

UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID

BA (HONS) IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, Level 6, Term 2

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INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION (LCBB6001)

Assessment 1

Report

International Business Communication: UK vs. Romania

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INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

International business communications involve global communication. This communication occurs across international borders and is used to increase business effectiveness and influence globalisation (Chong, 2020, 55). With more and more businesses going global, it calls for communication advisers with a keen eye on intercultural communication and foreign language talent. Understanding the intercultural context of business gives the organisation a competitive edge.

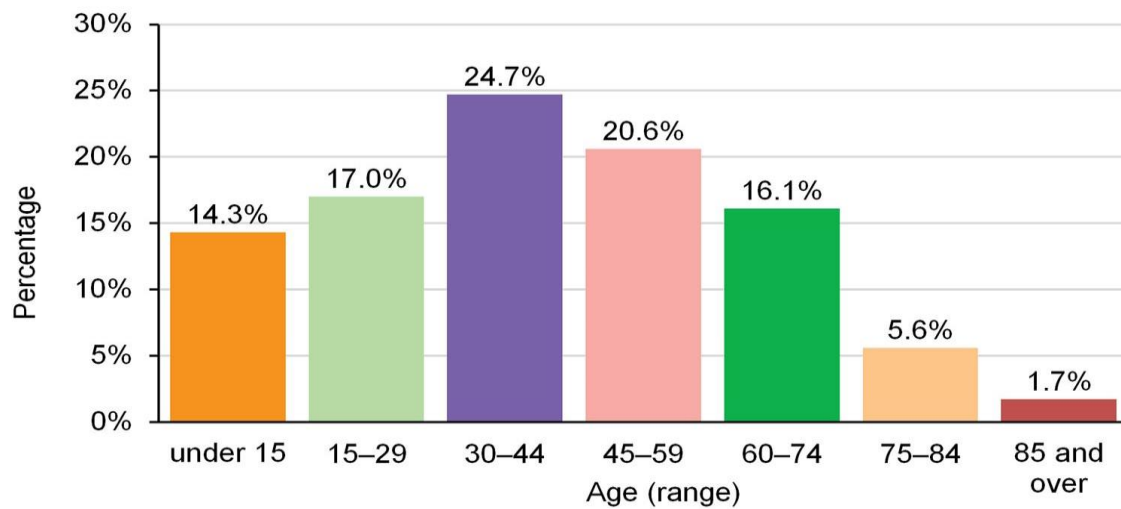
Effective international communication is critical for global success. Lee et al. (2006, 1) argue that the global arena's underlying organisational and national cultural differences create obstacles to effective communication, hindering business performance. Consequently, managers should be aware of them and develop the right communication strategies to counter them. Good communication must coordinate the exchange activities to develop strong relationships that lead to higher performance. There are four types of communication, including lateral, external, and downward and upward communication. Intercultural communication remains critical to breaking down cultural barriers and developing awareness of cultural norms, self-awareness, and communication skills (Magal, 2010, 7).

Romania: Brief Introduction



Romania remains the 12th largest state in Europe. The state capital is also the largest city by the name of Bucharest. Currently, it is one of the least urbanised countries in the EU. Poor people make up about 75% of the whole population living in rural areas. Due to misguided policies and poor skills, only a small percentage of the population has moved in the last two years. Romania's population is approximately 19.1 million people, with its largest city, Bucharest, holding 2 million people. The country's demographics as of 2018 are shown below (Jitchins, 2022, 1).

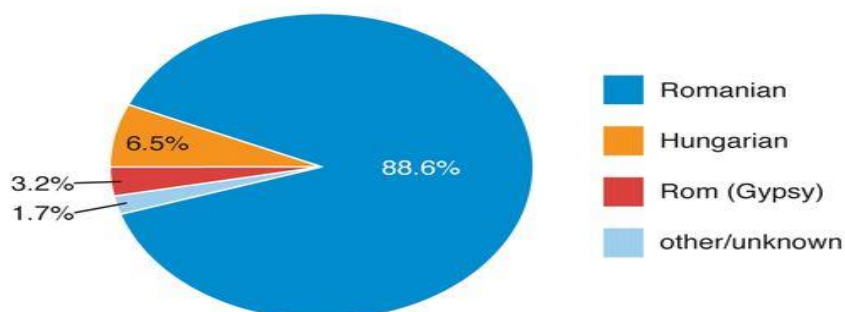
Romania age breakdown (2018)



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The country speaks English, and education comes first on the international map of education. However, over 25 million people speak the country's Balkan language. Some Romanians have dark eyes, olive skin, and dark hair, while others have blue eyes and fair, blonde skin. The largest ethnic minority in Romania is the Hungarians, who predominate in the west of Transylvania. Consequently, it is common to hear the Hungarian language spoken in most cities (Jitchins, 2022, 2).

