Learning Unit 6: Celebrating Diversity

Cultural Diversity

Cultural Diversity

Introduction

Target Group

Young people

Competencies to be acquired

1. Learners will be able to explain what cultural diversity is.

2. Learners will be able to name the reasons why cultural diversity is important.

3. Learners will be able to describe different ways of supporting cultural diversity

4. Learners will be able to list seven important actions involved in the definition of multiculturalism

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CULTURE

Culture refers to the shared language, beliefs, values, norms, rituals, behaviours, arts, food and drink and material objects that are passed down from one generation to the next.

The Culture Wheel

- GREATER COMMUNITY
- KNOWLEDGE & STORIES
- LANGUAGE
- TRADITIONS & RITUALS
- TECHNIQUES & SKILLS
- TOOLS & OBJECTS
- THE ARTS
- FOOD & DRINK
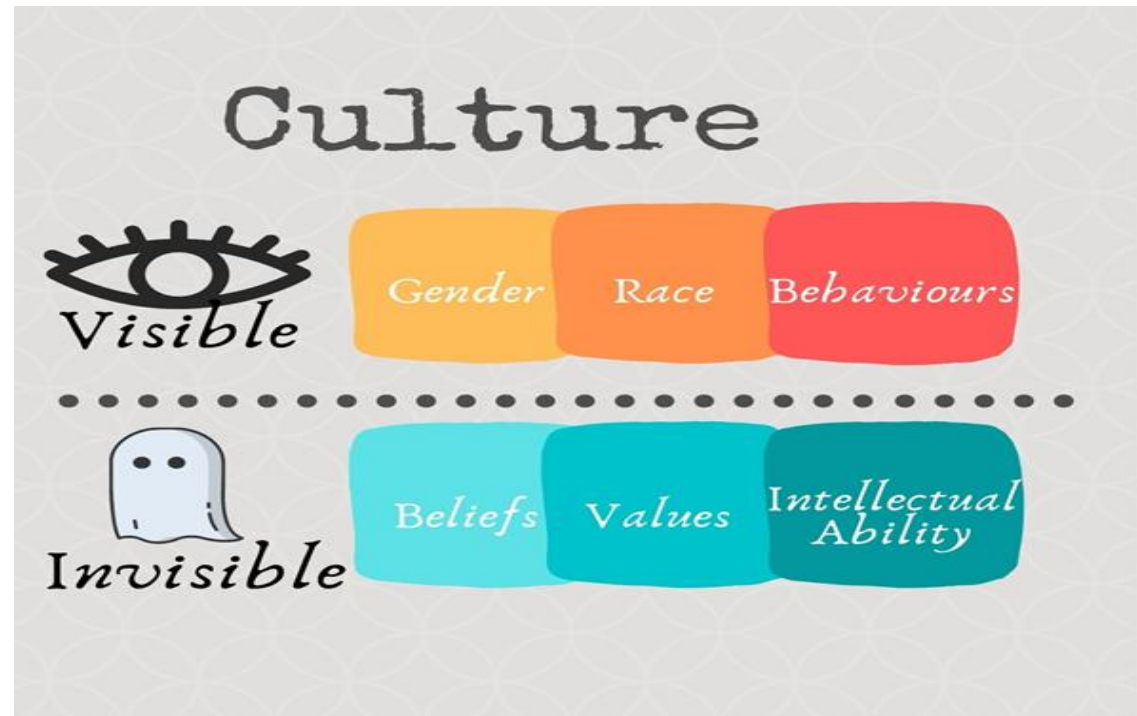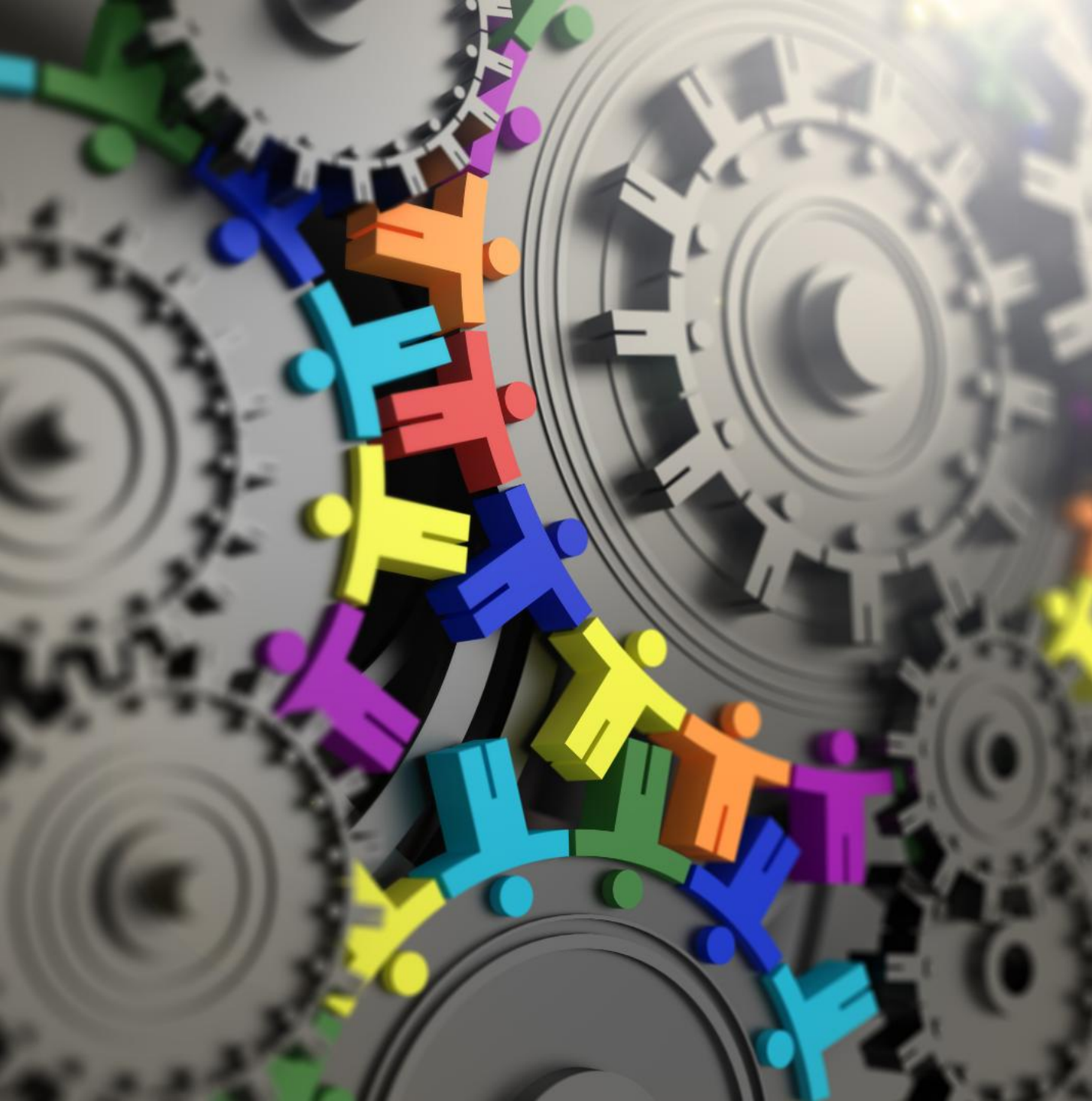- VALUES

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Culture and Cultural Diversity

Groups of people that share the same culture, religion, ethnicity, language, nationality, sexual orientation, class, gender, age, disability, health differences, geographic location and lots of other things are referred to as "**cultural groups**".

Cultural Diversity is the existence of a variety of cultural groups within a society.

Refers to both external (**visible**) and internal (**invisible**) characteristics such as knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, religions, languages, abilities and disabilities, genders, ethnicities, races, nationalities, sexual orientations, etc., of human beings.

