International Business Communications LCBB6001

Assessment 2

Practical: Individual Presentation

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Introduction

- International commerce encompasses the exchange of products and services, money, knowledge, and technology across countries on a worldwide level.
- Here the selected firm is **Tesco PLC**. The firm is headquartered in the United Kingdom. Presently, the organization is planning to expand its commercial operations in Germany.
- Engaging in international business in Germany might provide several profitable opportunities for Tesco because Germany offers significant opportunities for retail businesses.
- This presentation will explore the cultural sensitivities and disparities between the United Kingdom and Germany.

Source: Fornes & Altamira (2023)

Source: tesco PLC (2023)

Introduce the German culture

Business contacts in Germany are characterized by a high degree of formality, reflecting the cultural values of order, privacy, and timeliness.

- Germans value authority and seldom criticize their bosses openly.
- The personal relationships are not necessary for business.
- Business lunches will strengthen relationships later in the relationship.
- Punctuality is crucial, coming 15 minutes early to meetings.
- Business cards are exchanged promptly upon meeting start.
- Germans often priorities business above casual conversation in early interactions lasting less than an hour.

Source: Levi (2022); Franzmeier (2022)

Main differences between the UK and Germany

Germans have a preference for a more straightforward mode of communication and often do not engage in niceties as commonly seen in the United Kingdom. They like concise and productive conversations, which may be mistaken for impoliteness by outsiders.

- **Working hours**
  - Germany: 36-40 hours six days from Monday- Saturday
  - Britain: working time directive; Max 48 hours per week
- **Work ethics**
  - **Hierarchy**: Both **British and German** work cultures adhere to clearly established hierarchies that are respected by all individuals.
  - **Introductions: German** work culture practises formal introductions with 'Frau' or 'Herr.'

  In **British** professional relationships, a strong handshake is the typical greeting for both genders.

Source: Franzmeier (2022); Joseph (2015)

Main differences between the UK and Germany

- **Work ethics**

  - **Dress code:** In **Germany**, the dress code is often formal. In the **United Kingdom**, several organisations have varying dress rules that are determined by the office's culture and the specific industry.

  - **Punctuality:** In **Britain and Germany**, individuals meticulously schedule appointments and meetings and adhere rigidly to the designated start times.

  - **Language:** The **United Kingdom** speaks English, even if many **Germans** do as well.

  - **Ethnic group:** The **UK** has 87.2% white population! 3.7% identify as black, African, Caribbean, or Black British. 2.3% are Pakistani, 1.9% are Indian, and 2% are mixed. In **Germany**, the population is composed of 86.3% Germans, 1.8% Turks, 1% Poles, 1% Syrians, 1% Romanians, and 8.9% other

Source: Franzmeier (2022); Joseph (2015)

Religious values, and business- and work-related attitudes in Germany and UK

Religious Values:

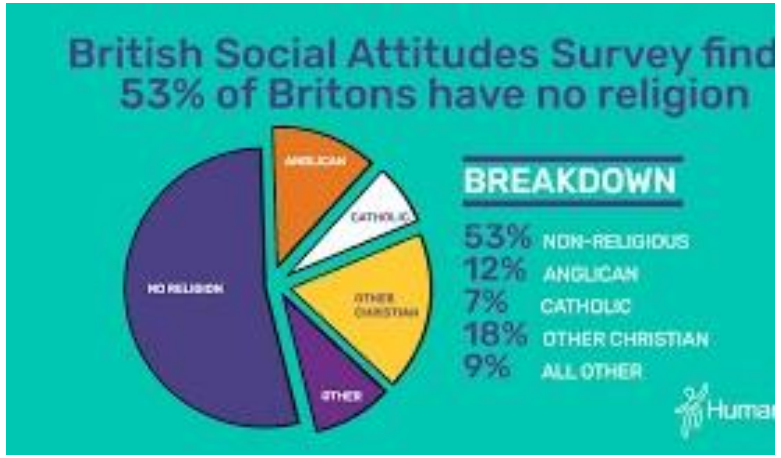
The Christian church, including both Catholicism and Protestantism, has the predominant position in **Germany**.

