

A magnet for international management

The Intercultural Conference 2011 discusses diversity

Three days of intercultural trends, social diversity and long-term personnel development: several hundred specialists and executives accepted the invitation from ICUnet.AG and the city of Passau to attend the Intercultural Conference. “Intercultural understanding is becoming increasingly important – for everyone”, said Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger highlighting the relevance of the event.

The conference focussed on the topics of diversity and personnel development. Top-quality speakers from the fields of science, industry and politics discussed economic trends emanating from Asia, America and Europe. The management expert Prof. Dr. Hermann Simon highlighted two global players “Eurafrica” and “Chimerica”. Europe and Africa - Eurafrica are in direct competition with the Chinese and American market – Chimerica. The chairman of Simon-Kucher and Partners pointed out that the Asian mar-

ket in particular should be viewed differently: “India and China are always mentioned in the same breath, but in reality they could not be more different.” He views Germany’s

Wolfgang Ischinger
Chairman of the Munich Security Conference
“Intercultural understanding is becoming increasingly important – for everyone!”

locational advantage in its geostrategic position between America and Asia – which allows business calls to be made to both continents during office hours. International competition means that particularly high demands are being placed on the ability and flexibility of specialists and executives. A high level of intercultural com-

petence is expected in order to be able to fulfil these tasks. This is why companies now attach more importance to social and cultural diversity.

The Intercultural Conference – a long-standing event

The Intercultural Conference has been inviting specialists and executives to take an active part in discussions for the last eight years. Over 2,000 participants have attended the conference in this time. Around 60 percent have been decision-makers from the HR-sector, 15 percent from the management sector, with around ten percent coming from the field of international consultancy. There have also been many representatives from the field of science. Thanks to a development programme young professionals have also participated in the conference. At the end of the three day conference Dr. Fritz Audebert, CEO of ICUnet.AG, was convinced that “constructive contact with social diversity is the key to safeguarding competitive advantages.”



Ambassador Dr. Wolfgang Ischinger and Jutta Falke-Ischinger during the opening evening on the “Orange Sofa” in discussion with Daniel Auwermann, partner of ICUnet.AG (from right).



Ursula Schwarzenbart
Director Global Diversity Office & Performance and Potential Management at Daimler AG



Jürgen Dupper
Mayor of Passau



Stephan Piwanski
Vice President Corporate HR at SMA Solar Technology AG

Global trends and personal experiences

The Intercultural Conference highlights chances and risks in an increasingly interconnected world

The 8th Intercultural Conference in Passau brought together top-quality speakers from industry, politics and science. Eleven lectures highlighted the exciting developments in intercultural and diversity management.

Internationalisation as both an opportunity and challenge for universities

Following the welcome speech by Jürgen Dupper, Mayor of Passau, and the workshops on Friday morning, State Minister Dr. Wolfgang Heubisch spoke about the internationalisation programme at Bavarian universities. He pointed out that the internationalisation of universities is now an absolute necessity due to constantly increasing global competition.

Economic trends of the future

Accelerated globalisation was also a subject in the lecture by Prof. Dr. Hermann Simon. He identified six important trends, which will have fundamental importance in the business world

of the future. One observation was that in the future politics will intervene more actively in the market. He also highlighted the markets “Eurafrica” and “Chimerica”. Simon emphasised that Europe will have to make an active effort to improve relations with Africa, in order to remain globally competitive in the long-term.

Orange Sofa: from the White House to Buckingham Palace

The “orange sofa” formed the beginning of this year’s Intercultural Conference, one of two new formats as this year’s conference. The ambassador couple Wolfgang Ischinger and Jutta Falke-Ischinger were the first to take their place on the sofa. On 11 September 2001 Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger took up his post as Germany’s diplomatic representative in Washington D.C. Along with his family he experienced the land of superlatives at an extremely difficult time.

The journalist Jutta Falke-Ischinger accompanied her husband during his diplomatic career. In 2006, the diplomatic couple moved to Great Britain, where the ambassador worked in London until 2008. In a relaxed, informal atmosphere the couple spoke about their experiences in Washington and London. They both

found that it is much easier to make contacts in America – but it is very difficult and time-consuming to properly establish such contacts. Another observation was that the football world cup in 2006 brought England and Germany



Trends of the future

- » Accelerated Globalisation
- » Increased political influence

much closer together and smoothed the way towards better, mutual understanding.