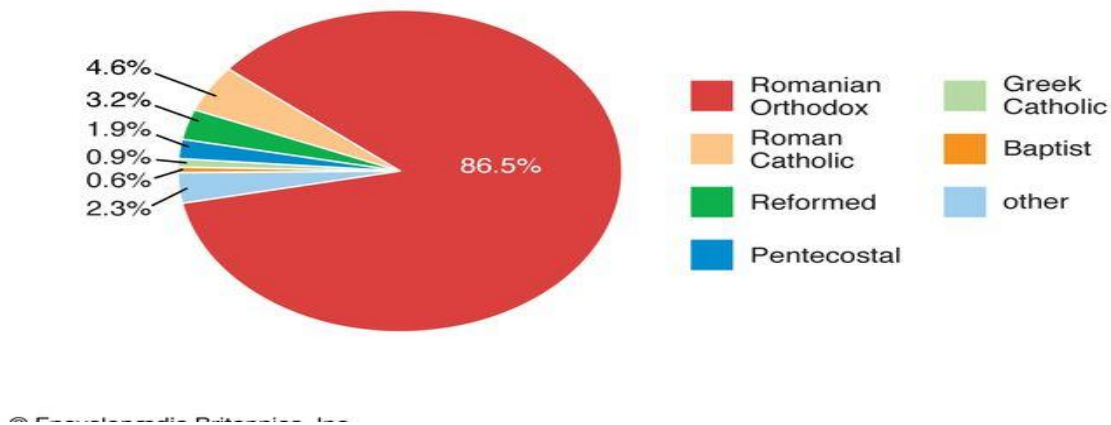
Ethnic composition (2011)



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Romania is a religiously diverse country, with 86.5% Christians (Roman orthodox), 6.4% Protestants, and 4.6% Roman Catholics. The distribution is shown in the chart below (Jitchins, 2022,1).

Religious affiliation (2011)



One will encounter ancient and modern men in the country, full of ego. Both remain proud and, sometimes, irritable. The males possess good humour and are very funny. Consequently, they make jokes about each other and remain ironic most of the time (Jitchins, 2022, 1).

Current Romanian philosophy arose and industrialised in recent years due to the strong inspiration from Western culture, particularly German and French culture. In Romania, one family is very important, and relatives give passionate and monetary care to each other. Normally, they devote more free time to socialisation. Foodstuffs play a big duty for them, and they pass on gastronomic skills and customs from one generation to another. Spiritual customs normally direct the lives of Romanians, and there is a mix of local cuisine and music that one experiences in the utmost country. Faith forms a key feature, especially in family life (Jitchins, 2022, 2).

The country's landscape has one third covered by mountains, another covered by forest, and the rest made up of hills and plains. The climatic temperament is marked by four distinct seasons. The country enjoys a considerable wealth of natural resources. For example, its fertile land is suitable for agriculture; the forest provides wood, petroleum reserves, numerous rivers that provide electricity, metals like silver and gold, and a black sea coastline suitable for resorts and sports (McCrill, 2019, 1). Further, the country uses USD for its business and other financial transactions. The country became a member of the Atlantic Treaty (NATO) in 2007, and also, during the same year, it joined the European Union (Jitchins, 2022, 2).

Theories of International and Intercultural Communication

International communication theory has been modelled in the age of modernisation, mainly around technologies. This theory reveals the imbalance in global media images, analysis of media imperialism, cultural effects, and transmitted media (Panocova, 2020, 10).

On the other hand, Samovar explores how communication values and styles vary across cultures and communities (Samovar et al., 2010, 145). In this context, the Romanians communicate through different styles, including voice tones, gestures, silence, eye contact, body language, facial expressions, and speech patterns. The UK people do not use all of these styles, so you will need to understand them well to succeed in doing business with the Romanians.

