An international Relocation Service facing intercultural challenges in a digital world – a study on how to improve the content of PROGEDO’s website for a culturally diverse audience using opinion research
International Communication - Anti-plagiarism statement:

I herewith certify that I am the sole author of the attached paper without having used any other primary and/or secondary sources other than those indicated, and referenced appropriately.

All passages in the paper used from published and/or unpublished texts have been acknowledged by source references, and are included in the attached bibliography.

This paper has not previously been submitted in its present, or similar form.

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**Acknowledgements**

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Executive Summary

PROGEDO is a national relocation service with international partners. It has nine branches in Germany, namely in Berlin, Dresden, Dusseldorf, Hamburg, Hannover, Cologne/Bonn, Munich and Stuttgart. The headquarters are located in Dusseldorf. Since 1995, PROGEDO delivers personal and individual support for expats, with the help of 40 experienced and well-educated relocation consultants.

This case study deals with the improvement of the PROGEDO’s website content. The client's main concern regarding the website is to increase the awareness of PROGEDO and its services among potential clients, in such a way that they are perceived positively by both expats and potential business contacts, such as expat managers.

The goal of this research was to make recommendations for PROGEDO relocation service Hamburg to successfully update their corporate website's content, to better satisfy the information needs and wants of expats, with emphasis on intercultural sensitivity to improve trustworthiness. This was done by collecting the expertise and experience of PROGEDO consultants, who frequently work in close contact with expats, and are privy to many of their information needs, expat employers, who may offer important insights regarding the professional expectations and needs of expat employees, and expats themselves, to uncover relevant insights first hand.

Research was conducted in different phases. Firstly, literature regarding the key concepts (international relocation, intercultural aspects and digital media) was consulted in order to gain an overview of existing knowledge. This desk research helped to narrow down the focus of the investigation and to shape the subsequent primary data collection approach. Next, five semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the current situation and to identify important survey topics. The interviewees were selected based on purposive
sampling, exemplifying an Airbus expat manager, one of the biggest expat employers in Hamburg, two PROGEDO consultants, one Spanish expat who was relocated by PROGEDO and one English expat who was relocated to Germany by another agency. Subsequently, a survey covering the insights of the literature review as well as the interviews was handed out to expats who have been relocated to Germany by PROGEDO or by another relocation agency. The total sample size reached 25 filled-in surveys. The results revealed that the expats’ main information needs and wants deal with housing, food, climate, family, friends, bureaucracy and cultural differences. Moreover, literature proposed the use of low-context communication (Hall, 1976), emphasized the importance of the provision of foreign languages and cautioned of making common communication mistakes.

Based on the conclusion of this research led to the following recommendations:

1. PROGEDO must not focus on what they want to say but on what information their target group needs.

2. Since PROGEDO wants to target an international audience, low-context communication is the best way to do so. This means using explicit, structured and detailed information. Even better though, is the use of as many visual messages as possible. Pictures always work better across cultures than text (especially when it comes to text in a foreign language, which is the case for most expats). Moreover, pictures and visuals have a much more emotional access to the reader of the website.

3. In order to facilitate finding an access to the target groups, PROGEDO must find a personal but professional communication level, which gives both the companies and the expats the feeling that PROGEDO is professional but delivering individualized services and understanding that they are working with human beings rather than machines.
4. Serving the major information needs and wants of expats, e.g. by explaining the relocation process or provide information about housing, will make the website attractive for expats and at the same time prove expertise to multinationals. Especially in combination with a newsletter and a communication network, which should be established using Facebook and be connected to the website, expats needs are addressed. It must be understood however that the newsletter is only of value when it contains interesting content for expats. Likewise, the Facebook presence and community of PROGEDO must be cared for and updated regularly.

Although it is recommended to mainly focus on expats, other target groups should not be neglected but addressed in terms of how they can benefit from working with PROGEDO.

5. The overall aim should be to connect all communication tools to thus increase the number of visitors and to spread the word about PROGEDO.

Regarding the budget and feasibility of the recommendations, PROGEDO aims to raise the awareness among potential business partners and to get in contact with them, which requires marketing. It is strongly advised to determine a certain amount of time and budget for marketing and promotion activates. Considering the current size of PROGEDO, at least two languages should be feasible (German and English) as well as the moderation of the Facebook platform and community. The creation of a newsletter will take time and should use a professional template, additional human and monetary resources are likely to be needed to successfully realize this goal.
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1 Introduction

The world is moving closer together; every one of us is surrounded by the consequences of globalization in our daily lives. The professional world is no exception. Never has there been more people employed abroad or working in an international context, thanks to vast developments in communication and transport technology. Nowadays, the World Wide Web is a constant companion and advanced to one of the most important information sources in the 21st century.

Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that these international jobs are occupied by human beings, with individual expectations, values and cultural backgrounds. Naturally, the relocation of employees raises a number of challenges, language and culture only being two of them. As a consequence, a business concerning itself with the support for individuals who are asked to move to another country by their employer has evolved. These emerging businesses are referred to as relocation agencies. This research concerns itself with the creation of a communication advice for the relocation agency PROGEDO to support their attempts to redesign their website to better serve the information needs of their target audience.

2 Project Context

According to the German Institute for Economic Research, Germany is lacking up to 120.000 specialists, mainly in the field of mathematics, informatics, sciences and technics (von Borstel, 2013). Since the national offer of specialist workforces is not sufficient to fill all vacancies, Germany is increasingly looking to hire specialists from abroad. Gradually, multinational companies such as Airbus, have been transferring their qualified and trained employees from another branch (ECA international, 2011), e.g. from Spain, to Germany. However, Germany is suffering from a negative image among transferees, with perceptions including
high taxes, German being a difficult foreign language to learn, high costs, problems with the recognition of certificates and a non-welcoming culture (Holsten, 2013).

Since moving to another country always involves a great number of uncertainties, cultural and organizational aspects, which might prevent employees from moving, companies are looking for ways to make the relocation of their employees as smooth, easy and pleasant as possible. This is the business of relocation services, such as PROGEDO, the organization at hand. A relocation service is a service company that manages and supports the transfer of employees, their families, and/or entire departments of a business to a new location under contract to mostly multinational enterprises (McAlpine, 2012). As independent consultants, relocators help facilitate many problems, such as language barriers, lack of local knowledge and time, i.e. prepare the employee’s arrival to the point that he or she can immediately start working in Hamburg (Holsten, 2013). Due to the increasing demand, PROGEDO sees many opportunities to expand its business and want to take advantage of these. At the same time, competition is getting fiercer (Anders, 2013).

It’s not only relocation, but also communication that has undergone a great change. As a result of technological developments, the Internet serves as a first point of reference, and websites have become essential communication and positioning tools (Kim & Ratchford, 2012). People tend to check the websites of all kind of products and services online for references and further information. A relocation service is no exception, and for them it is a very challenging task considering their hugely diverse, international audience (de Mooij, 2010). As preliminary research has shown, most relocation services are not paying specific enough attention regarding these communication challenges, including PROGEDO, which implies the opportunity to develop competitive advantages in terms of communication and service for those who do consider and respond to it (Usunier & Lee, 2013).
3 Organisational Context

PROGEDO is a national relocation service with international partners. PROGEDO focuses on foreign professionals coming to Germany, and will thus be referred to as an international relocation service in this research. It has nine branches in Germany, namely in Berlin, Dresden, Dusseldorf, Hamburg, Hannover, Cologne/Bonn, Munich and Stuttgart (Progedo, 2011). The headquarters are located in Dusseldorf.

Since 1995, PROGEDO states that they'll deliver personal and individual support for expats by the standards of a professional organization, with the help of 40 experienced and well-educated relocation consultants (Progedo, 2011). PROGEDO can look back on more than 19,000 employees of over 150 clients, such as Airbus and Unilever, who have immigrated and integrated into Germany. Its services include for example finding an apartment, organizing visas, opening a bank account, looking for a school for the transferees’ children (the term expats and transferees will be used interchangeably in this research paper), etc. Every client is free to select exactly which service(s) they want, or they can simply opt for a service ‘package’. PROGEDO positions itself as a high-end relocator, i.e. on a high price and service quality level with an individually adapted service (Holsten, 2013).

Being the German office of Global Relocation Services (GRS), PROGEDO is taking care of people in 87 countries worldwide (Progedo, 2011). There are central offices in Europe, Asia and the USA that coordinate worldwide activities.

In order to counteract the lack of special knowledge workers in Germany, PROGEDO has founded its own branch office in Posen (Poland) in 2011 to arrange the relocation of Polish specialists to Germany, called PROGEDO personal services (Progedo, 2011).
PROGEDO’s structure is very flexible because it is based on freelancing activities (Holsten, 2013). There are two managing partners who run PROGEDO, Frank Faggo (managing partner Dusseldorf) and Jörg Holsten (managing partner Hamburg). The company is built upon a system similar to franchising, i.e. the managing partners hold 50% each of PROGEDO and give licenses to work under the name PROGEDO to their freelancers. The research project at hand will mainly focus on the office in Hamburg. Holsten is responsible for the area Northern Germany and is working together with eleven freelancers, who are employed as relocation consultants or back office staff, as well as one part-time administration help. According to Mintzberg (1992), PROGEDO shows characteristics of an entrepreneurial structure. This has the advantage of being very informal, fast and flexible due to unstandardized systems. However, the managing partner Hamburg is now facing the difficulty of handling the growing agency on his own. Thus, decision-making power is increasingly shared and new administration and organizational structures are currently implemented.

3.1 Issue Statement

The current PROGEDO website, referred to as Web 1.0 in this research, has been solely designed to provide basic information about PROGEDO and its services. Due to the increasing demand for special knowledge workers in Germany, PROGEDO is planning on expanding its business, and is looking to make better use of current communication channels, to support the acquisition of new clients, i.e. companies who now start looking for a relocation service (Holsten, 2013). Realizing the value of a website as an effective communication tool, PROGEDO have decided they would like to reassess their website in light of these goals.

The client’s main concern regarding the website is to increase the awareness of PROGEDO and its services among potential clients, in such a way that they are perceived positively by both expats and potential business contacts, such as expat managers. It is these people who often decide which relocation company to
partner with. To achieve these goals, PROGEDO would like to redesign the site so that, next to the client-focused content, the much larger stakeholder group of expats is effectively catered to. It is thought by creating a site more relevant to this important group’s needs, the potential audience as a consequence is significantly increased, which will lead to a greater number of visitors and therefore overall awareness. Due to the way search engine algorithms work, this increased traffic as a result of making the site more relevant to a larger stakeholder group, means that the site will perform better in search rankings.

4 Theoretical Framework

With the client’s issues successfully established, a theoretical framework will be constructed to guide our research. In order to provide PROGEDO with relevant and useful recommendations regarding the improvement of their website’s content, in light of their goals, the following key concepts will be focused on. The subsequent fields of theories will be explored and suitable theories will be consulted.