Diversity Management as an economic necessity

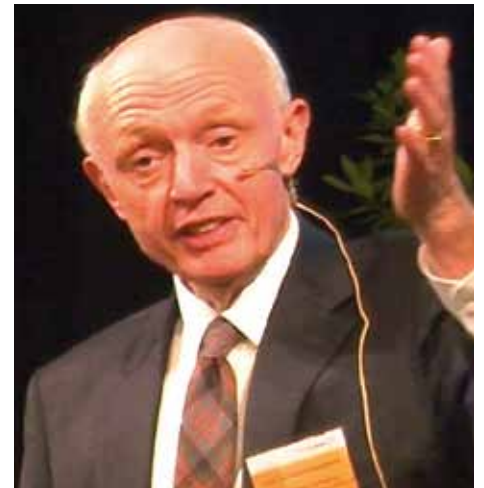
Ursula Schwarzenbart also spoke about a megatrend. The diversity expert introduced the conference participants to the economic necessity of diversity management and its huge importance for company structures. A team which is made up exclusively of males is sometimes



MdL Dr. Wolfgang Heubisch
Bavarian Minister for Science, Research and Art



Rhoda Schnitzer
Human Resources and Communications Manager
of SCA Asia Pacific



Prof. Dr. Wayne Brockbank
Primary Advisor of the
Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA)



Trends of the future

- » Closer link between management and capital
- » Tectonic shifts in the product world

unable to fully consider some of the development stages of a product – which can ultimately be fatal when it is introduced to the market.

The human factor – putting people first

Diversity was also discussed by Rhoda Schnitzer: The Indian spent many years in

Stockholm and Munich and has been working in Shanghai since 2010. In her lecture she analysed how globally operating companies can specifically meet the challenges of the Asian market, which are so different to those in Europe or America. For Schnitzer one thing was clear: The employee must always be viewed as being the focal point.

Insights into the global personnel policy of a leader in innovation

Stephan Piwanski also agreed with this concept, he said: “employees should do what they are best at”. He pointed out that company culture will be decisively formed by growth and internationalisation. Piwanski spoke about the experiences of his company, which has recorded an enormous growth in personnel over the past few years. He also passed on his own personal insights to the conference participants.

Dinner Speech: Defining culture from the outside-in for competitive advantage

The dinner speech on Friday evening was the other new conference format. Prof. Dr. Wayne Brockbank captivated the conference audience with his speech, which took place between the two courses of the ceremonial gala dinner.

The leading American HR advisor presented inspiring ideas about creative employee motivation and sustained improvement in quality. He underlined the central importance of company culture and the strong influence the expectations of modern society can have on it, such as the example of FedEx: “If they don’t get it there faster, cheaper, more reliably, then what do we do? We give the business to somebody else.”

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Beatrice Achaleke
CEO of Diversity Leadership and Manager of the European Diversity & Inclusion Congress



Prof. Dr. h.c. Hermann Simon
Chairman of Simon-Kucher & Partners
Strategy & Marketing Consultants



Amir Roughani
Founder and CEO of VISPIRON AG



Dr. Fritz Audebert interviews Stephan Piwanski.

The influence of social media on the global world of employment

Young talent make new demands on company culture and communication when choosing a future employer. The influence of new media is growing. “39 percent find a company more attractive when it has a well presented Facebook fan page”, explained Oliver Ueberholz. He also analysed just how global this trend really is and why many success factors of a European social media strategy can lead to failure, e.g. in China.

The audience shows active interest.

Diversity – Management or inner mindset?