Jandt offers unique insights into cultural communication both internationally and locally. He emphasises culture, history, and the popular media. In his theory, he states the importance of the duty of one's own stories, self-reflection, and personal experiences in developing intercultural understanding and competence (Jandt, 2017, 1). In his context, the

people of Romania have a rich culture of relationships, and they have gone through many challenges as a country, hence taking note of issues affecting their culture. Before trusting a stranger or new person, they take time to understand them but eventually accept them as part of their long-term plan.

According to the AUM theory by Hofstede, effective international communication is likely to happen when levels of uncertainty and anxiety are somewhere in the middle. Keeping them under control needs the active role of the mind. However, some factors increase or decrease the anxiety and uncertainty when it comes to an intercultural context. Such factors include self-concept, which is the way people see themselves. Normally, people apply social categorisations to themselves and others to clarify their perceptions of the social world and their place in it. This lowers subjective anxiety (Panocova, 2020, 67). Once the anxiety of the Romanians is under control, the people can easily predict the behaviour of the UK people.

Another factor, according to Hofstede, is the motivation to interact with strangers. This is based on people's need to trust strangers because strangers are considered predictable and reliable (Panocova, 2020, 84). The Romanians consider relationships important, and it takes a long time to include a new person in their circle of relationships. Once the relationship is developed, it will last longer and is based on trust. At first, the Romanians do not fully trust strangers, but they fully relate to them when they do. In this case, the UK investors should not rush the locals in the new country to trust them. Instead, they should cooperate with their demands and culture and try to give them enough time to trust them willingly.

According to this theory, the strangers' behaviour should make sense and thus be perceived as predictable. In return, the people confirm their self-concepts and feel included.

Inclusion is critical because it motivates people to communicate with strangers. The Romanians are more likely to manage their anxiety and uncertainty if this happens. Other factors that affect intercultural communication include the ability to show empathy to strangers, the social categorisation of strangers, and situational processes (Panocova, 2020, 69).

The basic assumption of AUM theory is that effective communication occurs when people can manage uncertainty and anxiety mindfully. This theory concentrates on understanding the factors that influence the achievement of effective communication. Such factors include basic and superficial causes (Panocova, 2020, 75).

Cultural Sensitivity When Doing Business in Romania

Romania is labelled as one of the ultimate historical toughies. Recently, the country underwent an economic and social change to join the EU. Although Romania tries to vacate its old Marxist ways, today, its traditions and attitudes reflect part of its troubled history. Currently, people have modest behaviours and attitudes and conventional Christian philosophies, which show their modest-mindedness and realistic mentality, which were achieved through hardship. The Romanians are considered the kindest people and very welcoming, filled with huge hearts, a strong cultural heritage, and a sense of humour. Investors need to understand this to succeed in doing business in the country. The main cultural concepts that should be noted while doing business in Romania include relationships, religion, and identity (Romania Insider.com, 2022, 1).

Romania is a family-focused community, and they rely deeply on relationships. Their past of occupation and invasion has shaped an atmosphere that needs more time for them to understand others outside their association. Their relationships are long-term and are based

on trust and loyalty. Such things go on in the business world. At first, the outsiders are treated very formally until a relationship is established. The past left a philosophy where a collection remains more vital than one person. Consequently, relations form a vibrant aspect of the country's business culture and need to be established for business success (Moke & Dijkzeul, 2006, 680).

Belief is another sensitive cultural area in Romania. Religion has mostly shaped the way people live. The people remain family-focused and collective, employing lots of attachment to deaths, births, and marriages. Further, the identity of the people is critical. Romanians have overcome the challenges of being a developing state. Consequently, they are very proud of their country and their national heritage. Thus, it remains sensitive to the ethnic and partisan matters that distress their state, although they remain happy to share their country with others (cultural atlas, 2022, 1).

The county has a robust ranked structure working where designations come from topmost to bottom, and verdicts are merely examined or tested by the inferior ranks. Most business dealings remain formal, with the older associates receiving more admiration and privileges. Positions and responsibilities are clearly defined. The ones with authority and a high level of admiration can be shown through decision-making processes, titles, and formal greetings. For example, the Romanians expect their managers to have all the answers and tell them what to do and how. The amount of attention paid to details could result in delays and missed deadlines (Roma Insider.com, 2022, 1).

