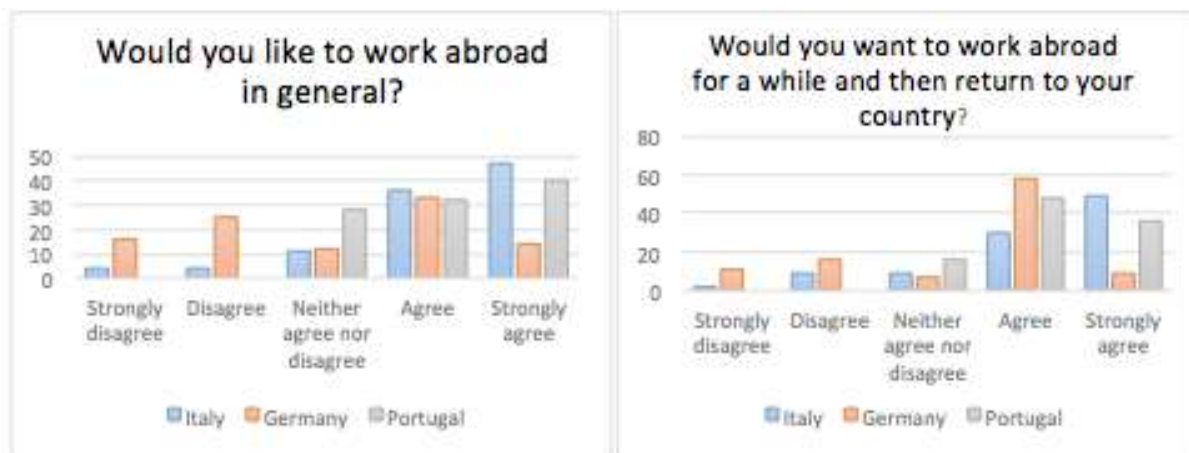Do you think it is easy to reconcile work and studies?
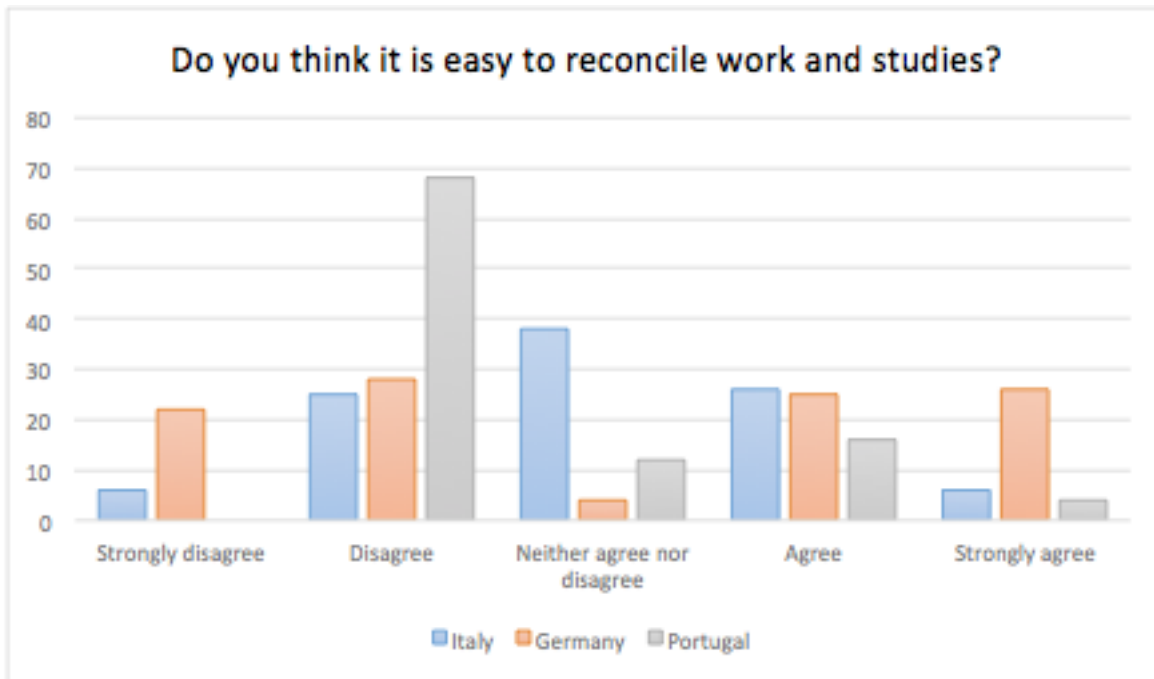
Another question was about the ease of reconciling work and study. While in Italy and in Germany there is not a large gap between the different answers, in Portugal we can observe a pitch of "disagree". The majority (68%) think that it is not easy to work and study at the same time. Actually, as the Portuguese team confirmed, university students in Portugal only work if they really need money to pay for their studies. The percentage of working students is very low in Lusitanian universities, with the exception for evening courses.

During our Skype meetings, the German team told us that that every student attending university usually work and study at the same time, because they want to be as independent as possible. For example, most German students are used to attend courses in the first part of the week and to work in the second half. This is why we expected a pitch of "agree" and "strongly agree". Whereas, 28% of people interviewed disagreed and 22% strongly disagreed on that question.

Topic 3: Working abroad

The last part of the survey focused on the working patterns abroad. The aim of this section is to understand young people's perception of both experiences abroad and job opportunities outside their countries. In addition, the survey tried to collect information about the distinctions between working conditions within the European Union.

Experiences and career abroad

Would you like to work abroad in general?

Would you want to work abroad for a while and then return to your country?

We can observe that in all the three countries there is a general willingness to work abroad. Despite of this, we can notice from the graph that Germany has a relative high percentage in "disagree" (25%) and "strongly disagree" (16%). Probably, this could be explained by the fact that Germans consider the working conditions quite favorable in their country and they do not feel the necessity to go abroad. This hypothesis can be confirmed by analysing the following question about the willingness to return to their country after an experience abroad. Indeed, 58% of Germans interviewed would like to come back to Germany.

The pitch of "strongly agree" and "agree" in the graph demonstrates that most of Portuguese and Italians would like to work outside their country. Due to the crisis, a lot skilled people are forced to go abroad because they could not find a job in their homeland, while other young people just want to make international experiences. However, the graphic shows also that most of Portuguese and Italians would absolutely return to their homeland. As regards Italy, we can suppose that the desire to come back is due to Italians' strong sense of family and the attachment to the country. In the case of Portugal, this willingness could be explained with the typical Portuguese feeling called "saudade", which is an emotional state of nostalgic toward their country, which is very strong in the native people.

Do you suppose it is easier to climb the career ladder outside the country?
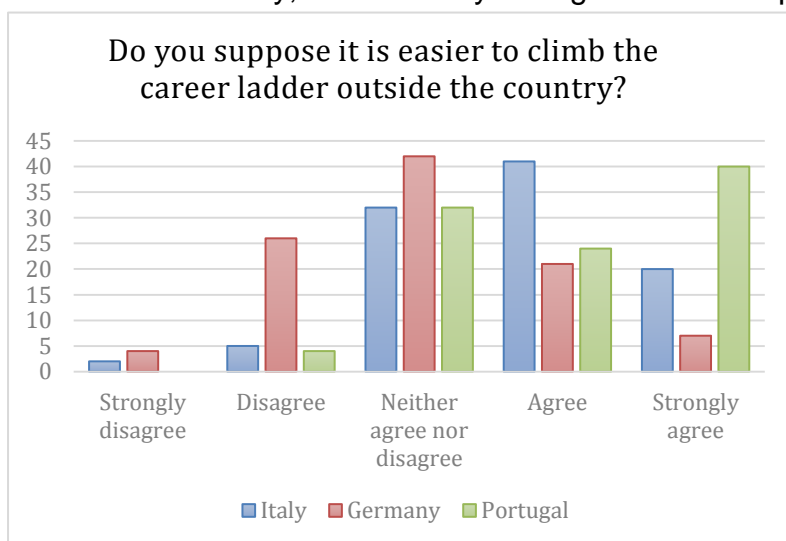
Another important topic concerns the ease to climb the career ladder outside the country. The majority of Portuguese and Italians agree or strongly agree on the fact that abroad there are more possibilities to get ahead in one's profession. This confirms our suppositions about the previous two questions about working outside. As a matter of facts, it is not surprising that Germans have a greater tendency to disagree, since in their country, working conditions seem to be good. Despite of this negative tendency, the majority of Germans answered "neither agree nor disagree".

Working conditions in Europe

Do you consider Europe as a continent the best one to work in?
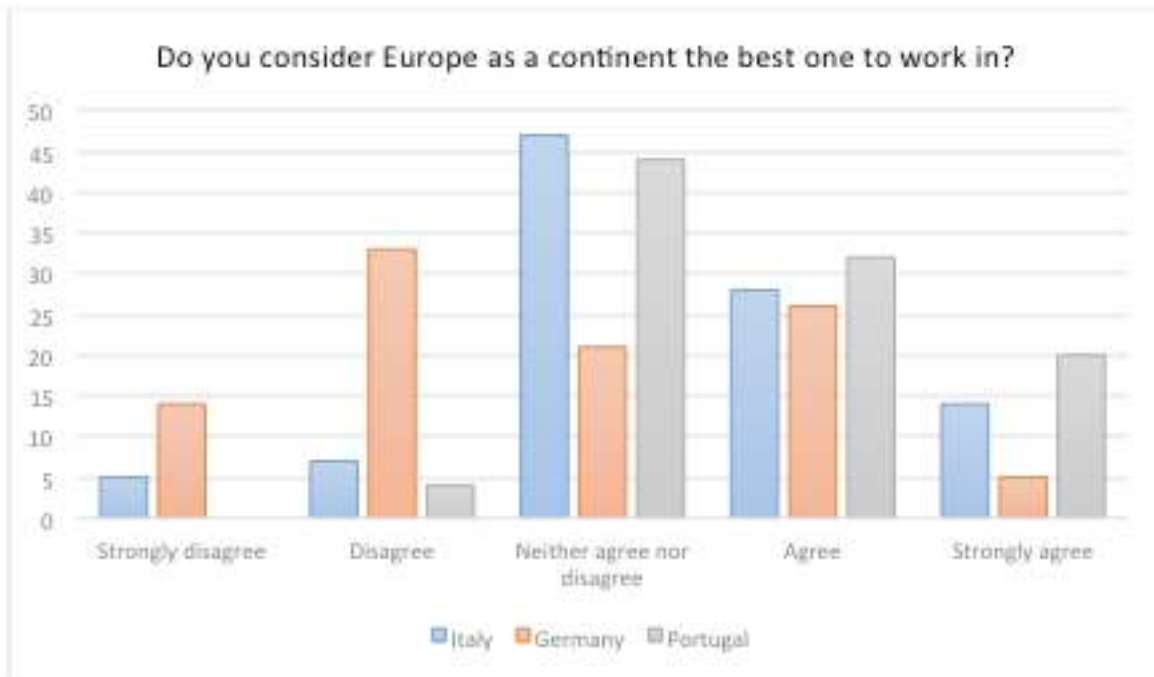
As regards Europe as the best continent to work in, Italy and Portugal do not have a preva-lent opinion (respectively 47% and 44% neither agree nor disagree). Differently, the majority of German respondents disagree on this point. The German team asked to some of their in-terviewees which continents are better to work in, and they replied North America and Aus-tralia. We can suppose that probably Germans think that Europe is not the best continent to work in because Germany is one of the economic giants of Europe and therefore they could find better labour market conditions only moving to another continent.

Do you think that Northern European countries offer better working conditions than Southern ones?
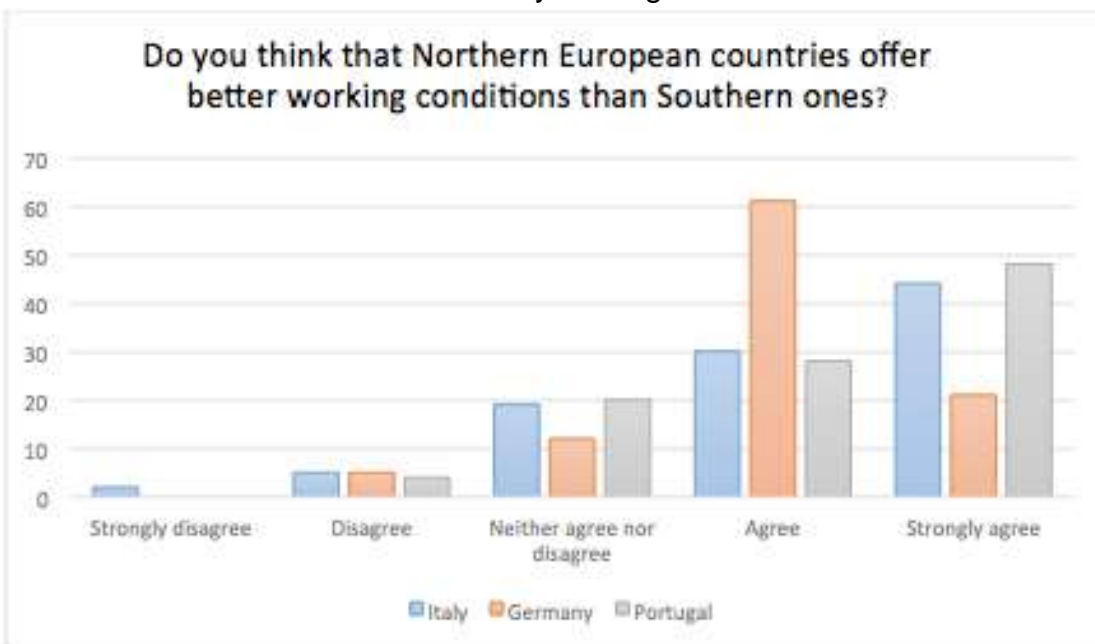
If we narrow it down to Europe, the results of our research show that all the three countries agree or strongly agree that Northern European countries offer better working conditions than Southern ones. A very little percentage of the respondents disagrees or strongly disa-grees. Once again, these findings could be justified by the economic gap in the continent,

which is increasing since the crisis of 2008. Indeed, the most of the countries affected by the crisis are located in southern Europe, such as Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

Hofstede's criteria

The survey often revealed heterogeneous answers between Germany, Italy and Portugal. These dissimilarities could be explained by cultural differences. For this reason, in this section we are going to analyse briefly the results of our research by taking into account Geert Hofstede's dimensions. His studies contribute to better understand the cultural differences and the values of each culture analysing its behaviour.

Geert Hofstede identified six dimensions[1]:

- **Power Distance Index (PDI)** is "the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally". In other words, how society handles inequalities among people. A high PDI indicates that a society has an unequal and hierarchical distribution of power. By contrast, a low PDI suggests an equal distribution of power.
- **Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV).** A high IDV score indicates a society in which the relationships between individuals are weak. It also indicates that the member enjoy new challenges and they have high expectations of rewards for hard work. On the other hand, a collectivistic society indicates a strong group cohesion and people have to be loyal to the group to which they belong. In addition, societies with a low IDV score share resources and are prepared to sacrifice personal interests for collective interests.
- **Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS)** refers to the distribution of roles between men and women. A masculine society has a preference for achievement, assertiveness and material reward for success and societies are more competitive. At the opposite, femininity prefers cooperation and modesty and societies are more consensus-oriented. In this society, men and women have the same working opportunities.
- **Uncertainty avoidance index (UAI)** "expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity". It indicates to what extent a culture feels uncomfortable or comfortable in ambiguous, new and unknown situations. A high level of UA indicates that people avoid uncertain situations whenever it is possible, while a low level of UA indicates a more relaxed and open attitude.
- **Long Term Orientation (LTO) vs. Short Term Orientation (STO)** refers to the society orientation towards time, traditions and values. Societies with a low score prefer "to maintain time-honoured traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion". By contrast, those with a culture whose scores is high, "encourage thrift and efforts in modern education as a way to prepare for the future".
- **Indulgence vs. Restraint (IND)** refers to the tendency of enjoying life and having fun as opposed to strict social norms and frugal attitude to life.

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[1] Information taken from https://www.geert-hofstede.com/ (consulted on 5th June 2016)

In the following graphic, Geert Hofstede indicates the rate of these six dimensions for the three countries concerned in our project. [2]

Italy
in comparison with Germany and Portugal
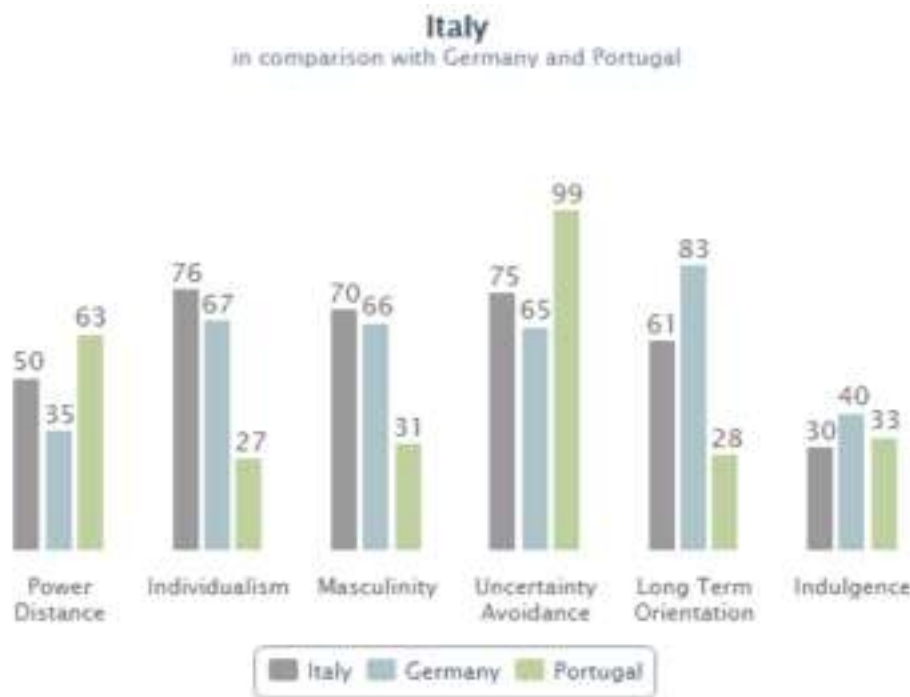
Hofstede's criteria in our research

On the basis of our results we have found three out of the five dimensions.

- **Power Distance Index (PDI).** We found this dimension when we asked if all university degrees should provide a compulsory internship. Italy and Portugal have a similar opinion, since they agree or strongly agree on the question. This reflects the high power distance index (respectively 50 and 63) because probably people accept hierarchies and consequently they are expected to be told what to do. By contrast, the situation in Germany is different and the opinions are conflicting. Actually, we can see that a 25% disagree on the fact that university should include at least one mandatory traineeship. It is possible that students believe that university should not include at least one mandatory internship because they want to have the freedom to choose whether do it or not. Therefore they do not accept any imposition from above. In other words, they are not expected to be told what to do and they do not perceive themselves as subordinate. For all these reasons, we can affirm that in this case our results are perfectly in line with Hofstede's studies.
- **Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV).** We observed these characteristics in the questions about the general willingness to work abroad. Indeed, the majority of young people would like to work abroad to achieve personal goals and to enjoy new challenges with high expectation of reward for hard work. Our analysis reflects in part Hofstede's studies because Italy and Germany have a high index of individualism, respectively 76 and 67. The only exception is Portugal, because the graph shows a high collectivism,

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[2] https://www.geert-hofstede.com/countries.html (consulted on 5th June)

whereas according to our questions it emerges an individualistic inclination. In other words, they have a strong willingness to go abroad for personal purposes.

Additionally, we noticed another individualistic tendency when we asked whether the Government should provide incentives to firms to hire young people. According to Germans, it is not necessary that Government have an active role in employing young people. It seems that in their opinion, the enterprise itself has the responsibility to foster youth employment. This reflects their strong individualistic attitude. By contrast, according to Portuguese, the Government should provide incentives in order to foster youth employment. This is confirmed by the low index of individualism (27) which demonstrates that Portugal is a strong collectivist country. Finally, in the case of Italy, our results disagree with Hofstede's findings, since the country has a high index of individualism even if Italians think that Government should have an active role to solve youth unemployment.

- **Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI).** We found this characteristic in the questions about working abroad. For example, Germans have not a strong propensity for leaving their country. Probably, they need to plan and prepare everything and they feel uncomfortable in accepting changes and risks. This is justified by the high level of uncertainty (65). Surprisingly, even if Portugal and Italy have a strong willingness to go abroad and face new events and experiences, the two countries have a high level of uncertainty according to Hofstede. Our results are even more unexpected in the case of Portugal, whose score is 99, since according to our research they seem not to be afraid of changes and to be ready to rearrange their own lives.

- **Long Term Orientation (LTO) vs Short Term Orientation (STO).** We observed this dimension once again in questions concerning working abroad and coming back to their own homeland. According to Hofstede's criteria, Germany and Italy have the highest score of LTO (83 and 61). This means that these countries are willing to adapt traditions to changed circumstances. On the contrary, Portugal has a low score (28). This means that they give importance to their traditions and values. By analysing the answers to the question "would you like to work abroad?" we came to the conclusion that Portugal and Italy are more Long term oriented because they accept the circumstances and they do not hesitate to introduce necessary changes. Whereas, Germany tends to be Short term oriented because it has a lower propensity to go abroad. Therefore, Italy's situation is the only one that reflects Hofstede's analysis. In the question "Would you want to work abroad for a while and then return to your country?", in all the three cases analysed, people would like to come back to their homeland. This demonstrates their attachment to traditions and values of their country and the unwillingness to adapt them to changed circumstances. In other words, this shows a STO orientation. For this reasons, our results agree with Hofstede only as far as Portugal is concerned.

Conclusions

The main purpose of this project is to encourage intercultural communication using English as Lingua Franca and to cooperate in a team composed by members of different countries and cultures. We found this project very useful in order to learn to use English as a means of communication and to deal with others cultures. Furthermore, the project gave us the oppor-

tunity to discover what Italian people think about "Youth and Employment" and to compare their opinions with Germany and Portugal. We found this project particularly stimulating because the topic concerned directly affects us, since we are going to enter the working life.

Another interesting aspect was to discover how the other countries perceive working life. Sometimes the results were not surprising, for example, the fact that all the three countries think that Northern European countries offer better working conditions than Southern ones, since this is probably a matter of fact. Moreover, another expected result was the general idea that internships increase the chances to get a job.

On the other hand, some findings were unexpected. For examples, we expected that all the three countries would have agreed on the necessity to have a compulsory traineeship at university. However, we detected that Germans did not express the same view. This is unusual because generally traineeships are considered fundamental in educational path in order to find a job later. Additionally, we found astonishing that Germans strongly disagree on the fact that the government should provide incentives for hiring young people. Indeed, government's initiatives are usually required when a problem occurs. We were surprised also by the fact that in many questions, Italians do not have a clear or a prevalent opinion about some topics, such as when we asked if they consider Europe as the best continent to work in.

It is important to underline that Italian and Portuguese answers are often similar while the German ones are generally quite different, as we saw above in the question about the role of the government in youth employment. Actually, both Portuguese and Italians answers "strongly agree". This could be explained by their geographic position, since they are both located in Southern Europe and therefore they share similar points of view and cultural background compared to Germany. Another reason could be the common difficult economic conditions that influence people opinions and their vision of the future. We noticed this aspect in the question about finding any job, as both Portuguese and Italians show incertitude or pessimism towards the topic. This could be justified by the economic crisis that affects both countries for several years. By contrast, Germany is one of the economic giant of Europe, for this reason Germans have an optimistic attitude towards the opportunity to find any job in the country.

As regards the analysis of Hofstede's dimension, we surprisingly observed that almost all our results were in contrast with his theories. The only exception was in the case of "Power Distance", where our findings were perfectly in line with his criteria.

To conclude, we feel satisfied about this international project because it was interesting to meet different cultures and to compare our points of view about a topic that closely affects us. Finally, we could see with our eyes and in practice that in order to come to a mutual understanding the most important thing is not to speak an academic English but to convey the message efficiently. Actually, sometimes it happened that the English structure used by the speakers was not perfect or it was difficult to explain some ideas in a foreign language.

Despite of this, we managed to convey the message in different ways, for examples by rephrasing, repeating or explaining what we wanted to say. For these reasons, the project was stimulating because we discovered unexpected aspects about the points of view of German, Portuguese and even Italian culture and that in international communication the most important point is to cooperate to convey the message in an efficient way.

Survey – Youth and employment

General information

This survey is used for a research in the so-called "European Dialogue Project" as part of our (please insert your course). The aim of the project is to encourage communication between students from three European countries using English as a lingua franca. We are in charge of carrying out a survey to assess views on specific topics related to "Workforce Diversity in the European Union". The findings will be shared in a joint compendium. Please be considered that the survey is anonymous and non-traceable. If questions arise, please contact (please insert name) (please insert e-mail address) for more information.

Internships and universities role

Do you think that an internship increases the chances for employment after studies?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Do you think that participating on Erasmus might increase the chance of getting a job?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Do you believe that all university degrees should include at least one mandatory internship?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Do you think that local companies are willing to accept interns and provide them meaningful training?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Are schools help solving the problem by organising more informative meetings with potential employers?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Working domestically

Do you think there are good chances to get a job in your profession after studying in your country?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Do you think there are good chances to get any job after studying (not your profession) in your country?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Do you think that your government should provide incentives for firms to hire young people?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Do you think it is easier to reconcile work and studies?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Working abroad

Would you like to work abroad in general?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Would you want to work abroad for a while and then return to your country?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Do you think that Northern European countries offer better working conditions than Southern ones?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Do you suppose it is easier to climb the career ladder outside the country?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Do you consider Europe as a continent the best one to work on?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Statistics

What is your gender?

☐	☐
male	female

Which age group do you belong to?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
<18	18-24	25-30	31-40	>40

What is the highest level of education you completed?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
did not complete high school	high school, college	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Ph. D.

Appendix B: Minutes of the meetings

First Meeting

Due to technical problems, the Germans did not recorded the Skype meeting. Therefore a record is not available on LEA. The teams of Italy and Portugal have been informed about it. As well, Mrs Brautlacht and Lioba Visser, her assistant, know about this fact. These minutes, written by the Germans, should help fixing the problem and assist the Portuguese for their minutes.

Template of minutes
European Dialogue Project 2016 Team: 1 – Youth and employment
Minutes of the Team Meeting – First Meeting

DATE: 14th April 2016
ATTENDEES: Carina & Joana (Portugal), Elena & Francesco (Italy), Blerim & Lukas (Germany)
ABSENT: no one
TIME: Start: 20.00h Central European Summer Time / 19.00h West European Summer Time
End: 20.50h Central European Summer Time / 19.50h West European Summer Time

Introduction Everyone introduced himself and talked a little bit about his or her hobbies. As well, everyone mentioned why he respectively his course is part of the EDP project. For example, the Germans are studying Business Management and take place in the EDP in their Business English course whereas the Portuguese are studying tourism and are improving their English skills.

TOPIC 1 - Current job situation
Discussion: We discussed how different the job situation in the three European countries is. For example, Blerim told the Italians and Portuguese that Lukas and he are working simultaneously to their studies and that this helps a lot to start on the labour market.
Action taken: keep at the back of one's mind when creating the survey questions.

TOPIC 2 – Analysing the main aspect of youth unemployment
Discussion: The Portuguese told the others that they have big problems to find a job. The only possibility at the moment are sporadical jobs like promoting party events. The Italians agreed on the difficulty. Francesco from Italy added that the youth unemployment rate is at approximately 40 per cent which is one of the highest rates of all European countries.
Action taken: don't be surprised when evaluating the survey in the different countries

TOPIC 3 - Preparing the survey questions
Discussion: The team discussed about collecting the survey questions.

Action taken: We agreed that every country should write down about ten to fifteen questions and upload them to our facebook group. The Portuguese will collect these questions, take the best of them, and upload a version for discussion before our second Skye meeting. Based on the proposal of the Portuguese we will then decide the last details about our survey.

Deadline: Facebook upload of all countries until 19th April 2016
Final version upload by the Portuguese a few hours before the next meeting

NEXT MEETING: 20th April 2016, 21.00h CEST / 20.00h WEST

MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Lukas Slavicek, Germany
DATE: 26th April 2016

Second Meeting
European Dialogue Project 2016
Team 1: Youth and employment
Minutes of the Team Meeting – Second Meeting

DATE: 20th April 2016
ATTENDEES: Carina & Joana, Elena & Francesco, Blerim & Lukas
ABSENT: no one
TIME: 09:17 pm – 09:41 pm (Germany/Italy) and 08:17 pm – 08:41 pm (Portugal)
Because of some technical problems the meeting started by Joana Ferreira and Carina Diogo 17 minutes delayed. The team already posted their survey on Facebook and agreed on the final list of the questions. The team discussed final details, the way of conducting the survey and when to meet for the next Skype Meeting.
TOPIC 1 – Description of the possibility to answer the questions of the survey
Discussion: Italy noted that the description of the answer possibilities didn't fit to every question of the survey. Germany suggested to split the questions in to groups and to word the answer description for each group separate.
Action taken: The team agreed on the German suggestion. Germany is assuming the modification of the possibilities to answer the questions of the survey and posting the final version on Facebook.

TOPIC 2 – The way of conducting the survey
Discussion: Italy and Portugal discussed an online tool for conducting the survey. Germany proposed a paper format for the survey.
Action taken: Because of a different situation in each country, Portugal and Italy will do an online survey whereas Germany will prefere the paper format. The team agreed on the fact that despite the different format the questions have suit precisely.
Deadline: 15th Mai

TOPIC 3 – Next Skype Meeting

Discussion: The third virtual meeting will be between the 30th Mai and the 5th June 2016. This meeting will be chaired and recorded by Germany. The minutes of the meeting will be written by Italy.
Action taken: The date of the next Skype-Meeting will be discussed on Facebook.
Deadline: End of Mai 2016.

MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Blerim Llolla (Team 1/Germany)
DATE: 21st April 2016

Third meeting
EDP 2016- Group 1: Youth and employment
European Dialogue Project 2016
Team 1: Youth and Employment:
Minutes of the Team Meeting – Third meeting
DATE: 3rd June 2016
ATTENDEES: Elena Querzola & Francesco Vella (Italy) - Lukas Slavicek & Blerim Llolla (Chair: Germany) - Carina Diogo (Portugal),
ABSENT: Joana Ferreira
TIME: 08:08 pm – 08:44 pm (Germany/Italy) and 07:08 pm – 07:44 pm (Portugal)
Introduction
Because of some technical problems, we had to start and stop the call twice. Each team already posted their survey results on Facebook and Lea platform. Each team discussed the results and made a comparison and a final evaluation.
TOPIC 1 – Presentation of the survey results of each country
Discussion: Each country presented the results in details, providing statistical numbers and percentages. The survey was divided into three parts: internship and university role, working domestic and working abroad. Therefore, in order to make it easier to follow the conversation, the results have been presented in this sequence by each country one by one.
Action taken: Each team tried to provide explanations and justifications for the results.
TOPIC 2 – Comparison of the results
Discussion: The three groups discussed the results and made a comparison. They tried to provide explanations. For example, in Portugal and in Italy, the majority of the interviewees would like to work abroad, maybe due to the economic crisis. Differently, in Germany, young people do not feel the need to go abroad.
 Action taken: Each team made questions and actively took part to the debate.

TOPIC 3 – Final summary
Discussion: Each country summarized the main points both of the research and the debate.
Action taken: We concluded our research with a comparison and our final considerations. Then we chatted a little bit and said goodbye because it was our last Skype meeting.

NEXT MEETING – This was the last meeting
MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Francesco Vella & Elena Querzola (Italy)
DATE: 03 June 2016

Team Two

European Dialogue
Project

European Dialogue Project 2016
Workforce Diversity in the European Union

Team 2: Working Patterns: length and patterns of working time, life-long employment vs. lifelong learning

Italian team:
Stefani Nicole
Tavaroli Silvia

Portuguese team:
Peixoto Joel
Chen Maria

German team:
Kugler Loris
Nebgen Daniela

Date: 11 June 2016

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

Hochschule
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

Introduction

European Dialogue Project analyses European values, especially in Italy, Portugal and Germany. Three universities are involved in such a project: Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia, Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg and Instituto Superior Politécnico de Viseu.The aim of this project is to encourage the communication using English as a lingua franca.

The participants were divided in three teams, each one composed by two people of the same country. The Portuguese team was composed by Maria Chen and Joel Peixoto, the German team by Daniela Hebgen and Loris Kugler and the Italian team by Nicole Stefani and Silvia Tavaroli. We were supposed to conduct a survey on the topic: "Working Patterns: length and patterns of working time, lifelong employment vs. lifelong learning".

The idea was to find out how employees in the three different countries feel and think about their jobs and future perspectives. In order to draft the final compendium, we were required to complete different tasks: to discuss our topic, create a survey and discuss the results.

We arranged three meetings on Skype, and we created the survey by using Google Drive. The other tools used were "Lea online platform" and the social network Facebook to arrange date meetings and comment upon survey questions.

The Survey

The survey we conducted is divided in six sections each of them focusing on a specific aspect of working patterns. We decided to focus on the following topics:

Demographic information about the interviewees
Working Patterns
Job Conditions
Working atmosphere
Idea of lifelong employment
Idea of lifelong learning

The main purpose of this survey is to reveal the working patterns that our countries have in common and also the differences between them. Italy, Germany and Portugal are all part of the European Union but this does not always mean they share common habits.

1. Demographic informations about the interviewees

In this section of the survey, we asked some questions about the general background of the interviewees.

Italian team interviewed 63 people, Germany 43 and Portugal 33.

First of all, they were asked about their age (open question), their gender, nationality and their level of education (open questions).

The Italian interviewees were aged between 21 and 61 years old, whereas Portuguese ones were between 19 and 53. In Germany, interviewees were aged between 21 and 64 years old. So, Portuguese interviewees were younger than German and Italian ones.

The level of education varies from Lower Secondary school to Master degree. All three countries have people who attended Lower Secondary school, and others who have a Mas-

ter's degree or Phd: in Italy, as well as in Germany, the majority of interviewees have an A level, so they attended High school.

For what concerns gender, in Italy and Portugal most of respondents were female (56.7% and 54.5%), whereas in the German survey there were a male majority.

2. Working patterns

On the topic of working patterns, we decided to ask some specific questions about employment, the type of contract and holidays, in order to analyse some working habits and compare them with the other two countries. Most of Italian interviewees are employed (90.3%) and have a full time job (89.1%). One surprising fact is that comparing these results with Portuguese team, their respondents have a rate of unemployment of 55%. The unemployment rate in Portugal is really bewildering, it's a lot higher than Italy or Germany.

In Italy, the unemployment rate in 2015 was 11.9% (ISTAT), in Germany 5.1%, whereas in Portugal 13.6%.

If we look at the question "How many years have you been working in your company?" the three countries answers present some different data.

The average employee stays at a job in Portugal is for 4.4 years, in Germany 10.9, whereas in Italy 13.5. This means that in Italy people do not have the tendency to change their job.

Comparing the results with those of the other two countries, Italy has a majority in people having a full time job (89.1%), whereas in Germany and Portugal this rate is lower (81% and 77%).

Moreover, in Italy full time workers usually work 40 hours per week or more (60%). Among the part time workers, 57.1% work more than 20 hours.

We can conclude that Italian workers have long working hours whether they have a part time job or a full time one. This can be noticed also at the question "How many breaks do you take and how much they last?": the majority answered they can take only few breaks and for few minutes (10-20) and they generally depend on the working schedule.

3. Job conditions

For what concerns working conditions, we focused on the topics of health insurance and maternity leave. Whereas the 70% of interviewees declared themselves satisfied with the health insurance, 40.7% answered that problems can occur with the maternity leave and only 54.2% specified that it should be regulated by law. The fact that problems can arise despite the maternity leave being regulated by law, reveals a certain degree of dissatisfaction among Italian interviewees. Compared with Portuguese results, in Italy maternity leave is a bigger issue, whereas in Portugal health insurance can represent a problem, because 60% of the interviewees are not satisfied with it.

In Germany everything is strictly regulated by law and respected, so the German team did not apply these questions.

Another surprising result concerns working productivity. We asked the interviewees if they think Italy has a high productivity and 57.6% of them answered "no". This seems to be a paradox, because Italians work long hours per week and per day but still, they think our country does not have a high productivity. Only 42.4% think Italy is productive. When they were

asked to motivate their answers, they said because of the high quality products, of the good industrial and artisanal sector, a major tourist potential and people working hard. Compared to the other two countries, our results are similar to those of Portugal, where the 62.5% think Portugal does not have high productivity because of their mentality and culture (doing things at the last minute, too many breaks and coffees). After some deeper research, we found out that Italy's productivity is decreasing, compared to all other countries, in spite of all the potential (for this reason it is called the sleeping beauty country).

4. Working Atmosphere

As we can observe in the graph below Portugal, Italy and Germany seem to prefer a better working atmosphere rather than a higher salary and they are also aware of what "mobbing" is.

According to the definition "Mobbing, in the context of human beings, means bullying of an individual by a group, in any context, such as a family, peer group, school, workplace, neighborhood, community, or online. When it occurs as emotional abuse in the workplace, such as "ganging up" by co-workers, subordinates or superiors, to force someone out of the workplace through rumor, innuendo, intimidation, humiliation, discrediting, and isolation, it is also referred to as malicious, nonsexual, nonracial / racial, general harassment."

This kind of behaviour on the workplace can deeply affect a worker's productivity and his/her health and this is well-known by most of the interviewees which, in fact expressed their preference for a better working atmosphere.

Concluding, according to our survey, a better working atmosphere with well established personal relationships, scheduled meetings and fixed rest breaks and holidays allow workers to feel better on the workplace making them more productive.
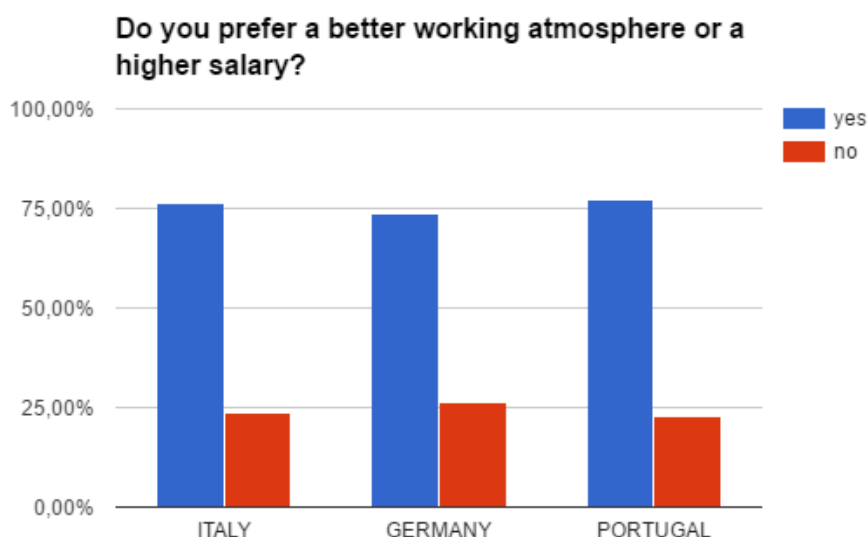
## 5. Idea of lifelong employment

Lifelong employment or a "job for life" is a concept that is in evolution, being strictly connected to the crisis and the evolution of the society. Nowadays young people do not necessarily

search a job that lasts for life while in the past this was really important in order to start an independent life.

Our survey reveals that more than 50 % of the sample of the three countries answered that is "really important" or at least "important" to have a job for life.

Percentages vary: Germany is 58.5%, Portugal is 78.1% and Italy 76.5%.

These results suggest that perhaps in Germany it is easier to find another job if one decides to change his/her current job, while in Portugal and Italy, because of the precarious situations, this seems more difficult and people are still very attached to the idea of security ensured by having a job for life.
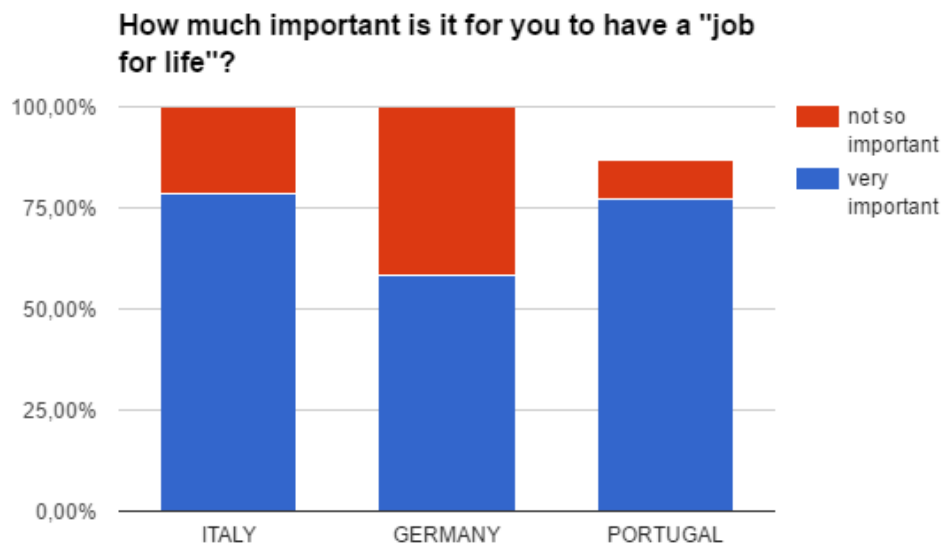

6. Idea of lifelong learning

The lifelong learning is an important concept in the world of work. Being updated and ready to learn new competences, skills and concepts is really important in a world that changes everyday thanks to the Internet and the worldwide connections.

The results of our survey confirm that people are well aware of the importance of lifelong learning; in fact, almost no one of the interviewees in the three countries answered that lifelong learning is not important.

A lot of the respondents would also be willing to apply in the future for a University of the Third Age, in order to improve their skills and knowledge and most of them usually follow updating courses on the workplace.

What is striking, in Italy in particular, is that people agree with the importance of lifelong learning but when it comes to pay for courses they will not be willing to do so.

If they are employed, they expect their enterprise to pay for these courses while in Germany it's the opposite and most of the interviewees answered that they will be willing to pay for updating courses if this can help their career.

Do you think lifelong learning is important?
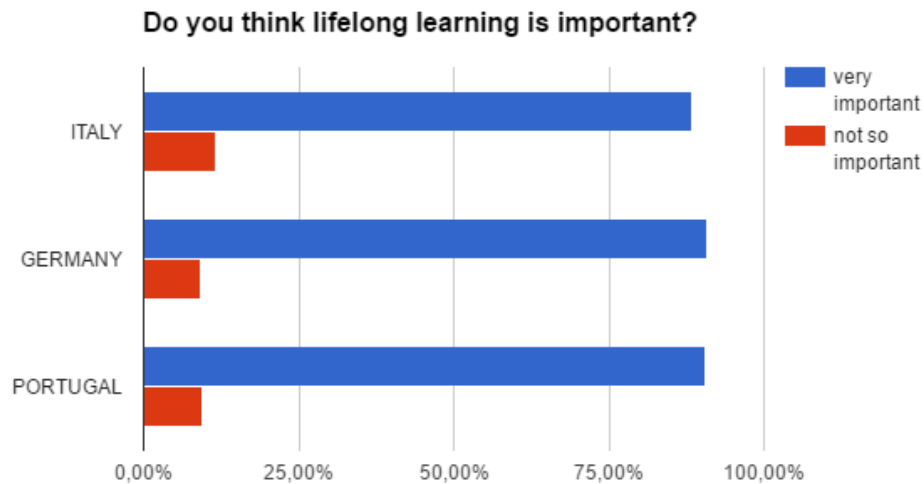
Hofstede's Criteria

All the results we have collected up to now can be compared with the studies and theories of the social psychologist Hofstede, whose studies of cultural differences are fundamental to understand the values of each culture. He analysed different cultures through five dimensions that allow him to classify their behaviour:

- Individualism vs Collectivism
- Uncertainty Avoidance
- Power Distance
- Masculinity vs Femininity
- Long term vs Short term orientation to time.

In the following graph, Hofstede indicates how these 5 dimensions are distributed in the 3 countries that participates to our survey.