Culture

Visible — Gender, Race, Behaviours

Invisible — Beliefs, Values, Intellectual Ability

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Multiculturalism is defined as:
"...a system of beliefs and behaviours that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organization or society.

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Inclusion VS Diversity

Inclusion means making sure everyone takes part.

Celebrating diversity means making sure everyone takes part on their own terms.

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Chapter 1

Different Approaches towards Cultural Diversity

Recognising Cultural Diversity

This approach considers the **recognition of different cultures and identities**, as the first step to teaching about cultural diversity.

In multicultural societies, it is crucial to provide everyone with a **sense of belonging**, and recognising a culture is an indispensable element for cultivating a sense of belonging.

However, recognition is not a concept that can be well defined.

Treating People with Different Cultures Equally
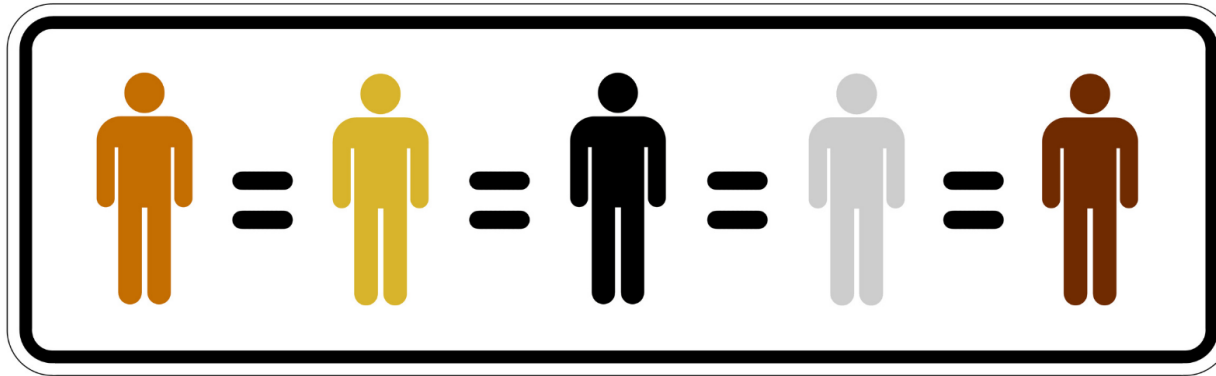
This approach stresses that treating people from other cultures differently can be problematic.

No **one should be discriminated against** or exempted from anything based on their differences and accidents of birth and everyone should be **entitled to participate equally** in decision-making processes.

Treating all people equally encompasses the following three conditions:

(1) everyone's basic rights are protected,

(2) no one is forced to adopt the values the majority of people share

(3) both in theory and in practice, the decision-makers are accountable

Protecting Minority People and Their Cultures

The idea of **protecting group identity** started from the fact that many societies had or are still excluding particular (usually minority) cultures and groups, and also the fact that social norms and values are defined by the majority.

However, protecting cultures should not be an excuse for violating **basic values or human rights** (e.g., religious fundamentalists)

Teaching About Cultural Diversity by Dialogue

Dialogue is essential to teach about cultural diversity.

Diverse cultures should be seen as a **tool** for human beings to have a more complete and **comprehensive view** of this world