The above ethnic morals inspire business connections between the outsider or investor and the Romanian team. For example, when dealing with Romanians for the first time, and until they can trust them, one must collaborate with their beliefs and ways of life. Also, one needs to motivate them to take extra responsibility for their tasks.

Comparison of Business Cultural Aspects between Romania and UK

Different cultural aspects have been compared to understand the ease of doing business in Romania, including power distance, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and long-term orientation.

	United Kingdom	Romania
Power Distance	35	90
Masculinity	66	42
Uncertainty Avoidance	35	90
Long Term Orientation	51	52
Individualism	89	30

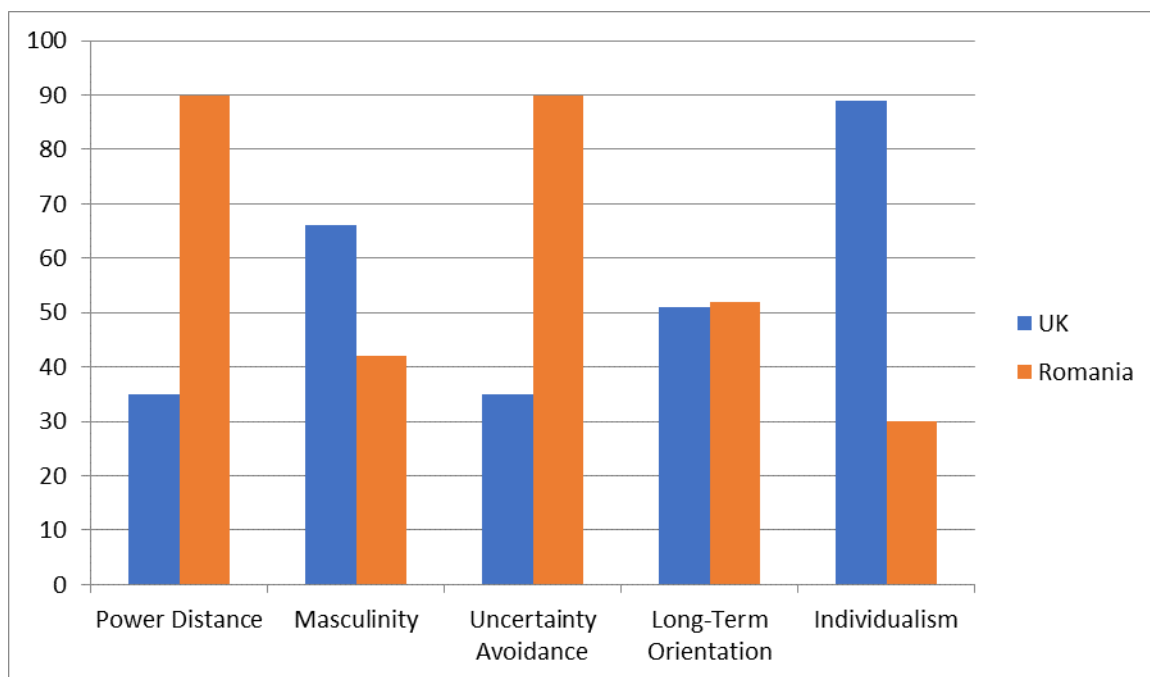
Power distance is the aspect that all people in the community are not equal. Romania has a higher attitude towards this inequality than UK. Also, the less powerful organisations and people in the community agree with the opinion. On the other hand, high masculinity shows that society is driven by success, achievement, and competition. In Romania, care for others, and life quality is dominant, hence remaining less masculine than in UK (Hofstede insights, 2022, 1).

Individualism shows the degree of independence that a community keeps among its members. UK is a high individualist society, and families focus on parent-child relationships. On the other hand, Romania is a collective society and focuses on extended family and friend relationships, making it less independent (Hofstede insights, 2022, 1).

Uncertainty avoidance shows how a society handles unknown facts about the future. Some communities feel threatened by unknown situations and develop beliefs to avoid them.

Romanians have a very high score, meaning they have many beliefs to avoid the uncertain future or circumstances (Hofstede insights, 2022, 1).