Hofstede's dimensions
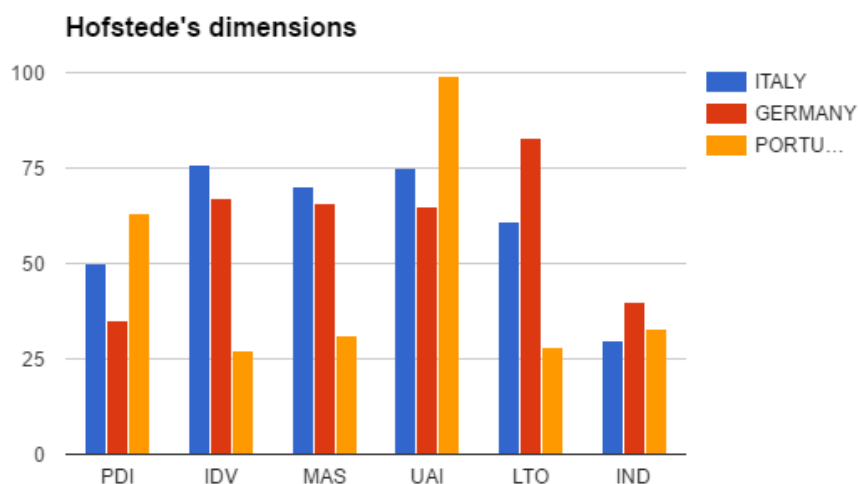
1.Individualism vs. Collectivism

At a score of 76 Italy seems to be an Individualist culture for Hofstede but the results collected in the survey seems to say exactly the opposite. For Italians, family and friends are extremely important. As we saw previously, a better working atmosphere is always preferred to a higher salary and when looking for a job, it's better if it is near family and friends. Of course, for Italians, having their own personal ideas and objectives in life is very important but sometimes it can happen that, in order to achieve their goals, they behave in an individualistic way neglecting family and friends.

The German society is also an Individualistic culture (67). As we saw through our survey, Germans prefer having a certain stability in work and life and this is reflected also in the relationships. A lot of people surveyed worked for the same company for more than 20 years so they had also achieved a better position. This is because German people strong believe in the idea of self-actualization and loyalty which seems to be very important for them. They have a very strong sense of responsibility and duty, they are also really direct in communication which can sometimes lead to an individualist behaviour.

2. Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension

The dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance has to do with the way a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known. This ambiguity brings with it anxiety and different cultures learned to deal with this anxiety in different ways.

Italians with a score of 75 are not comfortable in ambiguous situations. In order to avoid ambiguous situations Italians prefer having a lot of rules to control everything and in fact, there is an extremely complex bureaucratic and legal system and the Italian penal and civil code are really complicated and full of clauses and details. For what concerns the working atmosphere, Italians prefer having everything planned carefully. Everything must be in order before work meetings and everything must be scheduled, otherwise a more flexible approach can be very stressful.

We can observe this behaviour in the survey: Italians usually prefer taking breaks only after they completed a certain task or work. For this reasons rest breaks can change according to the amount of labour even if this causes sometimes a stressful atmosphere.

The same happens in Germany which is an uncertainty avoidant country (65); rules must be always followed and respected as we can see in German law system. Through the survey we noticed that even if Portugal and Italy have strong rules, sometimes problems can occur (for example the maternity leave in Italy or the Health Care system in Portugal) while Germany seems to be perfectly organised. This well-organised system allows people to feel more secure about their life and their job.

Portugal is another Uncertainty Avoidance country; it has a score of 99 on this dimension and thus, it has a very high preference for avoiding uncertainty. Hofstede affirms that "Countries exhibiting high Uncertainty Avoidance maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas. In these cultures there is an emotional need for rules (even if the rules never seem to work) time is money, people have an inner urge to be busy and work hard, precision and punctuality are the norm, innovation may be resisted, security is an important element in individual motivation." According to our results, in fact, in Portugal it's really important to have a "job for life" that assure people a certain sta-

bility and money but the law system seems not to work correctly as many problems have emerged and many things could be improved.

3. Power distance

The dimension of Power Distance deals with the way less powerful members of an organisation accept or expect that power is distributed unequally.

Italy has a score of 50, so this means that Italians have a preference for equality and the decentralisation of power and decision-making. Especially the younger generation dislikes control and formal supervision, so there is a tendency for teamwork and an open management style. The survey confirm this: Italian workers like having their autonomy, and prefer team work. It also came out that they establish their breaks, their vacation days, without anyone telling them what to do. Moreover, they said to prefer a better working atmosphere which confirm their preference for teamwork and positive relationships with colleagues.

Portugal's score on this dimension (63) reflects that hierarchical distance is generally accepted and the most powerful people within the organisations are legitimate to have privileges. So, employers have the control over their employees and often, the subordinate is not considered as a relevant work force.

A lack of interest towards a subordinate implies that this one is not relevant to the organization or the company. As a consequence, employees feel unmotivated to work. The results from the Portuguese survey confirmed that: in fact, when the question "Why do you think Portugal has a low productivity?" had been asked, interviewees answered they feel unmotivated, they had no interest and they perceived low salaries.

For Germany is exactly the opposite, it's a low power distant country even if it's far lower than Portugal (63) or Italy (50). Germans prefer team work, a participative communication employer-subordinate, control is disliked and leadership is challenged to show expertise and well accepted when it's based on it.

The results of the survey reflect this last point. At the question "Do you think lifelong learning is important?" all three countries answered "yes", but only German interviewees said they would be willing to pay out of their own pocket to attend updating courses. Moreover, 80% of the interviewees prefer having a better working atmosphere. In the end, they do not have any issue with health insurance or maternity leave, because of their tendency to respect laws.

4. Indulgence vs. Restraint

This sixth dimension was added later than the others and it analyses how people of a country deal with their impulses and desires.

Italy with a score of 30 can be considered as a restrained country. Societies with a low score tend to be cynical and pessimistic. We noticed that on our survey because most of the people interviewed answered that Italy has a low productivity even if they also admit to work long hours with little breaks. Italians are also self-critical regarding their society, and regarding the system in general.

Furthermore, Italians seem not to put emphasis on leisure time and gratification of their desires, and this came out from the survey where more than a half of interviewees work more than 40 hours per week. So they do not have much free time.

Portugal too has a low score (33), for this reason it is a restrained country. The results were, in fact similar to Italian results. Also Portuguese interviewees seem to be cynical and self-critical regarding Portugal productivity. The majority think Portugal has a low productivity, and among the motivation they provided the most surprising was "because of portuguese mentality" which is kind of negative comment about Portuguese culture.

Conclusion

When we discussed the results with the others team, we noticed that the respondents to the survey share some common patterns.

First of all, in every country the majority search and prefer a job that possibly lasts for life which ensure financial security and near the family.

Lifelong learning is another key point; all countries confirm the importance of being updated and ready to learn new competences and skills on the workplace. A better working atmosphere is always preferred to a higher salary.

We can conclude that for these three countries personal relationships play a major role: having a job is important to sustain the family and good relationships on the workplace are fundamental to be productive and avoid problems such as mobbing and health problems.

Nevertheless differences exceed similarities.

When it comes to health insurance and maternity leave, Germany has a more efficient system than Portugal and Italy, where some problems can occur when talking about health insurance (Portugal) and maternity leave (Italy).

Both Portugal and Italy think their productivity is low, whereas Germany is well aware of being a productive country.

Finally, the answers have been analyzed into Hofstede dimensions and most of the survey results have been confirmed.

Cultural behaviours and attitudes vary from country to country, especially when talking about work. Everyone has different mental attitudes, behaviours and priorities that should be respected and taken into consideration when it comes to intercultural communication.

In conclusion, when people choose to use English as a lingua franca, they decide to adopt this as a medium to facilitate communication but this could not work if used alone. In intercultural communication we need to consider culture, habits and different behaviours because they play a very important role and if not considered they can lead to several misunderstandings or to the end of the communication.

<div style="text-align: right">

Stefani Nicole
Tavaroli Silvia

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APPENDIX:

Minutes of the Team Meeting

First Meeting
DATE: April, 14. 2016
ATTENDEES: Joel Peixoto, Maria Chen (Portugal), Loris Kugler, Daniela Nebgen (Germany), Nicole Stefani, Silvia Tavaroli (Italy).

ABSENT: -
TIME: Portugal: 8:31pm; Germany/Italy: 9:31pm.

TOPIC 1 - Personal and School Introduction
Discussion: Each student talked about himself/herself and about the school and the course that they are studying. Maria and Joel are taking a degree in Tourism in the Polytechnic Institute of Viseu. They are now in the second year. Silvia and Nicole are taking a degree in Languages for Communication in International Enterprises and Organizations in the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia.
Loris and Daniela are taking a degree in Business Administration in the Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg.

TOPIC 2 – Themes for the survey
Discussion: The themes chosen are: productivity in the country and Working hours; Holidays and working on weekends; Country's health insurance; Mobbing and harassments in the job; Job for life.
Action taken: Every country will prepare a list of 15 questions on the topics discussed before the next meeting.
Deadline: April, 18th

TOPIC 3 – Targets for the survey
Discussion: The targets chosen are: All workers (including working students, unemployed people who have working experience, …)

NEXT MEETING: Monday, April 18th. 10:30 am (Portugal) and 11:30 am (Germany/Italy)
MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Joel Peixoto and Maria Chen
DATE: Thursday, April 16th

SECOND MEETING
ATTENDEES: Joel Peixoto and Maria Chen (Portugal), Nicole Stefani and Silvia Tavaroli (Italy), Daniela Nebgen (Germany)
ABSENT: Loris Kugler (Germany)
TIME: Germany/Italy: 11:30 a.m.; Portugal: 10.30 a.m.

TOPIC 1 – Reading of the prepared questionnaires
Discussion: The teams from Germany, Italy and Portugal have already read the lists of survey questions from the other participating teams before the beginning of the meeting.
The teams had the opportunity for enquiries and explaining the idea behind several questions to the other two teams.

TOPIC 2 – Questionnaire for the survey
Discussion: The three teams discussed about the given questionnaires and picked the 20 most suitable survey questions (see attachment).
The questions include the following issues: Working time, vacation days, health topics, mobbing, elderly learning, long-term employment.

TOPIC 3 – Ways to conduct the survey
Discussion: The three teams all agreed on conducting the survey online via Google Forms, Surveymonkey, etc. in the language of their countries. Until the 15 th of May each team should carry out the survey with at least 40 people.
Actions taken: The three teams will translate the questionnaire into Portuguese, Italian and German. The German team set the date for the next Skype meeting (see below).

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 31 st, 8.00 p.m. (Italy/Germany) resp. 7.00 p.m. (Portugal)
MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Daniela Nebgen
DATE: Saturday, April 23 rd, 2016

THIRD MEETING
DATE: 31/05/16
ATTENDEES: Joel Peixoto, Maria Chen (Portuguese team), Daniela Nebgen, Loris Kugler (German team) and Silvia Tavaroli, Nicole Stefani (Italian team)
ABSENT:
TIME: 8 pm (Italy and Germany) 7 pm (Portugal)

Introduction: Greetings

TOPIC 1 - The Portuguese team discussed the results obtained from the survey.
Discussion: Maria and Joel made their presentation of the survey focusing on the points they found more interesting. More than 55% of the interviewees resulted unemployed, most of them were not satisfied with Health Care systems and with the low wages.
Action taken: German and Italian teams asked some questions about the results because of the great differences between the data of the other countries.

TOPIC 2 – Discussion of the data
Discussion: The German team has highlighted some differences and similarities between the countries and they also presented their own results. Comments and critical discussion about the findings.

TOPIC 3 – Italian team presented their findings.
Discussion: The Italian team compared the results with Portugal and Germany, highlighting similarities and differences. The key points of the surveys were also showed and explained.
Action taken: Participants agree, in case of necessity, to compare again the results on the Facebook group.
NEXT MEETING: it was the last one
MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Italian Team (Silvia Tavaroli & Stefani Nicole)

Survey Questions

1. Demographic:
Age?
Gender?
Country?
Level of education?

2. Working patterns
Are you currently employed? Yes / No
If yes: Do you work full-time or part-time?
If full-time: How many hours do you work per week? 38, 40, 42 or more hours
If part-time: How many hours do you work per week? 10 or less, 10-20, 20 and more
Do you usually take all your vacation days/weeks in the same year or you postpone them to the following year? Same year / postpone to the following year
How many years have you been working in your recent job/company? Open question

3. Productivity
How many hours do you work per day? Open question
How much breaks do you have? And how long are they? Open question
Do you think the productivity is high in your country? Yes/No
If no, why do you think so? Open question

4. Job conditions
Are extra hours included in your contract or are they paid separately? included/paid separately
Is your contract temporary or permanent? temporary/ permanent
When looking for a job, is health insurance a condition that you are looking for?
Multiple choice
a) Health insurance mandatory in my country anyway
b) Yes, the health insurance is an important condition for me
c) No, it is not highly important to me
If health insurance is mandatory in your country:
Are you satisfied with the conditions?
Yes/No
Do you need to hand in a note from the doctor saying you are sick? Yes/no
In your country, does pregnancy/maternity leave cause problems to your job?
a) In my country maternity leave is regulated by law
b) Yes, problems can occur
c) No, there are no problems due to maternity leave

5. Working atmosphere
Are you aware of mobbing at your working place? Yes/no
If yes, do you think that "mobbing" can affect worker's productivity? Yes/No
Which do you prefer? Higher salary or better working atmosphere? Choose one
How important is it to you to have your job near your family? 1 – Not important, 5 – Very Important
Sometimes in the workplace poor performers are rarely removed from their positions because of their high position in the hierarchy. Have you ever noticed this situation? Yes/No

6. Idea of lifelong employment
Do you think a "job for life" is important? 1 – Not important, 5 – Very Important
Which age do you think is the most appropriate for retirement? Open question

7. Idea of lifelong learning

Do you think lifelong learning is important? 1 – Not important, 5 – Very Important

Throughout Europe there are many Universities of the Third Age. Are you aware the existence of Universities for the third age? Yes/No

Do you see yourself attending one of these universities when older? Scale 1- 5

In your job do you take courses to improve your skills and knowledge? Yes/No

Are you willing to pay for education/courses from your own pocket? Scale 1-5

Team Three

European Dialogue Project 2016
Workforce Diversity in the European Union

Team 3: Work-Family Issues

Italian team:	**Portuguese team:**	**German team:**
St		

Date: 11 June 2016

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

Hochschule
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

Introduction

The European Dialogue Project offers many students from different countries, namely Italy, Portugal and Germany the opportunity to communicate using English as a Lingua Franca in order to compare and discuss data coming from the three countries.

The importance of this project is to give students the chance to use English as a Lingua Franca namely "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option"[3] in an international environment in which the language is adopted and adapted by users from different lingua-cultural backgrounds.

In addition, is interesting to underline that the three countries that took part at the European Dialogue Project come from of Kachru's model Outer circle, in which English is spoken as a foreign language. Furthermore, Italy, Germany and Portugal are placed in different circles of Cramer's model, who has proposed a revision of Kachru's model applied to the European countries. According to Cramer's model there are two gray areas of transition in order to provide an account for the diachronic changes of English in Europe, brought about by the growing mastery acquired by Europeans. In particular, Germany is placed in Transition Circle 1, between the Expanding and the Outer Circle, whereas Italy and Portugal can be found in the Expanding Circle.[4] According to Cramer's model German students are expected to be more proficient in the English language whereas the Italian and Portuguese ones could have more difficulties.

In conclusion, the European Dialogue Project ran from March 14th to June 12th and it has been divided into seven tasks, necessary to provide an analysis of the data collected with the survey. Each team had to complete different tasks each week such as chairing one of the visual meetings, write the minutes of the meeting, recording it, organize the following Skype conversation and so on. In addition, coordination between the three groups has been fundamental in order to agree on the date of the visual meetings but also on the questions for the survey. To sum up, the teams had the opportunity to stay in touch thanks to many different electronic tools, such as Skype for the visual meetings, Facebook group, very important to organize the tasks, to discuss some aspects of the project and give further information and LEA, an online platform of the Bonn-Rhine-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, very useful in order to share files and documents necessary to complete the given tasks.

This compendium will focus on the analysis of the topic: Work and Family Issues, namely reconciliation between work and family life, maternity and parents at work. It is divided into three chapters: the first one takes into consideration the analysis of the survey and it focuses on the difference between the three countries that took part at the European Dialogue Project. The second chapter stresses the importance of Hofstede's dimensions and apply some of them to the results of the questionnaire in order to see if there is a match between Hofstede's analysis of different cultures and the data collected in Germany, Portugal and Italy. The third and last chapter wants to explain the usefulness of English as a Lingua Franca in an intercultural interaction: the transcriptions of the Skype conversations are provided and a brief analysis of the most common pragmatic and lexico-grammatical features are presented.

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[3]Poppi, F. (2012) *Global Interactions in English as a Lingua Franca. How written communication is changing under the influence of electronic media and new contexts of use*. Bern: Peter Lang, page 15

[4]Poppi, F. (2012) *Global Interactions in English as a Lingua Franca. How written communication is changing under the influence of electronic media and new contexts of use*. Bern: Peter Lang, page 167

WORK-FAMILY ISSUES SURVEY

Together with Portuguese and German students we chose the 18 questions to be included in the questionnaire. Each group created the survey in its native language using Google Drive Module that allows you to send the questionnaire to people through a link. This program was very convenient and simple because it gave us the opportunity to collect responses in a short time, orderly and clearly. Each of us has sent the link to friends and family, who have sent it to acquaintances. Finally, we analyzed the results obtained in the sample, then we have compared them to those obtained by the other two groups.

The purpose of the survey was to find out information about how work-family issues can influence people's life in Italy, Germany and Portugal and which are the main problems related to them.

COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE

GENDER

The Italian sample of our survey consisted of 52 people: 33 women (63.5%) and 19 men (36.5%), so with a high majority of females.

It is possible to see a higher majority of women in the German and in the Portuguese sample in which:

In Germany among 41 participants 80.49% of them were women.

In Portugal among 29 participants 82.8% of them were women.

The total amount of women of our sample was 90 (74% of the whole sample), while men were just 32.
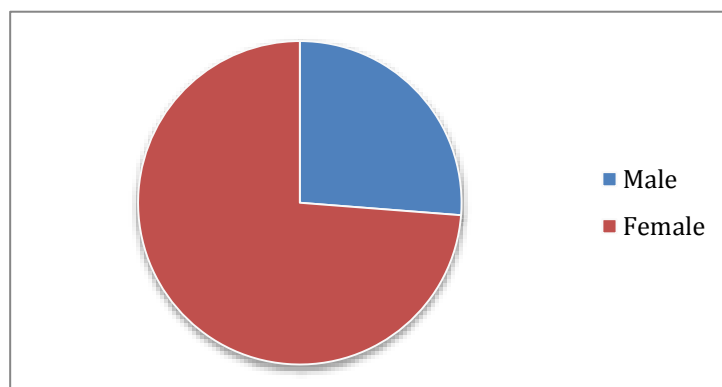
AGE

The age groups selected in the Italian survey was very large, from less than 30 years old to 50 years old or older. The two opposite and furthest age groups were the most analyzed and both consisted of 17 people (32.7%). This situation is given by the fact that we interviewed more our friends, who are less than 30 years old, and our parents, who are more than 50 years old. 11 people (21.2%) were between 40-49 years old and only 7 people (13.5%) between 30-39 years old.

In the Portuguese sample it is very clear that the majority of people were younger than 30 years old (62%), while the other age groups were almost equally distributed. The lowest percentage was 10.3 of people older than 50 years old.

In the German sample there was a majority of people younger than 30 years old, but it was not so high (36.6%), because another similar percentage can be seen among people between 40 and 49 years old (31.7%). The other two age groups were around 15%.

Having a full view of the sample we can notice that there was a high majority of the youngest age group (41%).
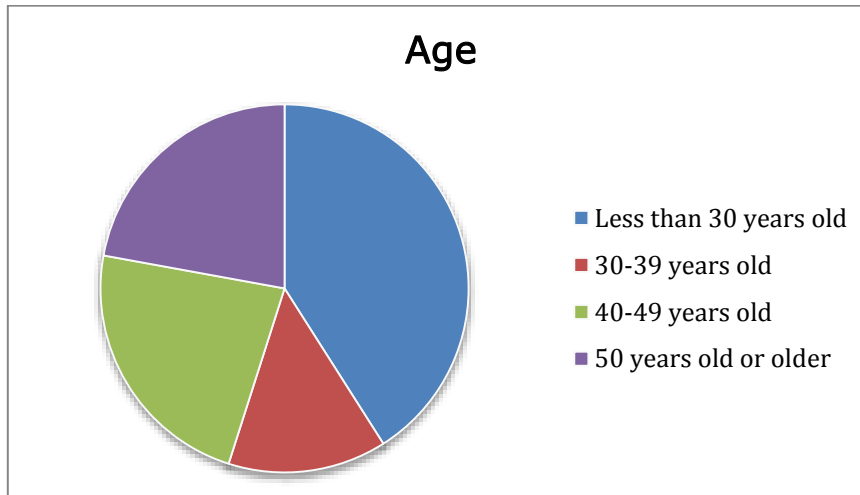
EDUCATION LEVEL

Most of the sample has graduated from high school (40.4%) or has a Bachelor degree (38.5%), therefore we mainly dealt with educated people. In addition, the percentage of the individuals that has a Master degree was not low because 9 people answered the question like that. On the other hand, the percentage of the middle school was very low, only 3.8%, therefore 2 people.

Referring to the middle school level, we can observe a big difference between the Italian results and those obtained in Portugal, where the percentage was 20.7%, higher than the one in Italy and in Germany.

The percentage of Bachelor degrees in Portugal is similar to the Italian one, it is 31.5%, while in Germany it is lower than the other two countries (24.4%). On the other hand, the percentage of Master Degrees is very low in Portugal, while it is similar between Italy and Germany, around 16%.
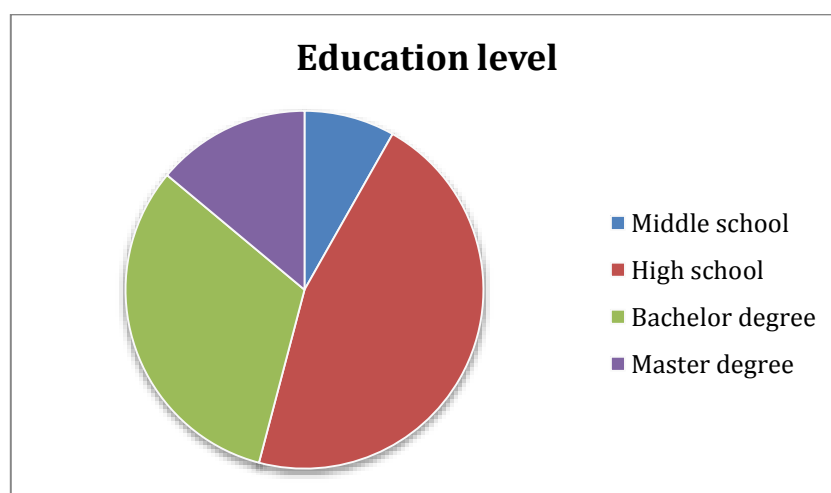
PROFESSION

The variety of professions analyzed by the Italian survey is very large. We found: 18 employees and among them there are accountants, secretaries and receptionists, 7 managers and surprisingly 4 nurses. Therefore, we could observe better the opinion of the employees, the majority of whom have a fulltime job.

Similar results have been given by the other two surveys, in which they consider also students and workers.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN

In the Italian survey we observed that 22 people answered the question saying that they had 2 children, 17 people saying that they didn't have children, 9 people had 1 child and only 4 people had 3 children. No one in the sample had more than 3 children.

Also in the German survey there was a majority of people with 2 children, and there was also a high percentage of the sample with only one child. No German interviewees had no children, neither more than 3 children.

On the contrary, in Portugal the majority of the sample had no children and one person had 4 children.
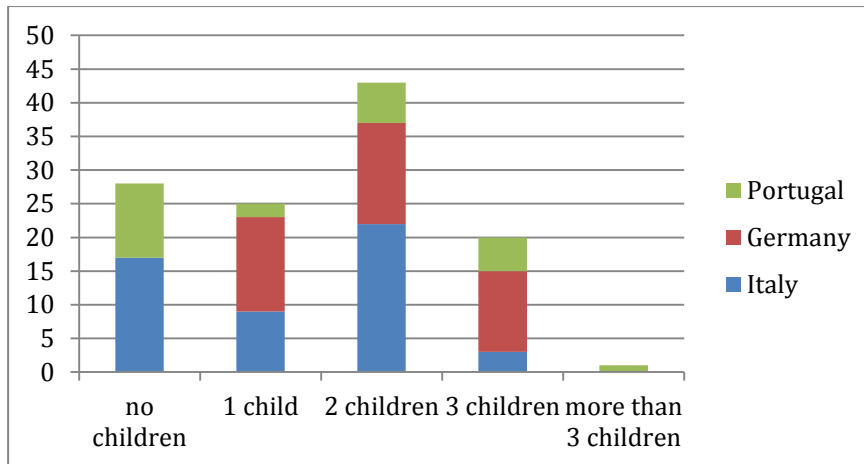
WORKING HOURS PER WEEK

19 people answered the question saying that they work 40 hours per week, they have a regular full-time job of 8 hours per day and 5 days a week. 14 people work between 30 to 39 hours a week. 9 people work less than 30 hours a week and 9 people work more than 40 hours a week.

In addition, in Portugal the majority of people answered that they work 40 hours per week and one person of the sample doesn't have a fixed schedule.

On the contrary, in the German sample the highest percentage is among people that work less than 30 hours a week, therefore the majority of German interviewees has a part-time job.
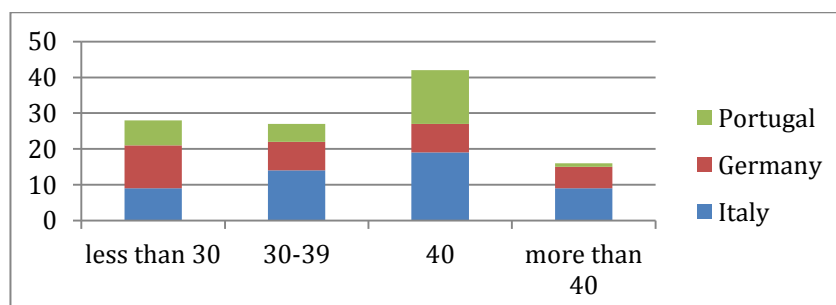
QUESTIONS

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT PARENTS NEED SOME HELP TO LOOK AFTER CHILDREN WHILE THEY ARE AT WORK

In this question, the majority of the Italian sample (48%) answered "strongly agree" and 28.8% agree, therefore a lot of them thought that parents need to ask grandparents or babysitters to take care of their children during the day. Only 3 people didn't agree.

The results of the Portuguese and German survey were very similar, the majority of Portuguese people (72.4%) strongly agreed and 17% agreed, in a similar way the majority of German people (41.5%) agreed with the sentence and 39% agreed.

In both German and Portuguese survey no one answered saying "strongly disagree".
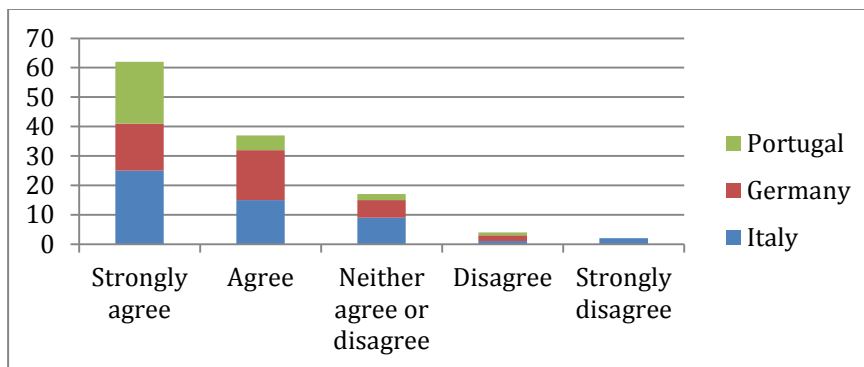
LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT TIME TO SPEND WITH THE FAMILY IS SUFFICIENT

In Italy a percentage of 44% of the sample answered the question saying that they disagreed, and 25% answered "neither agree nor disagree".

The major difference is between the Italian and German results, because in the latter the majority of the sample (39%) agreed with the sentence, but a high percentage was also neutral (29%) and 24% disagreed.

In Portugal most people were neutral and the others were equally distributed between "agree" and "disagree".

No one in the German sample answered "strongly disagree", while in the Portuguese survey no one answered "strongly agree".
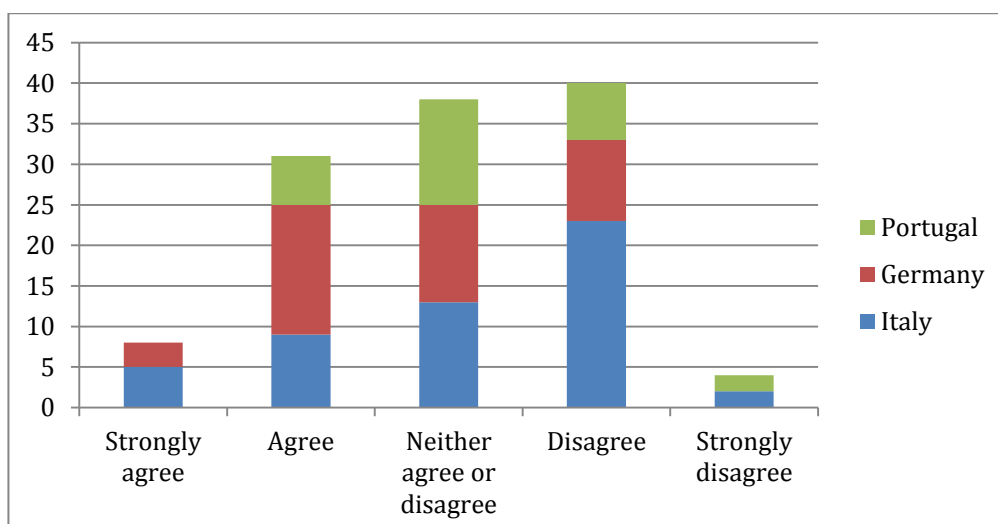
LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT **THERE ARE ENOUGH CHILDCARE OP-TIONS THAT ENABLE PARENTS TO WORK**

20 Italian people (40%) answered "neither agree nor disagree" with the statement, therefore the majority was pretty indifferent to this subject. But it was very strange the uniformity of the answers, because 22% of the sample answered that they agreed but another 22% disagreed and we can find the same equality in the opposite ends: 8% strongly agreed and 8% strongly disagreed.

There is a big difference between the German results and those obtained by the Portuguese team. In Germany the majority of the sample strongly disagreed (41.5%) and disagreed (39%), only 2.4% strongly agreed. The Portuguese sample is distributed in the opposite way, because the majority (52%) strongly agreed and 38% agreed, only one person strongly disagreed.

In the German survey no one answered "agree", while in the Portuguese one no one answered "disagree".
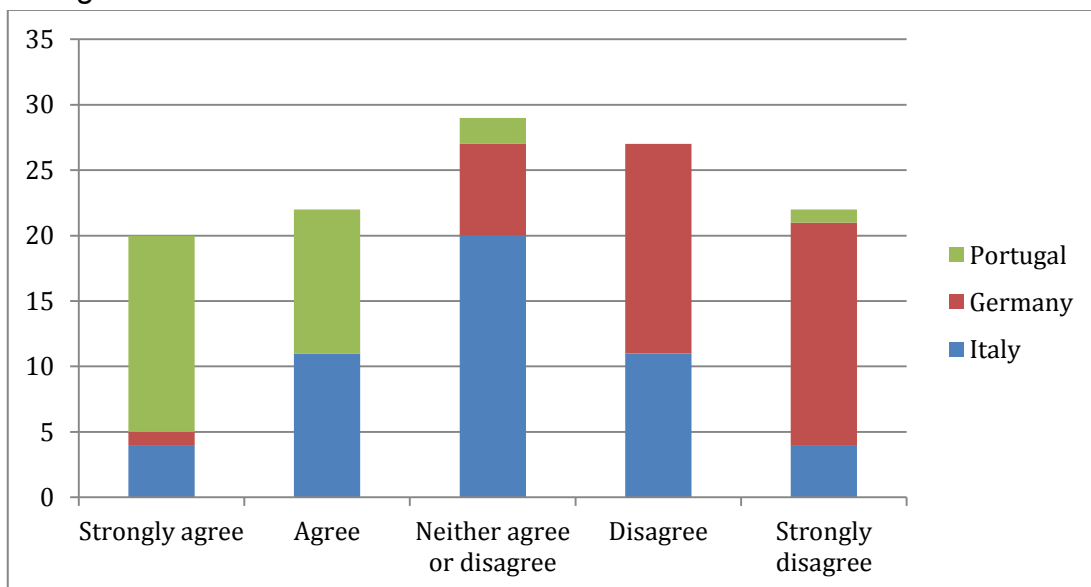
LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT **WORK RESPONSIBILITIES INTERFERE WITH FAMILY LIFE**

42.3% of the Italian sample agreed with the statement, therefore their work influenced their family life concerning time, duties and relationships. 19 % strongly agreed but the same percentage disagreed.

Furthermore in the German sample the majority (34%) agreed, but there was a high percentage of people that disagreed (22%) and that neither agreed nor disagreed (24%). In Portugal the highest percentage (43%) was the one of people who neither agreed nor disagreed but the rest of the sample answered more with "agree" (29%) and "strongly agree" (18%).
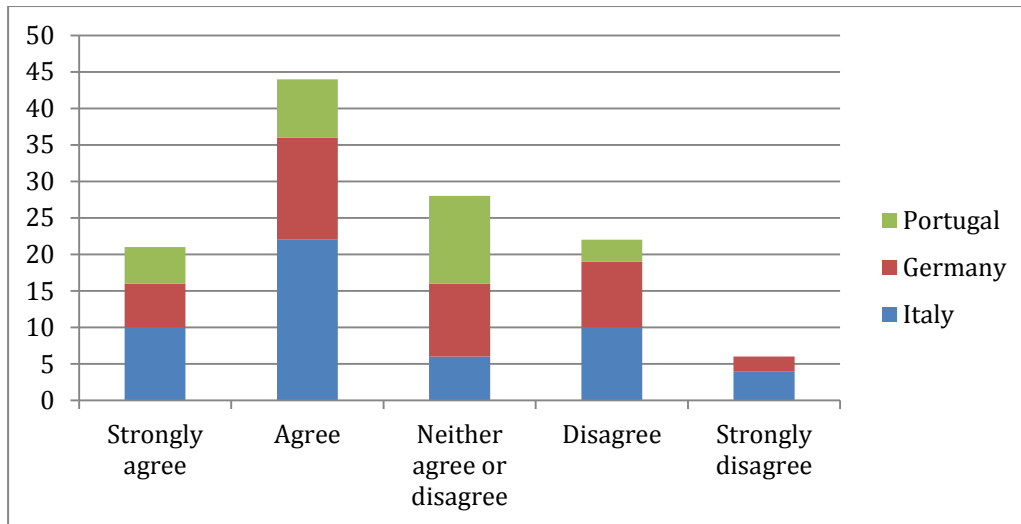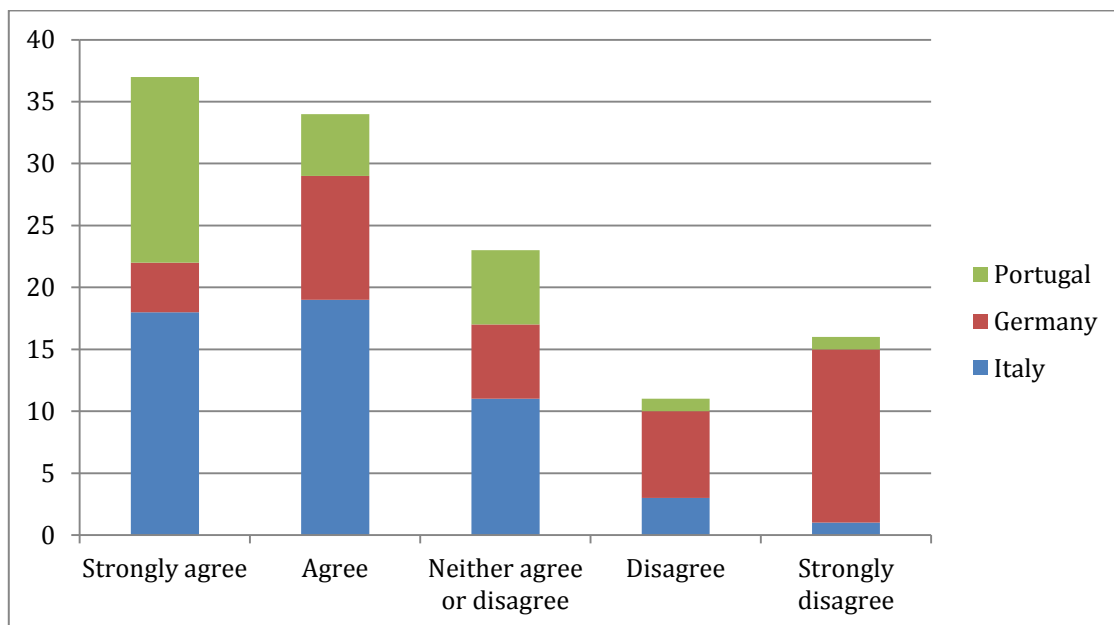
LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT THE **RECENT ECONOMIC CRISIS HAS INFLUENCED FAMILY HABITS IN THE INTERVIEWEES' COUNTRY**

The Italian result consisted of 36.5% of the sample agreed with this statement and 34.6% strongly agreed. Only 1 person strongly disagreed.

It is possible to find the same results in the Portuguese survey in which 54% of the sample answered "strongly agree".

The majority of the German sample (34%) answered "strongly disagree" but, on the other side, a high percentage of 24% answered "agree".

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT **DECISIONS TAKEN IN THE INTERVIEW-EES' WORKPLACE LET HIM/HER BALANCE WORK AND FAMILY**

36.5% of the Italian sample agreed that their works allowed them to reconcile professional duties with family life and 23% neither agreed nor disagreed. On the other hand, 19.2% disagreed with the statement.

In the same way, in Portugal and in Germany the majority of the sample agreed with the sentence. In the Portuguese survey 36% agreed and another 36% strongly agreed. No one answered "strongly agree".

In the German survey 30% agreed, but there was also a 20% of the sample that disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed.
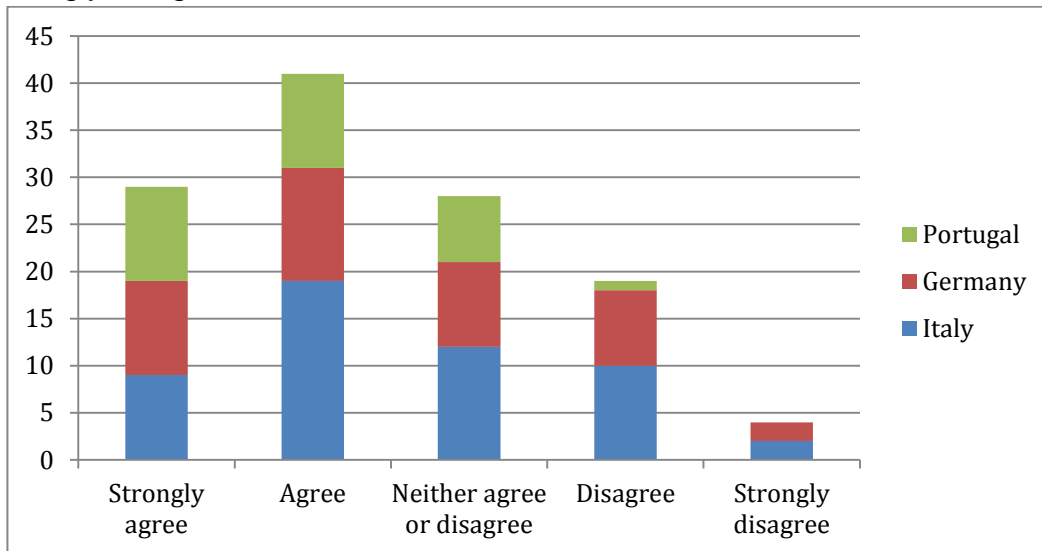
LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT **IT IS DIFFICULT NOWADAYS FOR A YOUNG WOMAN TO START A FAMILY AND GET ON IN HER CAREER AT THE SAME TIME**

According to this sentence, it is possible to see that in the Italian sample there is a strong majority (58%) that answered "strongly agree" and 27% replied with "agree".

Although in the other surveys the majority of the sample answered in the same way, namely they agreed with the sentence, but the percentage was not as high as the one in Italy. In Portugal and Germany the same percentage of 39% agreed and 25% of the sample strongly agreed in both survey.

Contrary to the Italian results, in which only 3.8% of the sample was neutral, in the other two surveys 29% answered with "neither agree nor disagree".
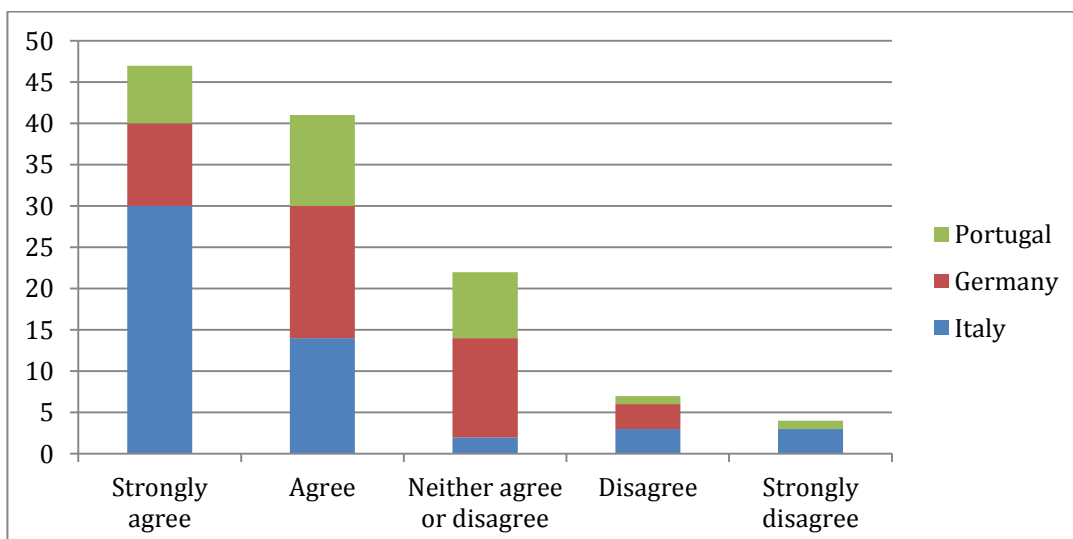
LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT **HAVING CHILDREN MAY AFFECT THE RATE OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR FORCE**

A high number of Italian interviewees (55%) agreed with this statement and 23.5% strongly agreed. Only one person answered "strongly disagree".