Welcoming different thoughts and views can be a remedy to people's **narrow-mindedness**
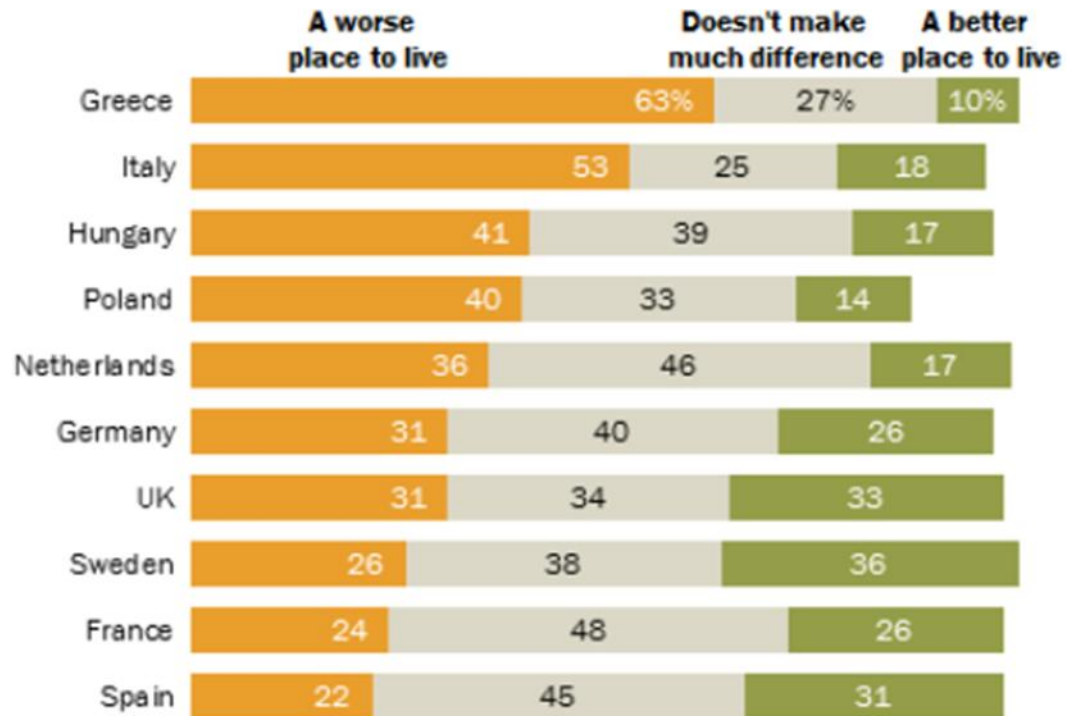
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Chapter 2

Cultural Diversity in Europe

Cultural Diversity in Europe

Few say growing diversity makes their country a better place to live

Overall, do you think having an increasing number of people of many different races, ethnic groups and nationalities in our country makes this country a better place to live, a worse place to live or doesn't make much difference either way?

	A worse place to live	Doesn't make much difference	A better place to live
Greece	63%	27%	10%
Italy	53	25	18
Hungary	41	39	17
Poland	40	33	14
Netherlands	36	46	17
Germany	31	40	26
UK	31	34	33
Sweden	26	38	36
France	24	48	26
Spain	22	45	31

Source: Source Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey. Q44.

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Europe is increasingly becoming a place of cultural diversity and citizens born in foreign countries. The share of immigrants is rising in some countries, mostly due to the large number of asylum seekers entering Europe in the past year.

According to a recent Pew Research Center analysis (2016), across the 10 EU nations surveyed, the median share of immigrants in the population is 12.2%, ranging from as high as 18.3% in Sweden to as low as 1.6% in Poland.

People on the right more likely than those on the left to say increasing diversity makes life worse

An increasing number of people of many different races, ethnic groups and nationalities in our country makes this country a worse place to live

	LEFT	CENTER	RIGHT	RIGHT-LEFT DIFF
Germany	14%	29%	50%	+36
Italy	36	51	62	+26
Netherlands	20	32	46	+26
Greece	49	65	69	+20
France	15	21	34	+19
Sweden	15	20	33	+18
UK	24	30	36	+12

People on the right of the ideological spectrum are remarkably more likely than those on the left to say that growing diversity is detrimental to their country.

Chapter 3

Why is cultural diversity important?

The importance of cultural diversity

We view the world around us through our **"cultural lenses"**

We tend to fear what we do not understand, which can result in people **discriminating against** others whose "way of being" is different to their own.

Why is cultural diversity important?

Fundamental changes in time and technology have made it almost impossible for different cultural groups to live without **interacting** with each other.

