**Modularising multilingual and multicultural academic and
professional communication competence
for BA and MA level**

Executive summary for employers

During the recruitment process, is the candidate's capacity to communicate in several languages a decisive factor for you?
Does this capacity in your opinion represent an asset in terms of obtaining future contracts and/or managing your professional activities?

In a context of increased mobility – of workforce, goods and services – being able to use languages appropriately to communicate in professional situations has become a considerable economic, social and cultural asset. It is a plus for companies and institutions, not only on a local and European level, but on a global one as well.

Given the importance of respecting linguistic diversity and the "client's language", a multilingual and multicultural competence is necessary for employees (as well as for job applicants). This competence includes not only linguistic and communicative but also intercultural know-how. Communication is in fact linked to distinct cultural practices – even if a *lingua franca* is used – and must include the capacity to find common ground in situations involving multilingual and multicultural communication.

What does MAGICC propose?

In order to produce a detailed description of the different aspects of this competence as well as the means to develop it, to certify it reliably and to promote it in undergraduate and graduate courses, the MAGICC project (a project comprising 9 European universities and supported by the European Union) has developed:

- a conceptual framework;

- pedagogical scenarios, including assessment resources which allow this competence to be certified;

- the possibility of documenting one's multilingual and multicultural profile in an ePortfolio in an internationally comprehensible way;

- tools to familiarize oneself with the levels and terms used.

What is multilingual and multicultural competence and how can it be documented with MAGICC?

The ability to use several languages in the context of work increases employability; however, employees do not necessarily need the same level and the same types of competences in the different languages. All abilities, however limited, can be useful to an employer, which is precisely what the multilingual profile that the project highlights wants to emphasize.

MAGICC provides a template designed to certify the multilingual and multicultural communication competences acquired during courses. These attestations together with a description of the courses which led to them and examples of personal work are assembled in a digital portfolio. This is a tool which MAGICC proposes to allow its holders to showcase their multilingual profile, with particular emphasis on the requirements of the labour market, and includes all the specific competences which make up their know-how in the different languages.

The description of this competence includes comprehension (reading and listening), oral expression (interacting and presenting), written production and the ability to assess one's own language, communication and intercultural competences and practices. An exhaustive set of competence descriptors has been established for each of these areas. Potential employers will thus be able to know exactly what each job applicant is capable of doing in the field of communication thanks to his or her multilingual profile. This will allow employers to make better use of the competences of their staff.

A new approach has been developed, which goes beyond the usual competence descriptors in language certification and takes into account areas such as:

- the effectiveness of communication in a multilingual and multicultural context;

- awareness of the context and the objective of the communication and of strategies for improving the quality of the communication;

- flexibility, adaptability and ability to manage ambiguity in a multicultural context;

- respect for intercultural codes and openness to difference, which are necessary to communicate with people coming from different backgrounds.

To be able to understand the terms and the levels used in the different parts of the project better, specific training materials are available for those who are interested.

For more information: **www.magicc.eu**