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A careful examination of literature, regarding each of these areas, has brought to light a number of interesting insights relevant to the development of this project. The following literature review is divided into each distinct research area. A brief introduction of the area is presented, including a description of its relevance to this project, after which the insights uncovered will be discussed, and their significance in light of this project considered.
4.1  International Relocation

4.1.1  Current developments

To set the scene, and provide this research with an academic context, a short summary of the most important trends in the field of relocation services is shortly outlined here.

In times of globalization, the transfer of employees becomes increasingly commonplace. Valuable background information on relocation is provided by the specialist consultancy Employment Conditions Abroad (ECA). As their survey in 2011 has shown, almost 90% of the participating multinationals have expats of different nationalities, 60% of them employing people from at least six different origins, with no one particular country dominating (ECA international, 2011). Ten years ago, only 70% of the companies employed expats. On the one hand, the increase in relocation can be explained in terms of need: As the magazine Outlook on Science Policy states, the lack of skilled workers is strongly affecting Germany’s R&D capacities (2003). On the other hand, a demographic change also modifies the expectations of graduates, who expect and want to work abroad (Syedain, 2012). Thus, the motivation of both companies and transferees has to be considered and addressed as an important background variable.

This short overview gives an impression of the speed at which this field is developing in terms of size and relevance. Moreover, it demonstrates the huge diversity of expats in terms of nationality and culture being relocated, a fact that has significant influence on the website’s development as a more effective communication tool.

4.1.2  Maslow’s hierarchy of needs

With the website we need to address the needs and wants of expats. Moving to a foreign country can create both positive and negative emotions. Many things that
have been common and natural at home are going to be different in another country. What is it that people need to build a new life from fundament again? In order to understand people’s needs and thus to derive information needs for the website, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs as described by Sadri and Bowen (2011) will be presented. With this information we can map general, global human needs, and relate these more directly to the needs of expats moving to another country.

In order to achieve motivation and contentment, the so-called hierarchy of needs has to be fulfilled to a satisfactory level. One need has to be substantially satisfied before the individual can progress to the next level. The hierarchy is categorized in five different levels: Psychological needs, Safety, Love/belonging, Self-esteem and Self-actualization. In the following, each level will be discussed more in detail.

![Graphic 1: Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Sadri & Bowen, 2011)](image)

Physiological needs are the very basic level of the hierarchy, and accordingly describe all the basic needs in our life such as food, air, water and shelter as well as the need to be active, to rest and to sleep. This can be clearly related to the importance of home search in the relocation process. It can be said that money is the most important factor to satisfy most of these needs, which is covered by the employers wage. Also, Sadri and Bowen emphasize the increasing importance of
work-life balance, which is also considered a physiological need since it includes the need of non-working activities and time to rest.

The second level, referred to by Maslow as ‘Safety’, describes the need to be safe from physical and psychological harm. This not only includes a safe place to live, but also mental and physical health as well as retirement arrangements which are considered to be trust building. In the whole situation of insecurity during the relocation process, safety is essential to feel comfortable.

The third level, called ‘Love/belonging needs’, stands for the need of affection and belonging. Employees who try to satisfy this need will keep on working at a company because of relationships and the social context they experience or expect to experience in a company. Since expats are leaving their family and friends behind, this point is of great importance for them. Building up a new social life can be difficult but is necessary for the well-being.

The fourth level ‘Self-esteem needs’ explains the “needs for responsibility, reputation, prestige, recognition and respect from others” (Sadri & Bowen, 2011, p. 45). This in turn will lead to more self-confidence and increase motivation and productivity. The authors emphasize indeed this level as the main factor for motivation. To be acknowledged or even praised for accomplishments and the development of a good reputation are one of the main incentives for more quality work and relocation.

The fifth and top level concerns the self-actualization need. It is about the need of self-fulfilment. People who reach the best possible satisfaction of needs they can achieve generally try to improve themselves and the world around them. This includes assisting their colleagues to satisfy their needs.

Another point the authors emphasize is the fact that not all people are on the same level and thus not motivated by the same type of incentives. Hence,
managers have to identify the individual needs in order to satisfy them and stimulate motivation.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides an academic framework for the design of interview and survey questions. In addition, it will serve as a checklist for the creation of the website content.

4.1.3 Motives for relocation

By understanding the motives behind an expat’s decision to move abroad, we may gain useful insights which aids survey and website content design.

Hippler (2009) researched the motives for expats to request or to agree to relocation. According to him, employers are increasingly having difficulties to convince employees to move to another country, although the demand for expats is growing. This increase in demand is due to a rising internationalization of small- and medium sized companies and the rapid growth in emerging markets, such as especially in Central and Eastern Europe, India and China (Hippler). Expats are of vital importance for companies to reduce managerial shortcomings in the host country as well as in regards to knowledge transfer.

According to Hippler’s research, based on a survey answered by 512 international transferees from a large German multinational company, the field of ‘motives rooted in the person of the transferee or his or her circumstances’ reached 37.2% of all the results, and ‘motives rooted in the new task or position or their features’ 26.6%. The eight factors with the highest percentages were ‘Ambiguous’ (25.5%, meaning seeking a challenge personally or professionally, or both), ‘Personality Development’ (19.5%), ‘Career’ (7.5%), ‘Personnel development’ (6.0%), ‘Responsibility’ (3.4%) and ‘Positively motivated wish for a change’ (3.4%, please find the complete list of motives in the appendix 11.5). Moreover, Hippler identifies compliances with preceding studies regarding his four main motive findings: career (prospects and advantages), contract (income
and compensation), personnel development (improvement/learning new skills) and personality development (interest in foreign countries and internationalism). This adds further value to his data. The gained insights highlight a number of the main reasons why expats decide to further their careers abroad. The major motives are:

- Personality development
- Career development
- Competence development

These three most prevalent motivations are useful because they provide a good point of reference when deciding what content to create for the PROGEDO website update. For example, a section describing the positive impacts a career in Germany may have on personality and character development. This is also useful to keep in mind when designing interview questions.

4.2 Intercultural Communication

4.2.1 Cultural Dimensions

As was discovered in section 6.1.1, when looking at general trends in the relocation industry, there is a huge diversity in terms of nationalities and cultures. Gaining deeper insights into cultural aspects is therefore necessary. Hofstede (2010) provides very useful parameters to identify and grasp cultural differences. It thus gives the opportunity to react to them and to explain them. The content of the website will greatly benefit of this since it bridges intercultural misinterpretations and tries to make the reader feel understood.

Hofstede (2010) identifies six cultural dimensions that characterize a culture, namely Power Distance (PDI), Individualism versus collectivism (IDV), Masculinity versus femininity (MAS), Uncertainty avoidance (UAI), Long-term versus short-term orientation (LTO), Indulgence versus Restraint (IVR).
The dimension Power Distance (PDI) concerns how the members of a society handle and accept inequalities among them. People who acknowledge their position and the different hierarchies without questioning characterize societies with high power distance. In societies with low power distance, people strive for equal places and justification for unequal distribution of power.

The dimensions of Individualism versus collectivism (IDV) concerns “whether people’s self-image is defined in terms of ‘I’ or ‘we’” (Hofstede, 2010). This relates to the size (immediate or grand) and importance of family and also influences the characteristic of the society in terms of the question whether the individual is important or if society strives together for a common goal. In general, Western cultures tend to be low-context oriented and Eastern and Mediterranean cultures high-context oriented (please find the map in the appendix iv). This is important for the content of the website because it gives a framework for the way of addressing the reader (e.g. using “I” or “we” in the text) and also for the content (if it is more directed towards a single person or a group of people). Furthermore, it gives hits on the high- or low-context of a culture (see Hall, 5.2.2)

The dimension Masculinity versus feminism (MAS) attributes certain characteristics that are perceived as male, such as competitiveness, achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material reward for success, to a society. Societies, which are showing features of preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak, quality of life and consensus-orientation, are seen as feminine. Again, this is important to understand the reader and also in terms of how to portrait Germany, i.e. explaining people from other cultures the differences.

The Uncertainty avoidance (UAI) dimension “expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity” (Hofstede, 2010). Furthermore, it concerns the reaction of a society to uncertainty: Is it just letting it happen or trying to control the future? A low UAI score indicates a more relaxed attitude towards uncertainty and a practice-
oriented approach. This indicates how much information is required, i.e. does everything need to be strictly planned or should there be some flexibility.

Long-term versus short-term orientation (LTO) could be seen as a society's interpretation of and dealing with truth. Short-term oriented societies tend to seek the ultimate truth, value tradition, think normative and seek to achieve quick success. Long-term orientation implies on the other hand the belief that the truth depends on the situation, context and time. People from these societies are more likely to adopt old traditions, to prosper and to adapt them to their situations to reach their goals over time. This is also helpful to understand the reader and to know how to present the content.

Indulgence versus Restraint (IVR) stands for the societies’ attitude towards life. While indulgence expresses the freedom of enjoying life and fun, restraint societies tend to suppress these basic and natural human drives and try to regulate it by strict social norms. This dimension can help to understand the reader and to give recommendation on how to handle intercultural distinctions.

Hofstede's dimensions will help designing interview questions as well as interpret the findings regarding intercultural aspects. It will moreover validate the advice given.

4.2.2 High- and low-context communication

Looking back at Section 6.2.1, it becomes clear that intercultural aspects are complex and concerning all areas in life. There is one cultural characteristic however that is of special importance for the website: the use of language. Hall (1976) establishes the concepts of high- and low-context cultures.

Low-context communication concerns societies who are directly putting the meaning in their words, i.e. explicit messages. Low-context cultures have a long
tradition in rhetoric, which implies the importance of verbal communication. This form of communication is expected to be direct and unambiguous.

In contrast, high context-cultures incorporate the meaning in the context, i.e. using implicit messages, very little is made explicit. In general, high-context communication is fast, efficient and economical. However, it needs time to establish such communication. If the communicators do not know what the messages and symbols mean or have a different understanding of it, the communication is incomplete or not even possible. This means that high-context communication can be described as inaccessible for outsiders.

Hofstede (2010) suggests a correlation between individualistic and low-context and respectively collectivistic and high-context cultures. This is because members of collectivistic cultures are closer and information flows more easily, thus there is no need for explicit clarifications. As a result, most individualistic Western cultures such as Germany, Switzerland or the US can be identified as low-context and most Eastern and Asian cultures tend to use high-context communication.

The concept of high- and low-context cultures is of critical relevance for the website since it gives valuable evidence on how to provide information, i.e. explicit or implicit. Usunier & Roulin (2010) will take this concept further and research its correlation to the World Wide Web (please see 6.3.1).