Amir Roughani is living proof of intercultural success. He came to Germany from Iran as a refugee when he was eleven years old. He was not able to speak the language but had great ambition. Roughani took the audience on a journey through his exciting and impressive career, which he owed, among other things, to sport as a former German bowling champion. Roughani also urged people not to be misled by



Your opinion counts

Join our discussion on Facebook! What did you like about the Intercultural Conference 2011? What could we improve, which new formats and which speakers would you like to see next year? What do you expect from the 2012 conference? One of the participants in the discussion will win a ticket for the Intercultural Conference 2012.

facebook.de/global.visions





Dr. Tankred Stöbe
 Doctor and President of the German section of Médecins Sans Frontières



Oliver Ueberholz
 CEO of mixxt GmbH



Trends of the future

- » **Lasting changes in customer behaviour**
- » **Complete cross-linking**

prejudices: “Anyone promoting people who, on first impression, seem to have great potential but in reality this turns out not to be the case, is at risk of endangering the entire company.”

A change of perspective, perception, identities and intercultural competences

Casting aside prejudices was a central part of Beatrice Achaleke’s lecture. Nobody can be completely free of prejudice, but it is essential to be constantly aware of it. For the Cameroonian prejudice becomes a real problem when it leads to other people becoming excluded, whether consciously or unconsciously. With the question “Am I unwilling to integrate just because I cook differently?” she also scrutinised the value system of our society and provided realistic examples from her everyday work life.

When the state fails it is the people who suffer

The impressive everyday working life of Dr. Tankred Stöbe was the basis of his lecture. In late summer 2011 he worked for Médecins Sans Frontières in Mogadishu. In a very personal field report the doctor described the daily challenges which he and his team faced in Somalia. The work of Médecins Sans Frontières in East Africa is characterised by very difficult living conditions and high risks. In this regard Dr. Stöbe found that NGOs are involved in crises more than ever before and intercultural competence offers real security.

Reception on Friday evening.



Interculturality: Feel the difference

Excellent performances in the competition for students



Gala dinner with the presentation of awards in the competition for students.

On Friday evening the participants of the Intercultural Conference enjoyed a ceremonial gala dinner in the lavishly decorated ballroom of the impressive Redoute building.

“Aubergine tatar”, “truffled macaire potatoes” and “Mango Panna Cotta” were just some of the numerous delicacies on offer from around the world. In particular the midnight buffet with its dessert variations and two striking chocolate fountains was once again a meeting point for networking and the exchange of ideas. Between courses awards were presented for contributions in the competition for students. The winners, Sebastian Zietz and Sören Münch from the universities of Jena and Mainz, were able to impress the distinguished jury with an intercultural interview project. After the gala dinner, guests danced to live music from the Regensburg band Mojamm.

Mojamm performing live.



Workshops

The seven workshops of this year's conference focussed particularly on economic, tax and legal aspects of foreign assignments and expatriate management.

Global Move Management – importance of relocation during the deployment process

Andreas Kölling demonstrated important factors for successful relocation in the workshop "Global Move Management". In particular he discussed how companies deal with this subject, the difference between theory and practice and why it is not always possible to fulfil all requests.

Andreas Kölling, Managing Director of confern Möbeltransportbetriebe GmbH

International insurance concepts for corporate clients

In the workshop held by Christoph Kirsch and Dr. Martin Bausen, one of the topics, among others, was accompanying consultation and sales clients beyond national borders. Both speakers also discussed company health insurance and health insurance during foreign assignments or localisation.

Christoph Kirsch, Regional General Manager Germany Austria & Central Europe at Allianz Worldwide Care Ltd., Dr. Martin Bausen, Health Insurance Coach, and Ernst Wiedemann, Life Insurance Coach, Allianz Beratungs- and Vertriebs-AG

Innovations in law and practice when taking on foreign employees in Germany

Lawyer Angelika Schmid gave the participants of her workshop insights into legal changes in residency permit and work permit law as well as employment contract regulations and social security law.

Angelika Schmid, Lawyer and Advokátka (CZ) at Noerr LLP

Tax and social security trends during international employee assignments

Current developments for the implementation of the regulation on travel expenses for expatriates and the effects of new European social legislation on employee assignments were discussed in the workshop held by Jens Glaser and tax advisor Jochen Schreiber.

Tax advisor Jochen Schreiber, Senior Manager Global Employer Services at Deloitte & Touche GmbH Jens Glaser, Senior Manager International Social Security at Deloitte & Touche GmbH

Trends in Expatriate Management

Philipp Bastian raised the question of turning away from global policy in his workshop. He also illustrated policy segmentation as a model for the future and considered alternative remuneration models to be used for changing expatriate remuneration.