Long-term orientation describes how societies keep some connections with the past when handling present and future challenges. Romania has a slightly higher score than UK, indicating that people believe more that truth is dependent on circumstances, time, and context. They can adapt to traditions easily and preserve them from achieving the best results. A low rate would choose to keep time-honoured traditions and view societal changes suspiciously (Hofstede insights, 2022, 1). The above aspects have been compared in the graph below.



Different Communication Barriers Experienced by Foreign Businesses in Romania

The Romanian romance language is the official language of the country. However, it is technically a Romanian dialect spoken by 9/10 of the population in many areas; Hungarian remains the only other language spoken by more than a million people, while smaller numbers speak Turkish, German, Serbian, and others. Romania is one of the countries where

English is well-spoken, ranking up the 16th position in Europe for English proficiency and 20th globally. The main languages include Romanian, with 90% German, Italian, and French. The context remains more important than words (Jitchins, 2022, 2).

To ensure effective communication, one must consider several aspects, including language obstructions, which can hamper messaging amid the new market and the business owners. This involves how messages are conveyed from one person to another (Sternkopf, 2004, 1). For example, in UK, it is common for people to communicate piercingly and remain more self-confident when distributing concepts among co-workers. However, in Romania, where people value relationships and tell stories tenderly, it is not right for people to remain passive and share their ideas with colleagues softly.

Also, the elementary tolls, gestures, and mannerisms formally recognised in Romanian culture differ from those in UK culture. The behaviour that is common in UK may not be common in Romania. On the contrary, it may be offensive to a colleague or client in another country (Thussu, 2012, 2). A business handshake, for example, is a norm in British and American cultures, but the same handshakes have different meanings in Middle Eastern cultures (Prezi, 202, 1).

Attitude is another aspect of culture that causes communication barriers. In some countries, people highlight communal parity, using flat organisational structures. This relates to the casual method of messaging and collaboration (Tomalin & Hurn, 2013, 1). For example, business people communicate freely in UK, and businesses operate on a flat hierarchy with balanced power distribution. Hence, the managers do not have to develop all the solutions or tell the subordinates what to do and how. However, in Romania, there is equality. Businesses are expected to have hierarchies where decisions and solutions come from top to bottom. As a result, the subordinates wait for the seniors to develop solutions and

tell them what to do and how. As a result, while the manager waits for the subordinates to act on matters, the subordinates constantly wait for the managers to give instructions (Jitchins, 2022,2).

Appropriate Communication Strategies and Relevant Recommendations

Speaking in person: Managers should speak to their subordinates in-person to ensure clarity and consistency (UN, 2009, 1). In such a way, the information channel will be shortened, and errors will be eliminated. Also, the decisions communicated will have higher accuracy when implemented, thus increasing the business's success (Cambie, 2009, 2).

Paying attention to body language and voice tone: the managers in the new company should ensure they use the right tone when speaking to the Romanians to avoid communication barriers (Issa et al., 2015, 1). The British tend to speak loudly and authoritatively when passing information to colleagues. On the contrary, the Romanians are soft-spoken and share ideas politely. In such a case, the seniors should collaborate with the Romanian way of communication when passing on the messages.

Investing in communication training: training will be important for the British to learn new ways of communication as per the Romanian culture. The strategy will also see some Romanians learn the British ways of communication. In so doing, both cultures will equally interact and understand each other better. The result of such training will be increased inclusion, trust, productivity, and business success (Hooi & Yong, 2015, 2).

Recommendations

For the business to succeed in Romania, effective communication strategies will require. If this is not done, the business will suffer negative consequences in the workplace.

In addition, there could be business risks associated with improper information being distributed all over the establishment, leading to resentment and poor trade choices. Romania is very hierarchical, and decisions flow from the top to the bottom. As a result, any effective communication strategy should ensure that information is passed from those in authority to those who report to them (Liu, 2016, 2).

Conclusion

For international businesses, an active statement may differentiate failure and success. This is because businesses sell their products worldwide and form partnerships with people of diverse cultures. Each country and culture poses its tests to companies. Good global message steps aid in upholding the complicated commercial trades, while poor practices lead to lost business and pressure amongst the republics. The UK-based company will succeed in Romania if it understands the cultural aspects and respects them. The Romanians are friendly and hospitable, but they have a rich culture that they value. Consequently, businesses need to learn the culture and act to earn the people's trust for the success of their business.

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