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Press Release

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Smart Education: KOMUNIKI Launches Pro Bono Global Education Initiative with eBook-based trainings for iPad, iPhone, Android, PC&Co

The ongoing globalisation and thus the *interculturalisation* of every society increasingly requires interculturally competent collaboration – and not only on the international arena. Intercultural competence is rapidly becoming the basis for modern collaboration.

*"Global change", says Heiko Saeger Managing Director of KOMUNIKI, "along with **the challenges** it poses, can only be mastered by creating prosperity and by the rational use of resources. For this reason, sustainable innovations in organisations, technologies, economy and politics are highly required on a global scale. This can only be achieved through the mutually beneficial collaboration of competent individuals. **The problem is, however, that despite intensive international exchange and experience most people have no competence in working with individuals who come from a different culture. In this respect, genuine intercultural competence is the key qualification of the 21st century.**"*

KOMUNIKI is committed to promoting intercultural competence in the world to as many people as possible. For this very purpose, a unique world innovation was developed: the first eBook-based seminar series for smart phones, tablets, PC & Co worldwide, entitled **KOMUNIPASS – The Intercultural Certificate**.

Five smart training modules replace approximately 60 hours of expensive classroom education and prepare learners equally well for assignments and studies abroad as well as for intercultural cooperation.

The KOMUNIPASS trainings are available in English and German on Amazon **worldwide**, and **free of charge** for KOMUNIKI members. Anyone can become a KOMUNIKI member for free and without obligations. Those who wish to join KOMUNIKI only need to register with their names and email addresses on www.komuniki.org.

The KOMUNIPASS model of intercultural competence development and the related interdisciplinary content are based on the current work, experience and results of long-time research by academics of different national cultures and disciplines. The KOMUNIKI PROJECT is supported by the non-profit KOMUNIKI FOUNDATION, Aachen, Germany.

About eBook-based Trainings

Numerous studies have revealed that in all classrooms and conference halls of the world people learn at a different pace, with a factor ranges from 1 to 9. This means that classroom teaching is for most learners either too fast or too slow. The time of day is also crucial in learning. eBook training adapts to any learning speed and bio-rhythm. Whether at the airport, in a bus, or on the sofa, you can read, learn, practise and revise with the eBook trainings anywhere and at anytime.

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Further Information

Further details about purpose and background

Global Change – Why is Genuine Intercultural Competence Becoming Ever So Important?

Our global economic system is ultimately enforcing international growth for every society and organisation for the sake of achieving their own prosperity. This inevitably results in an initially slow but then rapidly increasing change within organisations and societies – a change that brings forth intercultural demographic and organisational structures, ownership and power relations, as well as an increasing international exchange in virtually every country on the globe. Professional, private, and business environments are undergoing a constant change. To some extent or another, every individual is affected. *Interculturalisation* is thus inevitable within every society and business enterprise worldwide.

The usual environment is undoubtedly becoming more and more intercultural. This very often leads to deep reservations or concerns about the upcoming changes, and at times it even triggers fear of the unknown. A great number of people who fail to cope with such significant changes seek for integrity and identity in sometimes radical attitudes, values and systems. As a result, groundbreaking innovations are being hindered and even disabled from use both in business and in politics.

Global change, along with the exponentially growing world population, is definitely unavoidable, and it entails two huge counter-productive challenges for every single society, organisation, and presumably for every individual, as well:

- potential distribution conflicts due to the increasing shortage of resources;
- rapidly progressing nationalism, radicalism and fanaticism triggered by resistance to changes (immigration, interculturalisation, or demographic change) and fear from the unknown.

Every one of us has to face these challenges, which can only be mastered by creating prosperity and ensuring the rational and intelligent use of resources. For this reason, sustainable innovations in organisations, technologies, economy and politics are highly required on a global scale. This can only be achieved through the mutually beneficial collaboration of competent individuals.

The problem is, however, that despite intensive international exchange and experience most people have no competence in working with individuals belonging to a different culture. In this respect, genuine intercultural competence is the key qualification of the 21st century. In order to achieve sustainable growth and wealth both in business and society, cooperation must be based on intercultural competence. Moreover, intercultural competence is also a determining factor in the organisational formation and development of every business enterprise.