4.2.3 Adaptation versus standardization

This research addresses the needs and wants from expats, i.e. a very diverse international audience. Since websites are a global communication tool, it is still widely discussed in how far the website should adapt to local habits or communicate on a global level.
According to de Mooij (2010), it is still widely thought that the Internet is able to cross all cultural barriers. Surprisingly however, it has increased localization rather than being the ultimate global communication medium. This is because globalization has not led to identical customers. De Mooij discusses the concepts of an adaptation versus standardization approach. Even after a debate of more than five decades, no agreement has been found. The big question is whether to standardize for greater efficiency or adapt for greater effectiveness. In 1966, people defending standardization believed in the “university of fundamental human needs as well as the assumption that advertising purposes are universal, and thus, advertising can be the same everywhere” (De Mooij, p. 14). In the 1990s, this statement became more modified, claiming that standardization could only be applied to certain segments and to certain marketing mix elements, e.g. packaging and advertising. Usunier & Lee (2013) state that “standardization is not a dichotomous one between complete standardization and customization; rather there can be degrees of standardization” (p. 229). De Mooij suggests using the following variables to make a decision: the product, the company, the business environment and the consumer. Usunier & Lee think that global standardization is impossible and mention similar criteria to adapt to an appropriate extent regarding important cultural differences. For PROGEDO this means:

- The product: PROGEDO’s product is the relocation service. This is a very personal and individual service, which can be standardized in terms of registrations, trips to authorities and certain other procedures, but not regarding individual needs and wants. Every customer is different and the service respectively as well.

- The company: PROGEDO clearly shows a German corporate culture. According to de Mooij, German, American and British managers are more often opting for standardization than French and Italian managers. Moreover, firms dependent on export tend to use a more aggressive adaptation strategy, which is not the case with PROGEDO who is aiming for German clients. At the same time, it wants to address international expats though.
• The business environment: The competition in the relocation sector is getting fiercer. Laws and regulations are often undergoing change with both positive and negative consequences for PROGEDO. To be up to date, PROGEDO works closely together with a law specialist.

• The consumer: In terms of customer similarities, PROGEDO’s clients show a comparable profile: the companies are acting multinational and need to relocate employees from one place to another. The expats are usually highly educated and qualified, willing to build their career and open to go to another country. Also the spending power is similar since the expats are receiving housing allowances and monetary rewards for moving to Germany. However, it also depends on the spending power of the company who is sending them there. In addition, the expats and companies have great variety of cultural, climate and language backgrounds. “The more marketers understand the differences in consumer behaviour across countries, the more effective international marketing and advertising will be” (de Mooij, p. 18).

All in all, there is no one right answer. Many companies claim that standardization is lucrative thanks to international media. But, PROGEDO needs to realize that only very few successful media is truly internationally standardized. The goal is thus to find the right combination of adaptation and standardization on the website.

Especially in this very personal service business, language plays a major role:

“So when the question comes up, why can’t we use English? I always ask this question: do you think that consumers should make the effort to understand us, or should we be making the effort to be understood by them?” (de Mooij, p.48).

It can be said that there is no adequate global language. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that although English is mostly recognized as an international
business language, it will never cover all cultural values nor have the same proximity to the reader as his mother tongue.

The insights of whether to standardize or adapt are of major importance to PROGEDO's website in terms of content design and should urgently be kept in mind.

4.3 Digital Media

Considering the fact that this research is dealing with the improvement of a website, it is inevitable to investigate literature on digital media. As it has to be dealt with a highly international audience, special focus has been directed to intercultural influences on websites.

4.3.1 High- and low-context styles in the World Wide Web

As already discussed in 8.2.2, the usage of language is one of the main factors regarding the transition of content. Usunier & Roulin (2010) see a clear influence of high- and low-context styles (as described by Hall, 1976) on the design, content, and languages of business-to-business websites. According to their findings,

"for the global audience, Web sites from low-context communication countries are easier to find, use colours and graphics more effectively, make navigation more user-friendly, contain more corporate and product information cues, and offer more contract- and relationship-related content than Web sites from high-context communication countries" (p189).

Usunier & Roulin note that Web sites are an attractive digital communication tool for business-to-business companies. These websites are increasingly standardized over time and tend to show signs of ethnocentrism, i.e. being highly influenced by the company's culture. Furthermore, they found out that website
characteristics influence the perceived value and quality of the company, cultural aspects can be count into this matter as well.

Since high-context cultures need more context related cues, i.e. also about the business partner, much business communication is taking place in personal meetings. Especially for high-context cultures, the website is no replacement for face-to-face communication. Indeed, low context-cultures tend to incorporate more tools to get in contact or relationship-building content on the website. Four main problems as identified in Shannon and Weaver’s (1949) model and quoted by Usunier & Roulin seem to describe major pitfalls of websites communication quite accurately: “(a) communication focuses primarily on the skills of the sender in message preparation, (b) it largely ignores inferences that the receiver may draw, and (c) contrary to the continuous bidirectional nature of oral communication, corporate Web site communication is largely unilateral” (p. 194).

On the current website, PROGEDO does not pay attention to these factors yet. This corresponds with the findings of Usunier & Roulin, who claim that B2B businesses are far from using the full potential of the Internet as a tool for improving international business communication. Especially these pitfalls have to be considered and avoided when redesigning the website.

Finally, Usunier & Roulin state that low-context communicators are in a favourable position since they are informative due to their communication style. In addition, Web sites from non-English speaking countries are in a better situation with an average of 2,5 languages in contrast to English speaking companies. This complies with de Mooij’s claim to not consider English as a global language but to emphasize mother tongues. Currently, PROGEDO’s website is available in German and in English.

These findings are of crucial relevance for the formulation of texts and the structure of the content. Moreover, it provides information about the importance
of languages, which is crucial when deciding in which languages the content should be made available.

4.3.2 Influence of culture on the perception of a website

Relocation is not only a very international but also personal business. Trust is one of the main issues when it comes to assigning someone to manage and organize all aspects that evolve when moving countries. But how can the perception of risk be decreased? And which role does the usability of a website play?

Vargas-Barraza & Gomez Suarez researched “how users perceive the cultural origin of a Website, even though the site was developed using principles of usability and trying to minimize culture shock” (Vargas-Barraza & Gomez Suarez, 2012, p. 9). According to these researchers, many companies neglect cultural differences when developing their website although these factors are important keys to success. For example, choosing English as the primary language of international websites is not enough when not paying attention to correct translations and grammatical consistencies.

Vargas-Barraza & Gomez Suarez talk about so-called “culturability”, which describes the connection between culture and usability. This is an important relationship since culture is a key factor when it comes to usability.

Using Hofstede’s cultural dimensions as variable to measure the results, Vargas-Barraza & Gomez Suarez found that a Web site with good design and satisfactory information about the company or products could help to reduce risk perception. They highly emphasize the importance of cultural factors because although participants from another culture than the designer did not identify the origin of the website, they appreciated and trusted it less than websites from their own culture. Especially the dimension of individualism/collectivism plays a major role.
These insights should be kept in mind when designing questions and content for the websites since it gives hints on how to establish perceived trust. Also it points out the importance of the grammatically correct use of language to create a professional impression.

5 Research Design

5.1 Intervention Cycle

The undertaken research was settled in the diagnostic stage of the intervention cycle. The problem has been identified and formulated by the stakeholders. Moreover, ‘Opinion Research’ method was chosen because it was more important to gain insights into the opinions and perceptions of the stakeholders, than the cause or objective knowledge of the problem (cf. Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). This is because it needs to be found out what the expats want.

5.2 Research Objective

The goal of this research is make recommendations for PROGEDO relocation service Hamburg to successfully update their corporate website's content, to better satisfy the information needs and wants of expats, with emphasis on intercultural sensitivity to improve trustworthiness. This will be done BY collecting the expertise and experience of:

PROGEDO consultants, who frequently work in close contact with expats, and are privy to many of their information needs.

Expat Employers, who may offer important insights regarding the professional expectations and needs of expat employees

Expats themselves, to uncover relevant insights first hand.
By successfully satisfying expat’s information needs, it will raise the likelihood of them revisiting PROGEDO’s site and promoting the site by word of mouth, which in turn will increase the traffic. This responds to the client’s main concern to make better use of the PROGEDO website to increase the awareness of PROGEDO and its services among potential clients. PROGEDO seeks to get in contact with the deciders of relocation, e.g. expat managers, be it via a high ranking in a search engine or word of mouth via the expats.
RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Theory
- Relocation Theories
- Intercultural Theories
- Digital Media Theories

Research Perspective

Research Objects
- PROGEDO consultants
- Expat employers
- Expats

Results of Analysis
- Results of analysis

Product
- Recommendations for the creation of content for the PROGEDO website that better serves the information needs and wants of expats

Digital Media Theories

Web 1.0

Intercultural Theories

Graduation Report

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Anna-Lena Schulte
5.2.1 Research Objects

In order to help PROGEO to create a website that is made more relevant for expats, it has to be investigated what the information needs and wants of expats are. Thus the following research objects have been chosen:

5.2.2 PROGEO consultants

PROGEO consultants are frequently working with expats and exposed to repeatedly asked questions. By sharing their experience, valuable information needs and wants could be identified that the expats themselves are not aware of.

5.2.3 Expat employers

Companies who are relocating many employees have to inform their candidates about their relocation and are faced with many questions. In order to find about the information and support expats receive from their employer before and during their relocation, expat managers were identified as an object.

5.2.4 Expats

In order to gain a first hand insight into their information needs and wants, expats themselves were interrogated.

5.3 Central Questions

a) Theoretical Central Question

What is known from theory and preliminary research about the influence of international relocation procedures, intercultural aspects and digital media on the content of a cultural sensitive website?

• What are the main developments and factors regarding international relocation?
• Which cultural features have to be considered?
• How is content transmitted via digital media considering cultural differences?
b) Empirical Central Question
Which influences do international relocation procedures, intercultural aspects and digital media have on expats according to PROGEDO consultants, expat employers, and expats?

- What are the expats’ information needs and wants?
- What are the expats’ cultural values?
- How do expats use digital media?

c) Analytical Central Question
What do we learn by comparing the analysis results of the influences on expats in order to make recommendations on how to improve PROGEDO’s website with focus on intercultural sensitivity?

- How should the website be set up to suit to different target groups in several different national cultures?
- How far is a cultural general approach possible?
- Which choices have to be made for the website to be attractive to the main different cultural groups?

5.4 Research Strategy

A practice-oriented research of the type of diagnostic research was carried out. The research was based on a case study, i.e. it was devoted to PROGEDO Hamburg. There was no intention to generalize it to other companies, but to give specific advice to PROGEDO Hamburg.

Further, a combination of descriptive and explanatory research was used. As an underlying philosophy, a combination of positivism and interpretivism was applied. An empathetic stance was adopted. Moreover, an inductive approach was exercised since the advice was based on the findings. Existing theories were consulted to generate research strategies and to interpret findings, which implied deductive features.
This case study used multiple sources of evidence. In order to ensure correct interpretation of data, triangulation strategies were applied. Moreover, secondary and primary as well as qualitative and quantitative data were collected. In accordance with the mixed model research, quantitative data and qualitative data collection techniques and analysis procedures were combined. Besides, this research was cross-sectional.