Philipp Bastian, Head of Centre of Excellence Mobility Central Europe of Mercer Human Resource Consulting

Practical subjects meant that the seven workshops were extremely informative.

From the prevention of crises on business trips to crisis situations

2011 was a year of crises for commercial travellers: It clearly demonstrated the importance of implementing company contingency plans. Dirk Guß considered the challenges which can arise – and looked at which new, previously unexpected challenges can be involved in contingency plans and crisis situations.

Dirk Guß, Director Sales Finance & Special Lines of Allianz Global Assistance

Why retirement provision is particularly necessary during foreign assignments

What is a "good plan" for retirement provision during foreign assignments? Do company pension schemes say something about the culture of a company? Which special role do expats play in general? These and other questions were answered by Rüdiger Blaich in his workshop. He also discussed changes to worldwide demographics, effects on the social budgets of nations and the reactions of companies.

Rüdiger Blaich, AEGON Global Pensions Germany & CEE





The concert performed on the largest church organ in the world offered an unforgettable experience at the cathedral in Passau.

Exclusive concert in Passau's famous landmark

Organ music delights audience

From intercultural impressions to a cultural highlight. After the forward-looking lectures in the Redoute building the participants visited Passau's famous landmark, the Cathedral of St Stephen. In the baroque ambiance of the impressive cathedral the audience were treated to an exclusive concert on the largest cathedral organ in the world. They heard a wide spectrum of pieces from various musical epochs.

In particular, the arrangements from

the works of Johann Sebastian Bach and Georg Muffat offered an opportunity to demonstrate the acoustic possibilities of the organ with its 17,974 pipes.

During one piece played by a glockenspiel the golden "Zimbelstern" – a musical instrument which rings small bells at random - appeared, which is a rare sight. "At the end of the concert I actually had goose pimples", said one of the thrilled audience members.

Save the Date!

9th Intercultural Conference:
11-13 October 2012

Look forward to another exciting three days in Passau. Prof. Dr. Gunther Olesch, CEO of Phoenix Kontakt GmbH & Co. KG has already agreed to be a speaker.

www.interkultureller-kongress.de



Frances De Wolf Hoffmann talking with Alejandro Palacios-Tovar, both country experts at ICUnet.AG (photo left). Andreas Kölling and Daniele Romano from confem Möbeltransportbetriebe GmbH in discussion with Doris Buchner, ICUnet.AG (photo right).

Opinions of the 2011 conference

“Great atmosphere, interesting participants!”

“The conference exuded a personal and stimulating atmosphere!”

“My expectations were exceeded. I really enjoyed the speakers, the content and the support programme.”

“The speakers were very inspiring!”

“The sofa discussion was great!”

“Very interesting, emotional lectures!”

“Only at New Horizons do I experience so many speakers with interesting subjects and lively lectures!”

“It is a fantastic achievement to be able to constantly offer this high-level every year!”

New Horizons 2011
8th Intercultural Conference

Impressions from Passau



Animated networking: Angelika Schmid from Noerr LLP and Markus Schichl, ICUnet.AG (photo left). Yvette Robertson and Rhoda Schnitzer, Human Resources and Communications Manager SCA Asia Pacific, at the gala dinner (photo centre). Claudia Böhme, Deutsche Post DHL, together with Anja Strößner, Fresenius Kabi AG.

Benedict Alechenu, Danube University Krems, speaking to Bassam Elemam, ICUnet.AG, (photo left). Jutta Wederheit, Germanischer Lloyd SE, Heike Langlotz, German Cancer Research Centre, and Till Friedrich, Porsche Consulting GmbH, in animated discussion (photo middle). Having a great time: Bernd Stern, Heidelberg Cement, and Cécilia Audebert, ICUnet.AG.



EDITORIAL DETAILS

Publisher: ICUnet.AG • Fritz-Schäffer-Promenade 1 • 94032 Passau • Tel.: +49 (0) 8 51/98 86 66-0 • Fax: +49 (0) 8 51/98 86 66-70 • info@icunet.ag • www.icunet.ag
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