With the number of **diverse cultural groups** living in Europe **increasing** day by day, European citizens are left with no choice other than to embrace our diversity.

Collaborating with diverse groups can help us view the world we live in through **different perspectives**, dispelling this way negative stereotypes and personal biases about different groups.

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Diversity opens up new market opportunities and boosts economic growth

Fosters **trust, respect and understanding** across cultures

Diversity is what makes Europe so **unique** and an interesting place to live in

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Chapter 4

How can you support cultural diversity?

Seven actions involved in the definition of Multiculturalism

According to Dr. Caleb Rosado, these are:

1. **Recognition** of the abundant diversity of cultures;

2. **Respect** for the differences;

3. **Acknowledging** the validity of different cultural expressions and contributions;

4. **Valuing** what other cultures offer;

5. **Encouraging** the contribution of diverse groups;

6. **Empowering** people to strengthen themselves and others to achieve their maximum potential by being critical of their own biases; and

7. **Celebrating** rather than just tolerating the differences in order to bring about unity through diversity.

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How can you support cultural diversity?

1. **Increase your level of understanding** about other cultures simply by **interacting** with people from different cultural backgrounds. (But recognise that someone's language limitations do not reflect their level of intellectual functioning)

2. **Don't force** your **beliefs** on people

3. At the workplace, **advocate** for the use of **materials** that are representative of the various cultural groups

4. **Intervene** in an appropriate manner when you observe discriminative behaviours

5. Be **open-minded**

6. Accept that differences are **beneficial** and not harmful

What does that look like in practice:

Diversity at the workplace

Cultural diversity could be fostered through a multilingual team, or by having a diverse range of ages working together, or having policies that are vocally against discrimination, etc.
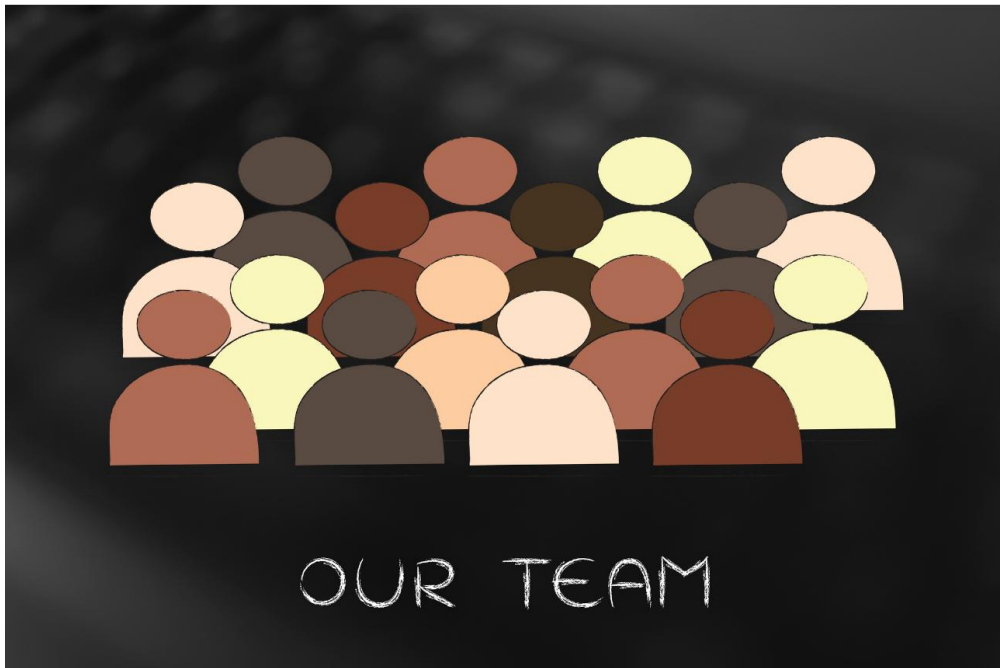
Diversity in education

Having a class with student from all over the world, being accepting of all religious practices and traditions that students part take in, supporting students to share their cultures with one another, etc.