5.5 Methodology

The research method included the following steps to answer the research questions:

a) What is known from theory and preliminary research about the influence of international relocation procedures, intercultural aspects and digital media on the content of a cultural sensitive website?

A literature review on intercultural communication, international relocation and digital media was carried out. This method was the most suitable one because it consults existing theories and thus draws upon fundamental knowledge, which will serve as a base for additional research and further validate the advice given. Relevant sources for academic literature were found in the Hanze Mediathek, the RUG electronic database, the university library of Hamburg and the Internet. Primarily written materials were used.

b) Which influences do international relocation procedures, intercultural aspects and digital media have on expats according to PROGEDO consultants, expat employers, and expats?

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain insights as to the opinions of relevant internal and external stakeholders. The number of interviews was limited to five, due to the nature of the interviews (qualitative, semi-structured) and time restraints. With the intention of receiving the most valid and reliable
results possible, the sampling technique was based on non-probability sampling. The interviewees were selected on the base of purposive sampling, which enables the researcher to “use [his] judgement to select cases that will best enable [him] to answer the research questions and to reach [his] research objective” (Saunders, 2009, p. 230). The following interviewees were chosen: a Spanish engineer who relocated by PROGedo, an expatriate manager who works for PROGedo’s most important client Airbus, two experienced PROGedo relocator, as well as an English project manager who was relocated to Germany by another relocation agency. They were considered to be the best cases to enable the researcher to answer the research questions because they deliver different points of views on relocation and the information involved and required. The PROGedo consultants delivered essential information about their work with transferees, i.e. which information is often requested, what are the main problems coming up that should be addressed, etc., and added cultural aspects that the members of the respective culture are not aware of. Likewise, an expat manager shared his experience about the information needs and concerns of expats. Lastly, Expats themselves expressed their opinion.

This research technique was the most appropriate to answer this research question because according to Saunders (2009), this method allows to probe answers and thus to get a deeper insight into the interviewees’ opinion, which adds significance to the data. Moreover, this collection of qualitative permitted the flexibility to change the research emphasis during the process.

The focus of interest was set on which cultural background most companies and transferees have, which languages are required, what the most important information is that should be provided, what the target groups digital communication behaviour is and which features they like on websites. Furthermore, the motives, motivations and procedures of relocation were researched.
The interviews were categorized and analysed according to the key concepts. Categorization helped to get an easy overview about the main topics and the main factors that contribute to a cultural sensitive website. As an aid to analyse the data, the analytical tool Dedoose (2011) was used.

Based on the results of the semi-structured interviews, surveys were designed to gather more detailed information and to involve a greater number of participants. The online survey tool SurveyMonkey (2013) was used. Also, as pointed out by Saunders, the standardized data allows an easy and valuable comparison. Moreover, this technique is perceived as authorizing by people and both easy to understand and explain. Since the interviews showed that the keys to all communication are the clients, i.e. the expats, the survey was targeted at expats who were relocated to Germany by PROGEDO or other relocation services. The sample size was 25.

c) What do we learn by comparing the analysis results of the influences on expats in order to make recommendations on how to improve PROGEDO’s website with focus on intercultural sensitivity?

A comparison of the literature review, interview and survey results contributed to answer central question three and will lead to the most important features the desired website should fulfil according to the opinions of internal and external stakeholders.

The results of this research will be presented to the client PROGEDO in form of an extensive report and a summarizing presentation at the end of the project period.
6 Research Results

6.1 Interview Findings

In this chapter, the results of the semi-structured interviews will be presented with regard to the key concepts. The interviewees have the following backgrounds:

S.H.: Expat manager at Airbus, a large expat employer in Hamburg
S.F.: PROGEDO consultant
A.A.: PROGEDO consultant
P.A.: Spanish expat, relocated by PROGEDO
D.J.: British Expat, relocated by another relocation agency

6.1.1 International Relocation

6.1.1.1 Important relocation aspects

Housing is by all interviewees perceived as the most important aspect when it comes to moving to another country. The main motives to accept or seek relocation are monetary rewards and benefits as well as career. According to A.A., the employees theoretically have the possibility to refuse to relocate but know that this will negatively influence or end their career. Also, most employees are still young and thus take the opportunity. To gain personal experiences or learn new languages can also play a role. For P.A. it was a convincing factor to be supported by a relocation service.

6.1.1.2 Experiences

According to A.A., relocation consultant, relocation services are a tool for companies to make the immigration to another country easier for their employees and thus also a tool to convince them to relocate. As said before, this was an important factor for P.A. to decide to relocate.
As a positive aspect, A.A’s clients point out the security and freedom to just walk along the street without fear. This is especially important for middle or higher-class businessmen from e.g. Asia or South America. In addition, her clients appraise Hamburg’s public transport and the friendliness of the Hamburg citizens.

From the point of view of an expat manager, S.H. experienced that employees appreciate the function of the relocation service as “first friend abroad”. S.H. thinks that the relocators know the host country and they can help the employees a lot. Sometimes it is problematic that the employees are not satisfied with the relocation service although it is not the agencies fault, e.g. when the house market is tense, it is very difficult to find an apartment to the employee’s liking.

P.A., who was relocated by PROGEDO, made good experiences with his relocation consultant. He appreciated that she was very patient as well as their conversations about his first impressions. In his opinion, it is good to have somebody to talk to when newly arrived in Germany.

However, the search for housing could be improved i.e. more information about the possibilities and areas. Housing is an especially important issue for P.A. On the other hand, he thinks, if the relocator recommends too strongly, the expat can also feel pushed. He suggests providing more information on distances and traffic, as well as to establish a personal link between relocator and expat to be able to individually recommend the best housing possible.

D.J. who was relocated by another relocation service, made bad experiences with his first relocation from Britain to Germany, he and his wife organized most things on their own. But he was much better supported when being relocated to the Netherlands.
6.1.1.3 Overall satisfaction

As the reader will have noticed, overall satisfaction has not been covered by the research yet. However it was identified as an important component during the interviews as it builds the ground for trustworthy testimonials and basically represents what every human being is striving for: happiness.

P.A. emphasizes that he lives in harmony in Hamburg. No one was ever doing him wrong, tried to take advantage of him or treated him differently because of his look. He thinks there are very few countries in the world where he could say the same. However, he does not perceive Germany as welcoming but as “normal”. One arrives and lives in harmony with other citizens. P.A. says that all the expats in Hamburg are fine and having a good live. He thinks that this is probably the most important aspect: to be happy and feel at home in Hamburg.

6.1.2 Intercultural Aspects

6.1.2.1 Cultural background

A.A. states that she supports clients from all over the world, many of them are from Europe. Similar, a grand number of S.F. clients have a European background. Many of them are French, but she also supports clients from other continents.

6.1.2.2 Languages Spoken

All interviewees testify that most of the expats speak English in addition to their mother tongue. Some however, only speak their native language, i.e. according to S.F. in most cases only Spanish, French or Italian. In P.A.’s opinion, he would only really know what it is like to live in Hamburg or what the relations with people are like when he improved his German. According to him, it takes Spanish people around two years to speak German. By then might
already be time for a new assignment because in his business one should change projects every three or four years.

### 6.1.2.3 Missing from home

Primarily, A.A's clients are missing their family and friends from home, people from warmer countries also the warm climate. However, in-depth conversations with the clients are rare.

This is also motioned by P.A., he misses the life outside, the cultural and leisure offer, and the interaction on the places and streets of Madrid. As he says, he needs this social collective relation. Also, he misses his friends, but he says he started living a very dynamic life and that he is happy at the moment in Hamburg.

D.J. also misses certain foods and drinks from home. He found them available on websites but only for quite high prices.

### 6.1.2.4 Cultural differences

As a relocation consultant, A.A. encounters some difficulties due to cultural differences. A.A. tries to explain that things are different in Germany from how they might be in their home country. A.A. herself gave intercultural trainings already in the 80s, but she has the feeling that companies believe that they are not necessary anymore because of globalization. She also thinks that intercultural differences were stronger 15 years ago, when people did not have access to worldwide information, brands or movies. Today, she perceives them as being more similar. However, in her experience, intercultural training would still be needed and desired because differences still exist.
According to S.H.’s French colleagues, Germans are structured, tough and have a lower hierarchy. A grand cultural difference between Germany in France is also the childcare and the Germans’ appreciation of punctuality, reliability, and clear words.

P.A. perceives harshness, lack of flexibility, great respect of the rules, lack of empathy and missing emotional intelligence in Germany. He thinks that it might also be due to the harsh weather. He likes the honesty, bureaucracy and precision and calls the overall system “more civilized”.

D.J. also experienced intercultural differences in daily life, e.g. when choosing the right insurances, since they are hard to explain and translate. Also, he identifies a different eating culture in Germany. He classifies politeness as a typical British characteristic.

S.F. does not recognize severe cultural differences, apart from different bureaucracies and that e.g. Spanish people tend to write very short e-mails. Also, for many of her clients, especially for the Spanish ones, it is strange that there is no life on the streets in Germany, many are missing the good weather from home.

6.1.3 Digital Media

6.1.3.1 Usage

None of the interviewees has been using the websites.

A.A. does not use the PROGEDO website because she wonders why she should look on her own website. S.F. does not use the PROGEDO website because she does not require any information from it.
S.H. is not looking on the websites of their service providers because she thinks she is informed well enough. She would access it though if there was a tool the expats had to use to ensure that it is easy to handle. Besides, if the feedback of an employee required it, she would look at it.

6.1.3.2  Content

In A.A’s opinion, websites should inform gradually rather than going into detail. A professional website should be ascertainable in one look and offer the most important information: contact, prices, and services. A.A. thinks to explain into detail what relocation is not necessary because people looking for it know what it means. Moreover, she doubts that the website will be used as information source, neither by the human resources departments nor the clients. A.A. prefers personal contact instead and believes her clients to feel the same.

S.H. wants to know what the company is about, how long they exist and their history. She also prefers to have faces of the company to see who is working for it. In addition, it would be good to have the questionnaire for the house searching, for example, on the homepage, to decrease the paper work, which is massive. Thus, she would appreciate such an easy-to-handle tool as well as news about the host country.

P.A. would appreciate information about the city, an explanation of the services, description of the parts of the city and housing. For example, some description of the neighbourhoods, average prices, e.g. square meter prices, rent furnished or not furnished, would be helpful.

D.J. thinks that customers desire a smooth relocation and do not know what to expect. On the current website, he cannot see any sign of a differentiation of customers, e.g. private individuals or families.
Moreover, D.J. is missing a clear sales pitch or marketing of what PROGEO can do for the customer. He points out that moving countries is never easy, so the main message should be “We are going to make your life easier”. Having read the English version of the website, he thinks that the main pages are mostly OK, but later pages have several mistakes which gives an unprofessional impression.

In addition, D.J. perceives the website as too technical. The website provides a long list of services, but PROGEO should not expect their customers to know what these services mean and which of these services are necessary. He thinks it creates confusion and fear rather than making things simpler for the expat. He assumes that no marketing agency was involved to take care of the content.