At the same time, the majority of the Portuguese interviewees (43%) answered "agree", but a percentage of 25% was neutral to the topic. The same happened in the German survey, in which 46% of the sample agreed and 34% was neutral.
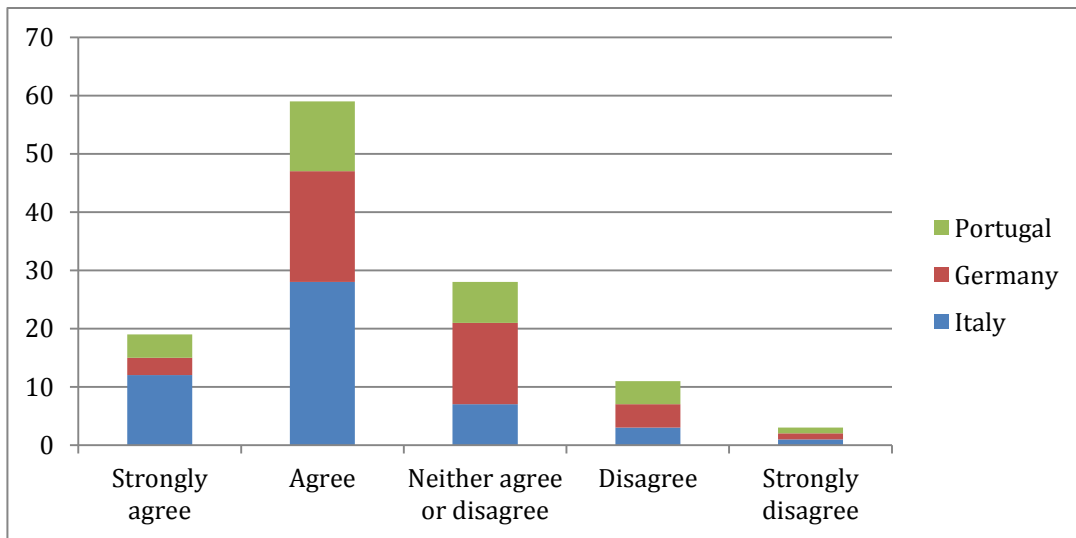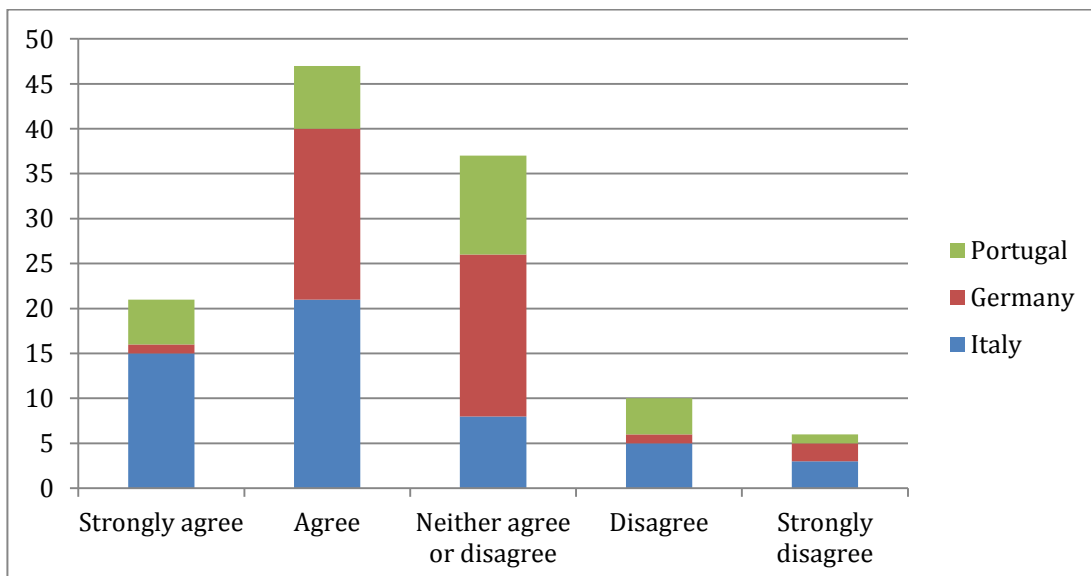

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT THE **NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF A COUPLE IS INFLUENCED BY THE INCREASE OF WORKING HOURS FOR WOMEN**

40.4 % of the Italian sample answered "agree" and 29% "strongly agree".

Also in the German sample the majority (46%) agreed but there was a high percentage (44%) of people that answered "neither agree nor disagree".

In the Portuguese survey the highest percentage was 39% of neutral people, and the other answers are distributed more towards "agree".

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT **THERE SHOULD BE MORE POLITICAL REGULATIONS CONCERNING WORK AND FAMILY LIFE**

In the Italian and German surveys we observed a particular case of answers' distribution: 41% of the Italian sample answered the question with "strongly agree" and also another 41% answered with "agree", therefore the majority agreed. The same situation can be found in the German survey in which 39% of the sample strongly agreed and another 39% of the sample agreed.
In addition, in the Portuguese survey the highest percentage was concentrated in "strongly agree" with 57%.
In every result the percentages of disagreement were very low, in Portugal no one disagreed, in Germany no one strongly disagreed and in Italy only two people strongly disagreed.
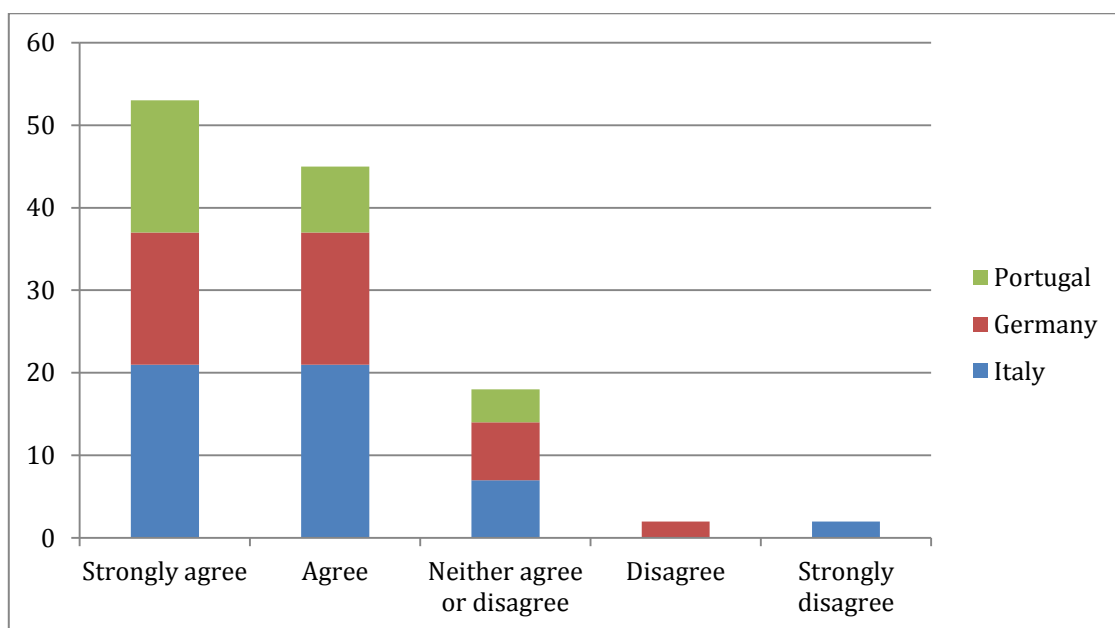
LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT **MONEY RECEIVED DURING THE MATERNITY/PATERNITY LICENCE IS SUFFICIENT**

The majority of the Italian sample (41%) were indifferent to this subject, they neither agreed nor disagreed but a percentage of 25.5% answered "disagree" therefore the general orientation of the interviewees was slightly towards the disagreement.
It is possible to find the same orientation but to a greater extent also in the Portuguese and German surveys, in which 39% of the Portuguese sample disagreed and 37% of the German sample disagreed. In both surveys, 29% of interviewees was neutral, a smaller percentage in comparison to the Italian one.
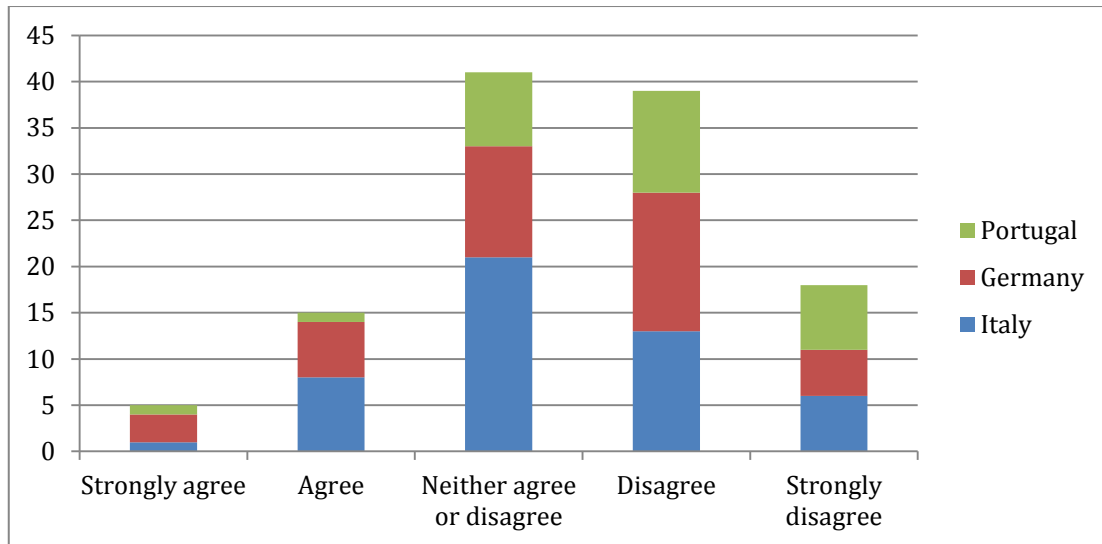
LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FACT THAT **THE INTERVIEWEES HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO ORGANISE HOLIDAYS WITH THEIR FAMILIES**

In the Italian survey the last question showed a concentration of answers towards the centre, therefore the majority of the sample (37%) answered "neither agree nor disagree", 25% "disagree" and 21% "agree".

We can observe different results in the other two surveys, in which the orientation was towards the agreement. In Germany the majority of the sample of 34% agreed and the others were equally distributed among "strongly agree", "neutral" and "disagree". No one in the German survey strongly disagreed.

On the other hand, the majority of Portuguese interviewees (36%) answered "strongly agree", but there is also a high percentage of 29% that was neutral.
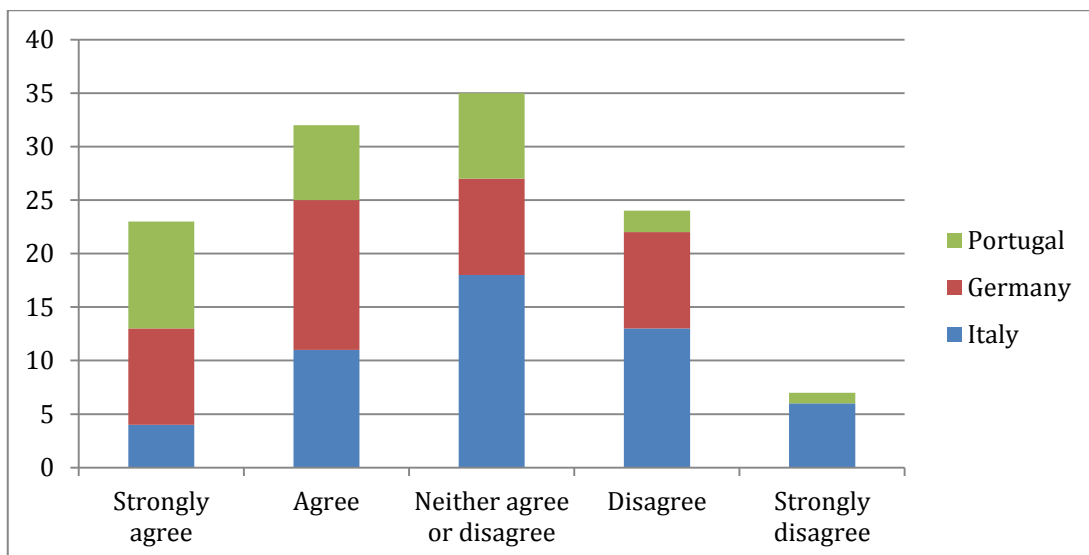
Conclusion

To sum up, we observed that work strongly influences family life and that it is not easy to balance them. The majority of the total sample agreed that parents need help to look after their children while they are at work, therefore they need to call a babysitter or leave children

to relatives when they are work. In fact a lot of interviewees said that they think not to have enough time to spend with their families, only in Germany they are divided between people who agree and disagree. In Germany they also think that there are not enough childcare options. On the other hand, in Portugal interviewees claim that there are enough childcare options that enable parents to work. In Italy people are almost indifferent to this topic.

An interesting result we had consists in the fact that the recent economic crisis has influences a lot of Italian and Portuguese people in particular in their family habits, while in Germany it is not like that.

Furthermore, we can see that the majority of the whole sample agreed with the fact that it is difficult nowadays for a young woman to start a family and get on in her career at the same time. Therefore it is generally believed that women have more problems than men in finding a balance between family and work and that having children may affect the rate of women participation, as a labor force.

In conclusion, the most of our sample believed that the government should play a more active role in work-family issues, namely by creating more programs that would help parents and most of women to take care of their family and children when they are at work.

Team Four

European Dialogue Project 2016
Workforce Diversity in the European Union

Team 4: Socio-demographic change

Portuguese team: **German team:**

Cosme, Ines   Martin, Laura
Machado, Rita   Ljachov, Dimitri

Date: 24 June 2016

Introduction

This report is part of the European Dialogue Project 2016, which deals with the topic of Workforce Diversity in the European Union. The aim of the European Dialogue Project is to bring students of three different countries (Italy, Portugal and Germany) together to work on a specific topic, using English as common language as well as Web 2.0 tools to communicate. The research topic of Team 4 was: Socio-demographic change, Transition from work into retirement, population ageing in Europe.

The project was conducted from March 14th until June 12th, 2016. In this period the teams had to fulfil 7 different tasks with given deadlines.[5]

Team 4 had two groups- one from Portugal (Cosme, Ines and Machado, Rita) and one from Germany (Ljachov, Dimitri and Martin, Laura).

The essential part of the project was to make a survey concerning the given topic. Both teams suggested 7-9 questions for the survey and agreed on 16 questions for the final questionnaire, during the skype meetings. After that, the survey was conducted in Portugal and Germany.

Approximately 7 weeks after the first Skype meeting the teams met again on skype to compare the results of each country.

Those results were presented in the last week of the European Dialogue Project in the universities of both teams. Therefore, the students had to give a poster presentation and had to be well prepared on the specific topics to answer the questions which were asked during the presentation.

Information regarding the last European Dialogue Project(EDP) in 2014 and 2015

In this Table you can find information about the EDP in 2014 and 2015

	2014	2015
Timeframe	10.03.14 – 11.05.14 (9 weeks)	31.03.15 – 11.06.15 (10 weeks)
Participating countries	4 France, Germany, Portugal, Italy	3 Germany, Portugal, Italy
Participating students	75 France (12), Germany (20), Italy (23), Portugal (20)	83 Germany (27), Portugal (25), Italy (31)
Online platforms	LEA (ILIAS LMS System), Adobe Connect, Doodle, Skype, (Google Drive)	LEA (ILIAS LMS System), Doodle, Skype, (Google Drive)

Table 1. General Information for the EDP in 2014 and 2015

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[5] European Dialogue Project." *Workforce Diversity in the European Union Student Guidelines 2016*

Topic and objectives of Team 4 of the EDP 2016

The topic of international Team 4 was:
"Socio-demographic change, Transition from work into retirement, population ageing in Europe".
This Team consisted of 2 groups instead of 3. No Italian member participated in the Team. One Group was from Portugal (Rita Machado and Ines Cosme from the Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal) and one from Germany (Laura Martin and Dimitri Ljachov from Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, University of Applied Science, Germany)
The aim of the survey was to find out what people in Europe think about the socio-demographic change and about the situation that the retirement program has to deal with high pressure because of aging generations and declining birth rates.
The participants were asked about the retirement program and how it will affect future generations.

Method

The survey was conducted from April 25th – May 15th, 2016.
The German team chose 16 representative Questions for the Survey which you can find attached in appendix B.
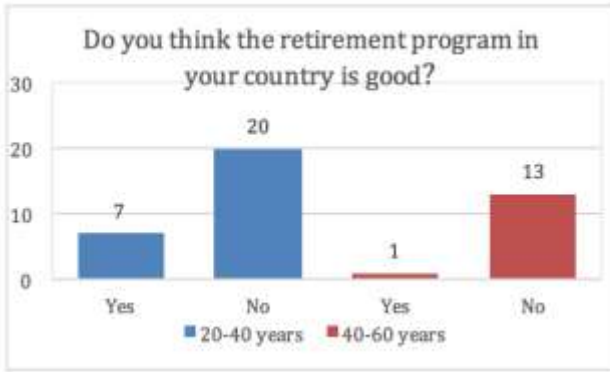
In Germany 41 people were asked (24 females und 17 males).
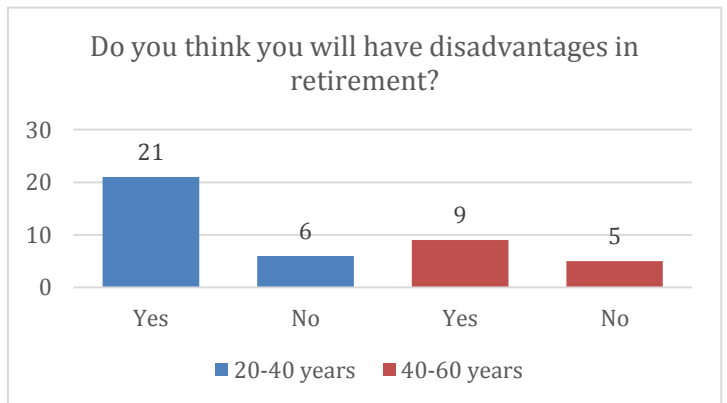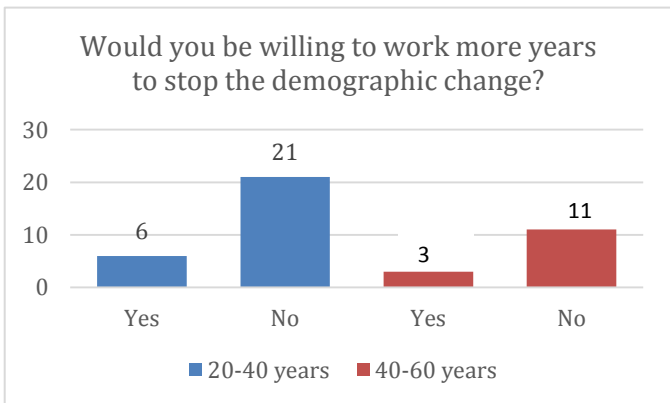To keep it simple, printed questionnaires were given to the respondents.
We did not choose a special target group to get a general view of very different participants. People under the age of 20 were not asked to get a better view of people who are affected by the socio-demographic change, because they are working and paying for the retirement system. To get a better overview the participants were divided into two groups, group one represents the younger generation from 20-40 years, group two represents the older generation from 40-60.

Results

The results in the different age groups, on all 16 questions were very similar. We started our survey with very general questions about the socio-demographic change, for example we asked the participants if they think the retirement in our country is good or if they think it will cause problems for the younger generation. To our surprise many participants did not know what we mean by socio-demographic change, but when we explained it, it became clear to them very fast. The next graphs will give you an overview about the six most concise answers.

Do you think the retirement program in your country is good?

Do you think that the demographic change could be problem for the younger generation?

Do future generations have to save money on their own to prevent poverty when they are old?

Do you think the socio-demographic change will cause big problems in your country?
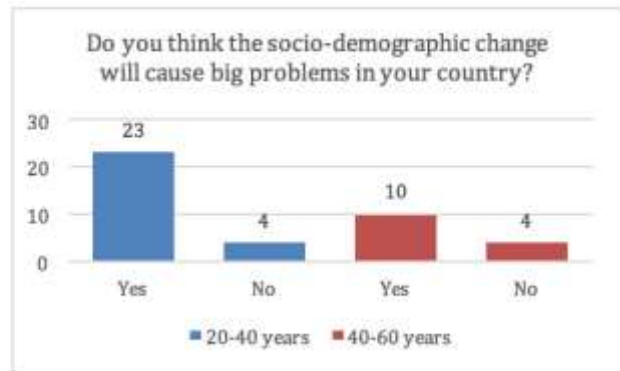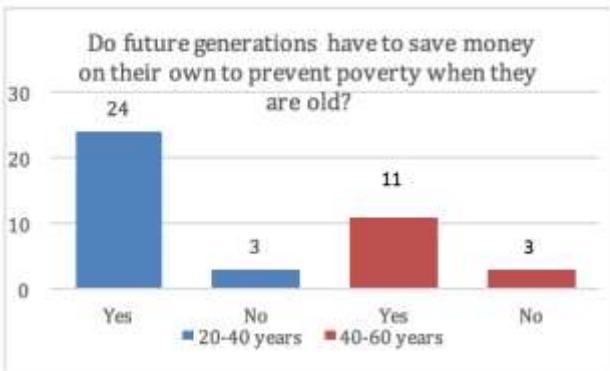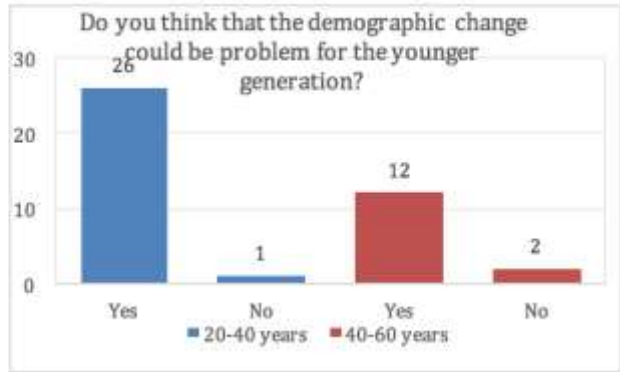
The questions "Would you be willing to work more years to stop the demographic change?" and "Do you think you will have disadvantages in retirement?" were asked to see if there are significant differences between the "younger" and the "older generation".

As you can see in the graph below, there were no big differences between the answers of young participates and the older participants.

Would you be willing to work more years to stop the demographic change?

Do you think you will have disadvantages in retirement?

Discussion

On the basis of the survey results, it might be concluded that the socio-demographic change is noticeable for most people in Germany. But not only the ageing generation causes the demographic change, also the declining birth rate is a problem in Germany.

As a consequence, we have to think about how we can improve the circumstances for young families to minimize the impacts of the socio-demographic change in Germany. (e.g. through support of young families or higher wages for the young generation are only two of many possible approaches.

The Question we have to ask is: How can we reach a better work-life-balance? Finding a solution to this would help young people managing the challenges they have with a full time job on one Hand and on the other hand the family and children.

Results in comparison Germany and Portugal

The results in both countries were very similar, only the answers to the questions concerning the retirement program and the retirement age were completely different, 54.2 % of the participants in Portugal would work longer to stop the demographic change but only 20 % in Germany agreed on that. Furthermore, only 20 % of the participants in Germany said that the retirement program is good, in Portugal there were about 90 % who shared this opinion.

•100 % of the participants in Germany agreed on the question "Do you think there is a demographic change? Is the demographic change real?", 91.7 % in Portugal.

•As a consequence, approximately 80 % of the respondents in both countries said that younger generations have to save money on their own to prevent poverty when they are old.

•Furthermore it was significant that most of the respondents are afraid of having disadvantages in their retirement, 73.1 % in Germany and 85.4 % in Portugal.

•Over 90 % of the participants in both countries think the demographic change will become a problem for the younger generation.

•91.7 % are afraid that they will not live age-appropriate in the retirement and nearly 95.8% of the participants think the socio-demographic change will cause big problems in Portugal.

Conclusion

It is a fact that the socio-demographic change is one of the main subjects our generation has to face in the upcoming decades. It is a big challenge for the whole society to minimize the impact of the socio-demographic change if we want to keep or improve our standard of living. The change can be tackled through changings in the legislation, in the work-life relations and also in the public opinion. The first step has been done – the demographic change has been recognized as a major problem.

Furthermore, the impacts of the immigration and refugee movement are not measurable at this point yet. The future will show if our society will be able to handle it.

Our task and duty is to find the right and adequate solutions to the problems of the 21st century to give all people, retired or not, men or women, children or adults a good life.

European Dialogue Project 2016
Team 4 - Socio-demographic change Transition from work into retirement, population ageing in Europe
DATE: 13th April of 2016
ATTENDEES: Ana Rita Machado (Portugal), Inês Cosme (Portugal), Laura Martin (German), Dimitri Ljachov (German)
TIME: The meeting started at 17:45 (Portuguese time) / 18:45 (German time) and ended at 18:15 (Portuguese time) / 19:15 (German time)

Dimitri Ljachov started the meeting by calling at 17:45 (Portuguese time). The team introduced themselves, discussed several doubts and issues about the survey, clarified what was the topic about, what information was important and scheduled the date for the next meeting.

TOPIC 1: Presentation of the team
Discussion: Dimitri and Laura are from Germany, they study Business Management at the University Hochschule Bonn – Rhein – Sieg. They began their second semester after spring break in April, two weeks before the meeting. They both have 25 years old and they have the same English class.
Rita and Inês are students from the 2nd year of Tourism in Instituto Politécnico de Viseu, they both have 20 years old and began the second semester on February.

TOPIC 2: The theme and survey
Discussion: The team discussed what was important for the project, such as important information about the topic and the most important things to discuss on the meetings, like the retirement age in each country and expectancy of life in the future. They also talked about the survey to clarify some doubts – such as the number of questions, if it were just closed or open questions and who should answer the questions.

TOPIC 3: Schedule the next meeting
Discussion: Germany suggested that the next meeting was on April 20 at 17:30 portuguese time.
But due to some impossibilities of both countries the team had to reschedule the meeting.
Action taken: The decision was to meet on Thursday at 19:30 Portuguese time.

NEXT MEETING: Saturday 23rd April, at 12:00 portuguese time / 13:00 german time
MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Ana Rita Machado and Inês Cosme (Team 4 / Portugal
DATE: 15th April of 2016

Template of minutes
European Dialogue Project 2016
Team: 4 Socio-demographic change Transition from work into retirement, population ageing in Europe

Minutes of the Team Meeting – 2nd meeting
DATE: 23rd April 2016
ATTENDEES: Ana Rita Machado (Portugal), Inês Cosme (Portugal), Laura Martin (German), Dimitri Ljachov (German)
ABSENT: -
TIME: 12:00 (Portuguese time) / 13:00 (German time)
      End: 12:25 (Portuguese time) / 13:25 (German time)
      Dimitri Ljachov started the meeting by setting up a group- conversation on skype with all teammates at 13:00 (Portuguese time).

TOPIC 1 - Preparing of the survey
Discussion: The team specified first how to proceed with the survey and clarified what the focus of the survey should be. The focus of the survey is the general question, how someone want to spend their retirement and how it should be when someone is about to retire.
The team found an agreement that each member can formulate questions for the survey. If the whole team agrees on the question during the skype-call the question can get taken for the survey.
Action taken: The team formulate altogether 18 questions for the survey

TOPIC 2: Further actions
Discussion: The team discussed how to proceed
Action taken: The Portuguese team will send Dimitri Ljachov the questions which the Portuguese time has chosen. After that, the German team will create a survey and will send it to the Portuguese team until Friday 29.04.2016, the so every team can carry out the survey in their country.

TOPIC 3: Schedule the next meeting
Discussion: Time of the next meeting
Action taken: The date and time of the next meeting will discussed by the team during the next weeks
DATE: 28th April of 2016
NEXT MEETING The date and time of the next meeting will be discussed by the team during the next weeks on facebook.

MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Dimitri Ljachov
DATE: 28th April of 2016

Template of minutes
European Dialogue Project 2016
Team: 4 Socio-demographic change / Transition from work into retirement, population ageing in Europe

Minutes of the Team Meeting – 3rd meeting
DATE: 06th Juni 2016
ATTENDEES: Ana Rita Machado (Portugal), Inês Cosme (Portugal), Laura Martin (German), Dimitri Ljachov (German)
ABSENT: -
TIME: 18:00 (Portuguese time) / 19:00 (German time)
      End: 18:45 (Portuguese time) / 18:45 (German time)
      Dimitri Ljachov started the meeting by setting up a group-conversation on Skype with all teammates at 18:00/19:00 (Portuguese/German time).

TOPIC 1 – Comparison of the results of the survey
Discussion: Rita Machado and Ines Comes gave their results to the German Team (Dimitri Ljachov and Laura Martin). Because the German Team already had the presentation on Tuesday the 31st of May some of the results were already known. As the Portuguese Team has the presentation next week, the German Team gave them advices how to give a poster presentation. The German team uploaded the poster on LEA. The results of the surveys were very similar. The Teams recognized a significant difference in the question "Would you be willing to work more years to stop the demographic change?" between Portugal and Germany. More than 30% of the attendees in Portugal, in comparison to Germany, would be willing to work more years to prevent the demographic change. All the other 15 questions had similar results.
Action taken: The Portuguese Team will upload their Poster presentation after their presentation next week.

TOPIC 2: General exchange about the European Dialogue Project
Discussion: The team discussed about the socio-demographic change
Action taken: In fact, that it was our last meeting we talked about how the teams liked the project, besides it was a lot work to do, we came to the conclusion that the socio-demographic change is a very current topic that young people have to think about. Both teams came to the conclusion that the international work was and great experience.

MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Dimitri Ljachov and Laura Martin
DATE: 06th June 2016

Appendix B: Survey

Survey

Male ( )   Female   ( )
Age: 0-20 ( )   20-40 ( )   40-60 ( )   60-80 ( )

1) Do you think there is a demographic change? Is the demographic change real?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

2) Do you think the retirement program in your country is good?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

3) Do you think that the demographic change could be problem for the younger generation?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

4) Do you agree with the retirement age in your country?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

5) Would you consider retiring earlier?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

6) Are you afraid to live not age inappropriately?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

7) Is immigration a chance to stop the demographic change?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

8) Do future generations have to save money on their own to prevent poverty when they are old?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

9) Would you be willing to work more years to stop the demographic change?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

10) Do you plan to work after you retire?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

11) Do you think the system that the younger generation has to pay for the older generation is fair nowadays?

   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

12) Where would you like to spend your retirement years?
    ( ) Country
    ( ) City
    ( ) with the family
    ( ) Others
    ( ) retirement home

13) What, in your opinion, could stop the demographic change?
    ( ) support of young families
    ( ) a better work-life-balance
    ( ) to invest in the education
    ( ) more years of working before retirement
    ( ) higher wages of the young generation
    ( ) less money for retired people?

14) Do you think the socio-demographic change will cause big problems in your country?

    ( ) Yes   ( ) No

15) Do you think you will have disadvantages in retirement?

    ( ) Yes   ( ) No

16) Will the problem of the lack of qualified employees increased by the demographic change?

    ( ) Yes   ( ) No

References

[1] European Dialogue Project." *Workforce Diversity in the European Union Student Guidelines 2016*

Team Five

European Dialogue
Project

European Dialogue Project 2016
Labor market situation of non-EU migrants, refugee & Schengen crisis

Team 5: Migration

Italian team:
Mammi, Lisa
Rubbiani, Silvia

Portuguese team:
Martins, Cláudia
Mendes, Gabriela
Piedade, Jéssica

German team:
Erny, Florian
Hecht,Daniel

Date: June 2016

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University
of Applied Sciences

Introduction

The European Dialogue Project focuses on promoting exchange of ideas and opinions among different cultures.

The universities involved in this project are: University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences and Polytechnic Institute of Viseu; the Italian group is composed by Mammi, L., Rubbiani, S.; the German group is formed by Erny, F., Hecht, D.; the Portuguese group is composed by Martins, C., Mendes, G., Piedade, J.

Thanks to this project we had the opportunity to discuss with other European students about an important issue that our society is facing: migration and refugee crisis.

Our teams collaborated in the creation of a survey, whose aim was to become aware of how this situation is perceived in Italy, Portugal and Germany.

The survey was composed by 20 questions and translated in our three mother tongues; we surveyed a minimum of 40 people for each Country: the Italian group collected 51 answers, the Portuguese group 50 answers and the German group 40. The target people were both females and males, of all age groups. We also made them indicate their profession to complete the personal information.

To distribute the questionnaire we used different digital platforms, such as Google Drive and Qualtrics; those instruments allowed us to collect and analyze all the data in a fast and efficient way.

The means of communication was ELF (English as a Lingua Franca), that allowed us to cross language barriers and share our thoughts and ideas.

Comparison of results

Respondents personal data

We started the questionnaire by asking the respondents to indicate their personal data:
1. What is your gender?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your profession?

In fact, our purpose was not only to focus on the results, but also to analyze the origin of the answers.

What is your gender?
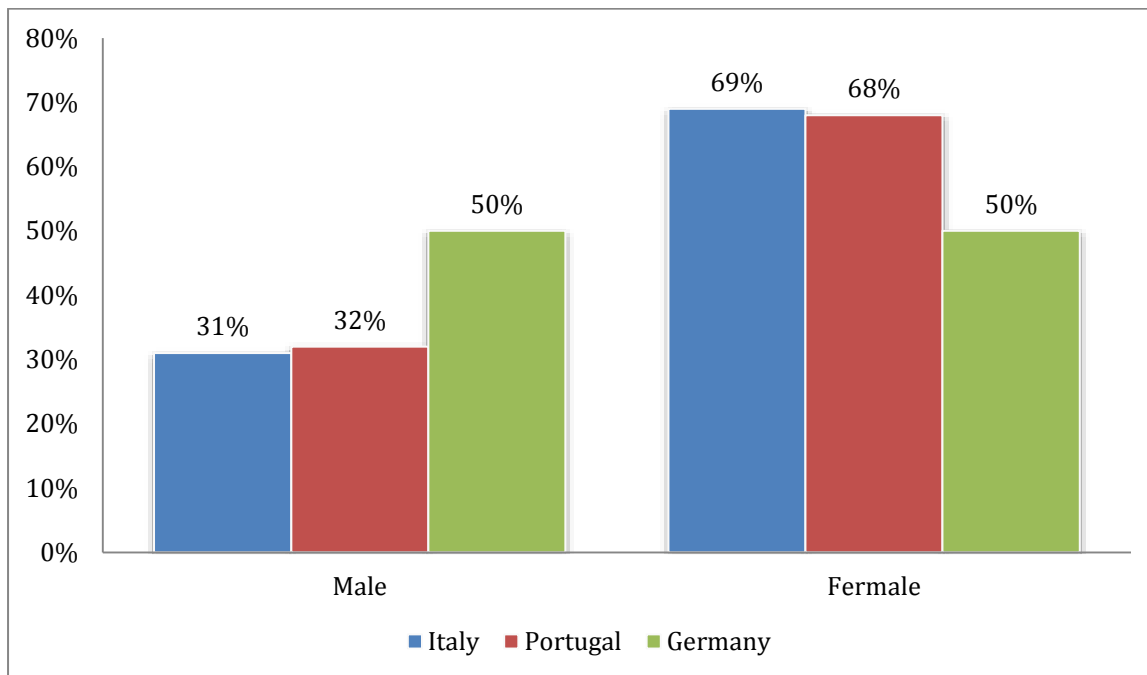
As far as the Italian and Portuguese results are concerned, a great percentage of the interviewees were females, whereas in Germany the respondents were half males and half females.

How old are you?
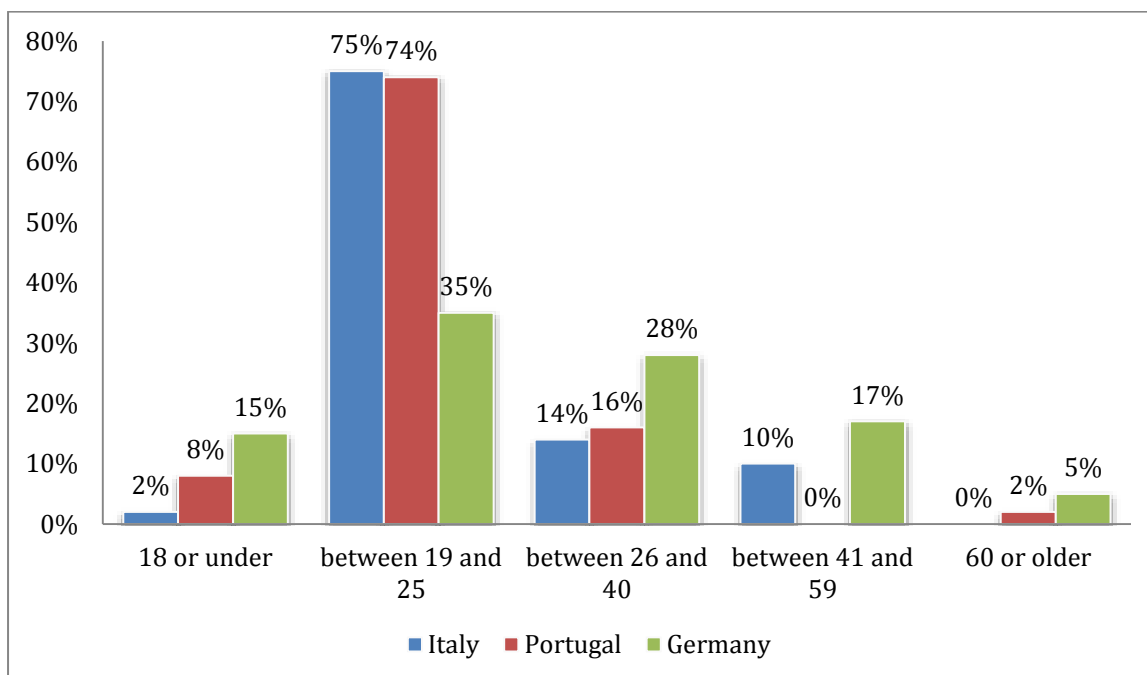
This graph shows that a great share of participants were between 19 and 25 years old: three-fourths of the Italian and Portuguese interviewees were between 19 and 25 years old, while in Germany the respondents were almost equally divided into the different age ranges.

What is your profession?
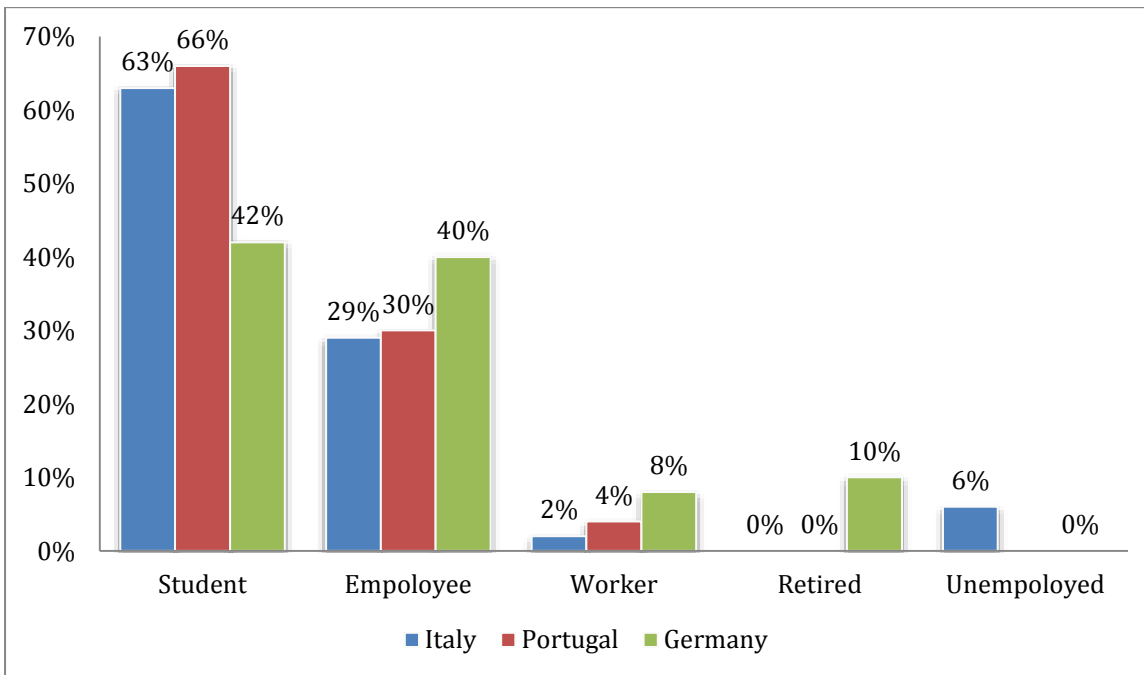
The great majority of Italian and Portuguese interviewees were students, whereas in Germany students exceeds employees only by 2%.

General questions

How serious is the migrants situation in Europe?
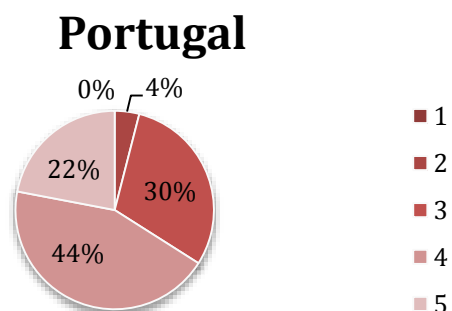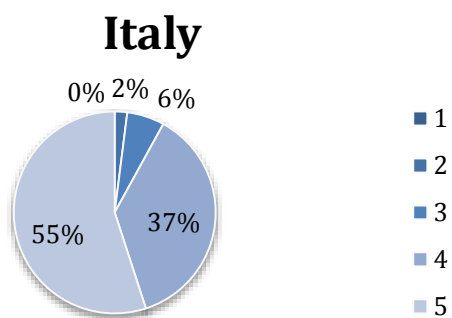
Germany
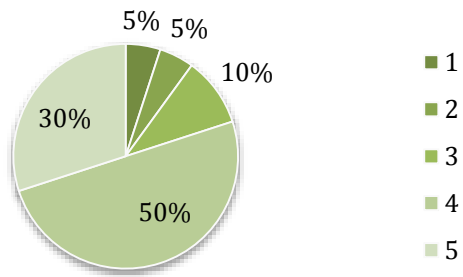
The situation in Europe is perceived as serious or extremely serious in all the three Countries.

How serious is the migrants situation in Italy/Portugal/Germany?

For this question the interviewees were asked to evaluate the situation only in their own Country.

Italy

Portugal

Germany

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
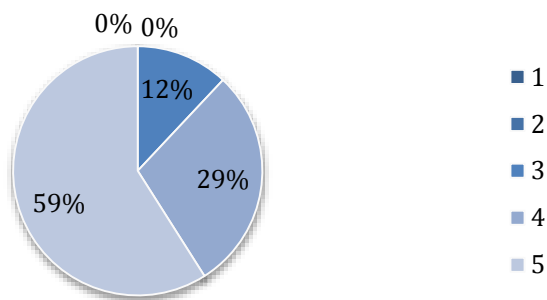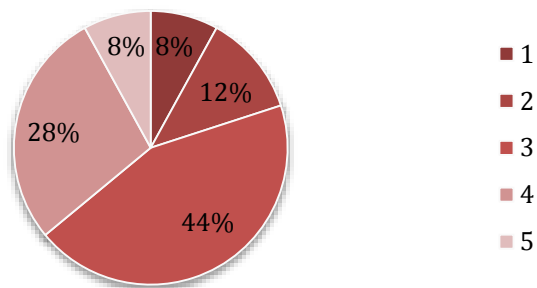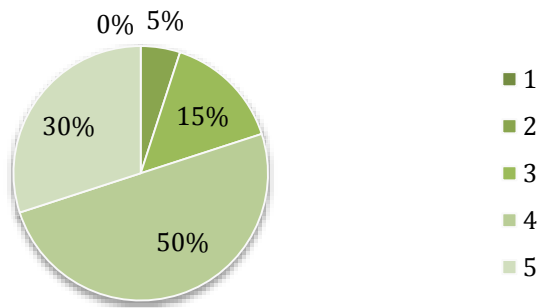
Regarding the single Countries, German and Italian respondents evaluate the situation as serious or extremely serious, whereas in Portugal the seriousness of the issue is less perceived.

Why do you think migrants are coming to Europe?
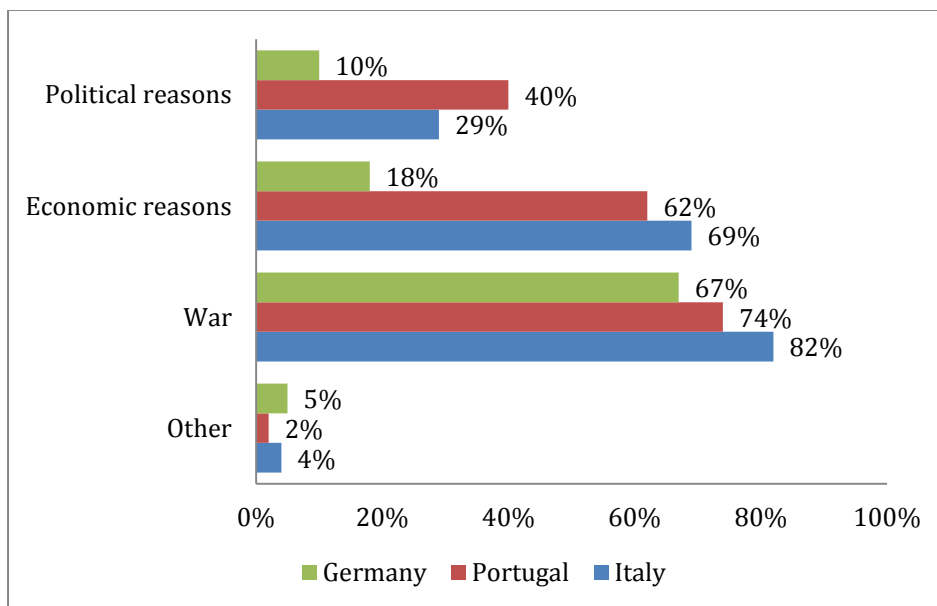
As the graph shows, the general opinion in all the three Nations is that migrants come to Europe because they want to escape from war and also because of economic reasons.