The global educational system is facing the challenge of making and keeping people fit for the emerging knowledge community, which does not merely involve a particular intellectual elite or young people, but it expands to the global population on the whole. In a time of rapidly increasing changes, it is through competence alone that individuals can become capable of self-determined participation in public life and able to create genuinely effective innovations.

Intercultural competence can help everyone to orient themselves in their continuously changing environments successfully, as well as further develop their personality without having to give up their identity. It is also through intercultural competence that people can explore opportunities arising from change processes and use them for the

public benefit. Sustainable innovations and solutions can be only achieved through intercultural competence based collaboration. This is the royal road to social and business prosperity, and it requires adequate methodological and social skills, together with excellent intercultural knowledge.

Useful Information About Intercultural Competence Development

A commonly shared assumption is that intercultural is equal to international! Not quite right.

The goal of intercultural competence development is to

- deal and communicate appropriately with people different from yourself;
- develop skills that enable you to act appropriately in new, unusual or changing environments and/or situations.

All this does not simply relate to the aspects of different nations or ethnic groups, but also to various other aspects such as age, gender, sexuality, religion, politics, or disability.

International experience is not the same as intercultural competence.

The problem is that most people, despite intensive international exchange experience, have no competence of working with people who are different from themselves.

International experience and intercultural competence are often identified as one and the same. The confusion arises from the frequent **assumption** that interaction with members of other cultures automatically leads to intercultural competence. It is a **proven fact** that this is wrong.

Intercultural competence development is a personality development process that must involve, among others, conscious self-reflection. A stay-abroad or intercultural cooperation can only become **a part** of the competence development process after effective cultural sensitisation has taken place.

Knowledge transfer of cultural specifics does not suffice!

There is a huge variety of intercultural action situations today that can challenge individuals both at home and abroad. Differences and deviations from stereotypical standards can be significant and plenty even within one particular culture, and so there is no wonder why numerous coaches and publications are trying to impart these differences willingly and profitably. It makes therefore no sense, and is often even wrong, to purposefully *prepare* for every possible action situation, read about country-specific *dos and don'ts*, or train oneself from how-to manuals about doing business in North, South, East, West, etc. and memorise the details described.

Dull knowledge transfer develops no competence. Competence development can only be further developed through a well-defined process.

The development of a more general, intercultural competence requires a learning process that does not only broaden your knowledge but is also accompanied by the conscious development of your own value system and a broader spectrum of actions,

involving the cognitive, affective and behaviour-oriented level to a great degree.

Only then can any person develop the capacity to act properly and spontaneously in an intercultural action situation. With these consciously developed skills an intercultural competent individual can use their own orientation system / model at any time to adapt to every new action situation, understand it, and act accordingly.

Intercultural competence learning is an ongoing process that involves both formal qualification processes, conscious personality development and informal learning processes, that is, experiential learning in intercultural contexts.

About the KOMUNIKI PROJECT

The KOMUNIKI PROJECT, due to start on 26th Jan. 2013, aims to contribute to an effective understanding and constructive collaboration between people with different cultural backgrounds and attitudes. It is the firm commitment of the project initiators to promote intercultural competence for as many people as possible, or at least to achieve intercultural understanding. The KOMUNIKI PROJECT develops, finances and implements unique educational projects that make this possible in every corner of the globe. Anyone is welcome to join at anytime and from any corner of the globe.

The KOMUNIPASS model of intercultural competence development and the related interdisciplinary contents are based on the current work, experience and results of long-time research by academics of different national cultures and disciplines. This is how the complete exclusion of potential ethnocentric influences or unilateral tendencies is guaranteed. At the same time, a globally adaptable intercultural competence model is used, supported by effective methods, for the efficient development of learners' competencies.

KOMUNIKI pursues non-profit purposes only. All proceeds are meant to serve the realisation of the KOMUNIKI PROJECT, which is supported by the KOMUNIKI FOUNDATION UG, a non-profit organisation operating in accordance with the German tax authorities in Aachen, Germany.