In specific, D.J. thinks that the profile is too factual. The same goes for the relocation services site, prices would be useful, too. He has the impression that many pages provide information the company wants to bring across although no customer will care about it. Regarding the establishing services, he thinks the examples are not useful. Indeed, PROGEO wasted this opportunity to present it and its success stories.

Overall, D.J. has the opinion that PROGEO needs a lot more marketing and sales pitch. He suggests focusing on what the customer want, rather than what PROGEO wants to tell them. He also warns about too many details from experts that can overpower non-experts and proposes a Q&A section.

6.1.3.3 Validity and Reliability

P.A. consciously distinguishes between false and true information and uses parameters such as language style, content, and web design to do so. When S.H. is looking for detailed information, she is not trusting any website but looking for experts. She identifies experts’ references and established names, such as PwC for taxes.
6.1.4 Consequences for the survey

6.1.4.1 Content and purpose

The survey will keep main insights from the theoretical framework in mind and take key elements of the semi-structured interviews and check them on a greater amount of people. It will be handed out to expats relocated to Germany by PROGEDO or by another relocation agency and will establish a quantitative representation of the expats’ opinions. The interview results served as indications for possible answers. The survey was developed as follows:

1. In the general section, the age of the participant will give hints on the familiarity with and usage of the Internet, the home country indicates the cultural background. The languages spoken will give a tendency on the languages required on the website. The business field and the motives are relevant to get an idea about expats occupations and interests and thus about information needs and wants.

2. In the relocation procedure part, the status, flow and importance of certain information will be further investigated.

3. The section living abroad will increase the knowledge about perceived cultural differences.

4. In the distribution of information section, ideas and suggestions form the interviewees are taken, e.g. newsletter, and tested on their interest by other expats.

5. In the overall satisfaction part, P.A.’s statement about happiness in the host country is taken further. This section contributes to the previously mentioned recommendations and exchange of experiences among expats.
6.2 Survey Findings

6.2.1 General Information

The first section, asking for general details, showed that the majority (56%) of the participants are between 31 and 40 years old, followed by 41-50 years old (24%) and 21-30 years old (12%). Furthermore, the survey shows a grand variety of cultural backgrounds, 40% being from other than the proposed countries and continents, but with a relatively high percentage from France (24%) and the United Kingdom (20%).

![Graph showing home countries](image)

Regarding languages, English is clearly the mostly spoken language with 88%. German and other languages are both reaching 32%, other proposed languages reach a level between 8% (Italian) and 20% (French), Spanish reaching 16%.

![Graph showing languages](image)
The participants are occupying different jobs (32% other), a grand majority is employed as IT specialists or engineering (20%). Multiple reasons led to their relocation, career being the most important motive (84%), followed by new experiences (48%), living in another country (44%), learning another language (40%) and monetary rewards (40).

6.2.2 Relocation Procedure

The next section dealt with the relocation procedure. Before the start of the relocation, 60.87% received information from their company about the relocation agency, 78.26% about the relocation services, 73.91% about the relocation procedure and 56.52% about what to expect from living and working in Germany.

According to the results, the participants were in average relatively equally concerned “A little bit” to “Quite a bit” about the proposed aspects. The main average concern was the foreign language and culture (average score 2.78 from 5) as well as housing and facilities (2.78) and finding new acquaintances and friends (2.74).
6.2.3 Living Abroad

The living abroad section used open questions to avoid manipulation, allow the participant’s own reflection and to enable the discovery of unsought aspects. The question for the main problem that occurred shows a tendency towards issues regarding housing (mentioned eight times), bureaucracy and taxes (mentioned 6 times) and language difficulties (mentioned twice).

The participants perceive the German language (mentioned four times), German people (mentioned three times), strict rules and discipline (three times) and the weather (twice) as strange.

Friends and Family are the main factors the expats are missing from home (mentioned eight times). Secondly, they miss their country's food (seven times), sun and beaches (four times) as well as dynamic and flexibility (twice).

6.2.4 Distribution of Information

The most important pieces of information that should be provided are information regarding housing (i.e. desirable neighbourhoods, living costs, etc.), the relocation procedure (i.e. required actions, documents, etc.) more English translations and explanations (especially regarding official German documents and contracts), childcare and family life, Tips and FAQ. In addition, the participants would appreciate information about German cultural rules and norms, the city Hamburg and help with the language (e.g. language courses).
If their relocation service introduced a platform for the exchange of information among expats, 45% would definitely use it, 55% might maybe use it. 60% of the participants use Facebook sometimes, 25% never and 15% all the time.

As for a newsletter from their relocation service, 60% might be interested dependent on the content, 25% would not be interested and 15% would be definitely interested.
6.2.5 Overall Satisfaction

Finally, the overall satisfaction section shows that 90% of the participants would recommend Germany as a working place, 10% are not sure about it. More than half of the expats (55%) are very content with their life in Germany, 45% think it is OK. In comparison to their expectations, 45% find their life in Germany better than expected, 40% just as expected, 10% are not sure and 5% think it is worse than expected.
6.3 Analysis

In the following, the results of the survey will be analysed regarding the survey sections and key concepts.

6.3.1 General Information

As the survey shows, more than half of the participants (56%) are between 31 and 40 years old, 24% are between 41 and 50 years old. This gives hints about characteristics of the target group. This can be of essential value when trying to understand the target group and the situations they are in in order to provide them with respective information. The grand variety of cultural background not only demonstrates the grand cultural diversity of the clientele but also gives value to the collected data, i.e. representing different cultures. The high percentage of French people is favourable because also many PROGEDO clients are French.

The results show that English is clearly the mostly spoken language with 88%. However, it has to be noted, that the level of English is unknown and that 12% are not able to speak English at all, which is more than 1 in 10. Also, other languages are reaching quite high percentages (32%), which represent the variety of mother tongues that should be considered. In fact, English can clearly be seen as a common but not native language. Moreover, the percentage of expats speaking German is surprisingly high with 32%. However, this survey is facing a limit by not knowing the language level, how long the participants have already been in Germany and if they knew German before relocating or learned it during their stay in Germany.

The fact that the participants are occupying a range of different jobs show again the diversity of interests, although a tendency towards IT and engineering can be spotted. In addition, it can be noted that all participants experienced higher education. Regarding the relocation motives it was surprising that money was mentioned on one of the last ranks, which contradicts the interview results. It could be hypothesized that the participants have not been completely honest when answering this question and rather been choosing more “honourable”
answers such as career and interest in foreign countries and cultures. Maybe, also cultural aspects such as the importance of and associations with money might have played a role, which differs from those of the interviewees. However, the stated motives deliver further clues about desired content.

6.3.2 Relocation Procedure / International Relocation

The fact that only 60.87% received information about their relocation agency from their company leaves an immense potential for PROGEDO to introduce and present them. Although more participants declared to have received information about the relocation services (78.26%) and about the relocation procedure (73.91%), almost one quarter of the expats is left without any information. It seems that information is provided but not everywhere and not sufficiently. By providing this information, PROGEDO cannot only present them and their expertise, but also gain the first bit of trust by explaining what they are doing and thus reducing fear. This especially relates to only half of the participants having been informed about what to expect from living and working in Germany. Hence, there is a lot of potential in this stage of communication that could be used, for example to reduce concerns. Although the average of every suggested aspect never showed any extreme concerns, “a little bit” to “quite a bit” of concern can be already quite exhausting when everything in one’s life is suddenly changing. The main concerns (being the foreign language and culture, housing and finding new friends) could be decreased easily by e.g. providing more targeted information or platforms for networking and information exchange.

6.3.3 Living Abroad / Intercultural Aspects

The most common concern and evolving problem seems to be housing (mentioned eight times). This shows the importance of shelter as a basic need as also described by Maslow (2011). Also the different bureaucracy and language are important issues that should be considered and taken care of, e.g. by providing direct links to German language courses or German podcasts, such as
Deutsche Welle. To overcome the perceived intercultural differences, an introduction to intercultural competences and the German culture would be helpful. Also, certain cultural characteristics could be picked up and directly addressed, e.g. showing ways how to escape bad weather or where to find beaches. In addition, tips as where to get international food seem to be required (mentioned seven times). As friends and family are missed the most, again, networking platform or events seem to be one of the key answers.

6.3.4 Distribution of Information / Digital Media
The results of the distribution of information section are fairly self-explanatory since it directly asked the participants for desired information. The outcomes (housing (i.e. desirable neighbourhoods, living costs, etc.), the relocation procedure (i.e. required actions, documents, etc.) more English translations and explanations (especially regarding official German documents and contracts), cultural rules and norms, the city Hamburg and help with the language (e.g. language courses)) pretty much reflect the findings of the previous sections.

Again confirming the networking idea, all of the participants would either definitely use a communication platform for expats (45%) or at least consider it (55%). This shows an overwhelming interest in such a tool! As to avoid having to set up yet another communication platform and to add another social media to the participants’ digital life, the question about the use of Facebook revealed whether this social media could be an opportunity. More than half of the expats use Facebook sometimes (60%) and 15% all the time. This means that three quarters of the participants are at least familiar and introduced to this communication tool already. It could be assumed that the usage would increase when they are gaining something out of the content and the interaction. In other words, when it is worth it. Unfortunately, the survey does not give answer to the question whether the remaining 25%, who never use Facebook, are more active in other social media tools or not involved in online media at all. Again, one could hypothesize that these participants start making use of this tool when they are gaining something out of it. On the other hand, they could just be “lost” for this
communication approach because of lacking interest in this kind of communication channel. However, the results of the web-monitoring provider Pingdom indicate an average age of 38 years of Facebook users (Pingdom, 2010), which would perfectly match PROGEDO’s target group.

A newsletter would be interesting for 61.9% depending on the content, for 14.29 definitely wished for, and not at all attractive for 23.81%. Seeing that more than three quarters of the participants are willing to read it, a newsletter can be interpreted as a potentially very useful communication tool, if it contains excellent content.

6.3.5 Overall satisfaction

Interestingly, nine out of ten expats would recommend Germany as a working place, 10% not being sure about it. This very positive working experience should absolutely be made public to reduce fear and to display that it is attractive to relocate. Also, the result that all participants are very content (55%) or at least OK (45%) with their life in Germany shows the quality of life expats are enjoying. Indeed, 45% think it is even better than expected. These kinds of experiences are the perfect basis for testimonials. In addition, this overall (very) good satisfaction reduces the risk of negative publications when providing a networking platform, which would immensely harm PROGEDO and the clients’ relocation activities.

7 Conclusions

7.1 Answering the research questions

After having obtained and analysed all necessary data, this section will answer the research questions.
a) Theoretical Central Question

What is known from theory and preliminary research about the influence of international relocation procedures, intercultural aspects and digital media on the content of a cultural sensitive website?

• What are the main developments and factors regarding international relocation?

The relocation business is constantly growing. More and more companies are employing employees from different countries and use their relocation for knowledge transfer and skilled management strategies. Also, a demographic change modifies the expectations of graduates, who want to work abroad. Thus, the motivation of both companies and transferees has to be considered and addressed as an important background variable for the website.