Which are your feelings about the migrants situation in E.U.?
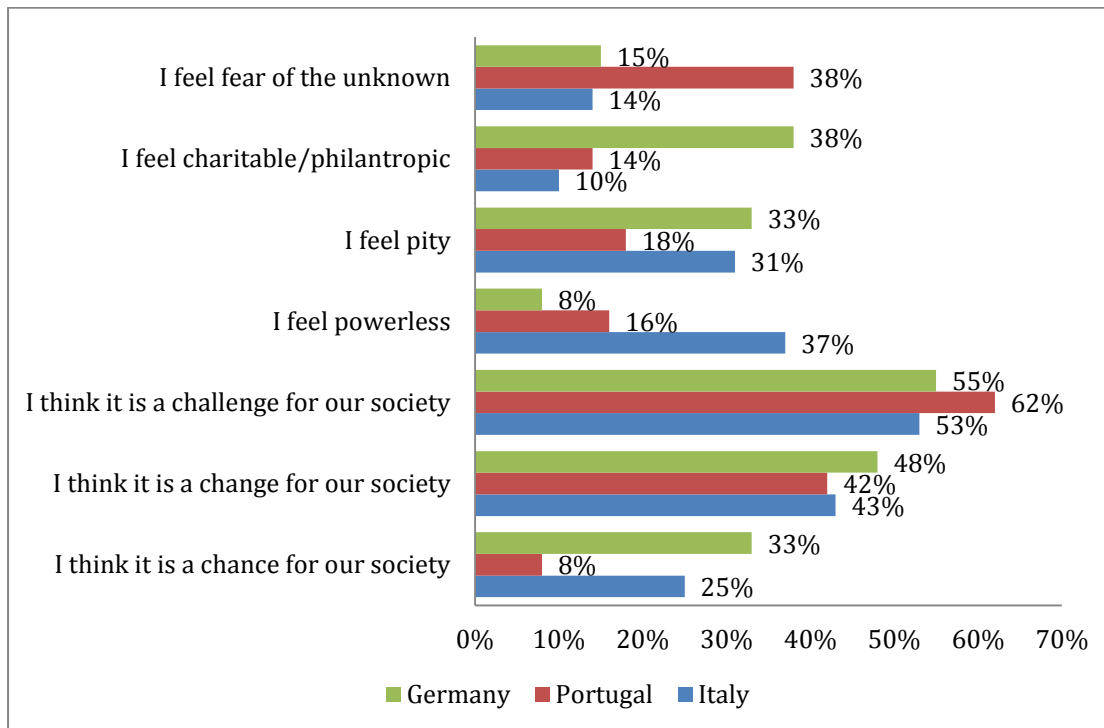
This graph illustrates controversial opinions regarding the feelings that arise from this situation: if on the one hand there is the common belief that the arrival of migrants could be both a challenge and a change for our society, on the other hand some differences stand out: in Italy the 37% of respondents feels powerless, in Portugal a similar percentage feels fear of the unknown and in Germany always a great percentage feels charitable/philanthropic.
These answers show that the same phenomenon causes different perceptions in Italy, Portugal and Germany.

Do you think that your country can welcome them and offer opportunities for a better life?
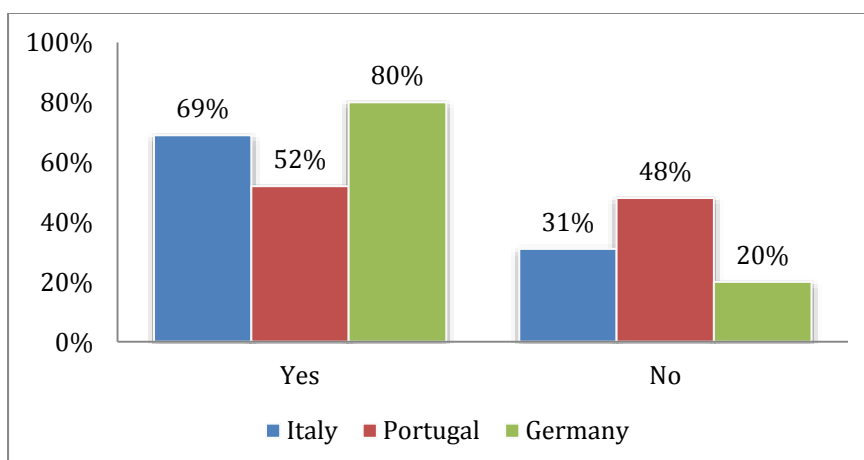
If yes, how?

From the graph it is clear that the great majority of respondents answered "yes" to this question; Italian respondents suggested several possible solutions: they proposed to integrate them in the society, through working programs and education, in particular involving them in social activities and offering them the opportunity to live a better life.

For Portugal the situation is slightly different: it is clear from the graph, in fact, that this is a controversial topic, since 52% of the people consider that Portugal is capable of giving the refugees opportunities for a better life, while 48% of the people consider that it is unable of giving those opportunities.
The solution they suggested were volunteering programs, education, offering a job.

Also the majority of German interviewees considered possible offering the refugees a better life, since in Germany their life would not be in danger and they would also find freedom and social security. The simple fact of being in a Country without war and oppression would mean a better condition compared to their previous situation.

If no, why?

In Italy, the reasons supporting the negative answers were mainly related to the absence of working chances and economic resources for Italian people.
In Portugal, the ones who mentioned that the Country should not welcome the refugees, pointed out reasons such as the unavailability of jobs for Portuguese people and the worsening of economic crisis.
By contrast, the German respondents pointed out the fact that their lack of language competence would prevent them from integration and from finding a job.

Who should take the responsibility for the migration situation?
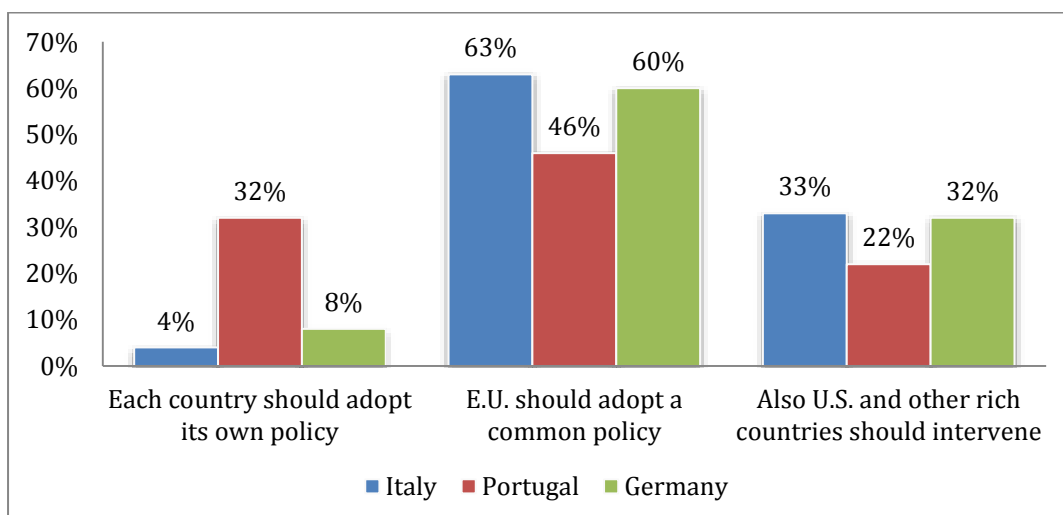
Generally speaking the majority of interviewees thinks that E.U. Nations should cooperate, and intervene to conduct a common policy. Nevertheless a remarkable percentage of Portuguese respondents believes that each Country would be better off by adopting its own policy.

**Do you think that closed borders are helping/solving the refugee crisis?**
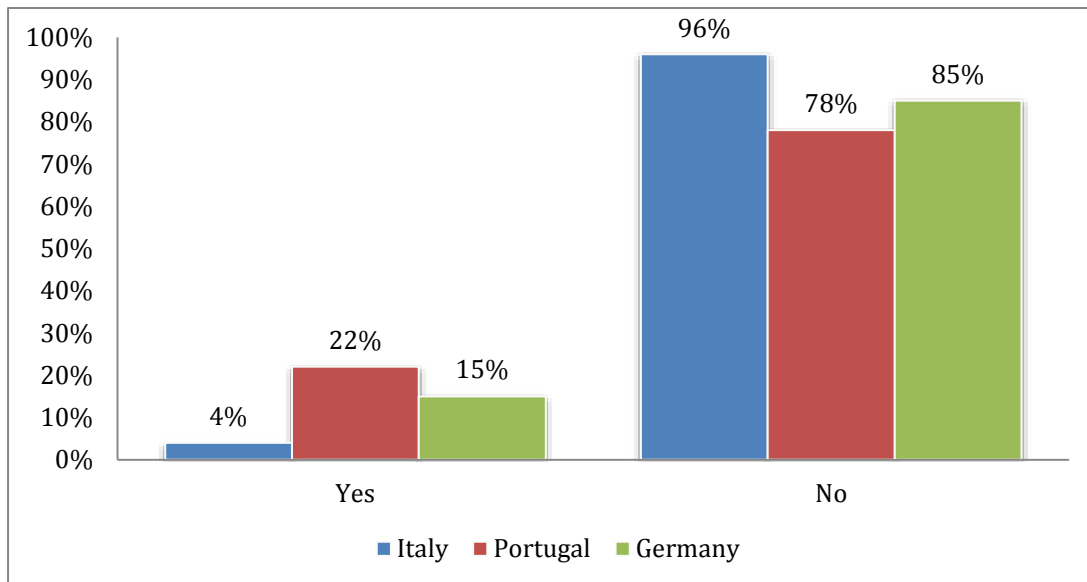
By looking at the graph it is obvious that only a small percentage of respondents is in favour of closed borders.

Do you feel that the refugees are stealing employment opportunities in Italy/Portugal/Germany?
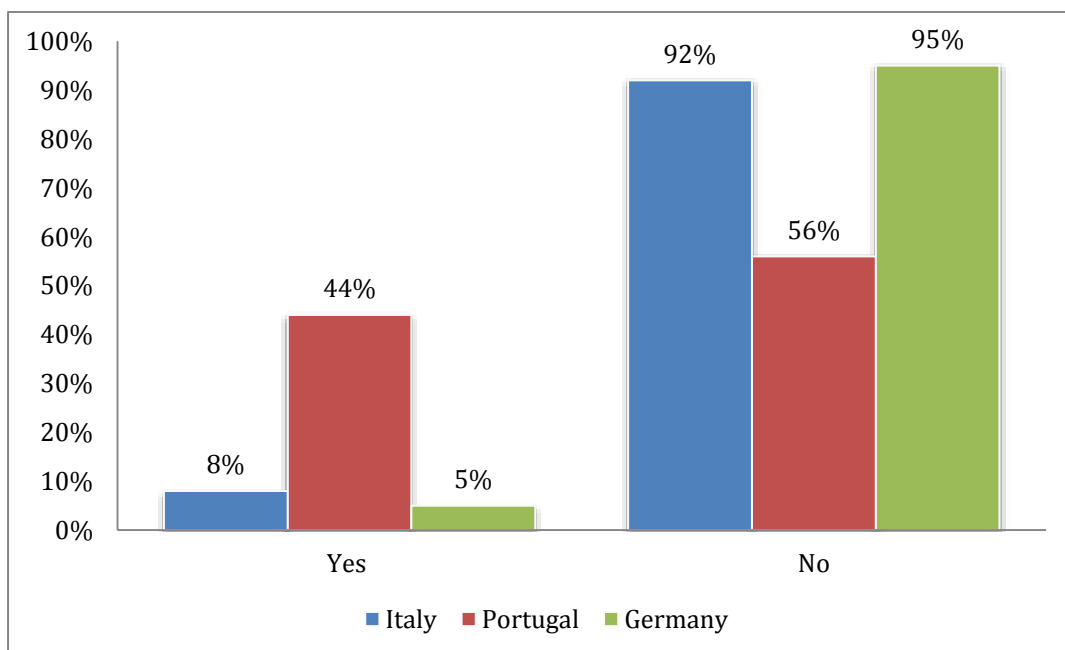
We can notice that only a significant share of Portuguese interviewees has a divergent opin-
ion and believes that migrants could represent a threat for their work opportunities.

How old do you think the average refugee is?
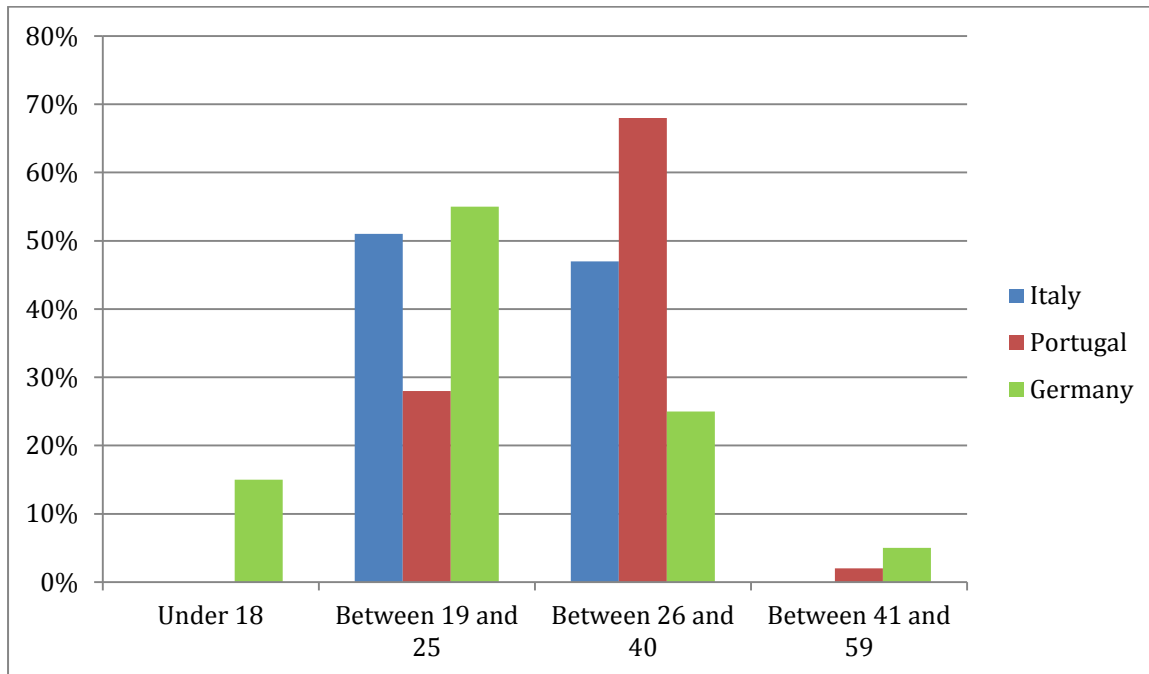
Where do you think the refugees come from?
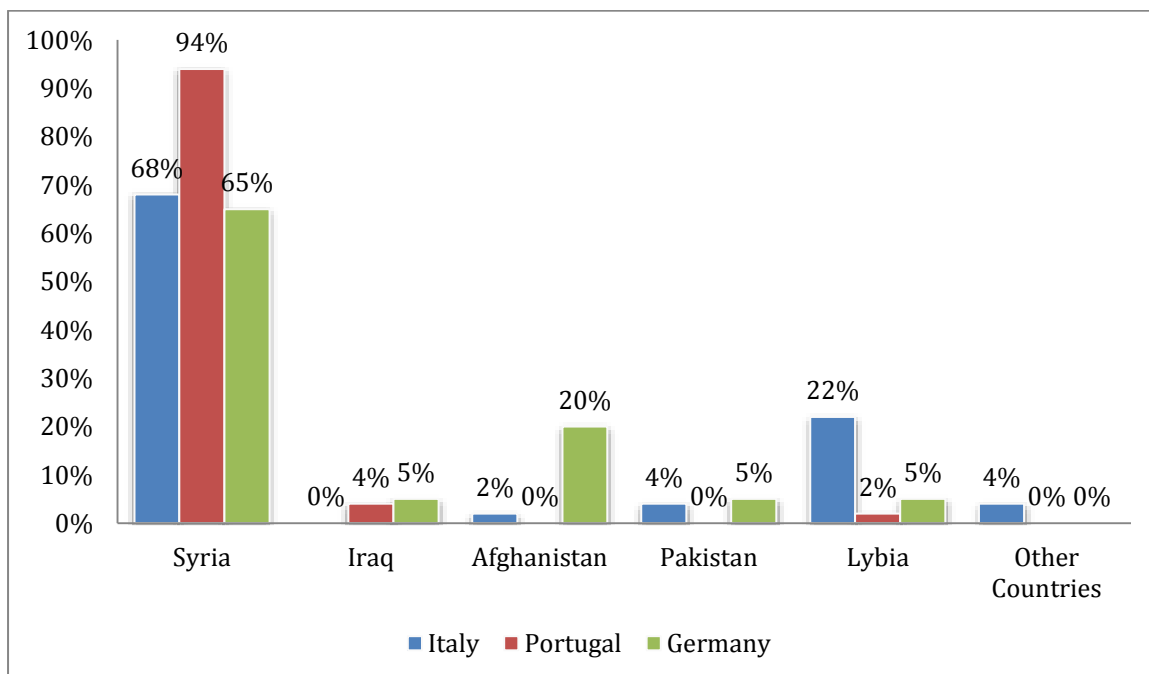
According to the interviewees perception, the vast majority of refugees comes from Syria; a
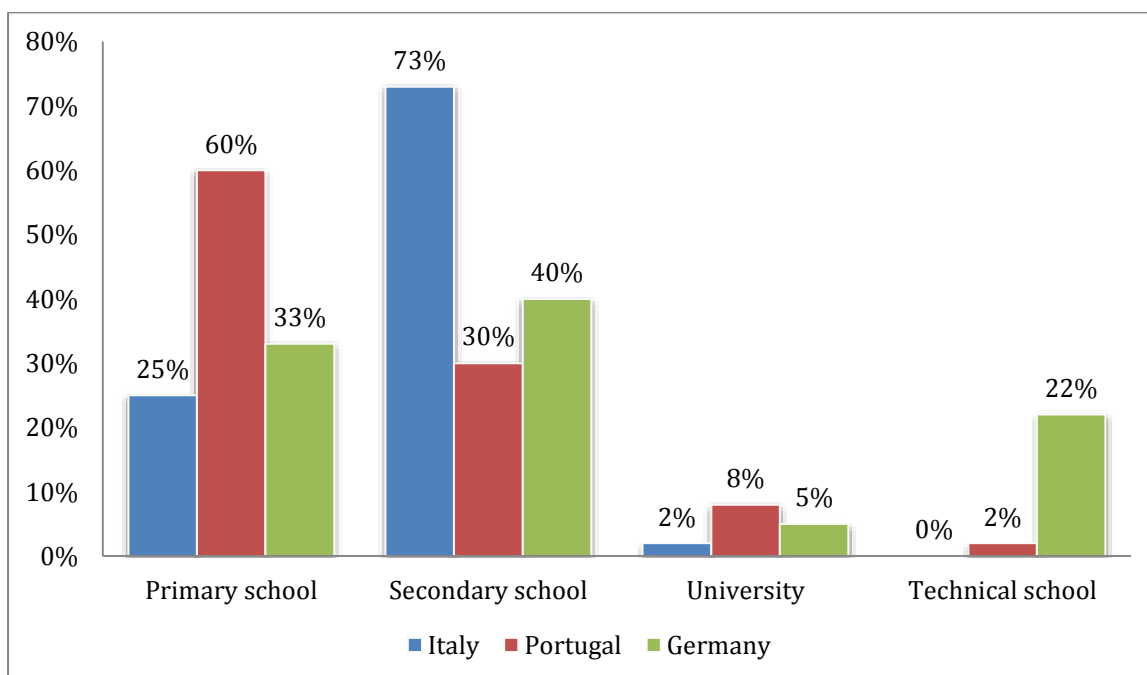significant percentage of Italian respondents selected Libya, whereas in Germany also Af-
ghanistan was a widely chosen answer.

How can refugees be integrated in Italy/Portugal/Germany?

The following chart shows the percentage of responses for different integration methods across Italy, Portugal, and Germany:

- School education: Italy 69%, Portugal 52%, Germany 70%
- Language courses: Italy 55%, Portugal 40%, Germany 85%
- Workplace programs: Italy 59%, Portugal 40%, Germany 50%
- Housing programs: Italy 25%, Portugal 72%, Germany 33%
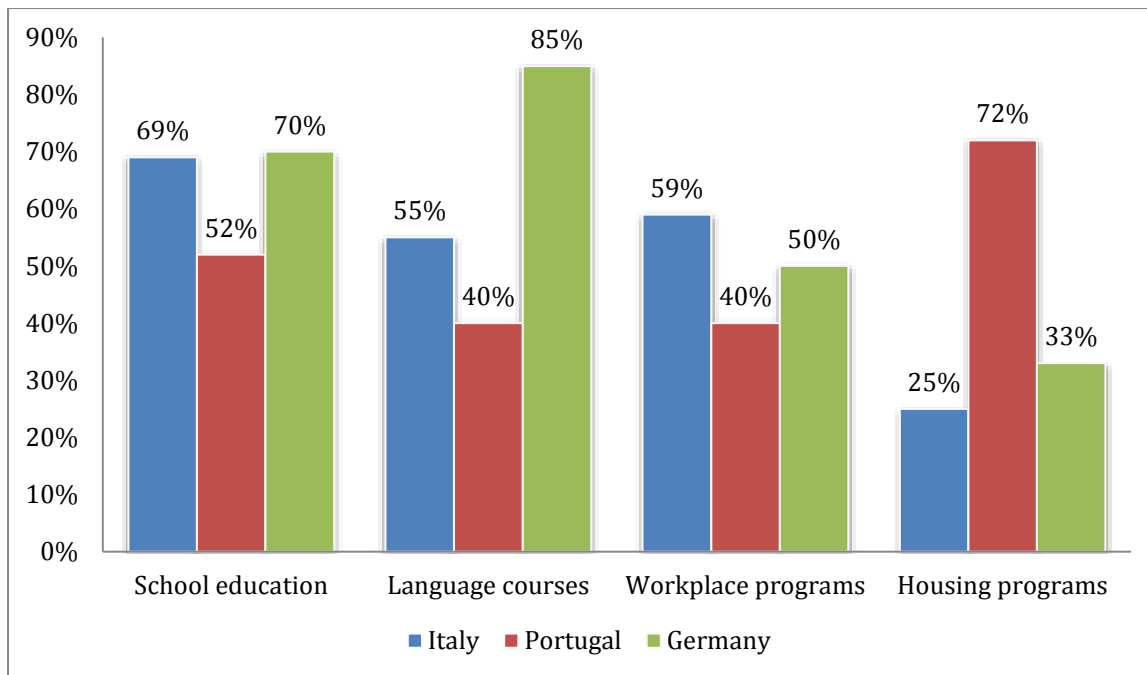
As already mentioned in the open questions about integration, German people think that language competence plays an important role for the integration of refugees.

Another remarkable percentage is represented by "housing programs", which were widely chosen as a possible solution by Portuguese People.

How educated are the coming refugees?

The following chart shows the percentage of responses for the education level of refugees across Italy, Portugal, and Germany:

- Primary school: Italy 25%, Portugal 60%, Germany 33%
- Secondary school: Italy 73%, Portugal 30%, Germany 40%
- University: Italy 2%, Portugal 8%, Germany 5%
- Technical school: Italy 0%, Portugal 2%, Germany 22%

If you were in the position to hire refugees in your company, what kind of contract would you suggest?
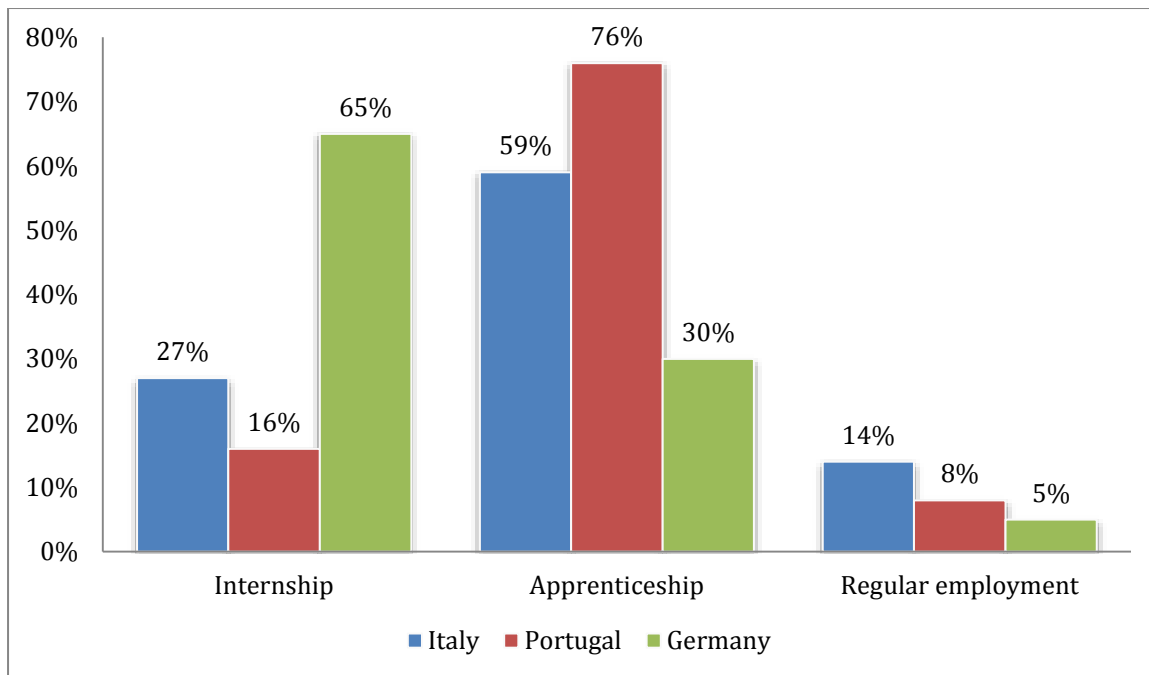
Both Portugal and Italy would suggest an apprenticeship to hire a refugee in their company; by contrast the majority of German respondents would propose an internship.

Which social impact does the refugee crisis have?
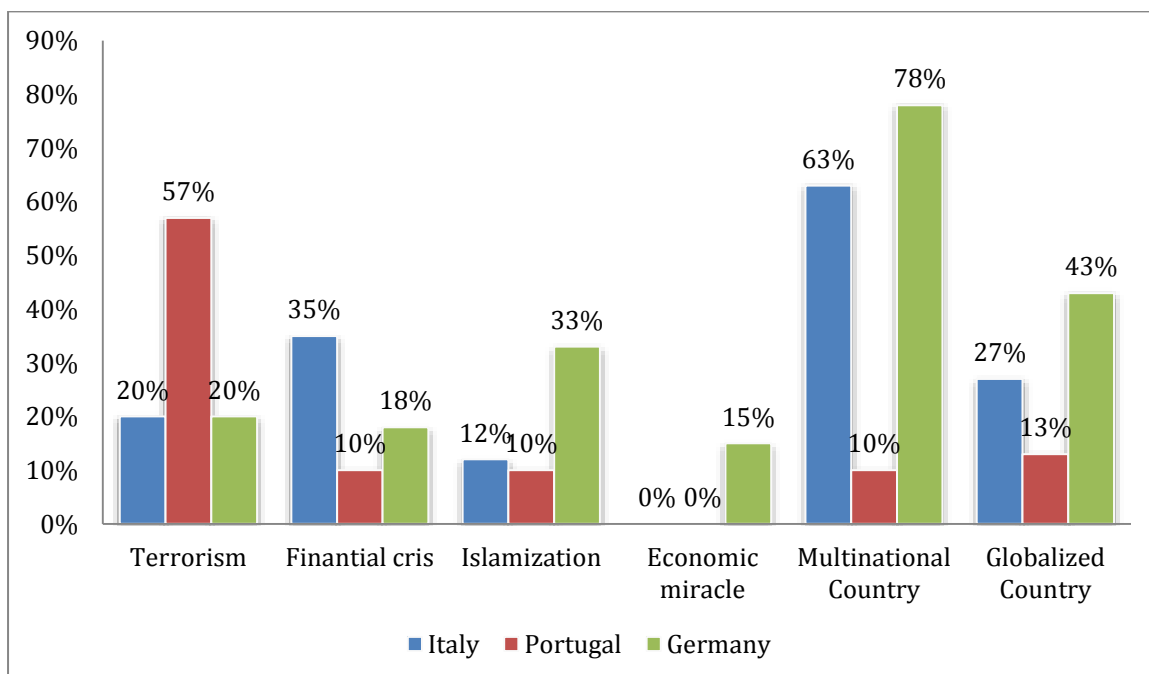
From this graph it is evident that more than a half of Portuguese interviewees thinks that the arrival of refugees could bring terrorism as a consequence, while in Italy and Germany "Multinational Country" is considered as a possible effect of this phenomenon.

Do you know the civil human rights of refugees in Italy/Portugal/Germany?
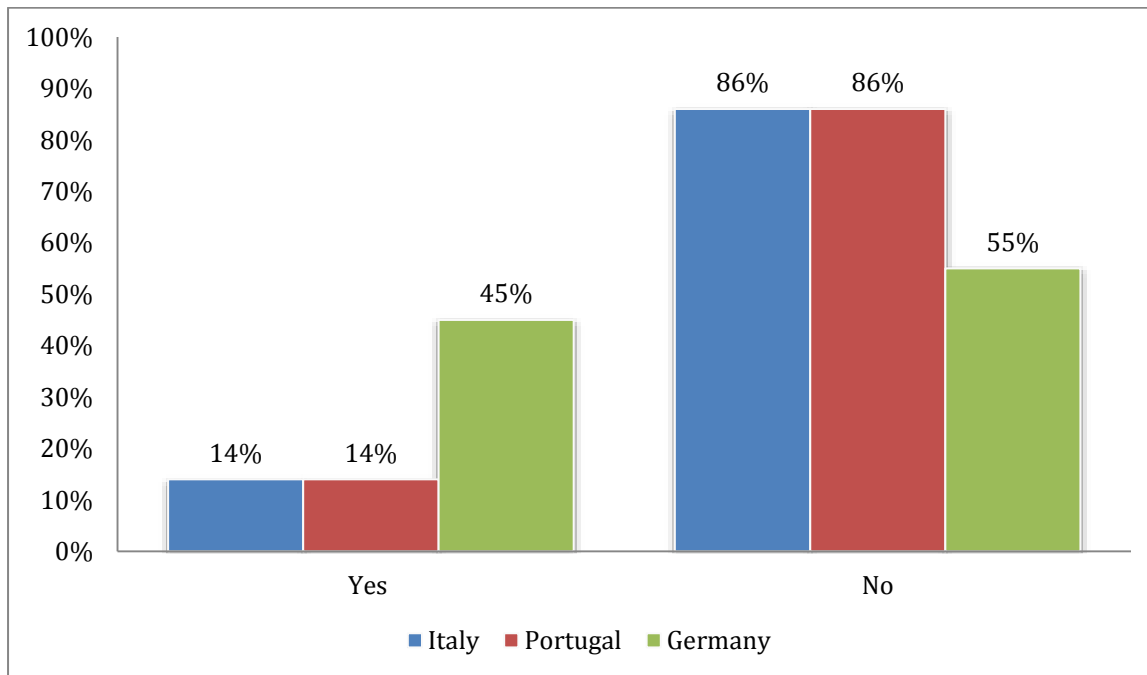
Generally speaking, we can notice that there is little awareness among citizens about the civil human rights of refugees: only in Germany a considerable share of people has knowledge of their rights.

If you were a refugee, what would you take in your backpack?
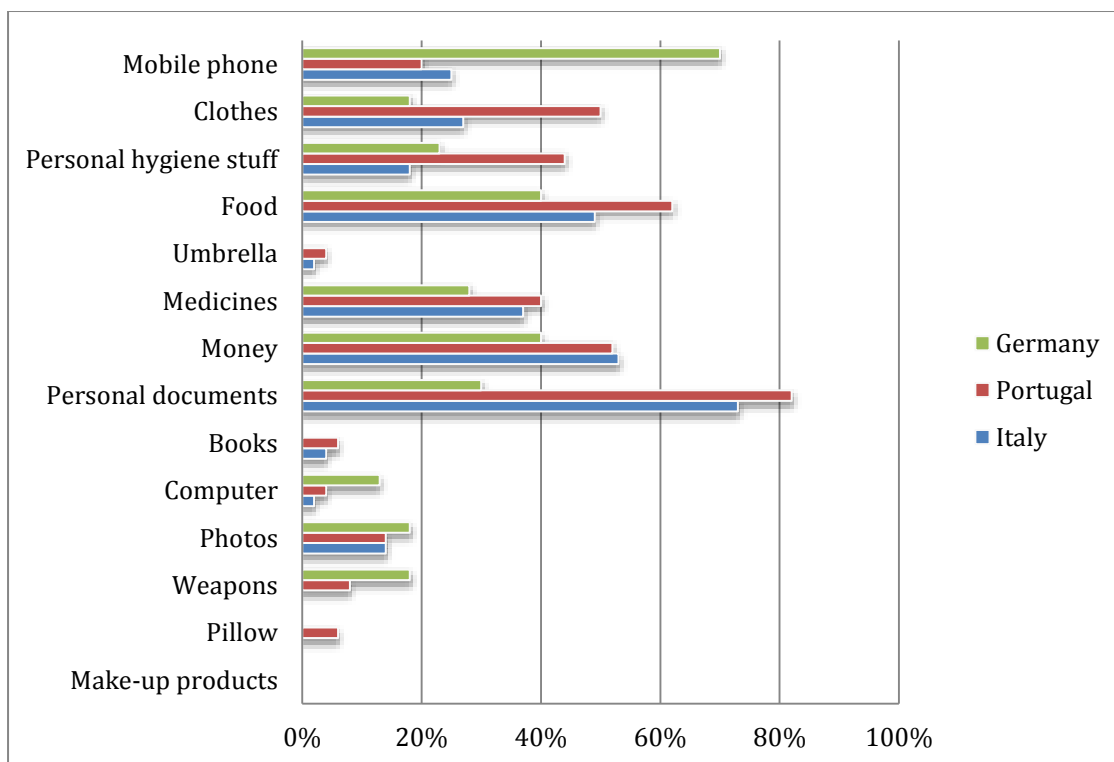
We decided to conclude the questionnaire with this particular question, to involve the inter-viewees emotionally, asking them to identify themselves with a refugee.

They were asked to choose only three items that they would bring in their backpack and this forced them to make a choice and renounce to objects that in their everyday life would be taken for granted.

In Italy priority was given to personal documents, money and food; in Portugal personal documents as well, food and money; in Germany, on the other hand, the mobile phone was the most selected item, followed by food and money.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions

The model of cultural dimensions created by Hofstede is helpful to compare and analyse cultures; it is possible to identify six different dimensions in his model:

- Power Distance Index (PDI)
- Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV)
- Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS)
- Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)
- Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation (LTO)
- Indulgence versus Restraint (IND)

During this research it was possible to notice some behavioural differences between Italian, Portuguese and German people: Hofstede's criteria suited perfectly to this comparison, to verify if our remarks were in line with his study.

First of all we decided to check how this Country are evaluated according to the 6 dimensions:
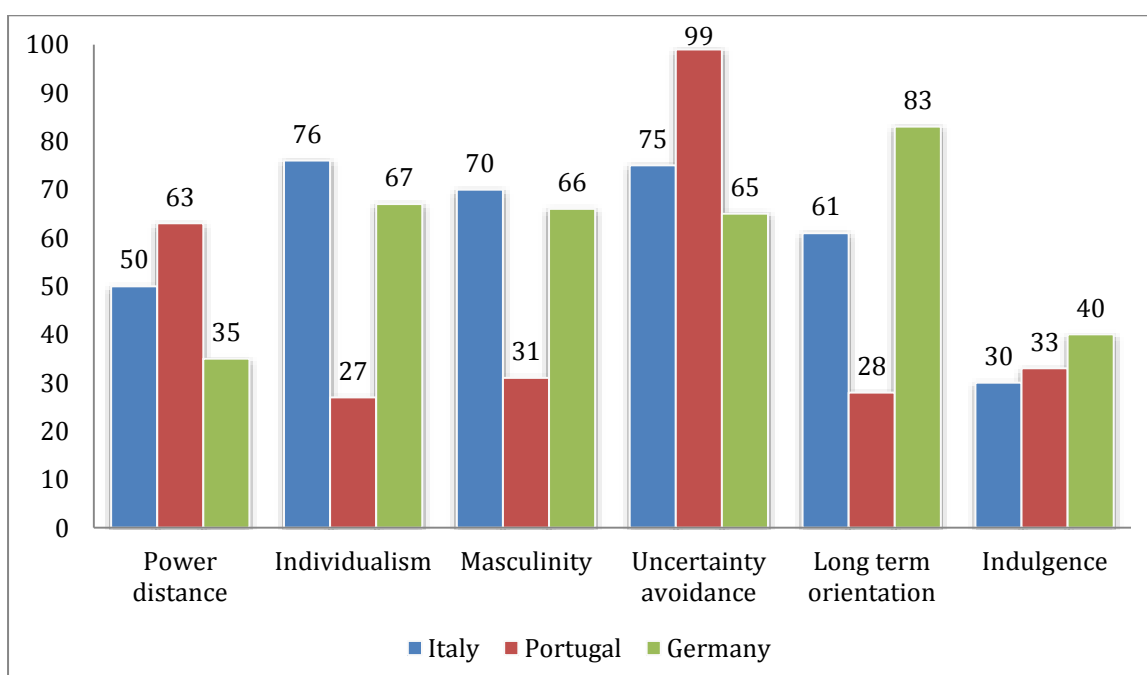
Hofstede's cultural dimensions: Italy, Portugal and Germany.

Secondly we compared these data with our perceptions; only some of these categories suited to this case: Individualism, uncertainty avoidance and long term orientation.

Individualism

Individualism "can be defined as a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families"[6]. According to Hofstede's cultural dimensions Portugal less individualist than Italy and Germany; as far as our experience is concerned Portugal turns out to be more individualist than Italy and Germany, since the answers show a certain reluctance towards foreigners and migrants.

Uncertainty Avoidance

This dimension "expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity"[7].
In this case we found similarities with Hofstede's criteria, in fact from our survey's result it seems like a consistent part of Portuguese shows fear of changes, such as the arrival of migrants and also worries for the consequences related to it.
Germany and Italy have a similar score in Hofstede's model and this does not diverge from what we have found.

Long term orientation

In Hofstede's model Germany has a high score, while Portugal is scored very low.
Countries whose score is low on this dimension "prefer to maintain time-honoured traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion"[8].
Even if we cannot confirm the whole sentence with our analysis, we can however notice that our results reflect the second part of the statement: in fact, as already mentioned, Portugal seems to be afraid of this change and less open to novelties in comparison with Germany and Italy.

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[6] https://geert-hofstede.com/
[7] https://geert-hofstede.com/
[8] https://www.geert-hofstede.com/portugal.html

Conclusion

In conclusion to this project, we can state that this topic is very debated and controversial nowadays and the collaboration with students of other nationalities gave us the opportunity to analyze this phenomenon also from a different perspective.

The survey also helped us to have a general overview of this issue and to become aware of how the situation is perceived in three European nations.

If on the one hand it is true that this is a complicated matter that requires a great effort and some people are worried about the consequences, on the other hand from the responses it emerges a certain open-mindedness and willingness to welcome refugees.

A very interesting aspect of this survey was the range of answers given to the question "Do you think that your Country can welcome them and offer them opportunities for a better life?": almost all responses, both yes and no, were justified and explained with suggestions and reasons that supported their point of view.

The majority of them gave a positive answer and this shows feelings of openness to welcome them.

The only remarkable difference is represented by some Portuguese results, which are not always in line with the other Nations' answers: whereas in Italy and Germany only a small percentage is not in favor of welcome, in Portugal a consistent share of interviewees seems to feel threatened by the arrival of migrants and fears to loose jobs opportunities; furthermore they do not think that their Country can offer them opportunities for a better life and believe that each Nation should adopt its own policy.

To conclude we can say that most of participants seem to be aware of the seriousness of this situation and even though it is perceived as a challenge and change for our society, it is considered possible to intervene through the cooperation of Nations instead of closing borders.

Appendix

Appendix A: Minutes of the Skype meetings

First meeting
European Dialogue Project 2016
Team: 5
Minutes of the Team Meeting – First Meeting

DATE: 12 April 2016
ATTENDEES: Italian Group –Silvia Rubbiani. German Group – Daniel Hecht, Florian Erny. Portuguese Group – Cláudia Martins, Gabriela Mendes, Jessica Piedade
ABSENT: Lisa Mammi (Italian Group)
TIME: 7:30 pm – 8 pm (Portugal), 8:30 pm – 9 pm (Germany and Italy)

Introductions the members from each group took turns introducing themselves.
TOPIC 1 - Discussion the research topic

Discussion: Discussion started by the attendees sharing their research on the topic about each country. The research showed that Germany and Italy are facing the major problems, talking about refugees topic.

Groups gave their examples about how their countries are facing the situation and the movements that community are creating to help the refugees.

NEXT MEETING

The 2nd meeting will take place on 20 April on Skype at 7:30 pm (Portugal) and 8:30 pm (Germany and Italy). The Portuguese or the Italian group will chair the 2nd meeting and the German Team will take notes during the meeting and afterwards write the minutes.

MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Cláudia Martins, Gabriela Mendes, Jessica Piedade (Portuguese Team)

DATE: 17 April 2015

Second meeting
European Dialogue Project 2016
Team: 5 Migration
Minutes of the Team Meeting – Number 2

DATE: 20th of April, 2016
ATTENDEES: Mammi, L. Rubbiani, S (Italy); Piedade, J.; Mendes, G.; Martins, C. (Portugal); Hecht, D.; Erny, F.
ABSENT: /
TIME: 20:30 - 21.45 CET

Introduction

TOPIC 1 – Italian survey questions
Discussion: The whole group looked at the 12 questions that the Italian group members had prepared and talked about which questions would be useful in their survey.
Action taken: We decided to take question number 1 about gender and number 2 regarding age into our survey. We also took question number 3 (profession) but agreed to add choices so we would not have too many different answers (Student, Employee, Worker, Retired, Unemployed) and make it easier to summarize our results.

We left the question about nationality out because we thought there would be no need for that question because most of the respondents would come from the very same country as the men/women that hand out the survey.

Furthermore, we took question number 5 which was, "How serious is the migrant situation in Europe?" and added a related question that refers only to our single countries (Germany, Italy, Portugal).

The group took question number 6 as our question number 6 and added possible answers.

All of us agreed on question number 6 but we wanted to add a few more choices than the question originally had.

Questions number eight, nine, ten and eleven were applied to our survey without changes.

TOPIC 2 – German survey questions

Discussion: The group then went on to the German survey questions and decided which of the questions should be part of the final survey.

Action taken: Question numbers 2, 5, 7 and 10 from the German survey were added to the final survey without changes. The Italian group members suggested "Libya" as an additional choice for question number 4 and we took the question to our final survey. In question number 2 we decided to add age gaps to make it easier to sum up our results.

TOPIC 3 – Portuguese survey questions

Discussion: At last we looked at the Portuguese survey questions.

Action taken: The group decided to take questions number 3 about the possible impact refugees could have on Europe, question number 8 regarding the rights of a refugee. As the last question the Portuguese members liked to have question number 9 from their survey because the respondents can emphasize with the refugees.

NEXT MEETING.: 2nd of July, 2016
MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Florian Erny
DATE: 26th of May, 2016

Third meeting
European Dialogue Project 2016
Team: 5 Migration
Minutes of the Team Meeting – Number 3

DATE: 31st of May, 2016
ATTENDEES: Rubbiani, S.; Mammi, L. (Italy); Piedade, J.; Mendes, G.; Martins, C. (Portugal); Hecht, D.; Erny, F.
ABSENT: /
TIME: 20:00 - 20.45 CET

Introduction
It was the last meeting and we discussed the results of our surveys, comparing them through graphs and charts.

TOPIC 1 – Italian presentation

Discussion: The Italian group uploaded a PowerPoint presentation on the virtual meeting room and started to present the results to the other two groups.

Action taken: After a few minutes the German group suggested to continue the analysis in a different way, thus comparing the answers of the three Countries for each question.
In this way it was easier to make a comparison between the data.