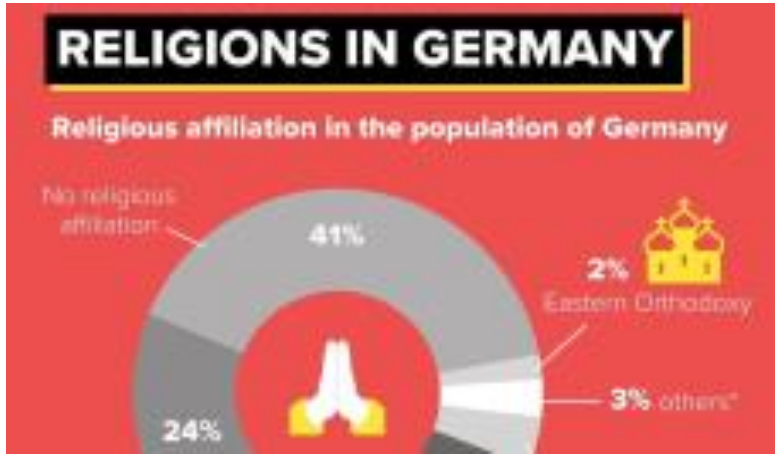
The **British** hold views consistent with agnosticism, non-theism, atheism, secular humanism.

- **Work-Related Attitudes :**

German labour ethics include punctual attendance and diligent completion of a full day's work, which is reciprocated with equitable remuneration and favourable working circumstances.

The **United Kingdom** now has a significantly elevated rate of inactivity, which pertains to the proportion of individuals within the working-age population who are neither employed nor actively searching for employment.





Source : Burns & Firn (2017) ; Allen (2020) ; Zagzebski (2020)

Cultural sensitivity in Germany

- German individuals have a tendency towards frugality, rationality, and mutual respect for privacy, while also displaying a higher-than-average adherence to societal structure and regulations.
- They experience a superior quality of life, as well as engage in political, cultural, and environmental discussions.

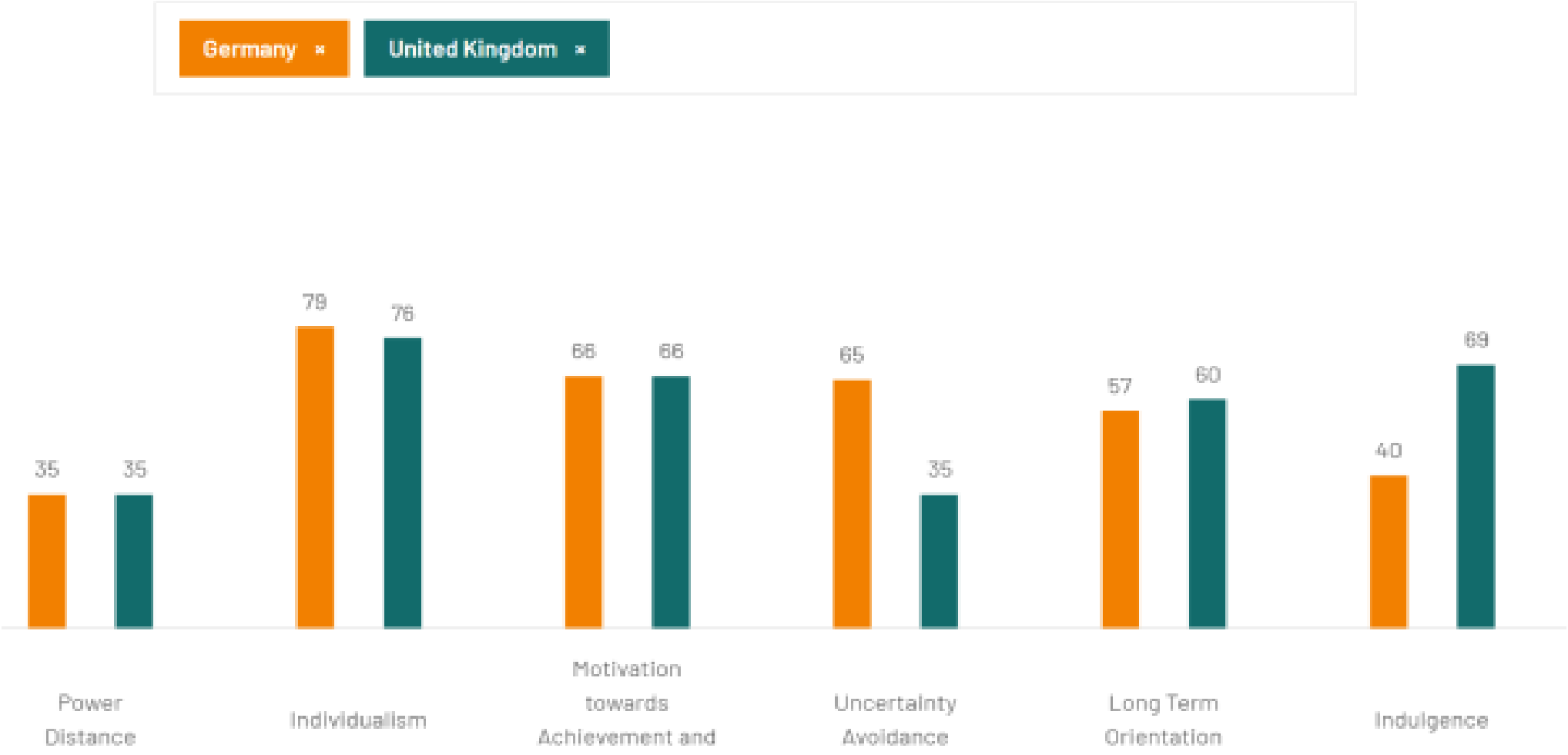
Source: Matloch (2018)