Moreover, the aspects of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, i.e. Psychological needs, Safety, Love/belonging, Self-esteem and Self-actualization, can be projected to the expats needs and wants when moving to Germany. Since the whole life of the expat is changing, these needs give a guideline of which information should be incorporated on the website.

In order to understand the main motives why expats relocate and thus the situation the expats are in, Hippler's research was consulted. According to him, career (prospects and advantages), contract (income and compensation), personnel development (improvement/learning new skills) and personality development (interest in foreign countries and internationalism) are the four main motives, which also complies with preceding studies.

• Which cultural features have to be considered?

As general guideline to identify and grasp intercultural differences, Hofstede's cultural dimensions are well suited. These include Power Distance (PDI), Individualism versus collectivism (IDV), Masculinity versus femininity (MAS), Uncertainty avoidance (UAI), Long-term versus short-term orientation (LTO), Indulgence versus Restraint (IVR). Hall's high- and low-context cultures gives valuable evidence on how to provide information. Low-context communication
concerns societies who are directly putting the meaning in their words, i.e. explicit messages. In contrast, high context-cultures incorporate the meaning in the context, i.e. using implicit messages, very little is made explicit. Hofstede (2010) suggests a correlation between individualistic and low-context and respectively collectivistic and high-context cultures.

Regarding the question of whether to standardize or adapt the website, De Mooij suggests using the following variables to make a decision: the product, the company, the business environment and the consumer. Usunier & Lee think that global standardization is impossible and mention similar criteria to adapt to an appropriate extent regarding important cultural differences. For PROGEDO the goal must thus be to find the right combination of adaptation and standardization on the website. In addition, according to de Mooij it can be said that there is no adequate global language. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that although English is mostly recognized as an international business language, it will never cover all cultural values nor have the same proximity to the reader as his mother tongue.

• How is content transmitted via digital media considering cultural differences?

Usunier & Roulin (2010) see a clear influence of high- and low-context styles (as described by Hall, 1976) on the design, content, and languages of business-to-business websites. According to their findings, websites from low-context cultures (such as Germany, which clearly influences PROGEDO) are more effective for an international audience in terms of graphics, colours, navigation, information cues and relationship- contract-related content. There are certain pitfalls that should be avoided by any means: providing information that only focuses on what the sender wants to bring across but ignoring the receiver’s inferences and information needs, as well as the unawareness of the one-way communication of a corporate website in contrast to two-way communication in conversations. Likewise de Mooij, Usunier & Roulin put emphasis on the importance of the availability of several languages on a website.
b) Empirical Central Question

Which influences do international relocation procedures, intercultural aspects and digital media have on expats according to PROGEDO consultants, expat employers, and expats?

• What are the expats’ information needs and wants?

As the interviews showed, multinationals are mainly interested in the professionalism and quality of the relocation services as well as the background and faces of the relocation agency. They value a high level of communication and personal service. However, the most important point for them is the satisfaction of their employees. Their opinion of the relocation service strongly depends on the feedback of the expats. A positive feedback from the expats also means contentment of the multinationals with the relocation agency, in this case PROGEDO. This is why this study focused on the information needs and wants of the expats. This obviously fulfils the information needs and wants of the expats, but at the same time also the needs and wants of the multinationals, which need to see the know-how and expertise of the relocation agency to support the expats successfully. This display of quality and knowledge is thus also an important tool to attract new customers. Additionally, it is highly probable that expats spread the word and exchange their experiences. In case of relocation, they should carry their knowledge and opinion to their employers, in the best-case scenario they will propose PROGEDO as relocation service. With this indirect way of communication, PROGEDO finds its way to relocation managers and deciders, which is the desired goal.

As both the interviews and the survey revealed, the expat’s information needs and wants show great similarities with Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs: For almost every person questioned, housing was one of the main issues when moving to Germany. This corresponds to Maslow’s physiological need for shelter. Similar, food and climate from home countries was missed and mentioned several times. Translated into information needs, this means a more accurate description of the housing opportunities and situation, including information on
Hamburg's city districts, square meter prices, distances to work and other important places, such as international supermarkets, how to escape bad weather, etc. Since Germany has the reputation of being a relatively safe country, none of the participants mentioned safety as an issue. However, uncertainties about mental and physical health were mentioned in form of different bureaucracies, tax issues, and other legal matters. Consequently, these should be explained more. In addition, the safety and welfare of the families relocating with the expat was of great importance demands more information for e.g. the accommodation of children in nurseries or job opportunities for spouses.

A very great concern of most expats was Maslow's third level, i.e. love/belonging needs. They are missing their family and friends at home and want to build up a new social network in Hamburg, which can be difficult, especially without speaking German. As an information need, connecting people can be identified. The development of communication networks could be one of the solutions and was appreciated by every survey participant (45% of the participants would definitely use a communication platform for expats, 55% would at least consider it)! It has to be decided whether Facebook could be a possible tool for this with 60% using it sometimes and 15% all the time. Also the belonging to society was expressed during the interviews and surveys. The participants actively asked for more information on cultural and social activities and support for learning German.

The fourth level can be reflected quite well on the motives for employees to relocate, as Hippler’s study as well as the interview and survey results demonstrate. The needs of responsibility, reputation, prestige, recognition and respect from others can be seen in the motive of relocation for career reasons. Since this level is also the main factor for motivation and quality work, it is naturally very important for companies that their employees reach this level. It must not be forgotten however that one need has to be substantially satisfied before the individual can progress to the next level. This is why the relocation
agency has to ensure to provide all information and the best support possible to achieve this employee satisfaction and motivation.

In addition, it came to light that many expats are asking their colleagues about their relocation experiences. This demonstrates the great power of mouth-to-mouth communication and the trust that this information enjoys. It indicates the need of information from like-minded and -situated people, which could be fulfilled by an expat network, testimonials and the survey results, which testify that all participants are very content (55%) or at least OK (45%) with their life in Germany, 45% think it is even better than expected. A newsletter would also be interesting for 60% depending on the content and definitely for 15% of the participants, which indicates strong relevance.

**What are the expats’ cultural values?**

Taking Hofstede’s cultural dimension as foundation, it can be said that PROGEDO’s clients and transferees have a grand variety of cultural values. The survey shows the many different cultural backgrounds expats who were relocated to Germany have. Many differences regarding the dimensions were apparent in the interviews. In the following, these cultural clashes will be compared to Germany as host country.

First of all, Germany is a very individualistic country (Hofstede, 2010) and has a low-context-culture. Many people from collectivistic and high-context cultures perceive Germans as rude and lacking social intelligence (c.f. P.A. App. xxxix) or less precise as “strange” (mentioned three times in the survey). Thus, one cultural value of the clients and transferees is a more collectivistic and high-context approach. Another circumstance that leads to the “strangeness” are the dimensions of indulgence versus restraint and uncertainty avoidance. As the results show, expats perceive everything in Germany as highly regulated by rules and strict social norms. Thus, cultural values that can be identified are flexibility and a more relaxed attitude. This also includes the rather reserved and private indoor life of Germans, also due to the harsh climate (see interview and survey
results, xlix) versus the cultural value of expats and clients of a more outdoor social and collective life.

Concerning the language, client communication, i.e., with companies, is completely held in English. Communication between expat and consultant takes place in the expats mother tongue if possible or otherwise in English. Thus, English could be seen as a communication criterion, which is fulfilled by 88% of the participants.

• How do expats use digital media?
As was confirmed in the interviews, the Internet is the tool to seek information. As it became clear in the survey, the participants are using and open to digital communication. The high rate of Facebook users and great appreciation for a potential communication platform and newsletter demonstrates a strong tendency towards digital communication.

c) Analytical Central Question
What do we learn by comparing the analysis results of the influences on expats in order to make recommendations on how to improve PROGEDO’s website with focus on intercultural sensitivity?

• How should the website be set up to suit to different target groups (companies and their transferees) in several different national cultures?
First of all, it should be acknowledged and kept in mind that these cultural differences exist when developing the website, which the literature review, the interviews and the survey has shown. Since a language also reflects a grand part of the culture, this can be an indication of how the website should be set up targeting different cultures. Ideally, it should aim to have as many different languages as possible. Also, the language is also an indicator on where the expat comes from and thus Hofstede’s dimensions come into play.
When looking at the results, the most important issue is to understand where the clients and expats are coming from, i.e. not only geographically but also culturally. For example, pictures could be changed dependent on the language, i.e. a French family having dinner or Spanish friends lying on the beach at Blankenese. This responds cultural aspects and at the same time it approaches the situation of the expats and reduces fear. Even if the website was held in English and only address exemplary different cultures during the text this would give an impression of acknowledgement and sensitivity.

• **How far is a cultural general approach possible?**
As a consequence from Usunier & Roulin’s research, PROGEDO should stick to it’s German corporate culture and use low-context communication on the website, since this is more effective for a global audience in terms of graphics, colours, navigation, information cues and relationship- contract-related content. Also the general and factual content can be standardized, such as information about Hamburg, housing, etc. To answer the question of whether to adapt or standardize PROGEDO’s website, PROGEDO’s size and resources have to be taken into account. While non-expensive adaptations such as specifically addressing the information needs and wants can be realized relatively easily, more costly adaptations such as translations have to be budgeted carefully.

• **Which choices have to be made for the website to be attractive to the main different cultural groups?**
As already mentioned before, PROGEDO has to find the right mix between standardization and adaptation. In order to be attractive to the main cultural groups, the most important languages have to be chosen, in this case German, English, French and Spanish. Depending on the development of PROGEDO, other cultures might have to be considered to a later point in time.
Furthermore, the target groups have to be clearly separated and addressed, i.e. clients-companies, expats and contractors. This allows a varying professional level (business level with companies and contractors and a more personal level with contractors) and thus also a variation in language, which helps to
circumvent power distances, e.g. a more formal approach to companies and a more empathetic and personal approach to expats. However, the content should and language should still be relatively coherent, e.g. constant use of formal form of address.

In addition, the website should include relationship-building tools targeted at low-context communication as well as the invitation for and emphasis on personal communication and meetings, since this is of high importance for high-context cultures.

7.2 Limitations and Validity

There are several limitations involved in this research. One of the most relevant limitations was the very concise time frame of four months given as the official graduation period. This might have been less time than might be ideal for a thorough and detailed study. It was preventing the researcher from taking a greater amount of samples and a more detailed look into theories. Moreover, the sample does not accurately represent the full spectrum of cultures PROGEDO will be communicating with.

Keeping these limitations in mind when considering the validity of results, it can be said that the results are of high relevance for the creation of recommendations for PROGEDO.

8 Advice

8.1 Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the following recommendations can be given:

1. PROGEDO must not focus on what they want to say but on what information their target group needs. Consequently, PROGEDO needs to put itself in the shoes of the different target groups, understand and
meet them in their situations, take them by the hand and guide them through the process. Relocation is a very complex process, in addition costly and valuable for companies and very personal for the expats. By showing sensitivity to their situations, the target groups will find themselves understood and taken seriously. As a consequence it will be easier for them to trust PROGEDO and its services.