TOPIC 2 – Analysis of results

Discussion: We went through the questions one by one, discussing the similarities and differences of almost all answers: for example, we noticed a similarity regarding the question

"Do you think that closed borders are helping/solving the refugee crisis?"; in fact, the majority of the respondents in all the three Countries answered "No".

We also found some difference, for instance only a small percentage of respondents in Italy and Germany believes that refugees are steeling employment opportunities in their Nation, whereas 44% of Portuguese respondents think that they are steeling job opportunities.

Action taken: We discussed all the results, also thinking about the reasons why some answers were so different.

TOPIC 2 – Last remarks and conclusion

Discussion: The Italian group asked the other groups to send all the results, in order to collect all the necessary data for the final compendium.

Action taken: The Portuguese group had already written all the data in the summary and the German group committed to uploading them by the end of the week.

MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Rubbiani, S., Mammi, L.

DATE: 7th of June, 2016

Appendix B: Survey

EDP Project 5 - Migration

1. What is your gender? *(Please select one of these options)*
   - Male
   - Female

2. What is your age? *(Please select one of these options)*
   - under 18
   - between 19 to 25
   - 26 to 40
   - 41-59
   - 60 and older

3. What is your profession? *(Please select one of these options)*
   - Student
   - Employee
   - Worker
   - Retired
   - Unemployed

4. How serious is the migrants situation in Europe? *(Rate it from 1 to 5)*
   - 1 not serious at all
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5 extremely serious

5. How serious is the migrants situation in Germany/Italy/Portugal? *(Rate it from 1 to 5)*
   - 1 not serious at all
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5 extremely serious

6. Why do you think migrants coming to Europe? *(It is possible to select more than one answer)*
   - Political reasons
   - Economic reasons
   - War
   - Other *(which? / open question)*

7. Which are your feelings about the migrants situation in the EU? *(It is possible to select more than one answer)*
   - I feel a fear of the unknown
   - I feel charitable / philanthropic
   - I feel pity
   - I feel powerless
   - I think it is a challenge for our society
   - I think it is a change for our society
   - I think it is a chance for our society

8. Do you think that your Country can welcome them and offer them opportunities for a better life? *(Please select one of these options)*
   - Yes
   - No

9. If yes, how? *(open question)*
   If no, why? *(open question)*

10. Who should take the responsibility for the migration situation? *(Please select one of these options)*
    - Each country should adopt its own policy
    - E.U. should adopt a common policy
    - Also U.S. and other rich countries should intervene

11. Do you think that closed borders are helping/solving the refugee crisis? *(Please select one of these options)*
    - Yes
    - No

12. Do you feel that the refugees are stealing employment opportunities in Germany/Italy/Portugal? *(Please select one of these options)*
    - Yes
    - No

13. How old do you think the average refugee is? *(Please select one of these options)*
    - under 18
    - between 19 to 25
    - 26 to 40
    - 41-59
    - 60 and older

14. Where do you think the refugees come from? *(majority)*
    - Syria
    - Iraq
    - Afghanistan
    - Pakistan
    - Libya
    - Other countries *(which? / open question)*

15. How can refugees be integrated in Germany/Italy/Portugal? *(It is possible to select more than one answer)*
    - school education
    - language courses
    - workplace programs
    - housing programs

16. How educated are the coming refugees? *(majority)*
    - Primary School
    - Secondary School
    - University
    - Technical School

17. If you were in the position to hire refugees in your company, what kind of contract would you suggest? *(Please select one of these options)*
    - Internship
    - Apprenticeship
    - Regular employment

18. Which impact does the refugee crisis have? *(It is possible to select more than one answer)*
    - Terrorism
    - Financial crisis
    - Islamisation
    - Economic miracle
    - Multinational country
    - Globalised country

19. Do you know the civil human rights of refugees in Germany/Italy/Portugal? *(Please select one of these options)*
    - Yes
    - No

20. If you were a refugee, what would you take in your backpack? *(Please select 3 of these items)*
    - Mobile phone
    - Clothes
    - Personal hygiene stuff
    - Food
    - Umbrella
    - Medicines
    - Money
    - Personal documents
    - Books

- Computer
- Photos
- Weapon
- Pillow
- Make-up products

THANK YOU!

References

- https://geert-hofstede.com/

- Poppi, Franca 2012. *Global interactions in English as a Lingua Franca. How written communication is changing under the influence of electronic media and new contexts of use* (Peter Lang Bern CHE)

Team Six

European Dialogue Project

European Dialogue Project 2016
Workforce Diversity in the European Union

Team 6: Human Capital

Italian team:	**German team:**
Crocetti, Rachele	Jamnicki, Michael
Bonvicini, Giorgia	Benedikt Ragnar, Paul

Date: June 24th, 2016

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University
of Applied Sciences

Introduction

We, Rachele Crocetti and Giorgia Bonvicini, as students of Modena and Reggio-Emilia University, have taken part into the *2016 European Dialogue Project* during this summer period, in which we have been working together with two students from Germany: Benedikt Ragnar Paul and Michael Jamnicki. Francisco Lopes (form Portugal) was supposed to be another part of team, but he resigned for unknown reasons, after having participated only to an online meeting.

"Workforce Diversity in the European Union" was the subject matter of the project, we have been working on and, in particular, our team had the task to study what *human capital* is and how Germany and Italy engage in making their citizen develop it.

Whenever we refer to *human capital*, we consider <<the measure of the economic value of an employee's skill set. This measure builds on the basic production input of labour measure where all labour is thought to be equal>>[9]. The term implies the recognition that people in organisations and businesses are an important and essential asset, that contributes to the development and growth of the factory itself, in a similar way as physical assets such as machines and money.

Our aim was to seek and identify which general abilities and skills job applicants need to display when looking for a job. Therefore our team carried out a survey, by contacting factory managers and personnel recruiters, both in Germany and Italy, to have a questionnaire we made answered. Moreover, we had to look for similarities and differences in these two countries in the way workers can gain experience and competences.

In Italy a total amount of 21 people agreed on answering the questionnaire, whereas in Germany the number was a little higher: 45.

The most interesting results of the survey

We focus in this section on the most engaging results we have been able to obtain by analysing the survey. Specifically, we deliver pieces of information:

1. about the personal qualities a candidate for a job position is supposed to have,
2. about the recommended age to start a traineeship,
3. about the efficiency of German and Italian education system.

Which are the personal qualities, which factory managers appreciate the most?

Since a person's human capital consists not only in the studies he or she did but also in his or her personal qualities, we though it could have been useful for our analysis to ask the test people for the personal skills they aim at finding in a candidate during a job interview. In order to do it, we invited them to assign a number (from 1 to 10) to the following qualities:

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[9] Definition from: http://www.investopedia.com/terms/h/humancapital.asp

Punctuality, Curiosity, Charisma, Knowledge, Respect, Determination, Organization, Sympathy.

Italy	Average	Germany	Average
1) Respect	9,19/10	**1) Respect**	8,33/10
1) Determination	9,19/10	2) Curiosity	8,08/10
2) Punctuality	9,04/10	3) Determination	7,75/10
3) Knowledge	8,76/10	4) Punctuality	7,67/10
4) Curiosity	8,42/10	5) Organisation	7,58/10
5) Charisma	8,14/10	6) Knowledge	7,17/10
6) Empathy	8,09/10	7) Empathy	6,45/10
7) Organisation	7,90/10	8) Charisma	6,42/10

(Figure 1)

According to *figure 1* (here above), the most rated characteristic is by far respect, which seems to be the *conditio sine qua non* young people can be taken into consideration during a job interview. This is valid for the two nations under exam here, in spite of the fact that in Italy this value is slightly overrated in Italy in comparison with Germany. Determination plays also a pivotal role for for factory managers, exceeding punctuality always of a position. Charisma and particularly empathy are not perceived as compulsory to find a job, perhaps because certain categories of work don't require workers be charismatic.

Moreover, by looking at *figure 1* once again, it emerges that there are not only similarities between Germany and Italy, but also some differences. In line with it, it is undeniable that organisation hasn't the same significance in these two nations: Germans place much more importance on this quality than Italians do, by confirming the widely held idea (or stereotype) that in Italy people never follow planes and are often in disarray. On the contrary, a stereotype which seems to be proven wrong is that for Italians punctuality is not something to worry about; indeed, this value has obtained a higher average in Italy than in Germany, where respondents rated it with a substantially lower score (9.04/10 against 7.67/10). This could lead to culturally-defined considerations: it might reflect the fact that punctuality is one of the typical German virtues and that so deeply-rooted is it in people's behaviour pattern that employers take it for granted in Germany.

At what age factory managers suggest young people start gaining experiences by doing a traineeship?
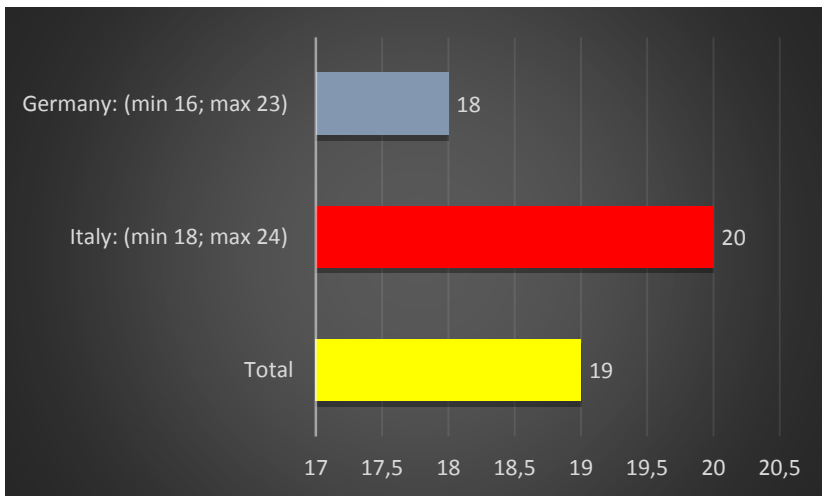
According to the respondents, the best age for a first internship in a qualified sector is around 19 years on average in these two countries, even though in Italy some respondents suggest that seventeen-year-old guys should already start looking for a traineeship in order to understand how the labour market works. The further, it is to outline that in Germany the schooling system at High School lasts a year less that in Italy, where students need to attend a fifth year. This means that Italian undergraduates start University one year after their German mates and may also start gaining working experience a year later.

Do educational institutions prepare young people for the job market properly?
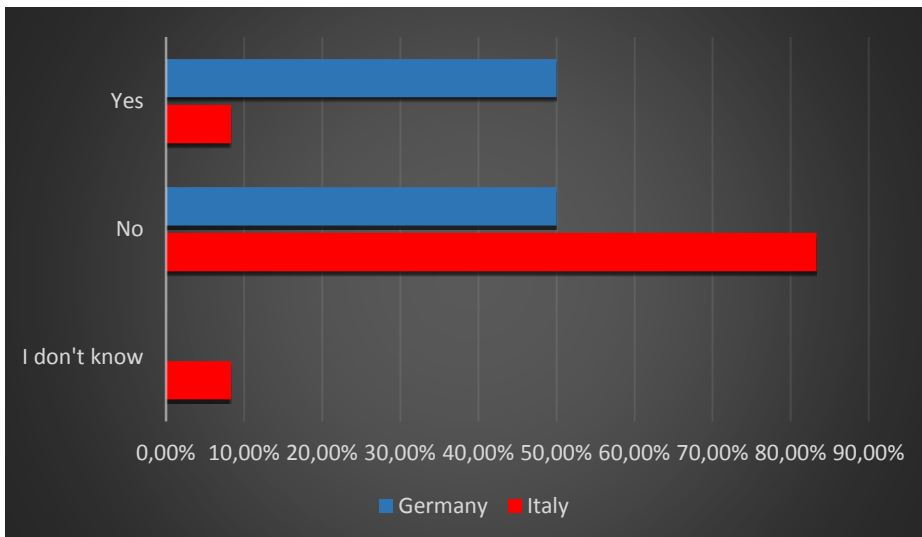
The two thirds of test people think that educational institutions do not properly prepare young people for the job market. Comparing both countries, this negative judgement is even more significant in Italy, where 82% put a cross on "no" when answering the question: "On the basis of your personal experience, do you think that educational institutions in your country are preparing properly young students to face the work market?" (question number 9). This has repercussions on young students, that are not ready to face the labour market when they leave their higher education institutions. In Germany, the perception is as negative as in Italy,

but not so dramatic: on the one hand, one half of the respondents indicates that graduates have all the necessary requirements to move freely within the labour market; on the contrary, the other half thinks the exact opposite. To solve this dilemma out, we have been discussing about it during the last Skype meeting, by thinking of cultural explanations to this: the Italian schooling system might be more time-consuming and less effective than the German one.

English: is it essential to find a job?
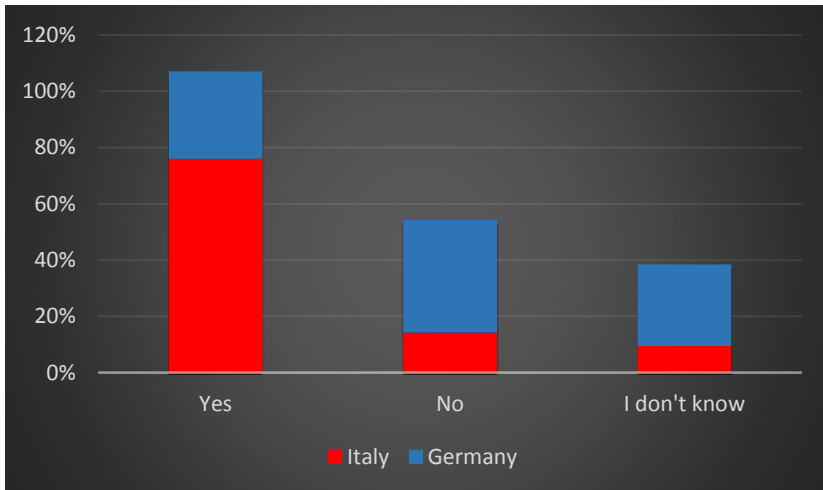
The world is becoming smaller: long-haul distance has never been easier to cover and communication is feasible whenever and wherever it is desired. So it is clear-cut that people around the world need to share a common communication code to carry on dialogues and relationships. In this "world at hand", English has gained so much power that it has become the Lingua Franca par excellence. For this reason, it was useful to know if factory managers want their employees to be able to speak English even at a basic level.

To have this matter analysed we asked the following question: "*Do you think that a person, whose fluency in English is quite sufficient, is better-off than another learned and skilled one, who neither speaks nor understands English*? (question number 8)".

The graph at the following page sheds light on the different way of answering to the above set question on behalf of German and Italian factory managers and personnel recruiters. Germans consider it to be more relevant to be skilled and learned, whereas Italians have another approach to this issue: for Italian factory managers and personnel recruiters is further more helpful to be able to speak English than been a skilled worker. Unlikely, without deeper data it is impossible to understand the reason of this two disharmonious point of view.

A comparison between the data of the survey and Hofstede's cultural dimensions model
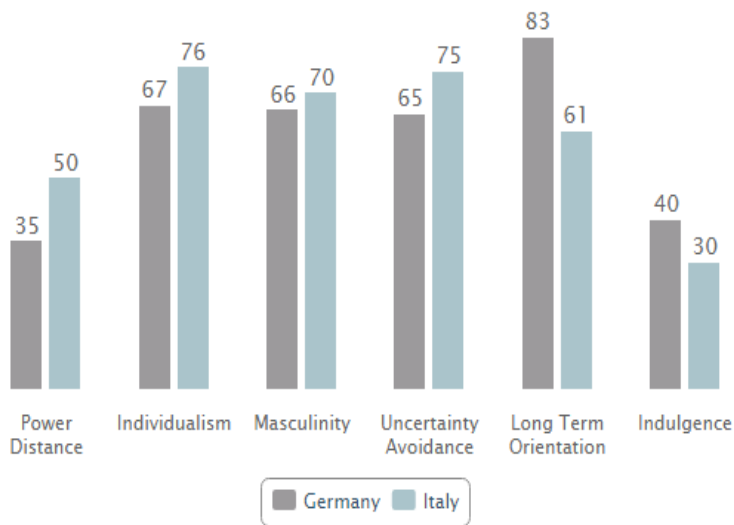
The graph at the left shows the comparison of the six-dimension model by Hofstede between Germany and Italy[10]. By observing the graph, it is clear-cut that the cultural drivers between these nations are not that different. Indeed, the German and the Italian have a similar behaviour pattern toward the way they live in the society.

As a matter of fact, Italy and Germany gained almost the same score for every dimension of the model:

- *Power Distance dimension*. Germany (35) and Italy (50) attempt to equalise the distribution of the power among more authoritative people and less ones and, in terms of work, they strive hard for a friendly communication style: this is in line with the findings of the project data, since both German and Italian managers or personnel recruiters aim at finding respectful people[11], willing to collaborate actively in the daily routine of the working life.

- *Individualism dimension*. With only a 9-point-distance between Italy (76) and Germany (67) as far as the dimension of the Individualism is concerned, these nations show that people have a strong ideal of self-affirmation and they tend to define themselves toward their working achievements. Indeed, the figures of project highlight that, in addiction to respect, also determination[12] plays a pivotal role when people are in search of a job.

- *Masculinity*. According to Hofstede's graph, Italy (70) and Germany (66) are two masculine societies, where the traditional role of the man (the breadwinner) and the woman (the angel of the hearth) is supposed to be followed. This seems to be proven wrong with the analysis of the project data: the simple fact that the number of women, who answered to the questionnaire in both nations, is higher than the number of men signals that women have gained more power and in the society[13]. Moreover, from the analysis of the questionnaires, it emerged that both German and Italian managers thinks that this issue might be a hindrance in highly limited situations.

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[10]The graph dates back to 20th June 2016 and it is retrievable at Geert Hofstede's personal website, at the url: https://geert-hofstede.com/germany.html.

[11]*Respect* is the most important value both in Germany and in Italy; in fact, it ranks in the first place among the other values of the question number 2.

[12]Determination ranks very high in the scale of the most important values of the question number 2: it is the second place in Italy and in the third place in Germany.

[13]The total number of test people in Italy is 21: 13 (62%) of them out of 21 are females. The total number of test people in Germany is 45: 27 of them (60%) out of 45 are females.

- *Uncertainty Avoidance*. This dimension refers to what extent people are willing and prepared to face problems or unusual situations and how much good they are at coping with anxiety. In relation to the above graph, Italian people (61) seem to be more ready than Germans (83) to deal with unknown circumstances. In fact, this is supported with the figures of the project: in Germany, the ability of being organised (organisation) has gained more points than in Italy, ranking in the fifth place on the scale of the eight values of question number 3[14] (whereas in Italy it ranks at the end of the scale).
- *Long Term Orientation* and *Indulgence*. *Long Term-Orientated* cultures have lots expectations from the future: they are capable to wait for important things in the long run. On the contrary, *Short Term-Orientated* cultures seek gratification in the short run. *Indulgence vs Restraint* refers to the degree of gratification and enjoyment which is allowed in a society. Our questionnaires investigate very little about these two dimensions, so it is impossible to comment upon them.

By analysing together the final data of the questionnaires and the comparison of the six-dimension cultural model by Hofestede between Germany and Italy, it can be claimed that the former validates the latter and vice-versa. Only the dimensions of masculinity by Hofstede is proven wrong with the data of the project, but further researches should be done to state it with an absolute certainty.

Conclusions

To summarise this study, we would like to highlight that the differences encountered between Germany and Italy can be considered from three points of view: social, cultural and economical. The first one is clearly displayed in the first graph containing the most relevant qualities a candidate should have, as respect or punctuality. The second evidences the cultural gap existent between the two nations and as a consequence a difference of one year appears on the topic concerning the best age to start an apprenticeship. Finally, the last one, linked to the economical aspect, concerns the fact that Germans are more eager and willing to mobility with regard to their jobs: as demonstrated not only by the graph but also by the chats with our German colleagues, Germany offers many social benefits that are unheard of in Italy. Moreover the bond existing between the "*casa*", the family and the soil is stronger in Italy compared to Germany, where very few people are real estate owners, preferring instead to rent their homes and more prone to eventual home moving.

Therefore, the difference existent between the Mediterranean culture Italy belongs to and the Middle-European one Germany is part of, do play a crucial role in separating both states in terms of human capital as it was expected, nevertheless some values are kept as equally important for the two republics: curiosity, determination and organization, ideas that are considered by many the backbone of the human resources world.

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[14]Question number 3: Please, assign the following values a number, according to the importance they have in your opinion (from 1, which is the lowest score, to 10, which is the highest score): Punctuality, Curiosity, Charisma, Knowledge, Respect, Determination, Organisation, Sympathy.

Appendix
Appendix A: Survey (in English)

MARKET RESEARCH SURVEY

Questionnaire on the subject matter "Human Capital"

European Dialogue Project 2016

Test Person: Male []   Female []

What is your job within the firm? _____

How long have you been working in this job position? _____

Instructions: Please, put a tick in the box next to the answer of your choice or write in the space provided as the case may be

1) How much can a person's school education help him/her find a job in the current labour market?

 Not at all []   A little bit []   Well enough []   Totally []

2) How much may a person's spirit of enterprise overtake his/her school education, while a job interview?

Not at all []   A little bit []   Well enough []   Totally []

3) Please, assign the following values a number, according to the importance they have in your opinion (from 1, which is the lowest score, to 10, which is the highest score):   Punctuality, Curiosity, Charisma, Knowledge, Respect, Determination, Organization, Sympathy

Are there any other values you would like to add?

_____

4) Imagine you have been carrying out job interviews for a vacant job in your firm. A candidate is now standing in front you and you are sure you want to hire him/her: What is he/she wearing? What kind of person is he/she like?

_____

_____

5) Assign a number to the following sections you normally find in a CV, according to the importance they have in your opinion

(From 1, which is the lowest score, to 10, which is the score):

- School Education
- Hobbies
- Presence on Social Networks
- Language Skills
- Working Experience

- Organization Skills
- Computer Skills
- Communication Skills

6) If two candidates have the same qualifications, what are those skills, which can make one of them, stand out?

_____

_____

7) To what extent do you think that a person's gender can influence his/ her possibilities to get a job? Not at all []   A little bit []   Well enough []   Totally []

8) Do you think that a person, whose fluency in English is sufficient, is better off than another learned and skilled one, who neither speaks nor understands English?

Yes []   No []   I don't know []

9) On the basis of your personal experience, do you think that educational institutions in your country are preparing properly young students to face the work market?

Yes []   No []   I don't know []

10) At what age would you recommend young people to start looking for a traineeship to accumulate experience? _____

11) In your opinion, has Information Technology contributed to incrementing one person's human capital through online courses)?

Yes []   No []   I don't know []

12) How often has it happened to you to talk to young people, who have worked abroad because they do not see chances to build a future in your country?

Never []   Sometimes []   Often []   Always []

13) Which is the reason why some European countries have a huge unemployment rate: Don't live there people with a satisfying human capital? On the other hand, don't people have the chance to develop human capital there?

_____

_____

_____

14) Do you think that in your country distance, transportation costs and other barriers affects to a great extent one's person decision to move freely wherever they feel they have to go to improve his/her human capital?

Yes []   No []   I don't know []

15) Do you think that if a person lives close to a company, which demands labor force, he / she will have more chances to get a job in this company than another one living far away?

Yes []   No []   I don't know []

THANK YOU FOR YOU HELP

Appendix B: Italian graphs and scales of values about the outcomes of the question-naires

Graph 1: Test people

Test people: 21 (100%)

Females: 13 (62%)

Males: 8 (38%)
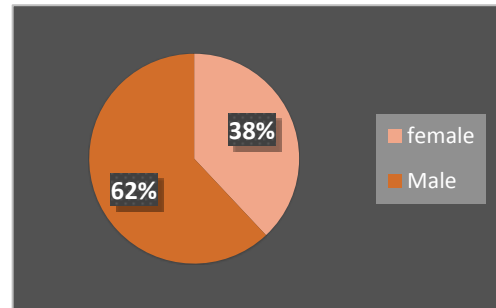
Graph 2: Graph of question number 8

Do you think that a person, whose fluency in English is quite sufficient, is better-off than another learned and skilled one, who neither speaks nor understands English?

Yes: 16 (76%)

No: 3 (14%)

I don't know: 2 (10%)
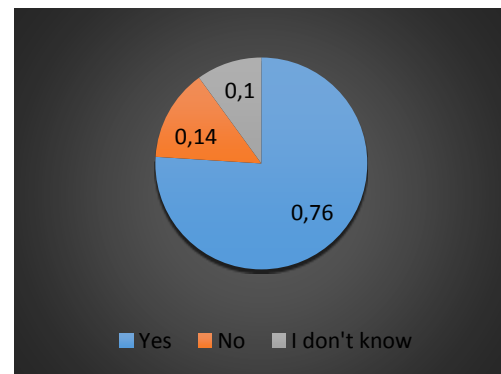
Graph 3: Graph of question number 13

Which is the reason why some European countries have a huge unemployment rate: A) Don't live there people with a satisfying human capital? B) Or don't people have the chance to develop human capital there?

A) 1 (5%)

B) 20 (95%)
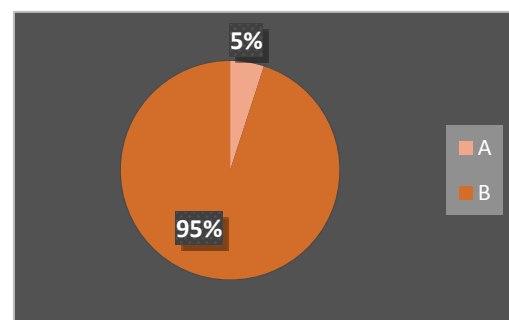
Graph 4: Graph of question number 14

Do you think that in your country distance, transportation costs and other barriers affects to a great extent one's person decision to move freely wherever they feel they have to go to improve his/her human capital?
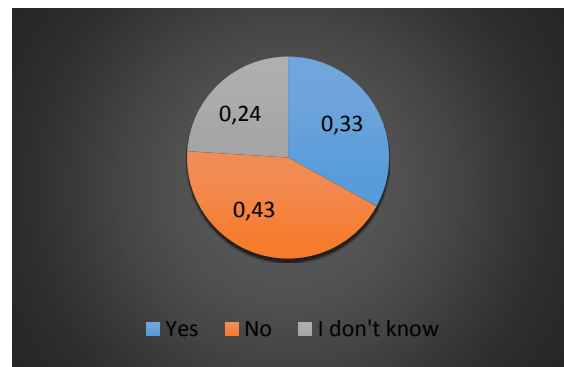
Yes: 7 (33%)

No: 9 (43%)

I don't know: 5 (24%)

Scale of values 1: question number 3

- PUNCTUALITY: 9,04/10 2
- CURIOSITY: 8,42/10 4
- CHARISM: 8,14/10 5
- KNOWLEDGE: 8,76/10 3
- RESPECT: 9,19/10 1
- DETERMINATION: 9,19/10 1
- ORGANISATION: 7,90/10 7
- EMPATHY: 8,09/10 6

1) Respect
1) Determination
2) Punctuality
3) Knowledge
4) Curiosity
5) Charisma
6) Empathy
7) Organisation

Scale of values 2: question number 5

- EDUCATION: 8,19/10 3
- HOBBY: 4,90/10 7
- PRESENCE ON SOCIAL NETWORKS: 4,14/10 8
- ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS: 7,14/10 4
- WORKING EXPERIENCES: 7,08/10 5
- LANGUAGES: 8,23/10 2
- COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS: 8,28/10 1
- DIGITAL SKILLS: 7,04/10 6

1) Communicative skills
2) Languages
3) Education
4) Organisation skills
5) Working Experiences
6) Digital skills
7) Hobby
8) Presence on social networks

Appendix C: Minutes of the Skype meetings

Appendix C.1): **First meeting** (minutes written by: Benedikt Paul; date: 29th April 2016)
DATE OF THE MEETING: 17.04.2016
ATTENDEES: Rachele Crocetti, Giorgia Bonvicini, Michael Jamnicki, Benedikt Paul
ABSENT: Francisco Lopes
TIME: 15.00 - 15.35

Introduction

TOPIC 1 - Introduction of each attendee
Discussion: Each attendee introduces itself. At first the Italian team, as second the German team.
Action taken: Introduction done

TOPIC 2 – Question for the survey
Discussion: The Italian team comes up with a prepared questionnaire, in which they wrote down their suggestions. They upload it on Facebook, to give the German team access to it. After reading it, the teams begin to discuss the definition of the word Human Capital. All attendees agree to the definition, that Human Capital is the definition of the potential labor/work-force of a human and groups of humans. Thereafter, they discuss about the possible audience and about their opportunities to distribute and share the survey.
Action taken: Italian team introduced their prepared questionnaire. German team agreed to add new questions and to improve the existing ones until next meeting.
Deadline: 24.04.2016

Appendix C.2): **Second meeting** (minutes written by: Benedikt Paul; date: 29th April 2016)
DATE OF THE MEETING: 24.04.2016
ATTENDEES: Rachele Crocetti, Giorgia Bonvicini, Francisco Lopes, Michael Jamnicki
ABSENT: Benedikt Paul
TIME: 15:15 - 16:00 German time

Introduction

TOPIC 1 - Presentation of questions for the survey
Discussion: Rachele talks about the questionnaire and mentions some issues about a few questions she already fixed. She also reminds the attendees about the influence of the situation of the actual Italian labor-market on her suggested questions. The attendees talk about the impact of several global events like the financial crisis 2008 on the different national labor-markets and note about the different labor-mentalities of each country. Each national team then introduces its questions and discusses the question with the other national team.
Action taken: The attendees chose the definitive fifteen questions for the survey and decided to improve the existing ones.
Deadline: Immediately

TOPIC 2 – Distribution of the questionnaire
Discussion: The team talks about the potential addressees, the quantity and the possible public sources of the questionnaire. Most important for the team is the perspective of Human-Resources departments of well-known local companies.
Action taken: The team decided to send 20-40 questionnaires per country per E-Mail, online or per paper to companies and other potential addressees. A possibility to increase the number of received interviews could be public interviews in well-populated areas like cities.
Deadline: 03.05.2016

NEXT MEETING 01.05.2016

Appendix C.3): **Third meeting** (minutes written by: Rachele Crocetti; date: 05th April 2016)
DATE OF THE MEETING: 04.06.2016
ATTENDEES: Rachele Crocetti, Giorgia Bonvicini, Michael Jamnicki
ABSENT: Benedikt Paul, Francisco Lopes
TIME: 16:30 - 17:00 Italian time

Introduction

TOPIC 1 - Data analysis and comparison
Discussion: Rachele, Giorgia and Michael start the conversation by talking about the results of their own questionnaires. During the discussion, they highlight the differences and similarities of the Italian and German labour market and instruction system. It emerged that, in the labour market, both Italian and German personnel recruiters search for curious and respectful people. As far as the punctuality is concerned, it was argued that in Germany this value is not allotted a high score because of the people's cultural tendency toward punctuality; whereas, in Italy personnel recruiters think of punctuality as a high value a candidate should have because of the stereotype that Italians are always late. Moreover, it was pointed out that factory managers believe that instruction system is preparing young students for the labour market more in Germany than in Italy, where people are also evaluated for their personality.
Finally, the attendees talk about the final compendium, where Rachele and Giorgia will write about the differences and similarities mentioned above.
Action taken: Michael agrees on sending in the next two following days a brief scheme of the answers of the German questionnaires, so that Rachele and Giorgia can compare the data of these two countries in details and write the final compendium.
Deadline: 06.06.2016

NEXT MEETING None

Team Seven

European Dialogue
Project

European Dialogue Project 2016
Labour Mobility

Team 7: Labour Mobility

Italian team:
Chiara Pineschi
Francesca Vitali
Beatrice Tedeschi

Portuguese team:
Jeremie Ballekens

German team:

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University
of Applied Sciences

Introduction

In the last 25 years, the world has experienced a gradual but steady flattening[1] because of the "advancing economic globalization, shifting demographic patterns, and the rapid pace of technological change" (Martin & Nakayama 2015: 14). All these factors are "catapulting people, practices and beliefs from different cultures into shared and contested physical and virtual spaces in workplaces in unprecedented ways" (Sorrells 2012: 372 quoted in: Martin & Nakayama 2015: 15). Workplace is indeed of one the most significant settings for international interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, many businesses wish for their employers to acquire intercultural communication competence (ICC) (Milhauser & Rahschulte 2010), in order to deal with complex and challenging relations.

However, according to Martin & Nakayama (2015), most of ICC models bear biased generalisations and assumptions about other cultures, and as such are heralds of "Eurocentric, ethnocentric, and egocentric perspectives" (ibid. 15). These models tend to "focus on national culture, conceptualize culture as bounded and static, and ignore issues of power and the larger structures that constrain and impact individual attitudes and actions" (ibid.). One outstanding example if Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory.

In the after-globalisation world, and especially because of the staggering recent changes in European dynamics, there is the need to dig deeper in changing aspects of labour mobility and workplace interaction.

Introduction to EDP

"European Dialogue Project" is a project based on primary research that has been made in a six- month period by students from Italy, Germany and Portugal using English as a lingua franca. Our topic was 'Labour mobility within the EU: challenges and perspectives for a sustainable European labour market' in relation to "Workforce Diversity in the European Union". Data from Germany and Italy were compared (no participants from Portugal were in our group) in a survey carried out in parallel between the two countries. The main platforms used for communication was Skype, with the support of Facebook and LEA for more formal communications. As final step, a compendium has been redacted.

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[1] See: Poppi 2012.

Issues of culture and Intercultural Communication

The term 'culture' might be held as an inclusive conception for the "life experiences of commonly recognisable groups" (Kim 2001: 140). As such, it allows for "the viewing of all communication encounters as potentially "intercultural" (ibid.), for IC is frequently defined as the "communication process in which individual participants of *differing cultural backgrounds* come into direct contact and interaction with one another" (ibid.).

Up until the 1970s, culture had been conceptualised in terms of patterns like race, social class, gender, and nation. However, IC research from the 1970s and 1980s adopted a positivist approach that believed national cultures to be essentially *static* entities, which could be abstracted from surrounding socio-political conditions (Haualani et al. 2009), and objectively and quantitatively measured (Bardhan 2011). Members of a culture would thus have acted in predictive behavioural formulae (Holliday 2010) 'inherent' to the culture. Little attention was devoted to individual variations, and the members' behaviours were rather classified as functional or dysfunctional to the equilibrium of the whole[2] (ibid.). This monolithic view of culture argued for a naturalised homology between culture and nation (Haualani et al. 2009), with the consequential assertion that IC is the neutral medium
through which national differences are expressed (ibid.).

Within this view, Hofstede (1980) distinguished himself among both neopositivist and systems conceptions, for he strived first to classify culture and IC according to "predictive, generalizable propositions" (Kim 2001: 141), and second he strived to arrive at "lawlike principles and patterns of human behaviour" (ibid.).

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[2] This view is also termed *structural-functionalist*, since culture is held to have a known type of structure, which "achieves equilibrium through the functioning of its parts" (Holliday 2010: 260).

Hofstede

Geert Hofstede is a Dutch social psychologist, who became famous for his research on cross-cultural groups. His most significant work relates to the developing of a *cultural dimensions theory*. Hofstede (1980: 13) argues that culture is the "collective programming of the mind", or "software of the mind", that defines a group, and holds that the way people think, feel, behave, and act is strongly influenced and affected by their country of origin. Moreover, he argues that these mental programmes "do change, but slowly and not according to anyone's master plan. Changes take decades, if not centuries. [...] We better take mental programmes as given facts" (Hofstede 2003: 101). Thus, mental programmes determine cultural identities (Shah 2004), and "participants in a social situation draw upon this tacit knowledge of culture as a frame of reference" (ibid. 556). Hofstede's cultural dimension theory conceptualises cultural identity as an "essential uniform and stable social category or a communal entity" (Kim 2001: 145), thus treating it as monolithic. The theory belongs to *etic*[3] studies of IC in that Hofstede holds it is possible to identify "cross-cultural variations in communication-related phenomena along certain universal dimensions" (Kim 2001: 146), thus adopting an objective outsider perspective that allows the underpinning of culture-general theoretical concepts, with little attention devoted to "individual variations within a group and the dynamic, evolutionary nature of cultural identity as it is enacted in an individual's everyday life" (Kim 2001: 145).

Hofstede claims he was able to identify the mental programmes when, between the years 1967 and

1973, he carried out a large questionnaire survey study throughout subsidiaries of the big multinational corporation IBM in 66 countries. He sampled 117,000 answers and firstly concentrated on only 40 countries. The result of his efforts was an analysis of systematic differences in national cultures on four primary dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity. These bipolar dimensions deal with "four anthropological problem areas that different national societies handle differently: ways of coping with inequality, ways of coping with uncertainty, the relationship of the individual with her or his primary group, and the emotional implications of having been born as a girl or as a boy" (http://geerthofstede.nl/dimensions-of-national-cultures). They are visible in verbal statements and

behaviours, and represent the "broad tendencies [of a culture] to prefer certain states of affairs over others" (Hofstede 1991: 35). Hofstede organised the value differences according to scores on each of these four dimensions (McSweeney 2002). Later cross-national studies conducted through the help and direction of Michael Harris Bond and Michael Minkov added two further dimensions to Hofstede's model: long/short term orientation and indulgence/restraint.

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[3] As opposed to emic studies of culture (see: Kim 2001: 147-148).

Hofstede's model collocates within the structural-functionalist theory. Hofstede's "macro-level laws" (Hofstede 2001: 28) are particularly valuable in this theory for they can be easily employed in training for interaction between specific cultural groups (Holliday 2010), especially after the advent of globalisation and the resulting increase in international interaction (Poppi 2012). However, these dimensions are too binaristic and static, and the risk is that those phenomena that do not "fit within a known frame of reference" (Shah 2004: 556) may lead to be wrongly perceived as odd (ibid.).

Hofstede's limitations

Hofstede's monolithic conceptualisation of culture rests on "methodological nationalism" (Beck 2004), i.e. the notion that it is possible to reduce and aggregate culture to the national level (Bardhan 2011). This is problematic for at least three reasons.

First, the discourse of methodological nationalism tends to support a hegemonic description of culture, showcasing the visions and politics of those in power while muting the voices of several subcultures (Ono 1998) and ascribing labels to "historically less-powerful groups" (Halualani et al.
2009: 16). To account for the culture-state structural functionalist theory would thus mean to reproduce and perpetuate framings of culture that reflect ruling power interests (Halualani et al.
2009), and that overlook the actual macro contexts of social, economic, political, and historical forces. Hence, Hofstede's universal covering laws such as Power Distance and Individualism/Collectivism convey an illusion of neutrality, since they may be ideologically[4] constructed and thus may "represent an idealised Western Self and a demonised non-Western Other" (Holliday 2010: 259). These unequal Central-Periphery relations are typically constructed through the binaries. The ruling group benefits from the binaries, since they may justify imposed worldviews like colonialism, while ignoring the IC issues that arise from the inequality[5]. Concluding, it would therefore be illogical to make "broad generalisations about massive numbers of diverse people with complex cultural organisations, performances, identities, and experiences" (Ono 1998: 201), and IC scholars need instead to consider epistemological claims in IC as the outcome of power-laden milieus (Lee et al. 1995) that shape cultural attitudes and values.

Second, the claim that a large collective is bound to share similar cultural meanings because they
share the same "national discourse and citizenship" (Bardhan 2011: 16) cannot hold in the real world. Even though nation may be regarded as an "external cultural reality that provides a framing for identities" (Holliday 2010: 263), cultural identity has a far more complex nature, and more often than not individuals are "web of identities" (DeTurk 2001: 379).

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[4] Defined as "a system of idea which drives behavioural choices, or as 'ideas serving as weapons for social interest' " (Berger & Luckmann 1979: 18, quoted in Holliday 2010: 261).
[5] Examples of problematic intrapersonal processes are stereotyping, ethnocentrism, racism, intolerance (Kim 2001).

People's personal cultural realities are inextricably intertwined with notions of ancestry, religion, skin colour, occupation, sexual orientation, gender, age, education, race, etc., which can cross national boundaries. "Individuals have the capacity to feel a belonging to several cultural arenas at the same time" (Holliday 2010: 263). In theorising about IC competence, many are the supporters of this dynamic and evolving nature of cultural identity, with a strong emphasis on identity-negotiation activities[6]. In this developmental process, two interrelated changes tend to occur in an individual's self-other orientation: "individualisation" (i.e., particularization of group categories) and "universalisation" (i.e., transcendence of group boundaries). This systems conception is consistent with Casmir's (1999) model of "third-culture building" as a desirable goal for intercultural communicators. (Kim 2001: 146)

Third, as McSweeney argued (2002), Hofstede's research methodology is inadequate for a variety of reasons. We will only briefly sketch McSweeney's arguments, for we agree with the claims and we just aim at giving a small glimpse of them in this paragraph. To begin with, the narrowness of the population surveyed, plus the fact that the respondents were "exclusively from a single company" (ibid.: 95) undermine the alleged worldwide validity of the findings. McSweeney (2002) discards as well the assumptions that respondents share 'organisational', 'occupational', and 'national' cultures, for there is cultural variety within and between units of the same organisations (ibid. 98). Moreover, the answers to the questions may be biased for three reasons: first, the findings overlook the fact that respondents were individuals situated within relations of power. Their views could be biased by the contexts. Second, "every conceivable stratification of the questionnaire responses would most probably produce differences" (ibid. 102), and Hofstede's assumption that these differences are the result of national characteristics is merely the "supposition that such causality exists" (ibid.). Hofstede cannot assume nationality uniformity in the study in which he purports to have found it. Third, the questions that were asked may have brought to the front just some of the possible differences, and the extent to which these questions had topics that were "conceptually equivalent across cultures" is unknown (ibid. 106). Concluding, Hofstede's claim of macro-level laws which are not merely national-work-place valid but also entire-national is simply the outcome of unwarranted presuppositions and generalisations, reflecting a deterministic view of culture. Thus, the plausibility of systematically causal national cultures is questioned.

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[6] I.e. facework, (Kim 2001: 144).

Proposal of a *critical* view of culture and IC

A later *critical* turn (Martin & Nakayama 2000), also known as *fifth movement* (Halualani et al. 2009), discards the structural-functionalist view of culture and IC, and acknowledges culture as a "site of struggle" (Martin & Nakayama 1999: 8, quoted in Halualani et al. 2009: 26), where the notions of power, context, ideology and historical hierarchies are admitted to play a major role. Culture is now seen as shifting, deterritorialised, and traveling along circuits of power (Clifford 1992, quoted in Bardhan 2011: 23). Instead of boundaries between distinct cultures, we see a removal or a blurring of boundaries, where cultural descriptions are "placed within worldwide processes such as globalisation and unequal Centre-Periphery relations" (Holliday 2010: 264). This critical turn requires scholars to "understand how relationships emerge in historical contexts, within institutional and political forces and social norms that are often invisible to some groups" and how intercultural communication relations are "constrained and enabled by institutions, ideologies, and histories" (Collier 2002: 1-2). Therefore, a vast array of factors enables and constrains IC and affects the reproducing of cultural identity, which is central in IC perspectives (Kim 2001). This entails two important matters.

First, the new critical de-centred way of representing reality (Hall 1996) gives origins to an emergent Periphery voice, "a vernacular cosmopolitanism which measures global progress from the minoritarian perspective" (Bhabha 1994, pp. xv-xvi). Grasping the role of the power-laden contextual constraints on IC means ultimately "achieve a more equitable society" (Martin & Nakayama 2000: 8).

Second, the notion of meanings as fixed entities existing prior to communication is discarded. Meaning is now considered as co-constructed and communicatively assembled in social interaction[7] (Shah 2004). From the dialogic construction of meanings in a "mutually beneficial environment" (Casmir 1999: 92), a third culture can emerge (ibid.), which is now an expression of "mutuality" (ibid. 108). "Knowledge is not something that people possess in their heads, but rather, something people *do* together" (Gergen 1985: 270).

Our Research

Methodology

Given the aim of this project, a survey was thought to be the most appropriate instrument to investigate how European citizens feel about the labour mobility within the European Union, and provide some recommendations based on the obstacles and shortcoming emerged from the results collected.

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[7] This relates as well to the Yellow Brick Road Theory, which holds that social context is *never* independent of actions. Rather, persons are continuously creating, maintaining, or altering the social circumstances in which they are placed and they do so in and through the actions they perform (Heritage & Clayman 2010). Context itself is the project and production of participants' own actions, so the participants build the context of their talk in and through their talk.