How the cultural sensitivity of Germany is different from UK

- The Germans are known to speak in a straightforward manner, in contrast to the British, who are more likely to use euphemisms and indirect language.
- The Germans want clarity and abhor ambiguity, whereas the British are okay with ambiguity and “reading between the lines.”
- The Germans priorities procedure, whereas the British priorities the ultimate result, regardless of how it was accomplished.
- In terms of managing work, The Germans priorities meticulous preparation for effective implementation. British people are more impatient and want quick outcomes.

Source: Matloch (2018)

Hofstede cultural Dimensions: UK and Germany



Germany

01

As a decentralized country with a robust middle class, Germany is among the lowest power distant nations (scoring 35).

02

Management must consider the substantial co-determination rights.

03

In a direct and participatory communication and meeting approach, control is hated and expertise-based leadership is preferred.

Source: Gaskell (2021)

United Kingdom

01

Britain ranks 35th in PDI, indicating a society that prioritises reducing disparities.

02

Interestingly, research indicates a lower PD index among the better class than the working class.

03

The PDI score challenges the traditional British class structure, highlighting cultural tensions.

04

Fair play promotes equitable treatment.

Source: Gaskell (2021)

Recommendations

If **Tesco** takes the suggestion, they could be able to overcome the cultural barriers in Germany.

- Accept and respect cultural diversity.
- Encourage open conversation.
- Championed open conversations on team rules and corporate culture.
- Encourage team unity around a single vision or purpose.
- Globally leading cultural variety.

Source: Orr (2019)

Recommendations

- Create and share significant values.
- Ensure good staff selection.
- Enhance orientation and onboarding.
- Empower and enable workers.
- Engage workers year-round.
- Coach staff.
- Communication with workers successfully

Source: Orr (2019)

Conclusion

- Cultural adaptation in international commerce involves the assimilation of both organizational culture and the cultural customs and traditions of other nations.
- It enables organizations to have a more comprehensive grasp of the functioning of local companies and the workforce.
- As Tesco intends to expand its operations in Germany. Engaging in international business in Germany might provide several profitable opportunities to sustain in the long run.

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