How?
To address both cultural, as well as situational circumstances PROGEDO should put more emphasis on a “we” approach when using languages that are common for more collective countries, e.g. Spain, or by using pictures showing a typical cultural situation respective to the home culture. Also, use of phrases/ headings such as:

- This is how we make your life easier
- This is how we can help you
- These are the benefits you gain from working with us
- We understand that your life is undergoing an immense change at the moment, that’s why we want to support you to fulfil your individual wishes
- This is what you can expect from living and working in Germany

One way of demonstrating understanding could be for example the use of a photo story. Portraying e.g. a family during their relocation with photos from the different stages and emotions creates a very close approach to an individual who is in the same position and who is wondering what is expecting him. In addition, testimonials about success stories and other expats’ experiences will build trust and take fear from the whole relocation process. This can include a ‘regular’ relocation procedure, problems that occurred and have been solved by PROGEDO, expats and their life in Hamburg, their expectations and experiences, etc. Also, photos showing for example people receiving the
keys to their new home or a child on its first day of school display the processes and create emotional attachment.

2. In order to facilitate finding an access to the target groups, PROGÉDO must find a personal but professional communication level, which gives both the companies and the expats the feeling that PROGÉDO is professional but delivering individualized services and understanding that they are working with human beings rather than machines.

How?
A very good start is made by the PROGÉDO slogan “The first friend abroad”. This should be extended to the overall website and create a personal and well-known feeling. For example, by producing a short movie with moving pictures or comics presenting PROGÉDO and its services, an easy but interesting introduction is made which facilitates cross-border communicaiton. Of course, the video or movie needs to be perceived as professional. Also, the managing partner could be filmed introducing their company, their services, experience and clients and thus building trust and showing their understanding of what clients need. At the same time, they are building their status.

Especially regarding the consultants, a personal level has to be found. One of the basics in building trust and relationships is getting to know each other. By providing photos of the consultants an important visual key element is made available. Also, a short summary of the professional as well as personal background is recommended to allow some first impressions of the consultants. Personal statements, e.g. one’s motto in life, or interviews demonstrating professional expertise or experience are a further plus point.

Moreover, a contact formulary should be provided under the contact section, which easily establishes personal contact between the potential
client or expat and PROGEDO. By requiring the name, company, and e-mail of the enquirer, PROGEDO already receives first important contact details and can engage an individual dialogue.

3. Since PROGEDO wants to target an international audience, low-context communication is the best way to do so.

How?

When creating text content, it's important to be as explicit as possible, ensuring the text is unambiguous and leaves little room for misinterpretation. Even better though, is the use of as many visual messages as possible. Pictures always work better across cultures than text (especially when it comes to text in a foreign language, which is the case for most expats). Moreover, pictures and visuals have a much more emotional access to the reader of the website.

In addition, it could be thought about recording some basic German phrases that could be listened to on the website to give a first tiny introduction to the German language, e.g. a friendly “Willkommen in Deutschland!” (Welcome to Germany!), “Hallo!” (Hello!), “Wie geht’s?” (How are you?), “Danke” (Thank you) and “Bitte” (Please), etc. It is important to only offer any videos or audio sequences on demand since people tend to be quickly annoyed by self-starting media. Furthermore, a humorous introduction to German culture, e.g. in form of caricatures or pictures about German stereotypes, breaks the ice between the different cultures and makes it more interesting than a dry text. Another opportunity would be to design a quiz about German habits.

4. As the findings have shown, the expats are in need of much information during their relocation process.

The content of the website should especially focus on housing, this
means a more accurate description of the housing opportunities and situation, including information on Hamburg’s city districts, square meter prices, distances to work and other important places, such as international supermarkets, how to escape bad weather, etc., since also the climate and the local food has been of primary concern. To give an idea about the climate in Hamburg, a live webcam showing e.g. the Landungsbrücken or another main place in Hamburg could be installed, as well as a widget displaying the local time and weather conditions on the home page. Moreover, bureaucracies, tax issues, and other legal matters should be explained more or linked to important websites. This could for example be part of a FAQ section.

Also, safety and welfare of the families relocating with the expat was of great importance and demands more information for e.g. the accommodation of children in nurseries or job opportunities for spouses. Indeed, there should be different scenarios covered by website, i.e. expats coming on their own to Hamburg, with partner or with family. Each of these is a very different situation. Thus, in the “How we make your life easier section” (see 5.) there should be at least three headings addressing one situation each. Use sentences such as “You are now in this situation, this is how you must feel like and these are probably some of the thoughts and concerns you have. But don’t worry, we will help you.” The explanation of the relocation process and major concerns such as housing will make the website attractive for expats and at the same time prove expertise to multinationals.

Naturally, one of the main issues is leaving family and friends behind. Communication networks have proven to be very much desired by the expats and should linked to the website. It is advised to use an existing communication platform to avoid creating yet another platform. This increases the likelihood of the expats visiting the PROGEDO network when they are already using social media such as Facebook anyways.
Indeed, Facebook showed a good user rate for making it the basis for the network. Furthermore, PROGEDO already has a Facebook site and can easily link it to the website. However, it is imperative that if the client decides to choose Facebook as a communication tool, it has to be professionally moderated and continuously updated, i.e. at the very least once a week.

Moreover, the expats showed interest in a newsletter, which can only be highly recommended. PROGEDO has to regularly update the news on the website to keep up the relevance regarding search engine rankings. Furthermore, the expats request the latest new and events that are going on in Hamburg, which should be seen as part of the service and as a support to integrate. To offer a newsletter that is sent out to the clients should be made optional on the website, using linked on the news site where the user can sign up for it. Plainly, the expats have made clear that they only accepts and desire such newsletters when the content is worth it. It is thus highly recommended to only start a newsletter when high quality content is guaranteed, otherwise this newsletter will be negative promotion for PROGEDO.

5. A good structure and overview as well as a “clean” design help to achieve a professional impression. The following navigation bar (here in green) with a drop down menu is proposed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Expats</th>
<th>Contractors</th>
<th>News</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who is PROGEDO?</td>
<td>How we make your life easier</td>
<td>How we make your life easier</td>
<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>Impressum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How we make your life easier</td>
<td>Team / Faces</td>
<td>Estate Agents</td>
<td></td>
<td>Disclaimer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduation Report 56 Anna-Lena Schulte
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Living in Germany</th>
<th>Craftsmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pricelist</td>
<td>Hamburg</td>
<td>Jobs for relocators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testimonials</td>
<td>Profile of Hamburg’s districts</td>
<td>Testimonials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklists for clients</td>
<td>Services &amp; Relocation Procedure</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Testimonials</td>
<td>Checklists for Expats PROGEDO-App Q&amp;A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen, each link in the navigation bar addresses one target group and specifically delivers the information needs and wants for the respective audience. Although it is advised that a main focus should be put on the expat’s needs and wants, also the other target groups should not be neglected but felt understood in their situations. In addition, it should be addressed how they can benefit from working with PROGEDO (How we make you life easier).

The overall aim should be to connect all communication tools and to thus increase the number of visitors and to spread the word about PROGEDO.
8.2 Budget & feasibility of recommendations

It has to be noticed that the mentioned recommendations are the ideal circumstances for the design of the website. However, making the website available in different languages involves hiring professional translators or native speakers to ensure an excellent and faultless content. These translations can be very costly, depending on the amount of text. For example, Optimus Übersetzungen (2011) charges per line, starting at 1,10€ per line, as a middle price 1,30€ and maximum 1,80€ per line depending on the language. Since it is advised to strongly communicate with pictures, the amount of text should not be too extensive anyways. Also, keeping the results of the literature review in mind, the power and importance of language must not be underestimated. Although it is recommended to start with the most common languages of the clients and expats (German, English, French, Spanish), PROGEDO should consider carefully to expand the offer of languages on their website to improve and further
demonstrate their personal and individual service. As a very basic version, the use of German and English is advised.

In addition, PROGEDO should expect the need of human resources to moderate the Facebook page and community as well as for the creation and management of the website updates and newsletters. Only with excellent content and support, these tools can successfully be established. Although PROGEDO’s back staff could handle this, this will require time and planning.

To put it in a nutshell, PROGEDO aims to raise the awareness among potential business partners and to get in contact with them, which requires marketing. It is strongly advised to determine a certain amount of time and budget for marketing and promotion activates. Considering the current size of PROGEDO, at least two languages should be feasible (German and English) as well as the moderation of the Facebook platform and community. The creation of a newsletter will take time and should use a professional template, additional human and monetary resources are likely to be needed to successfully realize this goal.

8.3 Future Outlook

As became clear during research, PROGEDO plans to expand its services by offering lower budget virtual support in within the next couple of years. In order to prepare the website for this future offer, it is advised to create a login area, which can later be used to make the required material available. It should explain all the expats’ main concerns and actions into detail in form of e.g. video tutorials, step by step filled in authority forms, etc. For now, this login area could be made available for clients, offering them more detailed and exclusive information. This will add perceived value for paying clients. For example, it could contain application forms, which are made available in a download tool or a digital questionnaire about housing preferences, which would reduce the immense paper work of the expats.
Considering the trend of PROGEDO rapidly growing, it should realize the importance of the website as a professional communication tool that requires budget, care and support. By implementing the mentioned recommendations over time, PROGEDO can successfully achieve its goal to use it in business-to-business communication and to reach potential clients.
9 References


Hague: Eleven International Publishing.


1 Appendix

1.1 Graphical overview of lack of specialists in Germany

![Graphical overview of lack of specialists in Germany](image)

(von Borstel, 2013)

1.2 Increase in international assignments

![Increase in international assignments](image)

(Syedain, 2012)
1.3 Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Week number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intake Meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue statement</td>
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<td>Hand in Draft Proposal</td>
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<td>Improve draft proposal</td>
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<td>DEADLINE Hand in Proposal</td>
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<td>Graduation Report</td>
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<td>Organize Interviews</td>
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<td>Write literature review</td>
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<td>Develop interview guide</td>
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<td>Feedback from graduation supervisor</td>
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<td>Interview 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transcribe Interview 1</td>
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<td>Interview 2</td>
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<td>Transcribe Interview 3</td>
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<td>Develop Survey based on Interview findings</td>
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<td>Feedback from graduation supervisor</td>
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<td>Distribute survey</td>
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<td>Analyze survey findings</td>
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<td>Write findings section</td>
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<td>Feedback from graduation supervisor</td>
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<td>Write analysis comparison section</td>
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<td>Write conclusion</td>
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<td>Work on feedback</td>
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<td>Hand in final Graduation Report</td>
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<td>Client Presentation and Examination Interview</td>
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<td>Plan Pitch</td>
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<td>Create necessary presentational aids</td>
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<td>Client Presentation</td>
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<td>Prepare Exam Interview</td>
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<td>Exam Interview</td>
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</table>

Note: DEADLINE dates are placeholders and should be adjusted according to the actual schedule.
1.4 Feasibility

1.4.1 Limitations and risks

The researcher’s position also played an important role in this kind of research. While observing, during interviews and the analysis afterwards, the researcher had to avoid including his own opinions, feelings or attitudes to not change the desired results in one way or the other by being biased (Hayes, 2006). Also, language barriers could occur.