The survey comprised 19 questions, and targeted European citizens aged between 18 and 30 years. Google Form was chosen as the platform for administering the survey because of its straightforward features. The following step was sending the survey to European citizens living in various European countries and non-profit organizations. A total number of 147 responses were collected. The minimum requirement that respondents had to meet was been born or have resided for a long period in a EU member country. Respondents were groups in three macro age categories which correspond to different education levels:

-		From 18 to 22: Bachelor's students

-		From 23 to 25: Master's students

-		From 26 to 30: Higher Education Programs

Results analysis

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, 147 answers were collected overall. Out of the 84 responses obtained by the Italian students, the 65.5% are female mostly aged between 23 – 25 years old, while the percentage of male and female respondents from Germany is perfectly even, and the majority of the interviewees is aged between 26 – 30 years old.

1. What is your gender?

Italy (84 answers)   Germany (40 answers)

● Male
● Female

2. What is your age?

Italy   Germany

18-22
23-25
26-30
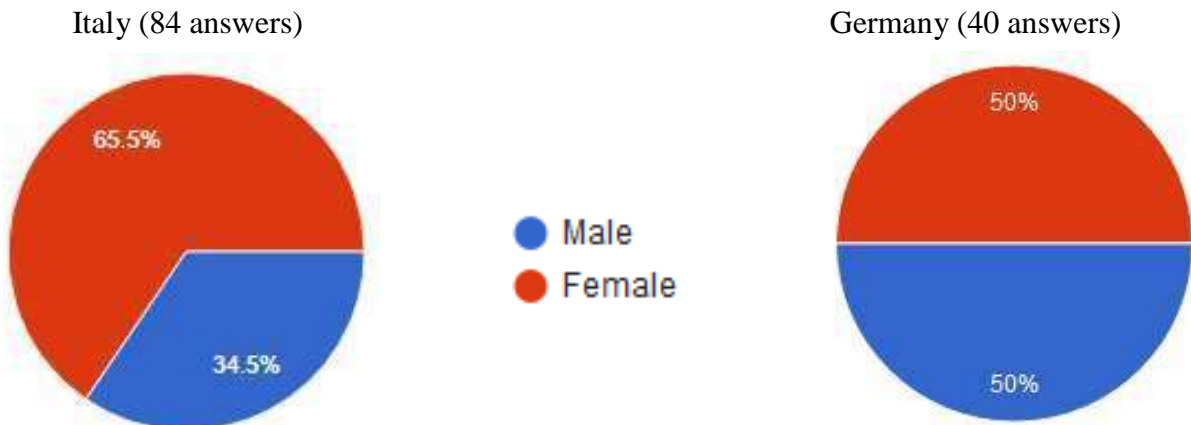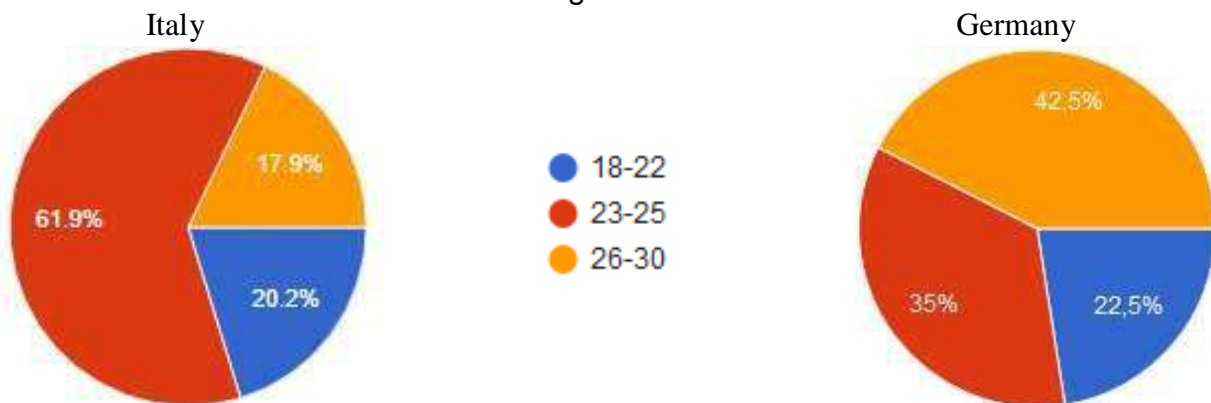
The age difference might be justified by looking at the responses to the question related to the respondents' education level. Out of the 84 responses, 67.8% interviewees have obtained a bachelor degree, and 19% of them have also completed a master degree. The results from show that less people complete a bachelor degree. The striking difference lies in the result concerning the amount of people who joined a PhD program and who searched for employment after graduating from high school. While in Italy is very common for high school students to continue their education and complete a bachelor degree, in Germany many students decide to explore the working environment instead. This trend could be the result of the work- oriented approach adopted by the German education system. Students can choose the option to work for 2 – 3 days per week, and spend the rest of the week at school, which allows them to get work experience while completing high school. On the contrary, the Italian education system provides a more general and theoretical preparation, with little focus on the job industry. Therefore, it is not surprising that a high percentage of the Italian young population chooses to enrol at university, and complete a bachelor's and even a master's degree with the hope to gain a more extensive preparation to have better chances when entering the job industry, as opposite to a larger number of German students who take the apprenticeship or other types of work path. This trend is also confirmed by the answers given to the question regarding the respondents' employment status. As expected, answers collected by the Italian students clearly show that the majority of respondents are unemployed students, and only the 23.8% are also employed on a part-time or full- time basis. This result differs from the one obtained from Germany, where 30% of the interviewees are employed on a full time basis and 17.5% have part time positions. Only the 27.5% are unemployed full time students. There percentages confirm the more prominent role of work in German students' lives.

5. What is the highest level of education you have completes?

Italy

Germany

- Elementary school diploma
- High school diploma
- Bachelor degree
- Master degree
- PhD
- Other
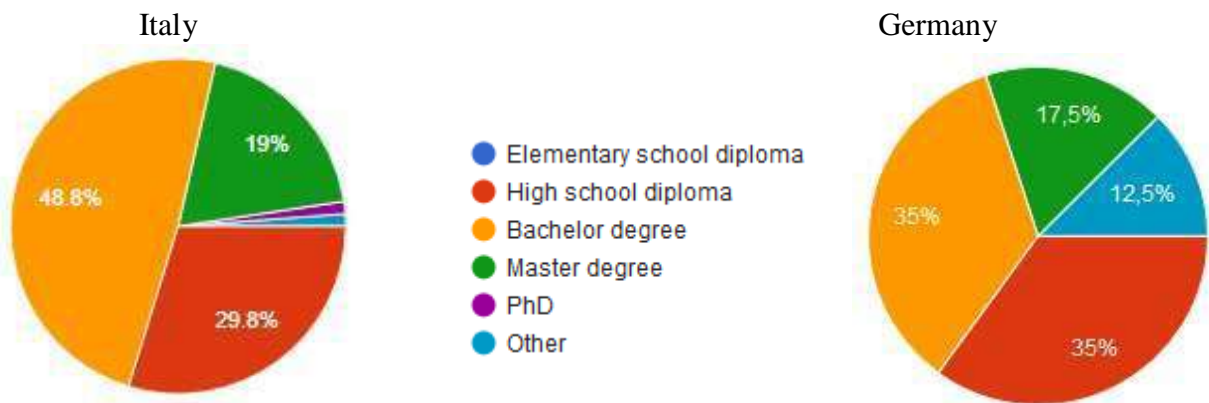
6. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?

Italy

Germany

- Employed, working full-time
- Employed, working part-time
- Internship/apprentice
- Student and no job
- Student with part-time or full-time job
- Unemplyed / looking for job
- Other

Given the intention of the project to provide an understanding of how Labour Mobility is seen by European citizens, respondents were asked whether they have worked abroad or considered doing so. The results obtained by the students are highly different. The reason behind this could be that the majority of interviewees are full time students who might not have had the chance to look for a job or who maybe lack the financial means to relocate. The majority of the total number of respondents stated that they considered the possibility of seeking employment in a foreign country. However, while the majority of the respondents from Germany has worked abroad for a period of time, only 24 people out of 84 interviewed by the Italian students were employed abroad.

5. Have you ever worked abroad?

Italy

Germany

In Italy, most young people consider relocating for work as a great opportunity, but the majority of them stay in their home country. Language, money, family ties are seen as factors which prevent them from moving. A very low number of people would be willing to permanently move to foreign country. Despite being seen as a great opportunity to experience something different, a new social and cultural environment for instance, or to learn or improve language skills or to find employment and better life conditions, few people would give up the safety and the comforts of their home. This is proven by the large number of respondents who stated that they returned to their home country for personal reasons. The answers provided proved to be similar perhaps because of the psychic distance between the two countries involved. Being member countries of the European Union, Italy and Germany share what could be defined as a macro culture. However, the result obtained by the German students shows that. 50% of the interviewees chose 'Other' as an answer to the question regarding why they returned home. It would be worth conducting further investigations to understand what lies behind 'other' to get deeper insight of the issues people faced when living abroad.

8. If you did and you came back, why did you return?
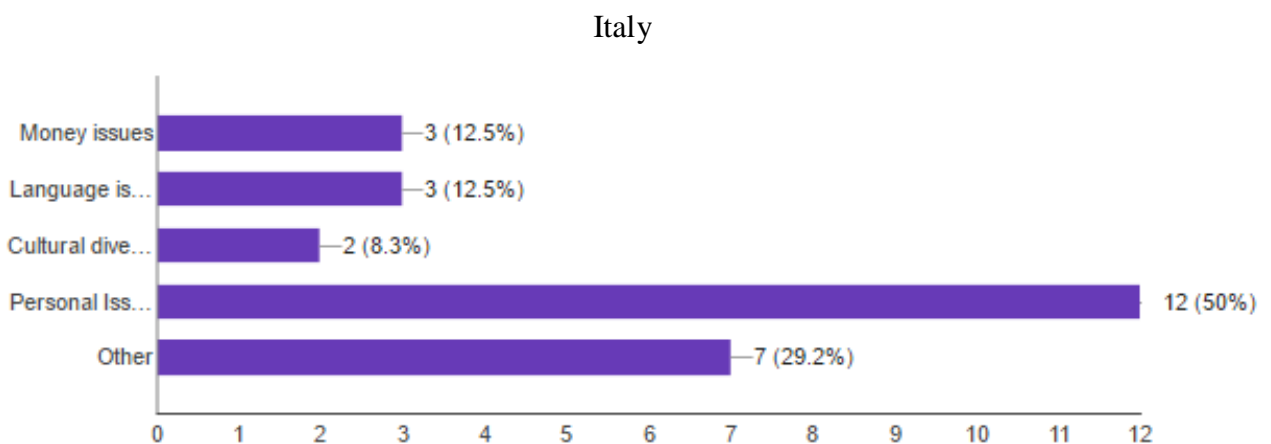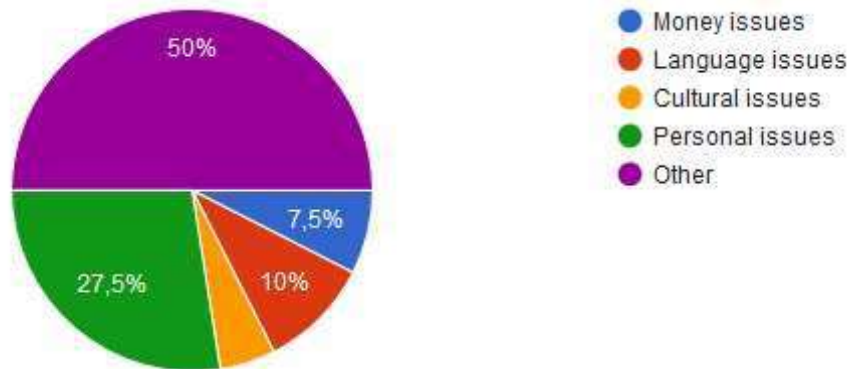
Italy

Germany

Legend:
- Money issues
- Language issues
- Cultural issues
- Personal issues
- Other

(pie chart values: 50%, 7,5%, 10%, 27,5%)

9. Have you ever considered the possibility of working abroad (even for a short period of time)?

Italy

Germany

Legend:
- Yes
- No

(Italy: 90.5% Yes, 9.5% No; Germany: 87,5% Yes, 12,5% No)
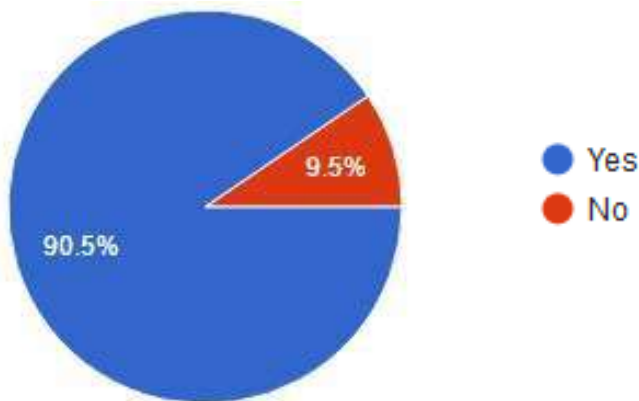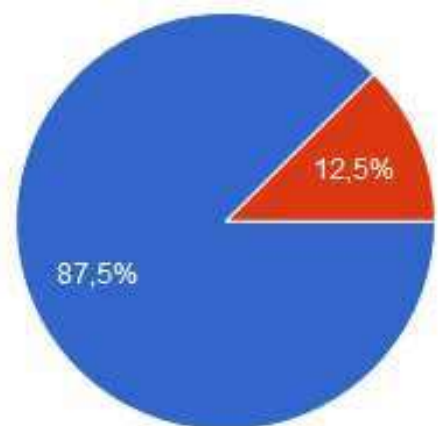
The answers to the question regarding the greatest difficulties one faces when moving to a foreign country already provide a better understanding. The majority of the respondents stated that creating a stable and definitive life together with cultural differences are the biggest challenges and learning a new language are the biggest challenges expatriates face. It is a surprising result because when asked whether cultural differences seem debilitating or insurmountable, only 21.5 % of the responded said yes. Such percentage could be regarded as inconsistent as cultural differences were rated as one of the biggest challenges of moving abroad. However, it is undeniable that cultural differences prove to be quite difficult to overcome. When moving abroad, people tend to experience unacceptance or intolerance to a certain extent. It is probably for this reason that cultural differences were chosen as one of the main difficulties. The contrasting result may be explained by considering the power of adaption. Cultural differences can be overcome with time as individuals have the capacity to adapt and fully adjust to new environments.

11. In your opinion, which is the greatest difficulty of someone who moves abroad?

Italy

Germany

- ● Cultural difference
- ● Language difference
- ● Bureaucracies
- ● Creating a new "definitive" life abroad
- ● Diploma or graduation that is maybe not valid in the new country
- ● Financial basis
- ● Other
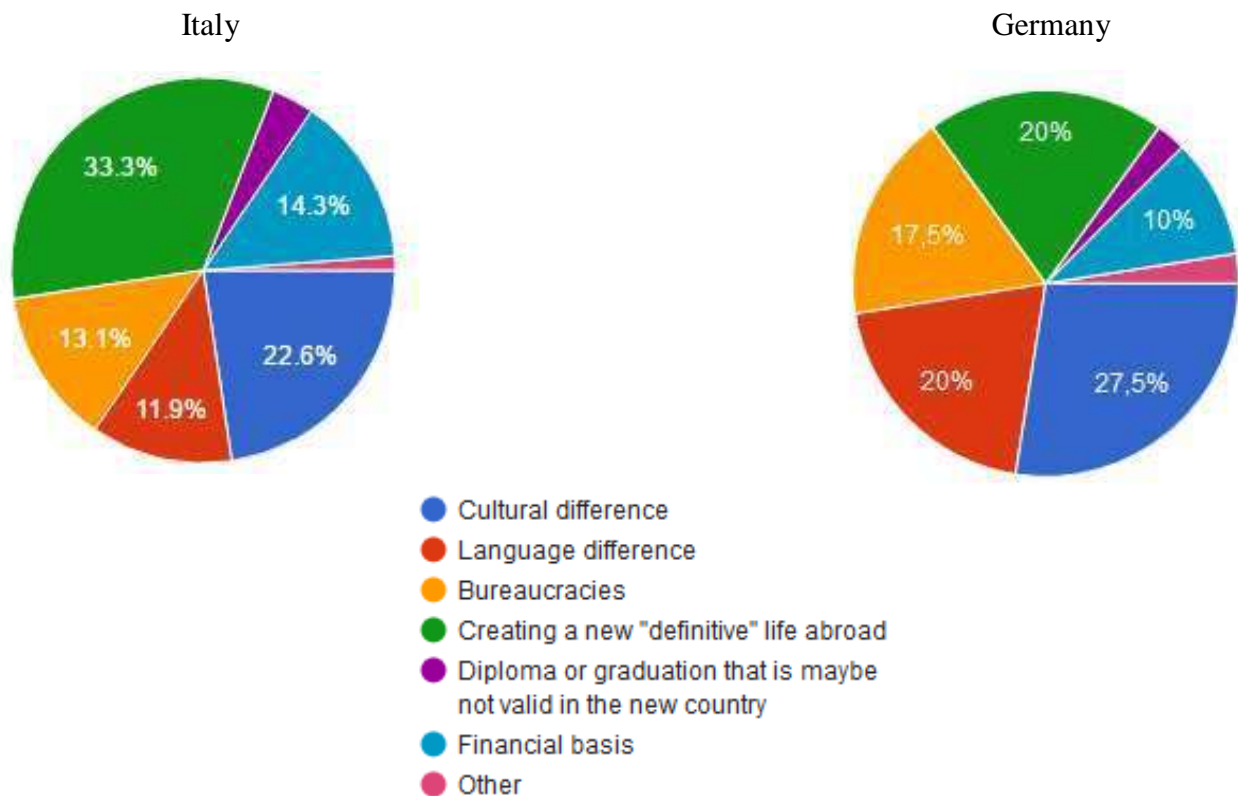
One of the key factors which greatly help adjusting to a new culture is knowing the local language. The majority of the respondents stated that having a good command of the local language before moving abroad is essential. This especially applies when the intention is to seek employment. Being able to speak the local language allows getting in contact with the local community, and helps absorbing the new culture. However, nowadays immigrants are often provided with language assistance when dealing with governmental procedures, and in some areas they are likely to be hired despite lacking basic language skills. Such advantages can be regarded more as disadvantages as they prevent expatriates to acquire the language skills necessary to successfully communicate. Being able to speak and understand the local language allows expatriates to create connection, build relationships, improves the chances of finding a job, and helps adjusting to the new cultural environment.

To analyse the difficulties presented by cultural differences more in detail, interviewees were asked a question regarding the issues which would be the most difficult for them to face. The question made reference to Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Answers confirmed a shared concern regarding people's ability to deal new and uncertain situations. People tend to feel uncomfortable when experiencing the unknown, in this case an unfamiliar culture. The second most recognized issue relates to the level of individualism and integration, in other words the level of interest in the community's wellbeing. This result is consistent with the difficulty of creating a definitive life in a foreign country where one lack's family connections and friendships.

15. Which of these issues would be the most difficult for you to face?

Italy

Germany

Gender issues - diffenent roles

Individualism - INTEGRATION: how much people are intereseted in their own good or the society's

Level of uncertainty related to life conditions

Importance of traditions and customs as opposed to more emp...

Higher level of indulgence and self-gratification as opposed to a more...

Moving abroad often seems easier than what it is. The interviewees were asked to evaluate how informed people are about the conditions of the country they decide to move to. The answers provided by the Italian and German students are very similar. As interviewers were expecting, the majority of the respondents (54%) thought that those who decide to relocate abroad are usually well informed and aware of the social and economic situation of their country of choice. However, 28% of the interviewees stated the contrary. According to them, people base their choice on stereotypes. This may be true to a certain extent, as in some cases people's expectations do not match reality. This is proven by the amount of respondents who declared that they returned to their home country for personal reasons.

Nowadays Europeans have countless opportunities for moving countries and a great level of freedom of movement which past generations did not have. The European Union promotes a large variety of programs designed to help young people to fulfil their dream of living in a foreign country. However, few of them are well advertised and widely known, such as the Erasmus+ and the Erasmus Traineeship. The rest of the programs listed in the question were known by a little percentage of respondents. From the answers collected, it is clear that they are not advertised enough. Better promoting activities would definitely contribute to the growth of bigger labour market.

Lastly, interviewees were asked whether they would hope for long-term employment when moving. Answers did not show a clear majority as it could be expected. Instead, 42% of the overall respondents stated that they would relocate with the intention of seeking long-term employment, while 37% declared that they would not want to turn their temporary working experience into a long-term commitment. A small 14% of the interviewees did not exclude such possibility, but stated that it would depend on a number of variables, such as the level of adaption and the contractual conditions. Only 7% of the respondents did not know have an answer to this question.

Labour Mobility within the EU

Space for improvement

One of the key achievement of the European Union is the right of free movement of individuals and especially the opportunities for students and workers mobility. As stated in the Consilium website,
6.9 million of EU citizens work in another European country (2016). However, despite the reduction of the barriers for mobility thanks to the single market and the goals for inclusive growth of EU2020 (Barslund and Busse, 2015), labour mobility still remain very low to support the single market, especially in comparison with the US. In 2011, 2.7% of the American population had lived at least one year in another State, whereas in Europe the percentage did not overtake the 0.2% (The Economist, 2014).

Figure 52: Annual average labor mobility (% working age population) in Australia, Canada, EU15, EU27, Japan, and the US
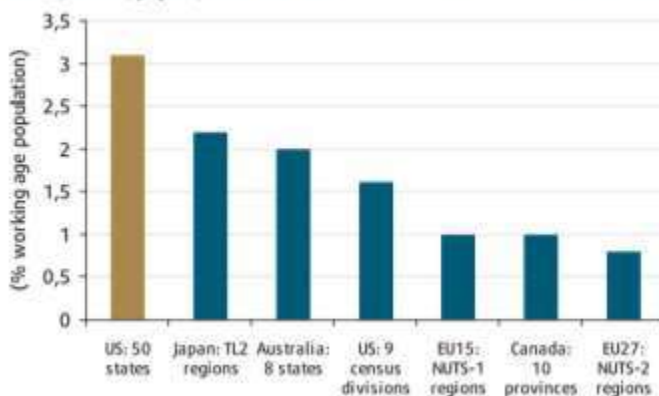
(source: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/ECAEXT/Resources/258598-1284061150155/7383639-1323888814015/8319788-1324485944855/10_us.pdf)

The reasons for such a low cross-border mobility has to be found both in relation to labour market and in issues that are not directly linked to it. Some reasons have to do with personal issues like language or cultural difference, family ties, climate, lack of personal international networks; market matter are related, instead, to differences in bureaucracies and educational systems, taxation and social security systems, and transfer of qualifications (Andor, 2014).

The thought behind this research is that a greater, more sustainable and more adequately promoted mobility in the workforce could benefit both the single member states and the European Union. Although numbers demonstrate that mobility is quite low, the public debate in Italy portrays a situation where a great portion of youth population move to other European countries to seek better economic conditions. The trend seems to worry a large proportion of the Government, which fear a long-term damage for the growth of the nation.

Benefits of mobility

Increasing labour mobility enhance welfare, resources, and economic output (ECB, 2006). This is possible because those who do not have work can raise productivity and outputs by finding a job somewhere else. In addition, it helps to reduce the European unemployment rate. Movement of skills and people ensure movement of knowledge, which is at the basis of innovation and, consequently, economic growth (Alesina et al, 2013).

On the other hand, the countries that 'hosts' mobility take advantage of this tendency thanks to the higher public income and economic growth, which is a consequence of increased competition that immigrants would create in certain sectors (Barslund and Busse, 2015). The sending countries, however, seem to obtain only negative effects from labour mobility, for example, the reduction of skilled workers and the loss of tax payers. However, it depends on what type of mobility we are taking into consideration: many positive aspects can be found for the sending country when mobility occurs through expatriates or temporary experiences. In these cases, the home country would gain more knowledge and capabilities transfer once the individual come back to the native country.
Benefits for individuals depend, once again, from the type of mobility and from what they are looking for. On a personal level, the opportunity to improve financial situation is a key point. Moving between various locations and seeking better wages, allow workers to be happier and this can impact on their productivity. Moreover, their qualifications will improve (Radcliffe, 2016). As stated in the European Job Mobility Portal, a work experience abroad can bring 'a real change of environment, new personal horizons, daily contact with a different culture, the ideal opportunity to learn a new language, the chance to enjoy working or studying alongside people from different backgrounds, exchanging ideas and comparing experiences'(2016).

Challenges of Labour Mobility

Sometimes labour mobility can bring to the migration of unskilled workers that decide to move abroad hoping in getting a permanent gainful employment and better opportunities. It is difficult to claim that this kind of migration still improves economy, deeper investigations should be carried out, but there is the chance that social and economic disruption become a consequence of it (Zimmermann, 2004).

Another opposite challenge could be the mismatch between education of immigrants and occupation type. Not having being recognized their qualification those who move in other countries, often end up with employments for which they are overqualified. In this sense, mobility lose all meaning as one could do the same job in the home country. It is more probable that immigrants accept poor working conditions than in-country citizens which lead to a waste of capabilities. Nevertheless, as Pasquinelli and Rusmini point out, the majority of them consider this condition as a stage that will be overtaken in the future (2008).

How to Promote Labour Mobility and make it more sustainable

- Improving information and connection for and between individuals and state members' governments

One of the findings from our survey has confirmed that the promotion of European program and mobility portals is an issue for youth. EURES (EURopean Employment Services) online portal allows to exchange and retrieve information about mobility and to facilitate free movement (Europa.eu). It is shocking that a great majority young people interviewed has never heard of it. In fact, only around the 35% of European vacancies have been covered thanks to this portal (Barslund and Busse, 2015). Good hopes are being put in the redesigning of the website that should enable a greater cooperation between the public employment services in the Union. Some countries face a lack of qualified personnel in certain sectors, whereas in other there is abundance of it. European portals should be created in order to connect jobseekers from different countries. It should be a project recognized by national authorities.

In addition, schools, universities and other public entities should make sure to encourage websites, organizations, and institutions to promote the mobility within EU as well as the creation of business incubators that support also self-employment and entrepreneur creation.

- Creating a common way for assessing educational and professional qualifications

Bureaucracy and recognition of qualifications is another concern of many young people who wants to move abroad for work, either because they are too scared not to overcome this barrier, or because they do not know how to seek information on that specific topic. Sometimes, translation of qualification is not enough, and sometimes professionals graduated in a certain country are not recognized in another one. As a consequence, they have to complete certifications or exams to carry out a given job. Unifying the teaching methods would be a slow, complex and maybe utopic process but one step to simplify mobility of personnel could be creating common, unified assessing methods.

A European grading system for universities should be adopted so to avoid the step of converting the marks. Lately, the European Union has simplified the process with the introduction of the European Professional Card that should facilitate administrative problems but further implementations could be done in a wider framework. As stated in the Europa website, it 'is an electronic procedure you can use to have your professional qualifications recognised in another EU country. It is easier and quicker to manage than traditional qualification recognition procedures, and more transparent'. For the moment, it is a procedure valid only for nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapist, real estate agents and mountain guides.

- Pension rights transfer

Transferring pension entitlements across countries is very complex, therefore, many people decide not to move abroad to avoid losing the rights acquired so far. Further investigations should be made on this topic, but a common, simplified scheme and regulation should be across the states.

- Language

Even though one of the main reasons of moving abroad is the desire of improving language skills, the gap between proficiency in English between the member states varies a lot. To create sustainable and profitable mobility, much attention should be put in the objective of improving foreign languages competence. Communication between employees and employer is vital and language knowledge is also relevant for a matter of integration. As a matter of fact, setting targets for English Language Proficiency would ensure more responsible movement of people.

Towards improvement

Having recognized the limitations of EURES portal and the issues that the EU is facing in relation to labour mobility, the Commission is taking some decision for improvement. Barslund and Busse point out 'That the Commission is aware of this, which is reflected in the meagre target for the number of young people matched to jobs via 'My first EURES Job', which is 5,000 placements of young people. The initiative helps young people under 30 to find a job in another country by providing, among other things, financial support for the interview process' (2015). Lately, the Commission has created a proposal to improve the EURES portal that include five steps:

- To collect a complete list of job vacancies accessible by the European citizens as well as a pool of CVs that jobseekers can contact
- Translation of all qualifications
- Promoting the portal
- Assistance in the process of recruitment and placement
- Improving the information exchange

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Appendix

SKYPE MEETINGS MINUTES
Team: 8 – Labour mobility

Minutes of the Team Meeting – roughly 30 minutes; **1st meeting**

DATE: 18.04.2016
ATTENDEES: Beatrice Tedeschi, Chiara Pineschi, Francesca Vitali, Jeremie Ballekens
ABSENT: Nobody
TIME: 12 am in Germany, 8am in Australia

We briefly introduced ourselves and we got to know a little about each other.

We discussed generally about the survey and we said that our survey would target young people between 18 and 30, mostly university students.

Then, we focused on the topic, trying to assess the possible reasons why people would go abroad definitively and we tried to come up with some issues that might arise in the case of moving to another country.

LABOUR MOBILITY

- unemployment/work abroad because there is no other option for you
- want to go abroad to experience/thinking that you will get more success
- having already experienced a country and wanting to move there for a longer time (ERASMUS)
- Difficulties that arise when moving/bureaucracies
- Cultural awareness language issues
- How expecting it to be/reality check: disappointment
- People are determined to go without "trying" before so directly there with no internships   before

We also briefly commented on the piece of news that 30% of people that live the country to live abroad come back after latest one year because was not successful.

Lastly, we spoke about mobility opportunities our own countries' governments or the EU (European Commission) set up. We said that people might not be aware of these opportunities. We asked ourselves whether the projects are sufficiently advertised and whether people would prefer to go abroad by themselves instead of being supported by such jobs.

MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Chiara Pineschi
DATE: 25.04.2016

Team: 8 – Labour mobility

Minutes of the Team Meeting – 50.44 minutes; **2nd meeting**
DATE: 24.04.2016
 ATTENDEES: Beatrice Tedeschi, Chiara Pineschi, Jeremie Ballekens
ABSENT: Francesca Vitali
 TIME: 12 am in Germany, 8am in Australia

After a short small talk, we started discussing the task scheduled for the week. Firstly, we compared the questions that each team had proposed for the survey. After agreeing on which questions we wanted to ask to our interviewees, we identified the potential answers to them. We created a template of the survey which would then be uploaded on the team's Facebook page to allow all the members to review before officially uploading it on www.surveymonkey.com, which we thought it was the most convenient and immediate platform to use.

Progress update would be discussed through the team's Facebook page. We agreed on holding the next meeting between May 15th and 16th 2016.

MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Jeremie Ballekens
DATE: 25.04.2016

Team: 8 – Labour mobility

Minutes of the Team Meeting – 52 minutes; 3ʳᵈ meeting
DATE: 01.07.2016
ATTENDEES: Beatrice Tedeschi, Chiara Pineschi, Jeremie Ballekens
ABSENT: Francesca Vitali
TIME: 12 am in Germany, 8am in Australia

The main focus of our third meeting was the discussion of the results collected through the surveys. Before the meeting, each group shared a summary of the results each group obtained for all the team members to see. The discussion was mainly aimed at collecting information to justify the results and include it in the paragraph of the compendium dedicated to analysis of the results. We provided practical examples, and asked each other question to get a deeper understating of the differences between our countries.

The results proved to be quite similar, even though some differences were identified regarding the amount of workers who participated in the survey and the participants' level of education. Each team provided potential reasons to explain such differences, and shared information regarding their country to give the other team members a better understanding of the the Italian or German educations systems and of the work conditions in the respective country. We learnt more about each other's educational and work environment and the current trends among the Italian and German young population in regards to labour mobility. We extensively discussed the importance of learning the language of the host country when moving abroad, and the effects of not being able to communicate with the local community. We briefly touched on the current situation of immigrants in our countries, and the importance of language skills in regards to integration. Lastly, we addressed the issue of the lack of adequate advertisement of the European Projects developed to increase labour mobility. Out of a great variety of programs offered by the EU, only few are known among the young population.

MINUTES WRITTEN BY: Francesca Vitali
DATE: 02.07.2016

European Dialogue Project 2016
Working Preferences

Team 8: Multinational vs. Domestic Firms

Italian team:
Bicchieri Giovanna
Crivillaro Roberto

Portuguese team:

German team:

Introduction

This compendium is the result of a case study aimed to find out what are the working preferences of people living in Germany, Italy and Portugal. Such study has been developed by three teams composed of two members each coming from different Universities from Germany, Italy and Portugal: the students worked together in order to find the best way to conduct a survey focused on the aforementioned topic.

An important role was played by social medias – like Facebook and Skype – that made possible to the international team to know each other and work together. An online workspace in which we were able to gain useful information to the complete the project was kindly given by the Hochschule Bonn- Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences with the LEA site. In this site were listed the tasks we had to complete in a given time period in order to complete the project: the first task started from the 14th of March while the last task ended on the 12th of June.

To gain useful data about the subject, we created a survey consisting of 20 questions; such questions were chosen by all the teams: each team chose 10 questions that were to be discussed together with the members of the other teams in a Skype conference call. The final questions, compiled in a survey using Google Forms, were sent to different people of each Country; the results were later discussed by a critical point of view by all the members of the project in a last Skype Conference Call used by the members of each team also to thank each other for the cooperation in the Project.

Our involvement was made much more interesting by the possibility of experiencing first-hand the use of the English language as a Lingua Franca in a setting in which a quite formal level of knowledge of the language was needed.

What follows is an extensive analysis of this data and it will be divided in three chapters: in the first the results of the survey will be analysed by a general point of view; in the second chapter the result will be analysed with a comparative approach among the Countries object of the study; in the third chapter the results will be studied following some of Hofstede's dimensions.

First Chapter: General Analysis of the data

Demographical data

The survey has been sent to a number of friends, fellow students and workers; the final number of the surveyed is of 128 people consisting of 77 Italians, 37 Portuguese and 14 Germans.
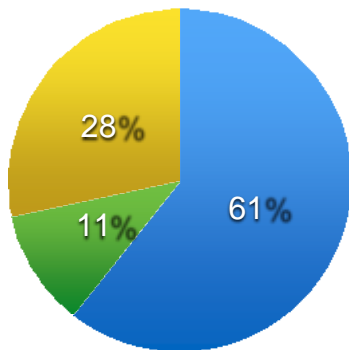
Fig. 1 Percentage of the surveyed
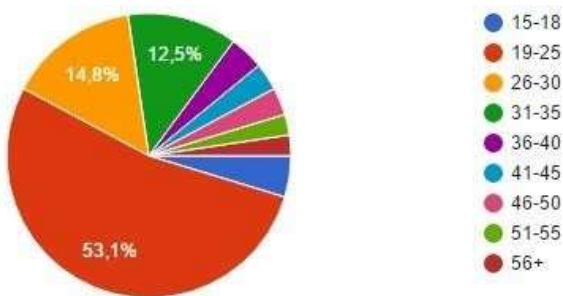
Fig. 2 Age
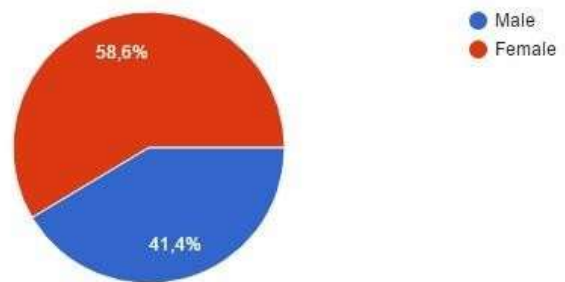
Fig. 3 Gender

The surveyed range from 15-18 years old to 56+ years old with a vast majority in the range of 19-25 years old. The 58.6% of the participants of the survey are females.

Level of education and occupation

The 48.4% of the surveyed declared a Bachelor's degree as educational qualification, making them majority as opposed to a 35.9% with a High School degree, a 9.4% with a Master's Degree and 6.3% with a Ph. D (fig. 4). The great majority declared to be students at the moment the survey was sent to them (fig. 5): it appears that there are more students focusing just on their academic career rather than students also working to maintain themselves. The low rate of unemployed surveyed could be the result of the great percentage of students that have taken the survey and the fact that the 66.2% of the workers are working in a full time job position (fig. 6).

Legend:
- High School
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Ph. D
- Post Doc

35,9%   9,4%
48,4%

Legend:
- Worker
- Student
- Working student
- Unemployed

44,5%   14,8%
36,7%

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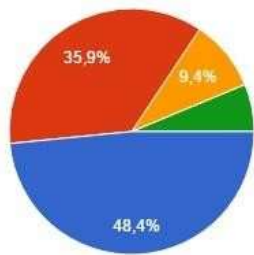
Fig. 4 Level of education

Fig. 5 Working status

Legend:
- Part time
- Full time

66,2%
33,8%
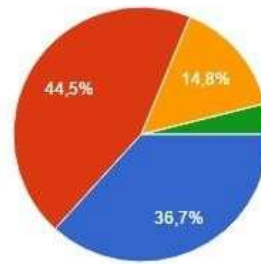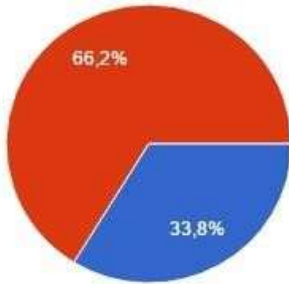
Fig. 6 Type of job

National background

The 48.4% of the surveyed don't know if in their Country working for a Multinational is considered a better position than working for a Domestic, while 44.5% consider it a better job position (fig. 7). Even though there's such a high level of doubt about the national perception of a working position in a Multinational, almost 2/3 of the interviewed would work for a Multinational firm rather than for a Domestic one (fig. 8).

Legend:
- Yes
- No
- Don't know

48,4%
7%
44,5%

Legend:
- Domestic
- Multinational

64,1%
35,9%
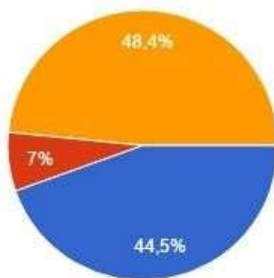
Fig. 10 Percentage of friends working for Domestic firms
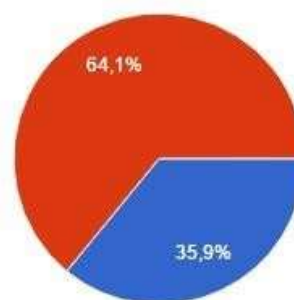
Fig. 11 Percentage of friends working for Multinational firms
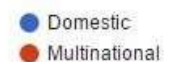
Benefits and drawbacks

Such preference on working for a Multinational firm is confirmed by the fact that the majority of those who participated to this survey believe that their careers would benefit more from working for a Multinational firm (fig. 12 and 13).
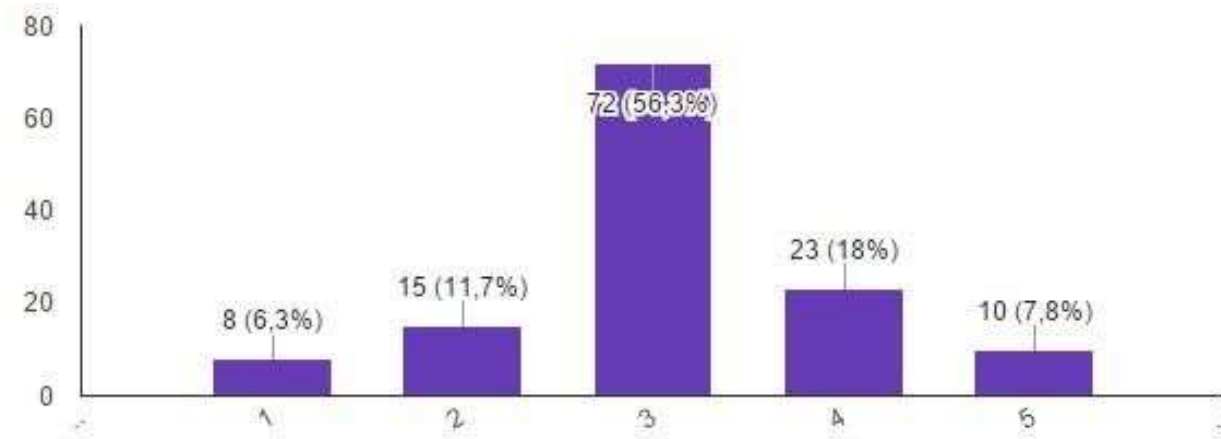
Fig. 12 Benefits from working for a Domestic firm
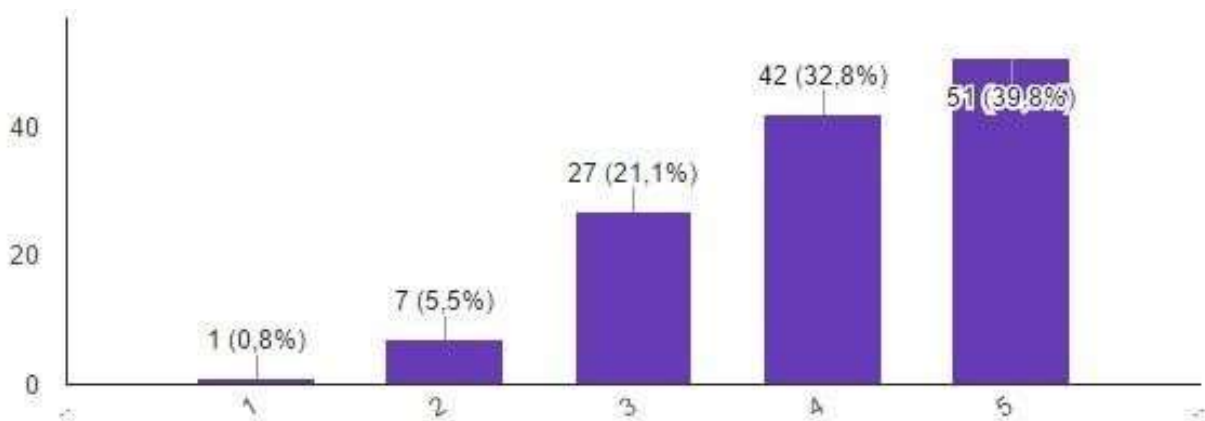
Fig. 13 Benefits from working for a Multinational firm

As shown in the figures above, the 39.8% of the recipients of the survey rated the benefits of working for a Multinational with 5, the highest value of the scale of evaluation, and 32.8% rated such benefits with a 4; for what concern the benefits of working for a Domestic firm, the 56.3% of the surveyed rated it with a 3 believing that not great career advantages can be achieved in such firms.

On the other hand, an important aspect of working for a Multinational firm is the risk of being subject to a strong psychological pressure given by the different hierarchical structure compared to a Domestic firm. Such pressure of working for a Multinational firm is likely to affect the 38.3% and the 15.6% of the recipients that voted (rating the aforementioned risk with a value of 4 and 5) (fig. 15); for what concern working for a Domestic firm, the 37.5% and the 29.7% rated the risk of psychological impact with a value, respectively, of 3 and 4 thus stating that it is less likely to have an impact in their career choices (fig. 14).
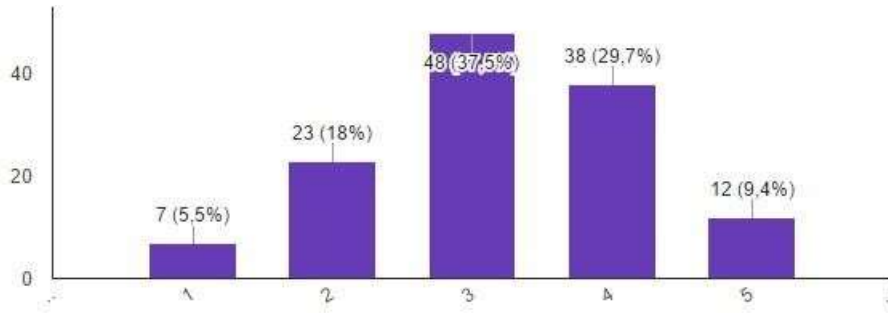
Fig. 14 Psychological impact of working for a Domestic firm
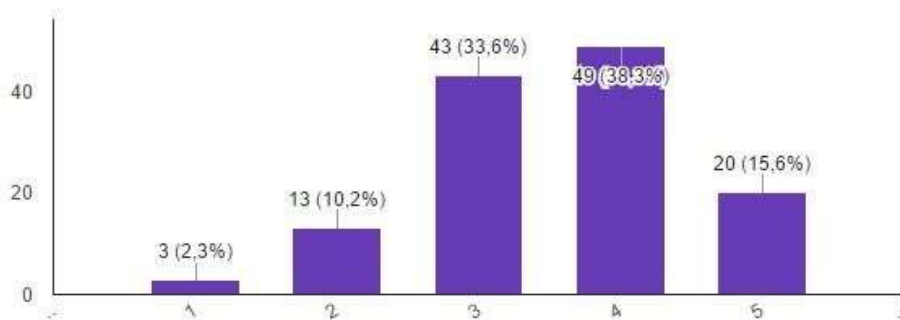
Fig. 15 Psychological impact of working for a Multinational firm

Chapter 2: Comparative analysis of the data1

Demographical data
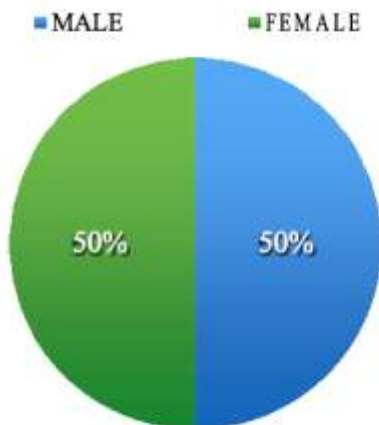
Fig. 1 Gender - Germany
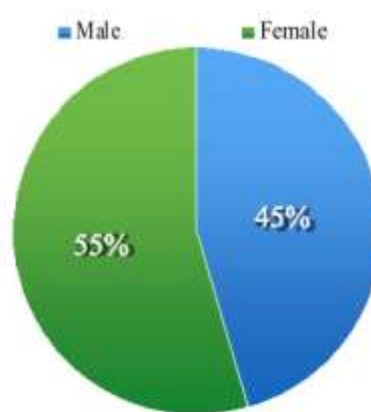
Fig. 2 Gender - Italy
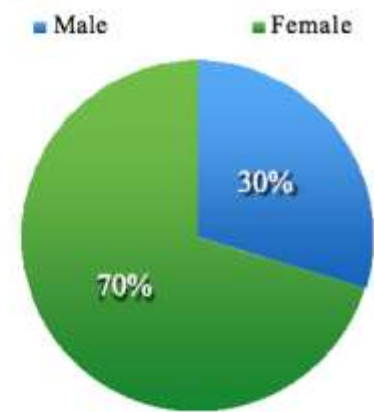
Fig. 3 Gender – Portugal

The data shows that both in Italy (77 surveyed, Fig. 2) and in Portugal (37 surveyed, Fig. 3) there is a majority of female recipients of the survey (54.5 % and 70% respectively) while there is an equal participation of male and female participants on the German side (14 surveyed, Fig. 1).
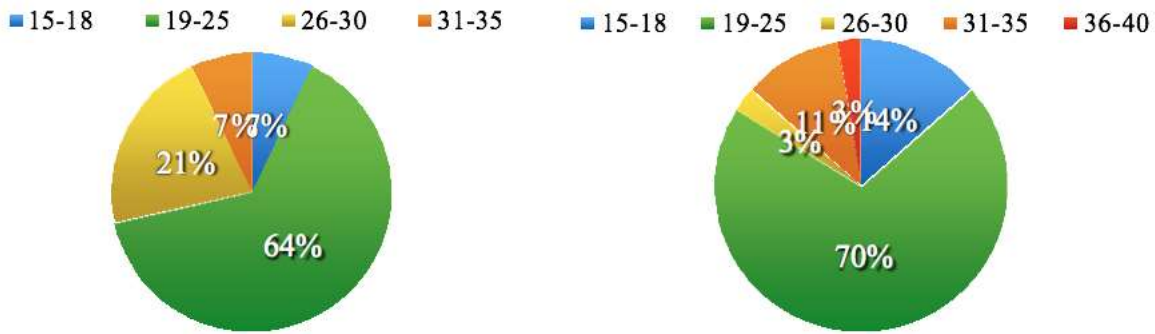
Fig. 4 Age - Germany

Fig. 5 Age - Portugal
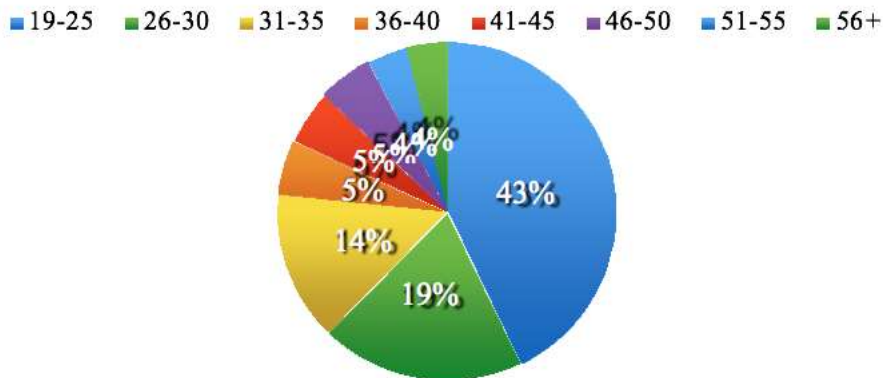
Fig. 6 Age - Italy

[1] Because of the small number of the German's surveyed, the results about their Country might not be useful for a comparative analysis.

In all the three Countries the majority of participants are in the range of 19-25 years old; Italy is the one with the lower percentage in that range with 42.9% (Fig. 6), while Germany and Portugal have higher percentages (64% and 70% respectively, Fig. 4 and 6). The main difference is the fact that the Italy has more participants above the 31-35 years old range while the other Countries have none: this will prove relevant when comparing the number of the workers surveyed.

Level of education and occupation

High School
Ph. D
Master's Degree
Bachelor's Degree
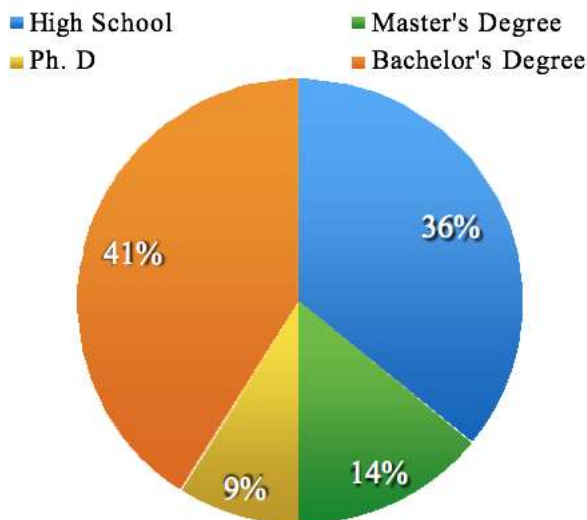
Fig. 7 Level of education – Italy

High School   Bachelor's degree
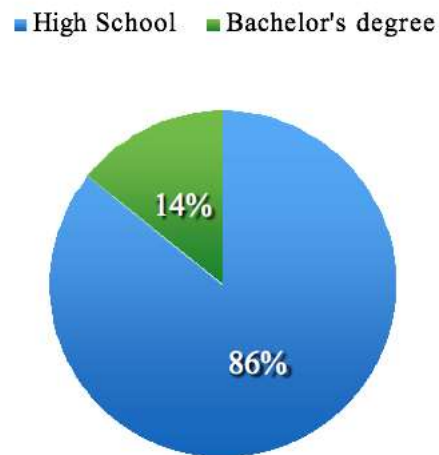
Fig. 8 Level of education - Germany

High School   Bachelor's Degree   Master's
Ph. D   Post Doc
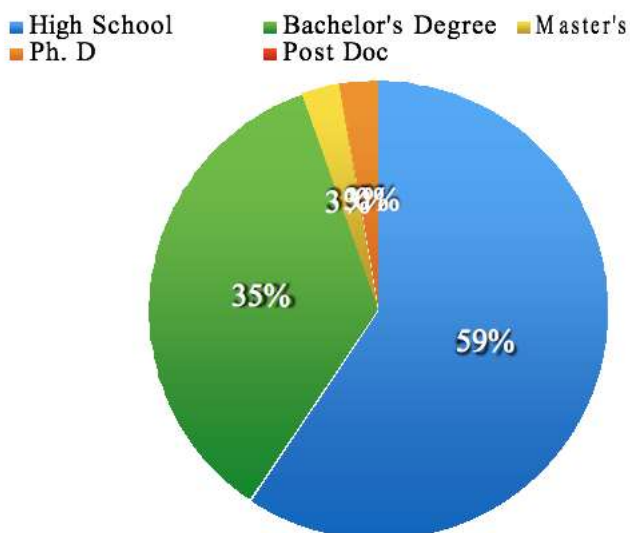
Fig. 9 Level of education - Portugal

The data about the level of education shows a majority of High School graduates in Germany and Portugal (86% and 59% respectively) and a high number of Bachelor's Degree graduates in Italy (40.3%); Italy also has a higher percentage of Master's Degree graduates (14.3%).

As mentioned before, Italy shows a higher number of working participants while Portugal has a higher number of students and Germany shows students but not full time workers – as opposed to the other two Countries that have the 49% (Italy) and the 24% (Portugal) of working participants.

142
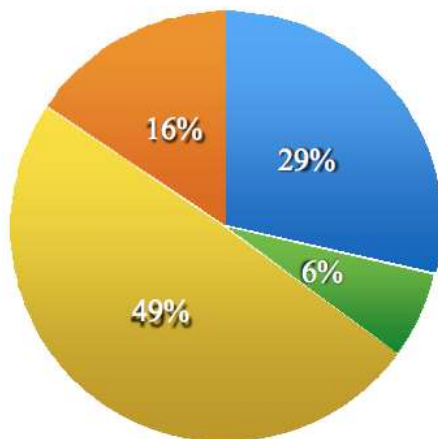
Fig. 10 Working status – Italy
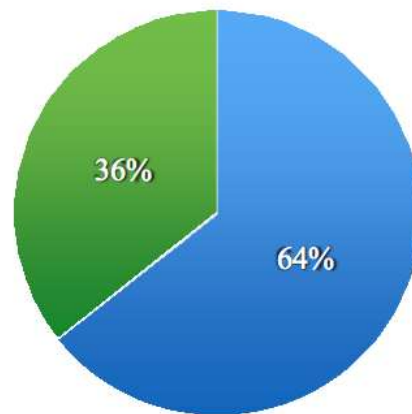
Fig. 11 Working status - Germany
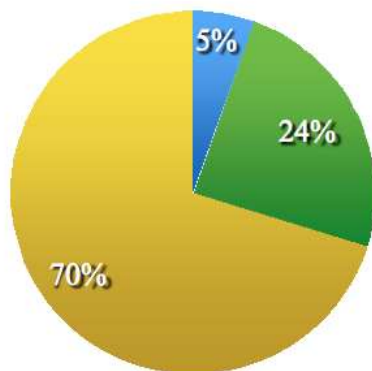
Fig. 12 Working status – Portugal

National background

An important aspect behind one's preference of working for a Domestic or a Multinational firm is the cultural belief surrounding such different job positions. According to our results, the majority of the Italian surveyed (48%, Fig. 13) don't know if working for a Multinational firm, according to their Country beliefs, has a higher value than working for a Domestic one while the 45% believe so. Such uncertainty about the Country's cultural view is shared also in Portugal (57%, Fig. 14) with a lower percentage of people believing their Country sees it as a better working condition (35%). A completely different percentage is the one resulting from the German answers: the 64% of the surveyed (Fig. 15) state that, in their Country, working for a Multinational is a better working position with just the 7% not believing so.

143
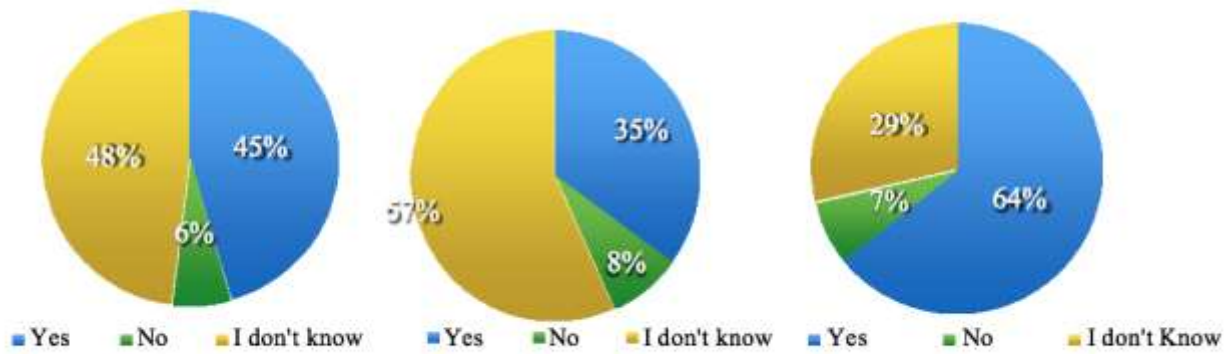
Fig. 13 National perception – Italy   Fig.12 National perception - Portugal   Fig. 15 National perception - Germany

Working situation and working preferences

Italy

To better understand the working preferences of the surveyed, it was considered important to analyse the working situation and experiences of the participants. The majority of the Italian working participants stated that they are working for a Domestic firm, with a full time contract (Fig. 16 and 17).
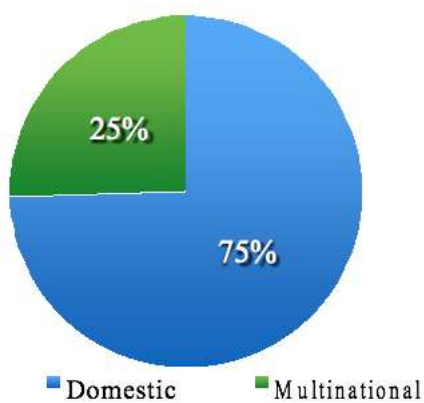
Fig. 16
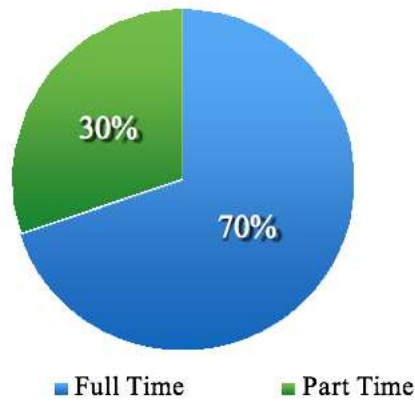
Fig. 17

When asked to rate their opinion on Domestic and Multinational firms, the Italian surveyed praised both Domestic and Multinational firm (Fig. 18 and 20); such positive view might be influenced by their good experiences in working for a Domestic and/or a Multinational firm (Fig. 19 and 21).
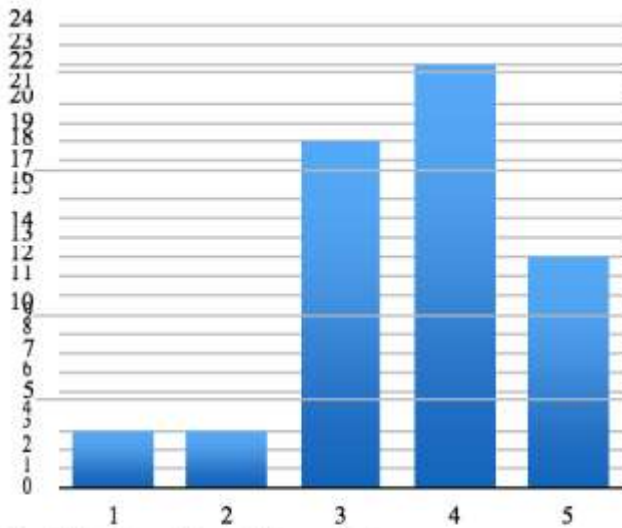
Fig. 18 Opinion on Domestic firms – Italy
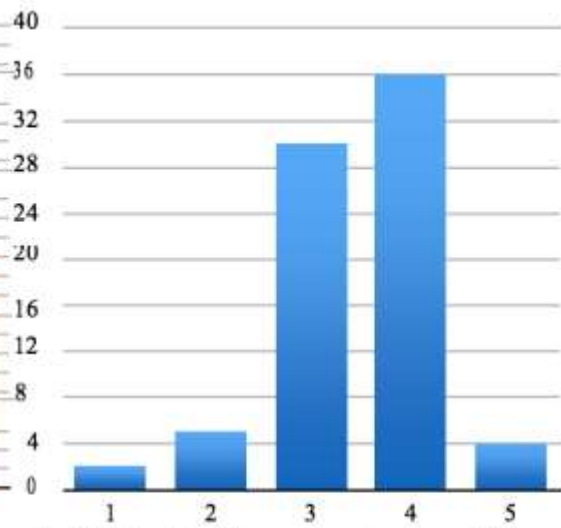
Fig. 19 Rating of working experience in a Domestic firm - Italy
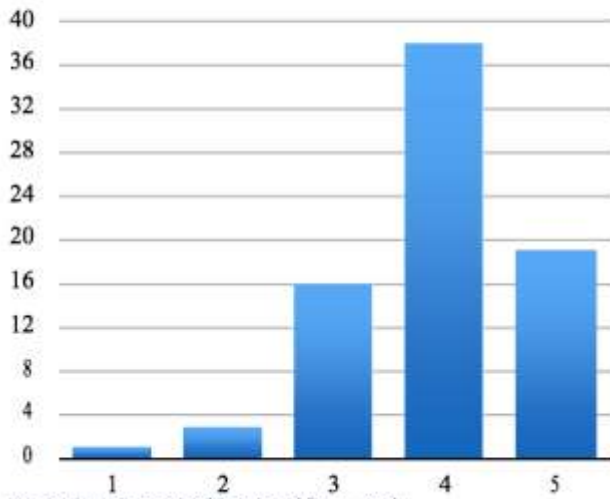
Fig. 20 Opinion on Multinational firms - Italy
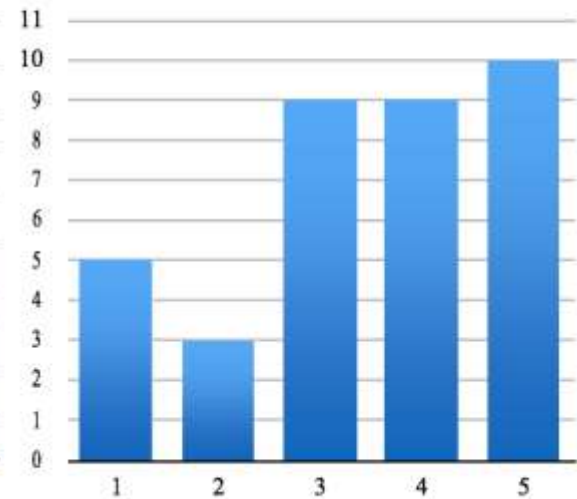
Fig. 21 Rating of working experience in a Multinational firm– Italy

Germany

The Germany's results showed some differences with respect of the Italian ones:

Fig. 22

Fig. 23

145
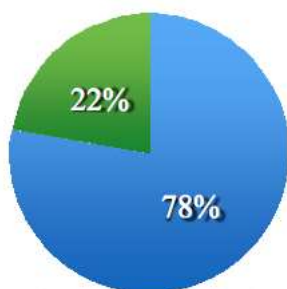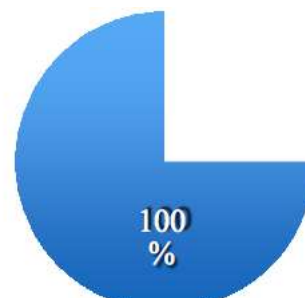
As shown in Fig. 22 and 23 the, respectively, majority and totality of the surveyed are working in a Domestic firm with a part time contract. Fig. 24 and 26 shows a rather positive opinion on both Domestic and Multinational firms although, for what concerns Domestic firms, the surveyed were not as positive as they were on Multinational ones.
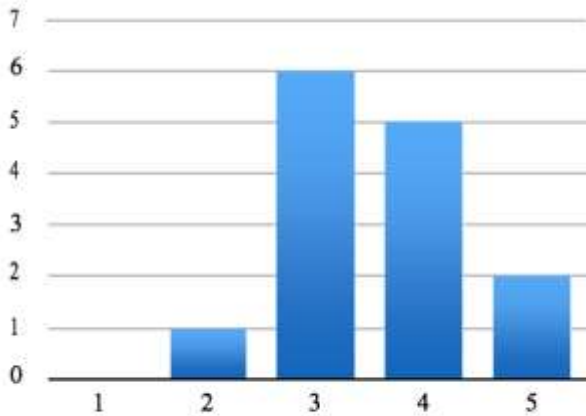
Fig. 24 Opinion on Domestic firms - Germany
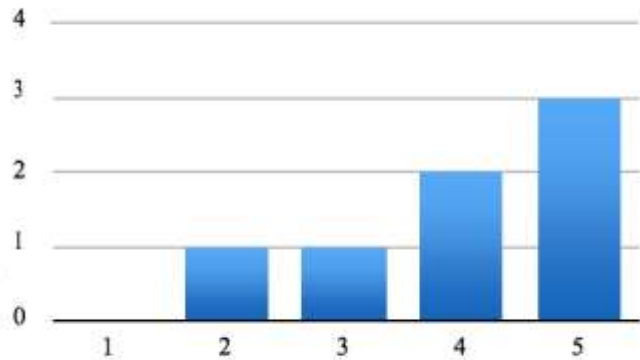
Fig. 25 Rating of working experience in a Domestic firm - Germany
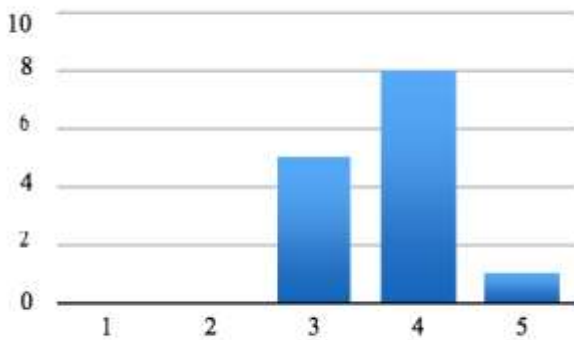
Fig. 26 Opinion on Multinational firms - Germany
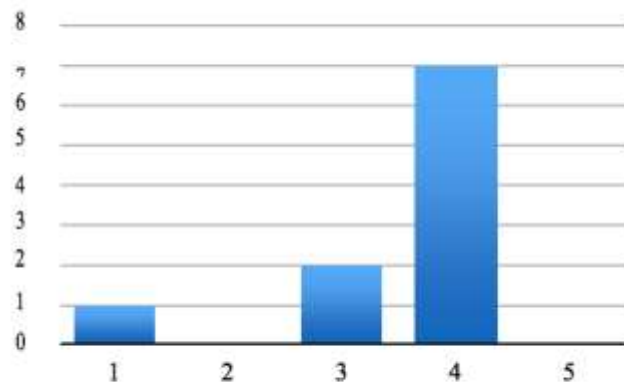
Fig. 27 Rating of working experience in a Multinational firm - Germany

For what concerns the rating of their experience in both Domestic and/or Multinational firms (Fig. 25 and 27), the surveyed were more positive about the experience in a Domestic firm giving the highest value of 5.

Portugal

The results Portugal show, like in the other two Countries, a majority of workers working in a Domestic firm (Fig. 28); as opposite to Germany but like Italy, it shows a higher number of full time workers (Fig. 29).

Fig. 28
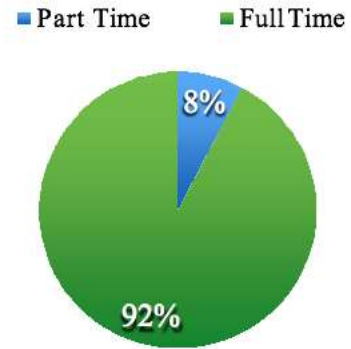
Fig. 29

The results from Portugal show how the surveyed opinion on Domestic and Multinational is, overall, the same (Fig.); the same happens when analysing the rating of the working experience in Domestic and Multinational firms (Fig.), although the experience in a Multinational received some low evaluations.
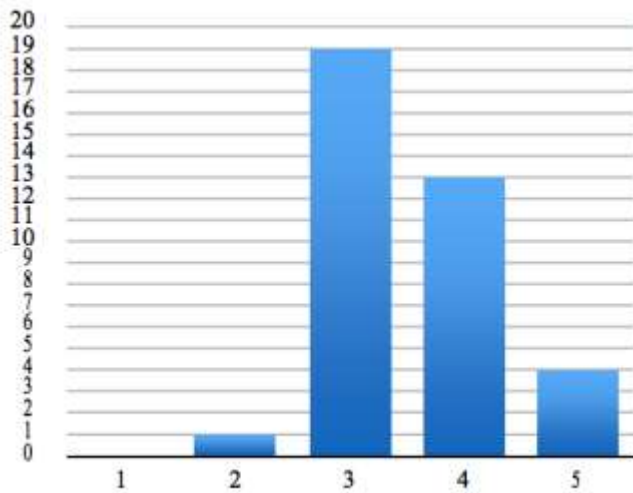
Fig. 30 Opinion on Domestic firms - Portugal
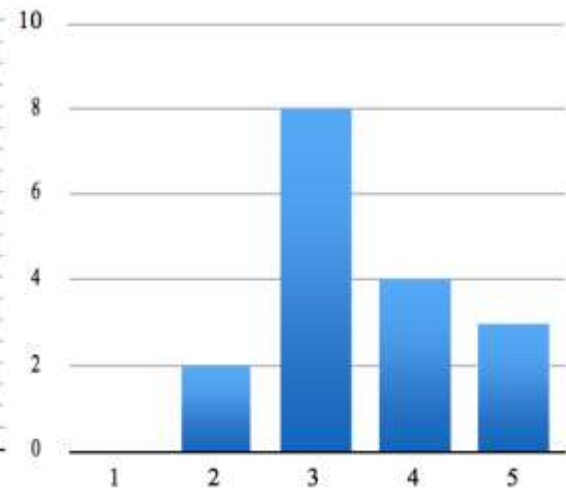
Fig. 31 Rating of working experience in a Domestic firm - Portugal
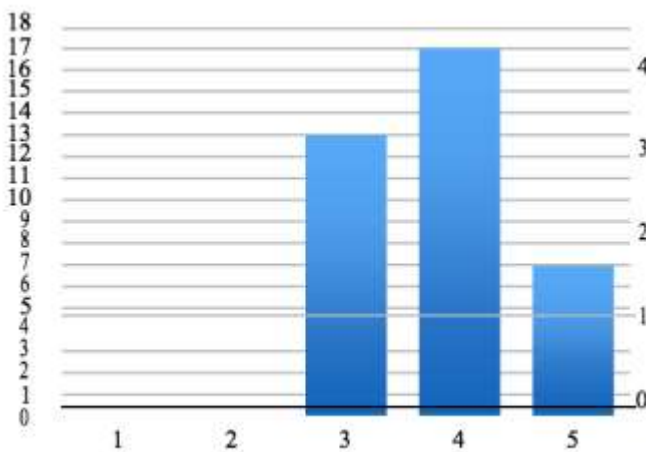
Fig. 32 Opinion on Multinational firms - Portugal
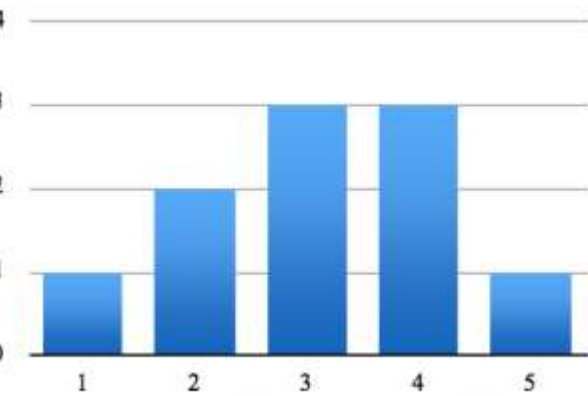
Fig. 33 Rating of working experience in a Multinational firm - Portugal

Working preferences: benefits and drawbacks

As seen in the first chapter, the majority of the surveyed would rather work for Multinational firm than for a Domestic one; analysing each Country data we can see how the percentages are not the same: while in Germany we have an 86% (Fig. 34) of consensus towards a career in a Multinational, in Italy this percentage lower to a 64% (Fig. 35). In Portugal there is not a crushing majority supporting the Multinational option: the 43% (Fig. 36) of the surveyed would prefer working for a Domestic firm.
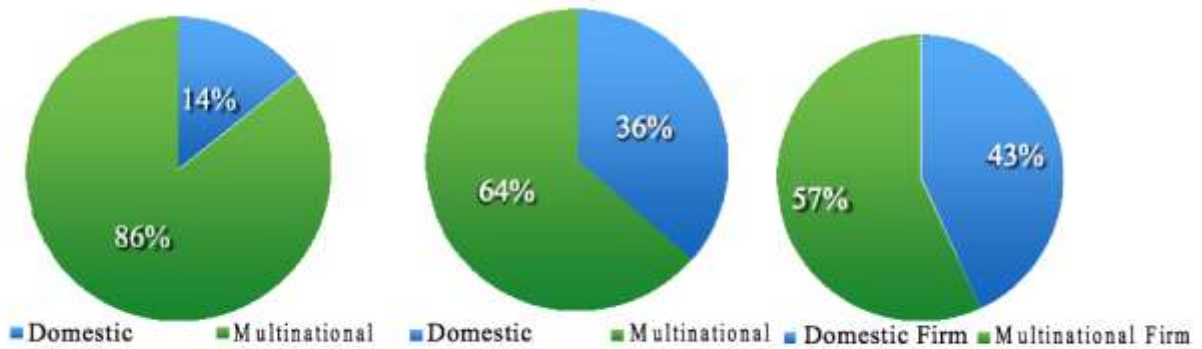
Fig. 34 Working preferences - Germany   Fig. 35 Working preferences - Italy   Fig. 36 Working preferences - Portugal

In all Countries, the majority of the surveyed so the possibility of working for a Multinational as an important chance for their career rating it with the highest values of 4 and 5 (Fig. 37, 39 and 41); such level of career benefit surpassed the one regarding a Domestic firm: although it is not seen as something dangerous for a working career, it received and average consensus (Fig. 38, 40 and 42).
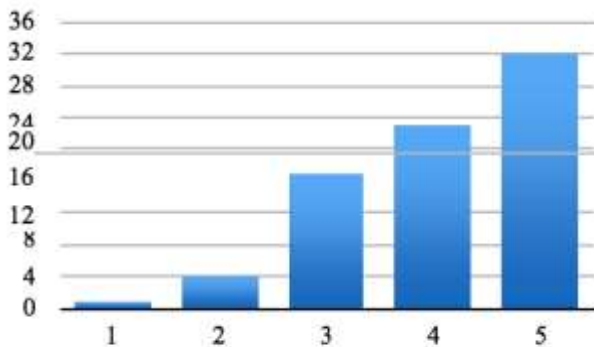
Fig. 37 Career benefit from working in a Multinational firm - Italy
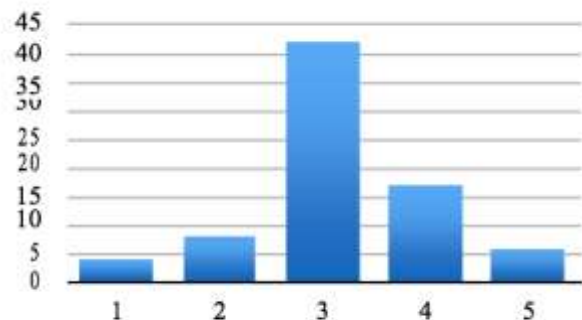
Fig. 38 Career benefit from working in a Domestic firm - Italy
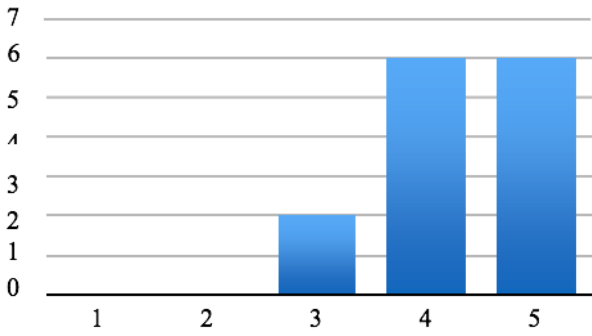
Fig. 40 Career benefit from working for a Multinational firm - Germany
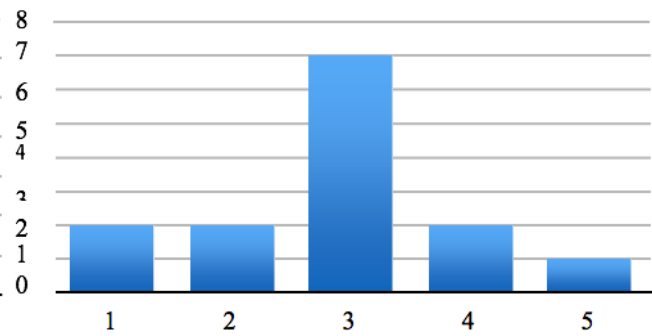
Fig. 41 Career benefit from working for a Domestic firm - Germany
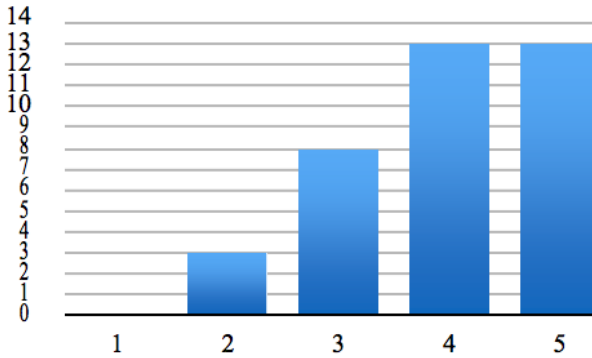
Fig. 42 Career benefit from working for a Multinational firm - Portugal
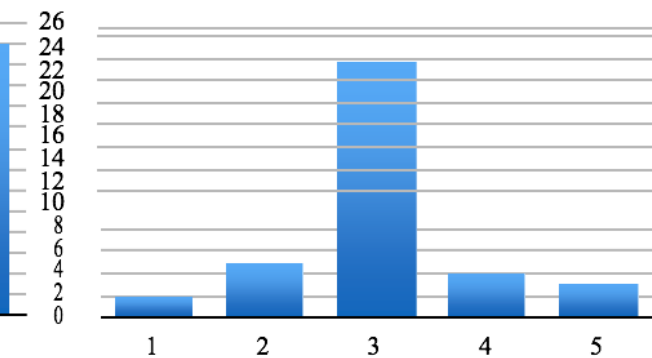
Fig. 43 Career benefit from working for a Domestic firm - Portugal

On the other hand, the chance of working for a Multinational represents also some risk at psychological level: the majority of the Italian and Portuguese surveyed (fig. 44 and 45) voted that it would represent a high level of psychological burden (for example: the fear of not having second chances in the presence of mistakes); same fear results from the German surveyed but with a lower level of gravity (a lower percentage voted with a 5, Fig. 46).
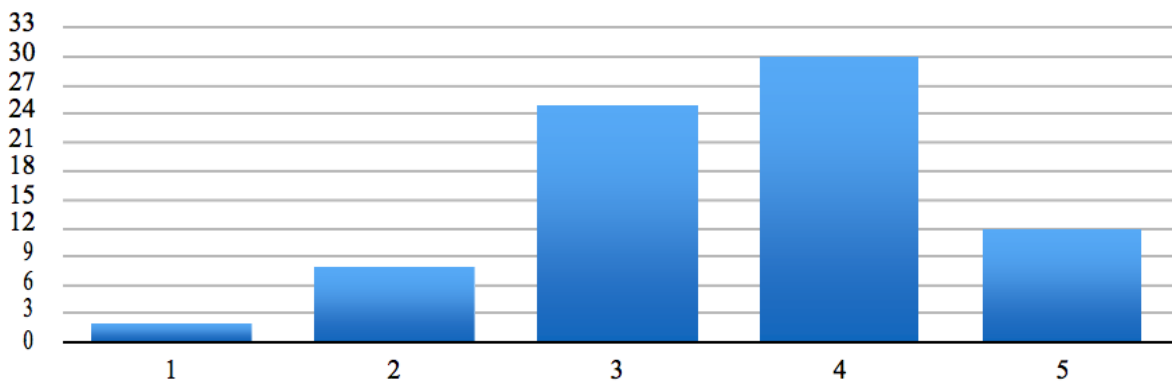
Fig. 44 Rating of psychological impact from working for a multination firm - Italy
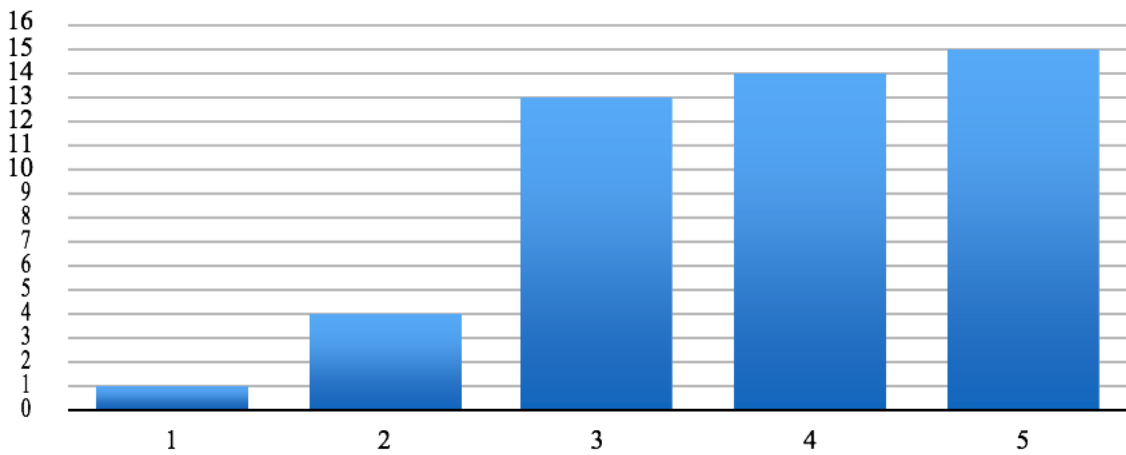
Fig. 45 Rating of psychological impact from working for a multination firm - Portugal
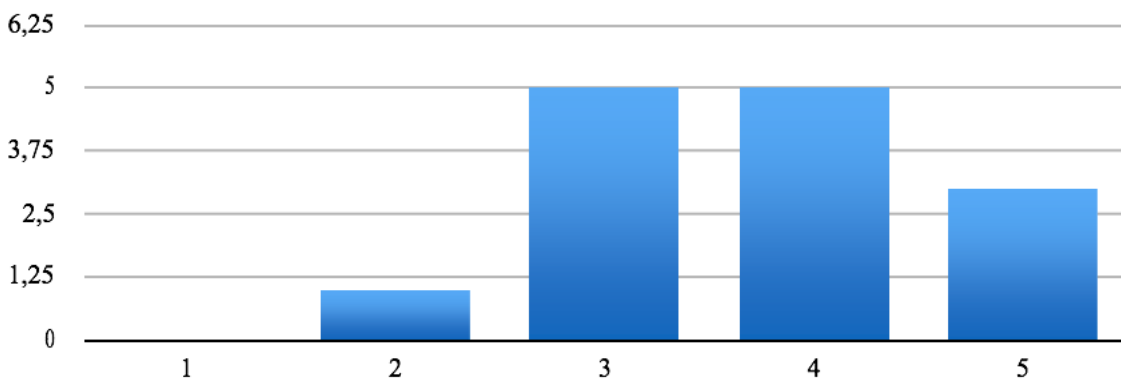
Fig. 46 Rating of psychological impact from working for a multination firm - Germany

Chapter 3: Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

With regard to cultural differences, a fundamental issue of this project, Gerard Hendrik Hofstede, a Dutch social psychologist well known for his research on cross-cultural groups and organizations offers us, with his model, a notable contribution in understanding the range of cultural differences.

His approach is based on the assertion that people carry a MENTAL PROGRAM or SOFTWARE OF THE MIND. This software is developed during childhood, it is reinforced by culture and it is expressed through dominant values that the scholar well explained in his Onion Diagram.
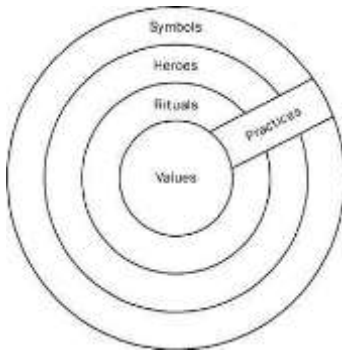
What are values according to Hofstede?

The values of a person determine how this person lives and what he holds dear to him. They are something of invisible that include s*ymbols, ritual*s and *heroes*.

These important aspects of the culture are expressed through *practices*, the language that we use every day in order to communicate our value.

According to this model, each Country has different values and, clearly, a different culture. It is possible to explain these differences using six dimensions (the 6th dimension is more recent than the others). A Country may have a higher or lower score for each dimension that reflects the behaviours and the values of that Country. The dimensions are:

1. *Power Distance*: it refers to the degree of inequality that exists among people with and without power, for example between an employer and an employee. A Country that has a High Power Distance Score is defined by companies with a strong sense of hierarchies; by contrast a Country with a Low Power Distance Score is defined by flatter companies where employer and employee are considered almost as equal.

2. *Individualism:* it refers to the relationships of a member in a group. In a Country with a High Individualism Score, there is a lack of interpersonal connections inside groups; a Country with a Low Individualism Score will be characterised by collectivism and so by groups with a strong cohesion.

3. *Masculinity:* it refers to how a society distinguishes female from male roles. For example: in a Country with a High Masculinity Score, the role of men is considered superior to role of women. By contrast, in a Country where there is a Low Masculinity Score, men and women work together equally.

4. *Uncertainty/Avoidance Index:* It refers to the behaviour of members of a society in front of an uncertain or unknown situation. A Country with a High Uncertainty/Avoidance Index Score is governed by several rules in order to avoid ambiguous situations; by contrast, in a Country where there is a Low Uncertainty/Avoidance Index Score there are few rules and the society is characterised by the desire to risk and change.

Long Term Orientation: it is linked to the virtue of a society and it refers to how much society values long-standing traditions and values. In a Country that has a High Long Term Orientation Score, the future plays a very important role (so values like education or family are very important). On the other hand, in a Country that has a Low Long Term Orientation Score, the past and the present are more important than the future (for example the results in a job is very important in order to "judge" someone).

5. *Indulgence:* It is the most recent dimension, it is based on the search of the happiness and on the concept of gratification within a society.

According to these dimensions, each Country has different scores.

In the next part, it is analysed the score, related to the six dimensions, of Italy, Germany and Portugal in order to better understand the results of our survey.
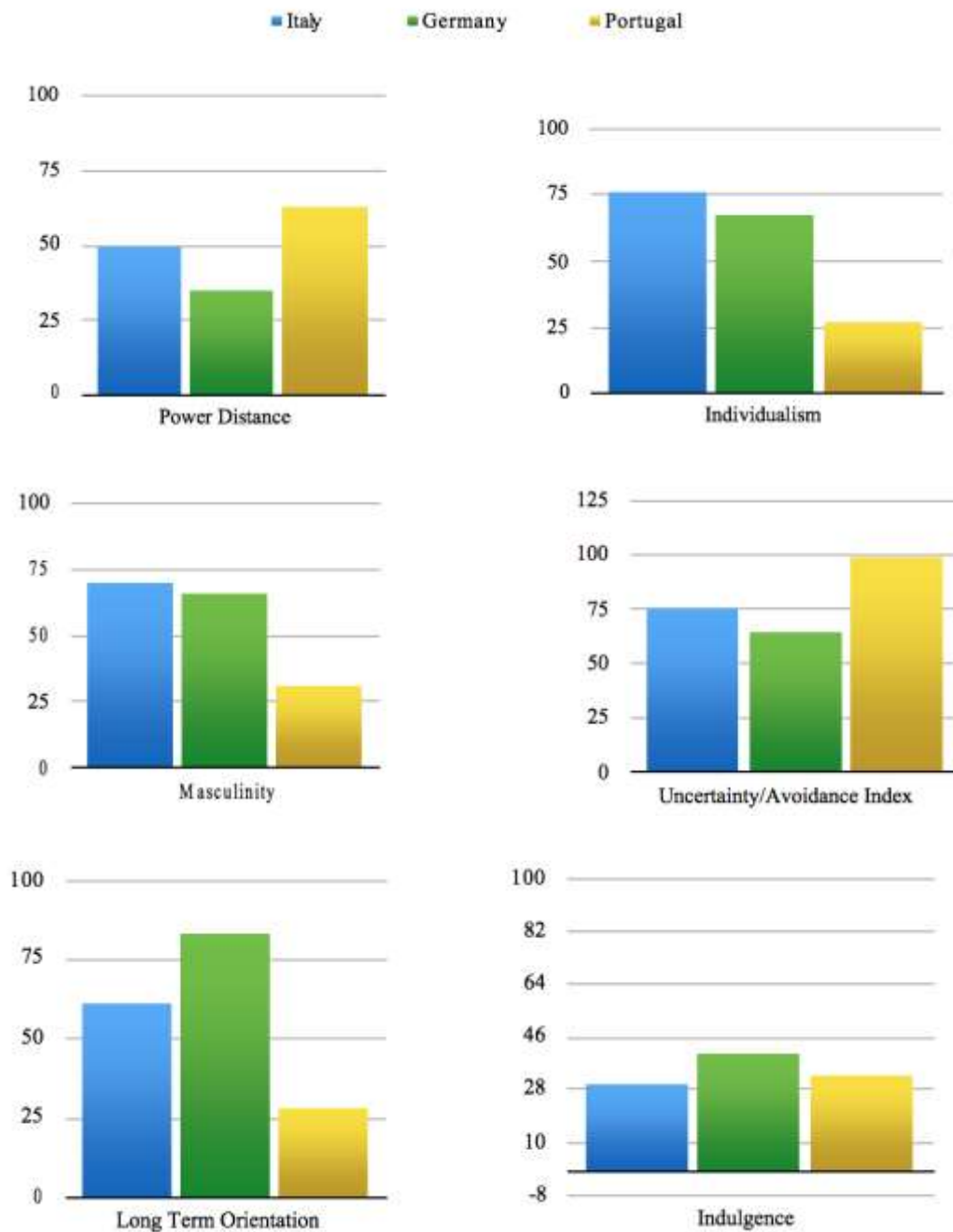
Application of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions on our data

In order to compare our data with the dimensions of Hofstede, it is possible to analyse our results with the score of the Hofstede's Analysis.

It's interesting how our results are reflected and confirmed on the score of each Country according to Hofstede's model.

In particular, three dimensions are linked to the survey in question: the long term orientation, the uncertainty/avoidance index and the indulgence.

The Long Term Orientation

Fig.1
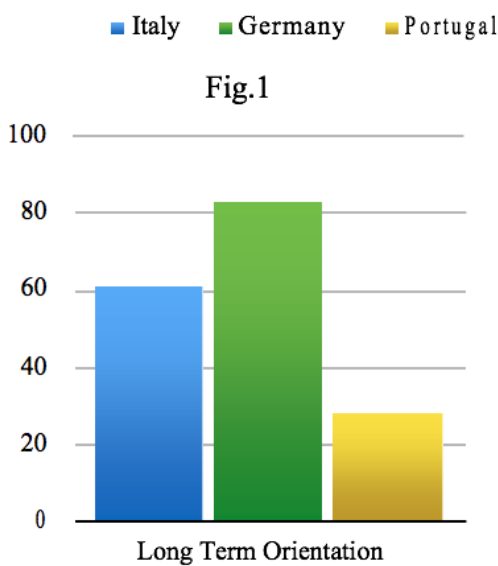
As explained above, this dimension is related to the virtue of a society. Such Country may pay attention in different way to education or to reach results in a career.

In some Countries the future is more important than the present and the past, these Countries are the Country with a higher LTO score. In this case, a member cares about his social responsibilities and the "loss of face" is considered essential in his life.

For these reasons, education is one of the most important aspects of the life of a member of this type of society.

Germany (fig.1) has the higher score (83)

But a contrasting result was expressed in the survey (fig.2). In fact, the survey shows a majority of High School graduates in Germany and only the 14 % declared to have a Bachelor's degree. These results are due to a very low number of German participants and, maybe, to a less truthful answers (probably linked to a bad knowledge of the language).

Another interesting result emerged when the German participants answered to the question "On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you think your career would benefit from working in a multinational firm?". Most of them declared that their careers would benefit from working in a Multinational company (Fig.2.1). This results reflect the data emerged in Hofstede's model.
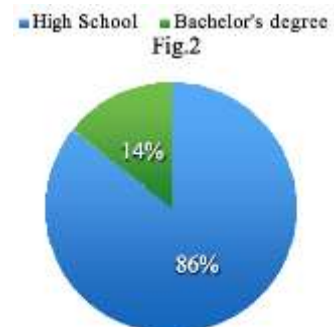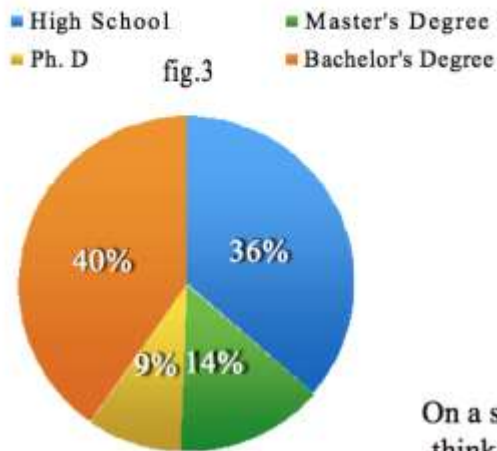

On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you think your career would benefit from working in a multinational firm? (German Point of View) (Fig.2.1)

153
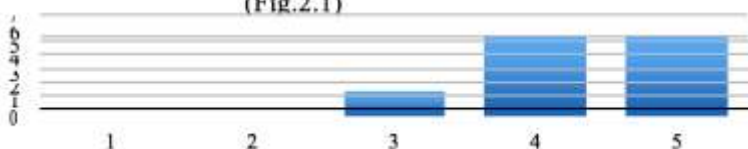
Italy has also a high LTO score (61), but it is lower than Germany's score (fig.1).

In the case of Italy, the results reflect Hofstede's Analysis. In fact, there is a high number of Bachelor's Degree graduates (40.3%); but also a higher percentage of Master's Degree graduates (14.3%) (fig.3), as the LTO score shows. (fig1). The majority of them prefer working in a multinational company in order to have benefits in their career. This reflects the data of Hofstede's Model.


fig.3

- High School
- Ph. D
- Master's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree

On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you think your career would benefit from working for a multinational firm? (Italian Point of View) (Fig.3.1)
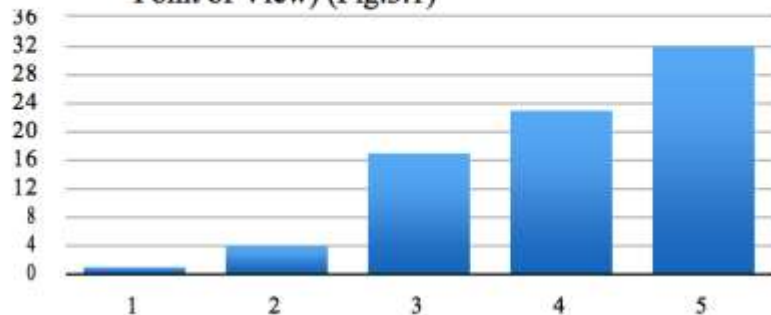
The situation of Portugal is different. According to the Cultural Model in question, Portugal has a score of 28, a very low score (fig.1).
As also shown in the case of Italy, Portugal results reflect Hofstede's Analysis.

The data about the level of education shows a majority of High School graduates (59%).

Fig.4

- High School
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's degree
- Ph. D
- Post Doc
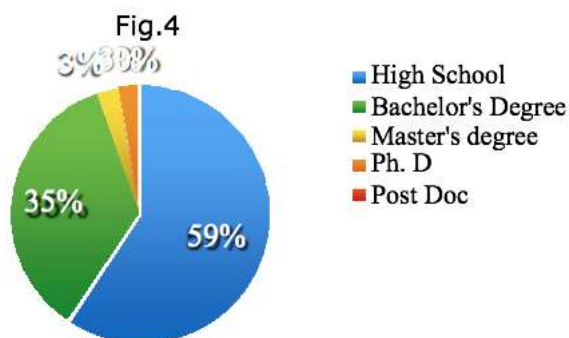
Uncertainty/Avoidance Index

As it is well explained above, it refers to the behaviour of members of a society in front of an uncertain or unknown situation.

The Uncertainty/Avoidance Index scores of Germany, Italy and Portugal are represented in Fig.5.
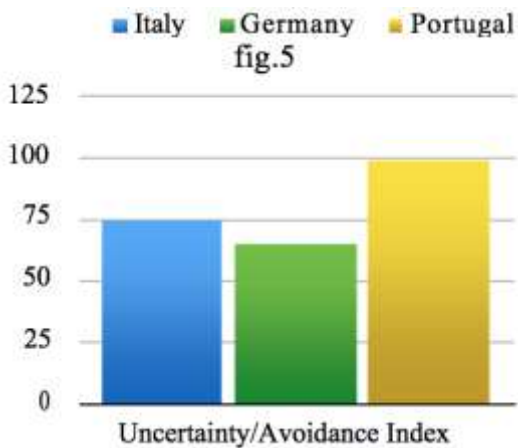
The Country with the highest score is the Portugal (99). According to the Cultural Model the Portugal is governded by several rules in order to avoid ambiguous situations.

This score is clearly related to the preference of the Portuguese participants to have a full time contract (92%) rather than a part time contract (8%) (Fig.6).

Also in this second dimension, Italy is situated in an intermediary position (75) and Germany has a score of 65 (fig.5), so in both cases, the Countries have a high score (higher than 50). Analysing the results of two Countries, the data emerging from the survey in Italy reflects the data emerging in Hofstede's Analysis (fig.8), but the data from the survey results from Germany are contrasting with the cultural model (fig.7). In fact, it results that:
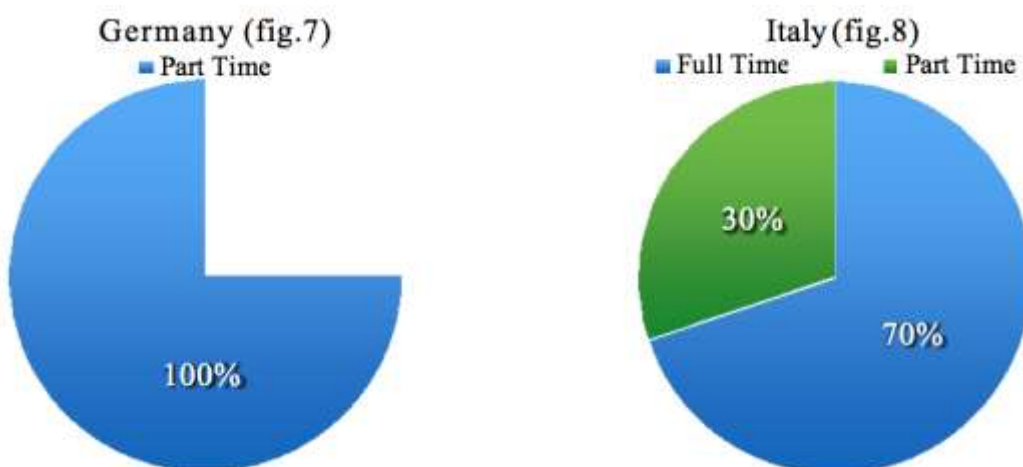
Indulgence

Indulgence is based on the search of the happiness an on the concept of gratification within a society.
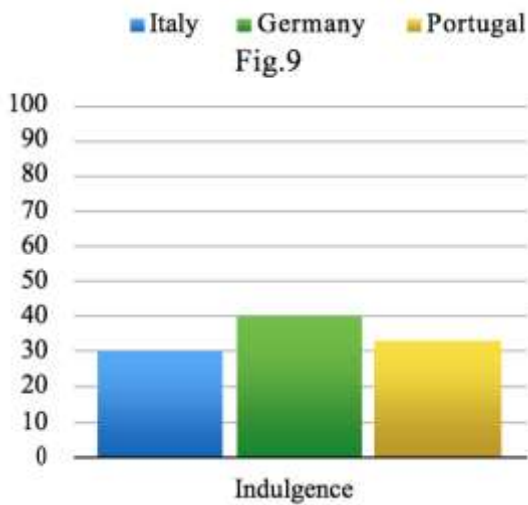
Fig.9

As it is shown in the graph (fig.9.), the Countries in questions have a low score in this dimension: 30, 40 and 33 respectively for Italy, Germany and Portugal.

Italy. Fig.10
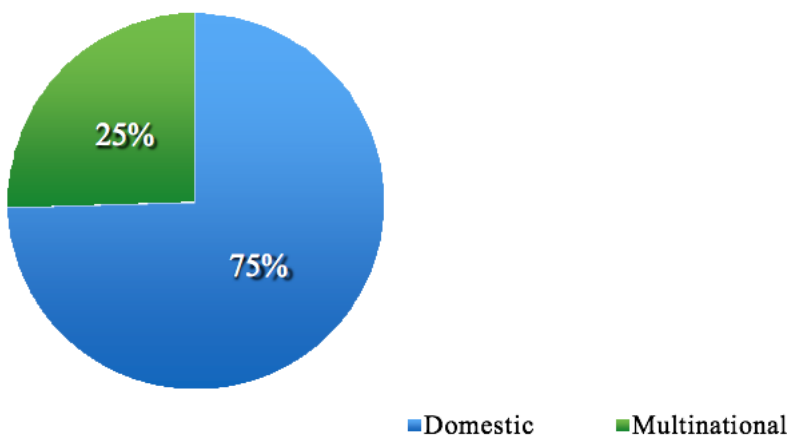
In Italy, regardless of the good opinion about the multinational company, most of the partcipants work in a domestic company (Fig.10).
Workers in a domestic company feel more rewarded and gratified because they are in a more familiar context. This results are equal also for the cases of Germany and Portugal.

Conclusion

This study about Working Preferences gave us some interesting insights about the way Domestic and Multinational firms are seen in the Countries object of the study: Germany, Italy and Portugal. In the last years Europe lived and, to some extents, still lives in difficult time of economic crisis; it was interesting to understand the way the citizens of the Countries examined still looked at the possibility of still gaining some benefits from their working career in times in which having a job is already considered something not accessible to everyone.

In the First Chapter we saw how in all of the three Countries there is a high interest in working

in Multinational firms rather than in Domestic ones: working in a Multinational is perceived as a way to improve one's own career even if working for a Domestic firm is still considered as a good position. The majority of the surveyed, in fact, responded positively about their past experiences in Domestic firm.

In the Second Chapter we analysed the Countries under a comparative point of view: we discovered that people in the same age range (19-25 years old) consider working for a Multinational the right career move. The surveyed from Italy and Portugal can already declare a certain degree of working experience in a full time job positions, working experience that is nowadays considered one the main requirements to be eligible for almost every working position.

In the Third Chapter we used Hofstede's dimensions to analyse the data of the survey: we saw how our data mostly reflects Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions studies. The cases in which Hofstede's models are not matching our data is, perhaps, due to the problem of having not a large number of surveyed (like in Germany's case). It was interesting to see how the Cultural Dimensions Theory, developed in the mid 70's, is still relevant and that can still be successfully applied after 50 years.

Appendix

Survey

Gender Age

From which part of your country are from?

Are you a worker, a student or a working student?
What is your degree of education?

Are you working part time or full time?

Are you working for a national or a multinational firm? Did
you ever had any experience in a domestic firm?

If yes, rate it between1 and 5*.

Did you ever had any experience in a multinational firm? If
yes, rate it between1 and 5*.

Would you prefer working for a national or a multinational firm?

In your country/culture is a multinational firm better than a domestic firm?

On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you think your career would benefit from working in a multinational firm?

On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you think your career would benefit from working in a domestic firm?

Do you have family or friends working for a multinational firm? Do
you have family or friends working for a domestic firm?

On a scale of 1 to 5, whats is your opinion about domestic firms?

On a scale of 1 to 5, whats is your opinion about multinational firms?

On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you think working in a domestic firm will psychologically affect you? (pressure, fear of not having second chances) On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you think working in a domestic firm will psychologically affect you? (pressure, fear of not having second chances)

European Sustainable Development Week

European Dialogue Project (Poster Presentations)

European Dialogue
Project

The Language Centre invites everyone to attend to the poster presentations of the European Dialogue Project!

When: Tuesday, 31 May, 11:30 – 12:30
Where: Hochschulstraße (Sankt Augustin)

Since 2013, the "European Dialogue Project" aims to encourage communication between students - using English as a lingua franca. In this project students discuss and compare data related to

"Workforce Diversity in the European Union".

Students work online in an international team using various Web 2.0 tools to communicate with each other. The international teams are in charge of designing and carrying out a survey and the findings will be shared in a joint compendium.

Topics of the poster presentations:

1. Youth and employment
2. Working patterns
3. Work-family issues
4. Socio-demographic change
5. Migration
6. Human capital
7. European values
8. Labor mobility
9. Working preferences

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Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

34   EUROPÄISCHE NACHHALTIGKEITS WOCHE 30. MAI - 5. JUNI

Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

Team Two

Working patterns

Authors: Nebgen, Daniela; Kugler, Loris

International research team: Stefani, Nicole and Tavaroli, Silvia (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy); Peixoto, Joel and Chen, Maria (Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal); Nebgen, Daniela and Kugler, Loris (Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Germany)

European Sustainable Development Week 31th May 2016

Introduction

As part of our Business English course we worked on the "European Dialogue Project 2016: Workforce Diversity in the European Union", which is an international research project with students from Germany, Portugal and Italy.

For that project we created a survey concerning the subject of length and patterns of working time, lifelong employment vs. lifelong learning.

The idea was to find out, how employees in the three different countries feel and think about their jobs and future perspectives.

We focused on different issues:

What are the circumstances at the workplaces:

How long have the participants been working in their current job?

Do they rather prefer higher salaries or better working atmospheres?

Concerning the part of lifelong learning vs. lifelong employment we tried to find out:

Which is the most appropriate age for retirement?

Do the respondents think a job for life is important?

What are their thoughts on lifelong learning, e.g. attending an university for the elderly?

Method

In our international team we figured out 24 questions concerning our different topics.

The questionnaire contained respond possibilities like scales (1…5), multiple choices or free texts.

We decided to conduct the survey online using Google Forms, as it was the most effective way to reach many participants.
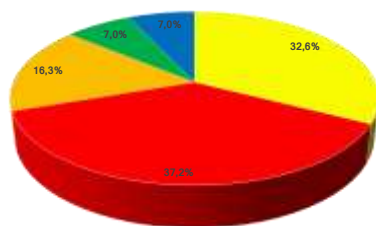
The survey went online for 2 weeks in May 2016.

During that time period in total 43 respondents filled in our survey (24 male, 19 female).

The age range was 21 – 64.

The levels of education are shown below.

81 per cent of the interviewees are working full-time, 19 per cent work part-time.

Results

We found out that almost three quarters (73,8 per cent) of the interviewees think a better working atmosphere is more important than a higher salary.

Furthermore, they have been averagely working in their current job for 10,9 years.

As the average appropriate age for retirement the participants answered 61,7 years.
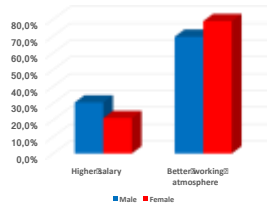
58,5 per cent find that a "job for life" is at least "important" or even "very important".

The results showed that a large majority (90,7 per cent) sees a high importance in the idea of lifelong learning.
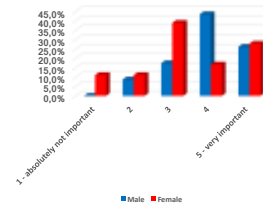
In comparison to that 34,9 per cent could imagine attending a university for the elderly.

All in all we could find out that there were almost no gender-dependent differences in the results.
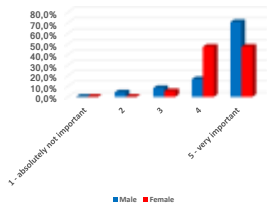
Discussion

One fact that truly got our attention were the responds to the questions concerning lifelong learning.

Almost all participants (90,7 per cent) said they think lifelong learning is certainly important.

But as we evaluated the following survey answers, the interviewees mostly mentioned they would not spend any money for extra courses to improve their knowledge or skills.

If you compare these replies to the importance of lifelong learning, that finding seems almost contradictory and ironic.

The questions we asked ourselves were:

On the one hand, why is lifelong learning so important for most people?

But on the other hand, why are they not willing to spend money on their self-improvement?

Conclusion

All in all we could find a main idea of security and constancy.

The interviewees have been working in their job 10,9 years averagely. Working in a company for such a long time results in security in income and life.

Furthermore, it was interesting to see that nowadays employees of all ages (at least what we can tell from our participants) tend to have constancy in their lives and jobs, even though it seems that employees of today are less loyal for instance to a job than 20 years ago.

Being in the same company for a long time means stability in life and also security for their retirement.

So we could figure that safety is highly important to Germans in their jobs.

Sources and Acknowledgement

We would like to thank all respondents who filled in our survey.

Also many thanks to our Portuguese and Italian team members for working on this project together.

Team Three

Work-Family Issues

Joseph, Manuela; Merz, Katharina

Schamott, Martina; Vismara, Beatrice; Terzaghi, Caterina (Italy) / Marques, Diana; Goncalves, Joana (Portugal)

The purpose

Within the European Dialogue Project our team, consisting of 2 Italian, 2 Portuguese and us, 2 German students, conducted a survey concerning work-family issues in each country between the 25.04.2016 to the 15.6.2016.

The purpose of the survey is to find out each country's main work-family issues with special regard to maternity and parents at work.

Our aim was to identify similarities and differences between Germany, Portugal and Italy.

This poster does not include any Portuguese results because of a lack of Portuguese participants.

Method

The answers were collected from an online survey and face-to-face interviews consisting of 18 questions.

41 working parents from Germany participated in our survey of whom 80,49% were female and 36,6% male.

The Italians collected 52 answers (63,5% female, 36,5% male) and the Portuguese 29 (82,8% female; 17,2% male).

Results

To what extend do you agree that parents need more help to look after their children while they are working?

The majority of the German respondents strongly agreed (39,02%) or agreed (41,46%). Comparing to the answers collected by the Italian team, the results are highly similar. 41,1% expressed that they strongly agree and 28,8% agree that working parents need more help to look after their children. Surprisingly 3,8% were of the opinion that they do not need any more support.

The data indicates that there is a definite need of support in forms of childcare in both countries which also suggests a rising amount of working parents.
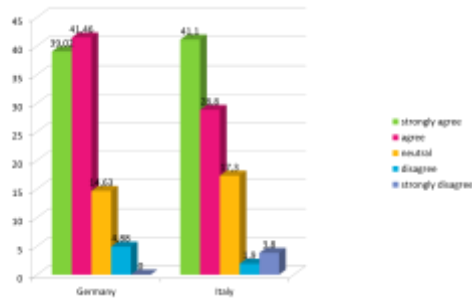
To what extent do you agree that there should be more political regulations concerning work and family life?

39,02% of the German and 41,2% of the Italian surveyed strongly agreed and agreed that there is a need for more political regulations. Only few people were neutral about it or disagreed.

The highly similar results in each country emphasize the discontent with the current political support concerning work and family life.
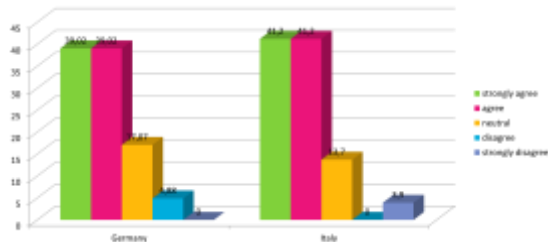
To what extent do you agree that it is difficult nowadays for young women to start a family and promote their career at the same time?

Most of the 41 Germans interviewed agreed (39,02%) or had a neutral opinion (29,27%) whereas the majority of the Italians with 57,7% strongly agreed that it is difficult for young women to balance work and family life.

All in all the situation for young women is quite similar although the circumstances in Italy seem to be even more challenging. In comparison the German participants tend to have a more moderate opinion showing that women might receive more support regarding the coordination between their career and family life.
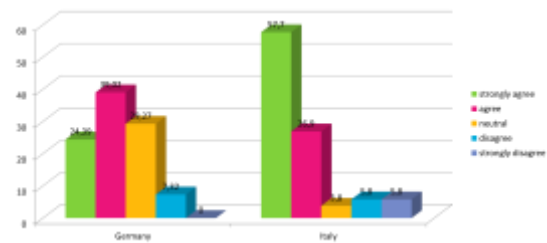

To what extent do you agree that the economic crisis has influenced the birthrate in your country?

In Germany, generally, more that half (34,15% strongly disagreed; 17.07% disagreed) of those surveyed voiced that they do not think that the economic crisis had an impact on the number of births while about a third (24,39% agreed; 9,76% strongly agreed) agreed.

The majority of the Italian respondents were of the opinion that there indeed is a connection between the economic crisis and the birthrate (34,6% strongly agreed; 36,5% agreed). Only 5,8% disagreed and 1,9% strongly disagreed.

Overall, these results show the different extents of the economic crisis in both countries. Italian families are significantly more influenced, probably because of a lack of labor opportunities.
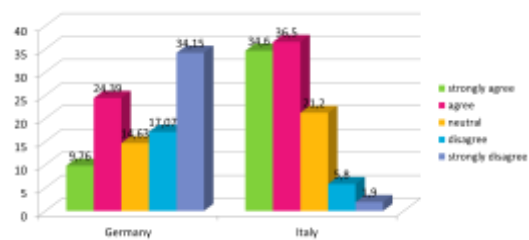
Conclusion

On the basis of the survey results, it might be concluded that balancing work and family life is still a considerable issue in both countries.

While the results were mostly similar, Germans seem to have a more moderate opinion about their situation, which might occur because of the better economic situation currently. Working parents, especially working mothers still have to meet a number of challenges.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to all of the participants who took time to complete the survey.

Team Four

Workforce Diversity in the European Union

Socio-demographic change

Authors: Ljachov Dimitri and Martin Laura

International Research Team: Cosme, Ines and Machado, Rita (Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal) Ljachov, Dimitri and Martin, Laura (Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Science, Germany)

Introduction

The aim of our survey was to find out what people in Europe think about the socio-demographic change and about the situation that the retirement program has to deal with under high pressure because of aging generations and declining birth rates. The participants were asked about the retirement program and how it will affect future generations.

This survey is about the gradual population aging in Europe and its effects on the retirement system in Germany and Portugal.

Method

The survey was conducted from 25 April – 15 May 2016.
We chose 16 representative questions for our survey.
41 people have been asked in Germany and 48 in Portugal.
To keep it simple, we agreed on printed questionnaires that we gave to the participants.
The data analyzed in this report was collected from very different participants.
We did not choose a special target group to get a general view of people on our topic, though we did not ask people under the age of 20.
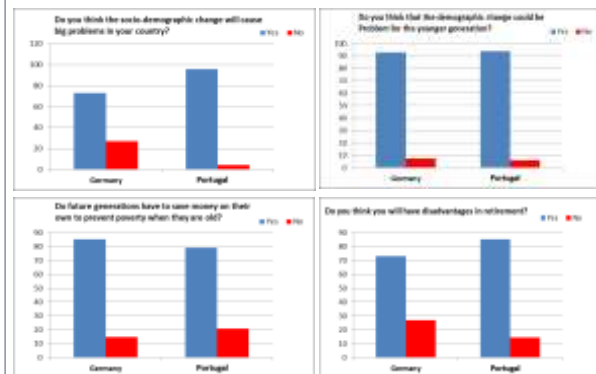
Results

- The results in both countries were very similar, only the answers to the questions concerning the retirement program and the retirement age were completely different, 54,2 % of the participants in Portugal would work longer to stop the demographic change but only 20 % in Germany agreed on that. Furthermore only 20 % of the participants in Germany said that the retirement program is good, in Portugal there were about 90 % who shared this opinion.
- 100 % of the participants in Germany agreed on the question "Do you think there is a demographic change? Is the demographic change real?", 91,7 % in Portugal.
- As a consequence, approximately 80 % of the respondents in both countries said that younger generations have to save money on their own to prevent poverty when they are old.
- Furthermore it was significant that most of the respondents are afraid of having disadvantages in their retirement, 73,1 % in Germany and 85,4 % in Portugal.
- Over 90 % of the participants in both countries think the demographic change will become a problem for the younger generation.
- 91,7 % are afraid that they will not live age-appropriate in the retirement and nearly 95,8 % of the participants think the socio-demographic change will cause big problems in Portugal.

Significant differences between the results in Germany and Portugal
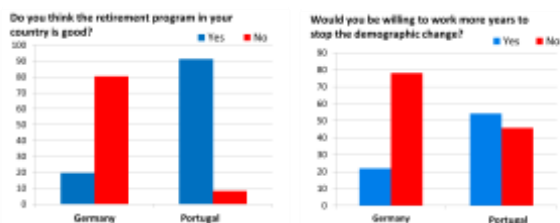
Similarities between the results in Germany and Portugal

Discussion

On the basis of the survey results, it can be concluded that the socio-demographic change is noticeable for most people in Germany and Portugal. However, not only the aging generation causes the demographic change, but also the declining birth rate is a problem in Germany.

As a consequence, we have to think about how we can improve the circumstances for young families to minimize the impacts of the socio-demographic change in Germany. Support of young families and higher wages for the younger generation are only two of many possible approaches. The question we have to ask is: How can we reach a better work-life-balance? Finding a solution for this question would help young people with a full time job and families with children to manage the challenges.

Conclusion

It is a fact that the socio-demographic change is one of the main subjects our generation has to face in the upcoming decades. It is a big challenge for the whole society to minimize the impact of the socio-demographic change if we want to keep or improve our standard of living.

The change can be tackled through changings in the legislation, in the work-life relations and also in the public opinion. The first step has been done – the demographic change has been recognized as a major problem.

Furthermore, the impacts of the immigration and refugee movement are not measurable at this point yet. The future will show if our society will be able to handle it.

Our task and duty is to find the right and adequate solutions to the problems of the 21st century to give all people, retired or not, men or women, children or adults a good life.

Sources and Acknowledgments

Team Five

Migration
Authors: Erny, Florian; Hecht, Daniel

International Research Team: Piedada, J.; Mammi, L. (Italy); Rubbiani, S.; Mendes, G.; Martins, C. (Portugal)

Introduction

During the Business English lessons, there is an European Dialogue Project with our partner universities in Portugal in Italy. The German group is represented by Florian Erny and Daniel Hecht. Our topic is 'Migration in consideration of the labor market situation of non-EU migrants, refugees & Schengen crisis'. Our aim was to find out how European citizens think and feel about refugees and migrants.

Method

As an international group we decided to ask 20 questions to 40 participants in every country (Germany, Italy and Portugal). In order to have a reliable result, we asked 20 males and 20 females separated into five age groups (18 or younger, 19-25, 26-40, 41-59 and 60 or older).

Results

The results shown in this report are solely based on the German research because the results of the Italian and Portuguese team are not available at this point. As already mentioned we asked 20 males and 20 females. But we found out that there are no significant gender-based differences except for the question about the seriousness of the migration situation.
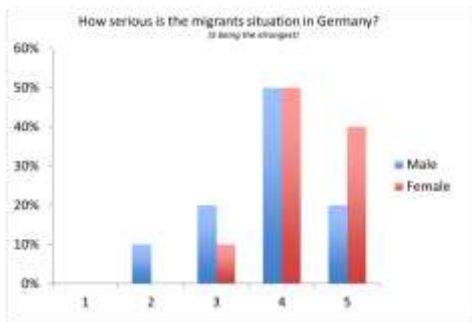

In a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the strongest) our participants evaluated the seriousness of the migration situation in Germany. As you can see, the female participants feel the migration situation in Germany more serious than our male participants. About twice as many females as males perceive the refugee crisis as 'totally serious' (5).
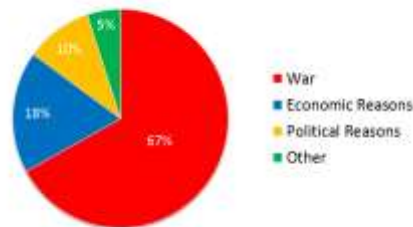

We also wanted to know, if people in Germany could think of a reason why people from the Middle East come to Europe. There were four possible answers given. Two out of three answered that the main reason is war in their home countries whereas only seven people believe that the economic situation plays an important role.
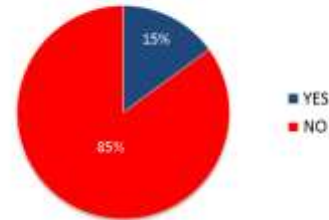
In Europe, several options of solving the refugee crisis are discussed, among them closing the borders. We found out that 85% of our participants think that closing the borders is not a viable solution.
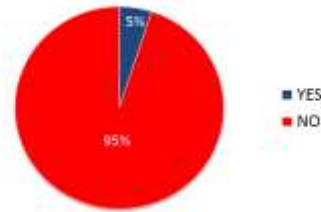
Another significant result was that our participants almost unanimously agreed that refugees / migrants are not taking away their jobs. To be precise, only 2 participants said 'yes'. Both of them were males.

Conclusion

As shown in the first graph, there is a consensus in the German society that the refugee crisis is one of the most challenging topics in our country. In the survey, our participants answered independently of gender, age and profession with one exception as shown in the first graph. A possible reason might be that women in general are more emotional and more easily affected than men. In recent news reports, the political refugees are as wildly discussed as the economic ones. But as you can see in the second graph our participants do not share that point of view. Due to higher approval rates of the new-founded AfD (Alternative für Deutschland), you can see a shift in the political mind set of the German people. Nevertheless, our participants seemingly do not correspond with that trend, given by the results that refugees / migrants are neither seen as a threat to our labour market (see graph 4) nor should be standing in front of closed borders (see graph 3). Everyone is aware of the challenges which come along, but 'Yes, we can!'

Participating Institutions

Germany	**Regina Brautlacht, Senior Lecturer**
	Bonn-Rhein Sieg University of Applied Sciences
Italy	**Professor Dr. Franca Poppi**
	University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
Portugal	**Dr. Lurdes Martins**
	Polytechnic Institute of Viseu

Hochschule
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

European Dialogue
Project

Aspects of Human Capital: Are there differences between Italy and Germany?

Authors: Benedikt, Michael

International research team: Rachel, Giorgia (Italy)

To find out which general skills and competences candidates need to succeed in an application procedure our group asked employers in both countries about traits and capabilities their staff need to have.

Our objective was to find out whether there are different requirements between Italy and German.

Method:

We prepared a questionnaire with 16 questions in English, which we translated into German and Italian to make sure that the content is congruent.

We asked **56 people** in higher job positions to fill out the questionnaire and evaluated their answers.

Most interesting results:

Does gender play a role for career options?
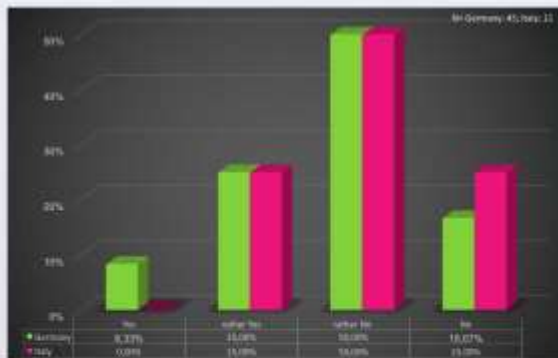
➢ The majority of the respondents is of the opinion that gender does not play an important role for career options but still almost 30% think that gender has an effect. **It is interesting that female test people answered more critically than male ones.** This indicates that among women the idea that gender is a discriminating factor is still present whereas men think that this is not a big issue. The difference between the two countries concerning this question is marginal.

Which is the best age to gain first experiences by doing an internship?
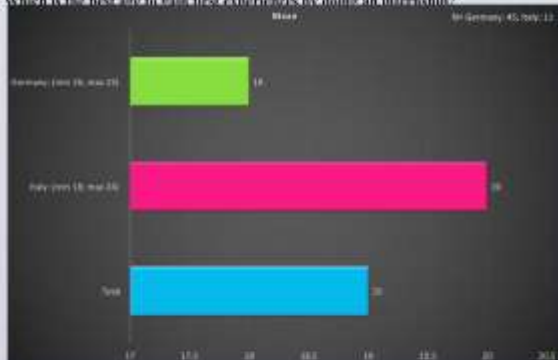
➢ According to the respondents the best age for a first internship in a qualified sector is around **19 years.** In Germany the estimated perfect time to gain first experiences is slightly earlier than in Italy.

Do educational institutions prepare young people for the job market properly?
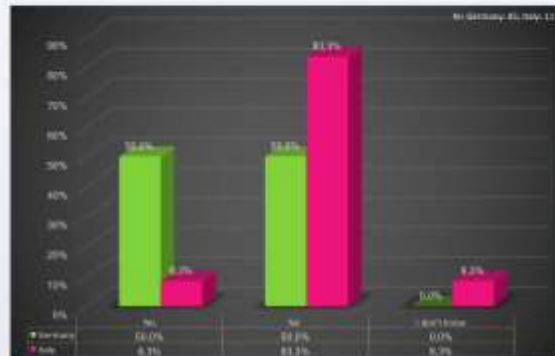
➢ Two thirds of the people we asked think that educational institutions do not properly prepare young people for the job market. Comparing both countries, this negative judgement is even more significant in **Italy (82%).** Young students are not ready to face the work market when they leave their higher education institutions. **In Germany the perception is divided.** Half of the respondents indicate that graduates have the necessary requirements.

Which are important characteristics of a good employee?

➢ We asked the participants to value the importance of **8 predetermined characteristics** of job applicants on a **scale from 1 – 10** to find out which values they favour.

One result is that the respondents only used the higher part of the scale. All the characteristics we chose seem to be **relevant for a good employee** to have.

In total **respect** and **punctuality** are the attributes with the highest rates. **Charisma** and **sympathy** are less important.

Apart from that, there are considerable differences between the two countries. The Italian assessments are generally higher than the German ones.

An interesting partial result is for example that punctuality seems to have a different local value.

In Italy punctuality seems to be a characteristic that is considered in the process of evaluating a job candidate, whereas German respondents rated this attribute substantially lower. This might be an indication for cultural differences. Punctuality is one of the typical German virtues so it doesn't have to play a special role to differentiate employees because it is fundamental value of the society.

Conclusion:

➢ The evaluation of the questionnaire shows that employers in Germany and Italy have different expectations regarding some aspects of what is required for career improvement. This might be due to the economic situation in both countries as well as the various cultures.

Team Seven

European values

Authors: Riccardo Rao, Henri Krieg, Joe Hoppe

International Research Team: Rúben Filipe, João M. Ribeiro (Portugal); Valeria Amici, Andrea Lucci (Italy)

Introduction

This poster is a project for our Business English class at the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences. Our survey was conducted in may 2016. We chose the topic ''European values'' because we think that this theme is a very important and relevant part of the European community.

That is why we wanted to research the opinion of the German population regarding themes like *human rights*, *freedom of speech* and *gender equality*. Therefore we asked adults in different age groups to represent the whole country.

Method

To get the best results, we created a survey with 15 questions, 5 for every topic, and asked different respondents of three different age groups. We divided the interviewees into the following age groups:
- 18 to 28
- 29 to 40
- 41 to 91

We decided against an online survey to make sure that everyone understands our questions. That is why we went to people on the streets, to friends and to our family members to get a variety of results. In the end we interviewed a total of 60 adults.

For each question we had 5 different possibilities to answer:
- I totally agree
- I partially agree
- I'm not sure
- I partially disagree
- I totally disagree

We decided to evaluate the three most critical questions and results.

Objectives of the survey

The main objective of our survey was to get an overview about all the different opinions in different groups of age in Germany. We wanted to see whether the age of the people influences their opinion on European values and how satisfied they are regarding these topics in our country.

Conclusion

The evaluation of our data shows some big differences between young and old interviewees. The age has a big influence on the people's point of view. It shows that older people have been confronted more often with our three topics. In contrast it seems that the younger generation has not thought about these themes. Still, there are also many accordances regarding other questions of our survey.
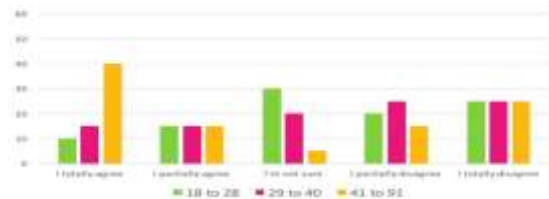
Results

Human rights

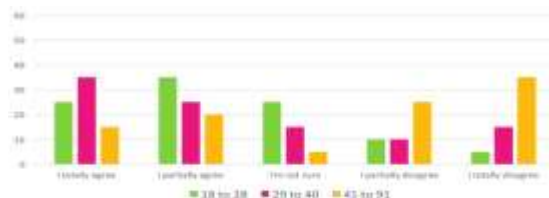Have you ever had the feeling that your human rights have been violated?
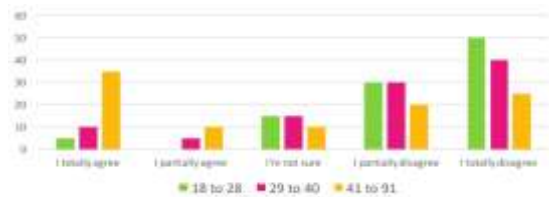
Freedom of speech

Have you ever had the feeling that your freedom of speech has been violated?

Gender equality

Should women be allowed to take the same role in the military like men?

Participating Institutions

Germany   **Regina Brautlacht, Senior Lecturer**
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Italy   **Professor Dr. Franca Poppi**
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Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, School of Technology and Management of Viseu

Team Eight

Hochschule
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

European Dialogue
Project

Labour mobility within the EU: challenges and perspectives for a sustainable European labour market

Beatrice Tedeschi, Francesca Vitali, Chiara Pineschi, Jeremie Ballekens

Task and how to reach the goal

With the survey we wanted to have some insights and background information for the topic of our investigation, that is 'Labor mobility within the EU: challenges and perspectives for a sustainable European labor market'. From the results, we will start to analyze and find some solutions to the possible problems and issues that emerge in moving within EU for working matters.

We agreed on 19 questions and decided to address our survey to European youths between 18 and 30 years of age. We decided to use 'GoogleForm' for our research. After sending the survey to acquaintances across Europe that included also non-profit organizations, we collected a total number of 107 responses. The respondents come from different origins and background but we required that they were born or at least resided for a period within the European Union. We decided to group ages in the three groups that we thought that could be differentiated approximately in education groups. 18-22= BA's students; 23-25= MA's students; 26-30= higher education

The willing to work abroad

71 of the respondents have never worked abroad whereas 36 have. However, of all respondents, 91.6% have considered the possibility of working abroad at least once. Of those who came back, 40.5% did it for personal issues, 32.4% decided not to specify it and 37.8% came back due to money, language or cultural issues.

7. Have you ever worked abroad? (107 responses)
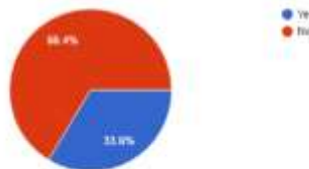
9. Have you ever considered the possibility of working abroad (even for a short period of time)? (107 responses)
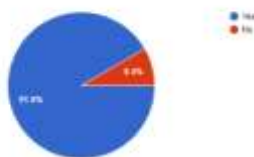
Difficulties and reasons for failures

The greatest difficulty of someone moving abroad seems to be the ability to create a stable and definitive life in a country that is not yours, followed by cultural differences. Lower and similar percentages were obtained for bureaucracies, financial basis and language difference. A minor concern is instead the validity of the educational degree you obtained in the home country.

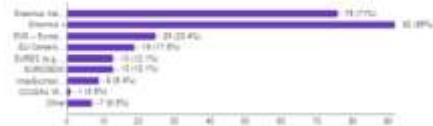11. In your opinion, which is the greatest difficulty of someone who moves abroad? (107 responses)

8. If you did and you came back, why did you return?

The graphs show that the fears before and the reasons why people came back do not covering each other.

Support for working abroad

17. Have you ever heard of these organisations/networks that offer support for working abroad?

18. Do you think that these programs are sufficiently advertised by the EU/your government?

We asked which of the following programs and organizations were the most famous and Erasmus+ and Erasmus Traineeship seem by far the most well know whereas the others are less known. Almost the 80% of the youth that have been surveyed agreed that the above mentioned programs are not enough advertised by public institutions.

We finally asked if the temporary working experience abroad could turn into long-term employment. The 42% of people answered yes and they would hope it happens because they saw abroad much more job opportunities and therefore employment chances. 37% answered no either because they wouldn't want to or because they were just looking for something temporary; 14% said that it could be a possibility but it would depend on a number of variables, among which, the level of adaptation they achieved, the positives of the experience, labor and contractual conditions offered and the kind of relationships created. The 7% did not know.

Thank you!

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