Next to the limitations, there were some risks involved in this research. Interview partners that were of relevance for the research might not have been available. An alternative would have been to find another source that would have been able to provide the same or similar information, e.g. a colleague.

1.4.2 Budget

There was no budget provided for research, i.e. the researcher was dependent on free resources. However, budget for the implementation of the advice was made available.
### 1.5 Hippler’s results: count of motives for an international transfer

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulated %</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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(Hippler, 2009)

### 1.6 High- and low-context communication

Yellow stands for individualistic, red for collectivistic.

(Hofstede, 2010)
1.7 Semi-structured interview guideline

1.7.1 English Version

Introduction

• Explain who I am, what I am doing and what the interview is about
• Ask for permission to record this interview
• Background information about the interviewee
  o Name
  o Nationality
  o Age
  o Position
  o Experiences

Questions about the key concepts:

Relocation procedure

• How did the relocation procedure of you / your clients / colleagues / employees work?
• Why did you / most of your clients / colleagues / employees decide to relocate?
• Did you / most of your clients / colleagues / employees come to Germany on your /their own or with a partner or family?
• Which information did you / your clients / colleagues / employees receive beforehand?
• What went well?
• Which problems concerning communication evolved?
• What could be improved information wise?

Intercultural aspects

• Which cultural background do you / most of your clients / colleagues / employees have?
• What is typical for your /their culture?
• Which languages do you / most of your clients / colleagues / employees speak?
• What is strange for you /most of your clients / colleagues / employees in Germany?
• What do you /most of your clients / colleagues / employees miss most from your home country?

Digital media (& cultural influences)
• When you need information, how do you try to get this information?
  o If Internet not mentioned: Would you use the Internet to search for it?
• How often do you use the Internet?
• How important is the information provided in the Internet for you /most of your clients / colleagues / employees?
• How much does the web page of a company influence your opinion about this company?
• What do you expect from a webpage?
• Did you have a look at Progedo’s webpage?
  o If yes: Why?
  o What is your opinion about it?
  o Is it available in your language?
  o Do you feel addressed?
  o What do you like about it?
  o What don’t you like about it?
  o What information is missing?
  o What could be improved?
  o How do you like the style of the Progedo webpage? Is it different from webpages in your home country?
    • How?
  o If no: Why not?
  o What would make you visit the website?
  o In which language should it be available?
  o Which features should it have?
  o What should it look like?
What do you think, what is the most important information that should be provided for you / most of your clients / colleagues / employees?

Wrap up

• Do you have anything to add?
• Do you have any questions?

Thank you for your time and help!

1.7.2 German Version

Einleitung

• Erklären wer ich bin, was ich mache und worum es in dem Interview geht
• Nach Erlaubnis fragen, das Interview aufnehmen zu dürfen
• Hintergrundinformationen über den Befragten
  o Name
  o Nationalität
  o Alter
  o Position
  o Erfahrungen

Fragen zu den Hauptkonzepten:

Interkulturelle Aspekte

• Welchen kulturellen Hintergrund haben Sie / die meisten Ihrer Kollegen / Ihrer Mitarbeiter?
• Welche Sprachen sprechen Sie / die meisten Ihre Kollegen / Ihre Mitarbeiter?
• Was ist für Sie / die meisten Ihrer Kollegen / Ihrer Mitarbeiter seltsam oder anders in Deutschland?
• Was vermissen Sie / die meisten Ihrer Kollegen / Ihrer Mitarbeiter von ihrem Heimatland?

Relocation Prozess

• Wie läuft / lief der Relocation Prozess bei Ihnen / den meisten Ihrer Kollegen / Ihrer Mitarbeiter ab?
• Welche Informationen hatten Sie / Ihre Kunden / Kollegen / Mitarbeiter im voraus?
• Was lief gut?
• Welche Probleme traten auf?
• Was könnte verbessert werden?

Digital media (& cultural influences)
• Welche Informationen sind Ihrer Meinung nach die wichtigsten und sollten unbedingt auf der Website erscheinen?
• Wenn Sie Informationen brauchen, wie gehen Sie vor?
  o Falls Internet nicht genannt: Würden Sie auch das Internet in Erwägung ziehen?
• Wie oft benutzen Sie das Internet?
• Wie wichtig sind die Informationen, die im Internet zu finden sind, für Sie?
• Inwiefern beeinflusst die Website eines Unternehmens Ihre Meinung über das Unternehmen?
• Was erwarten Sie von einer Website?
• Haben Sie die Progedo Website schon einmal besucht?
  o Warum oder warum nicht?
  o Wenn ja: wie finden Sie die Website?
  o Was mögen Sie an der Website?
  o Was mögen Sie nicht an der Website?
  o Welche Informationen fehlen?
  o Fühlen Sie sich angesprochen?
  o Was könnte verbessert werden?
  o Wie finden Sie den Stil der Progedo Website? Ist er anders als der Stil der Websites in Ihrem Heimatland?
    ▪ Inwiefern?
  o Ist die Seite in Ihrer Muttersprache verfügbar?

Wrap up
• Möchten Sie irgendetwas hinzufügen?
• Haben Sie irgendwelche Fragen?

Danke für Ihre Zeit und Hilfe!

1.8 Interview Transcripts

1.8.1 Interview Transcript S.H.

The questions posed by the researcher will be marked in italic, the answers by the interviewee S.H., expatriate manager at Airbus, PROGEDO’s most important client, in regular fond.

(Introduction)

First of all I would like to ask you about some background information. Could you please tell me your nationality?

S.H.: German. A.S.

And how old are you?

S.H.: I’m 27

What is your job position?

S.H.: I am working for a big company and the name is Airbus. And I am working as an expatriate manager.

What are your tasks?

S.H.: I am taking care for the seecondes and transfeerees going from Germany to France and especially in regard to tax issues and social securities as well as the integration in the host country and typical questions regarding their secondeement and so on.

We are coming to the main part of the interview now, which is separated into three parts being relocation procedure, intercultural aspects and digital media. So I would like to start with the first one: How does the relocation procedure of your employees work?

S.H.: The relocation process is like the occasion when we initiate a new assignment, we inform the relocation agency to get in touch with them and ask them uhm in regards to uhm their wishes in terms of home finding. So they get a questionnaire - the employees - and they have to answer what they are searching
for. And so then the process is that the relocation service prepares some exposés and when uhm the employees have their ‘Look and see trip’ they come over to the host country and the relocation service is helping them and introducing them to the possibilities in regards to the living. Yeah, and then other things like the initiation of a bank account and getting the providers for electricity and so on. Yeah and when everything is done, the relocation agency sends us the quotation and is done and it’s agreed when everything is fine. And this is the process. And afterwards, when they return back, the employees, they would support them as well and finishing off the assignment.

*Could you please shortly summarize your role in this relocation process, like what exactly are you doing?*

S.H.: Well, my job is to initiate the relocation company and uhm to get in touch with the employee. And also taking care of the quality of the service. So when there is uhm I receive the feedback of the employee like ‘I am completely not confident with the service’, I have to record this and get back to the company and ask them what was the uhm what was this about and find a solution. So: initiating the relocation service, taking care of the quality, being in touch with the relocation agency to have a good relation, and as well that the pricing is ok and also the agreement for the services.

*Another question about the motivation of the employees, why do most employees decide to relocate?*

S.H. Uhm as I have lot of Blue collars, the main focus of them is mostly in regards to the monetary aspects. Yeah it’s the motivation that they earn much money when they go abroad. But furthermore I also have some assignees saying ‘I want to go abroad because of the cultural differences, to learn the languages’ and because, for example, Toulouse is very warm, so the living standard is much better there.

*OK, but the main motive is...?*

S.H.: Yeah, the monetary rewards.

*Are most of your employees coming alone to Germany or with their families or partners?*
S.H.: It's... so I'm taking care of the other way round from Germany to France and I can only speak for them so mainly they are singles and I would say... yeah let's say 70% singles and 30% with family or maybe a bit more, let's say 60/40.

*And when you initiate this relocation process, which information does the employee get in advance before the relocation process starts?*

S.H.: Regarding only the relocation service, they get a briefing from me, which lasts one hour. And uhm I'm explaining who is the company, who will get in touch with them for the relocation, what are the tasks of the relocation agencies and uhm yeah nothing more information so uhm yeah the service package is provided by the relocation service.

*What about any other information about the country or culture?*

S.H.: From my side? No. No uhm everything is provided is by the relocation agency.

*During these relocation processes, what is usually going well?*

Soo uhm if the relocation agency is quite in contact with the employees, so they are first friends abroad, and so for them it's good to have somebody there and I think that it is the main importance what works very well because they know the host country and they can help them a lot. So that's working very well and uhm the home searching depends on the market. So we have a big issue because the market in Toulouse is very full. There are not many flats or houses available. So that's why the employees sometimes think that the service of the relocation service has the problem and it's not the problem of the market. So they are not confident with the service of the relocation service although it's not their fault.

*Regarding communication, are there any problems evolving?*

S.H.: I think the only problem regarding communication is that sometimes it's too less communication. So when I see there is a lot of communication and the exchange is very often, then I normally am quite sure that this service is quite good because of the communication. If you have no communication you know the service and so on is not so good.

*Do you have any suggestions for improvements?*

S.H.: Taking care of the communication and being in contact with the employees often, just e.g. creating a newsletter just to keep them updated. And uhm that you
help them, to be really honest, and to uhm with their duration and the whole transfer.

*Ok, so this was already the first part about the relocation process, we move now on to the intercultural aspects. Which cultural background do most of your clients have?*

S.H.: They have the German background.

*Is there anything really typical cultural that is very apparent when you are working with them?*

S.H.: So as I am also from the German culture, I cannot say anything special. But as I have lots of French colleagues, they always think that Germans are very structured and tough. And the hierarchy is not that high in Germany. But for my employees I can say there is nothing special. So it depends really on the character and I can say yeah, most of them are typical stereotypes of German cultures.

*Which languages do the employees usually speak?*

S.H.: German for sure. As not everybody has a high education, as they are blue collar, some of them are speaking quite well English but sometimes it's not that good, e.g. when they have tax issues and it's in English, they are quite lost. Because tax issues are quite complicated and then in another languages, you see, you might know, it's very complicated. So some of them English, French, let's say 5/10%, yeah.

*When you are sending the employees abroad, is there anything especially strange for them that they report back to you?*

S.H.: Yes, e.g. the childcare. When you go to France you recognize that all the mums, the French mums, they have organized the child very good. So they work and the child or the kids are in the kindergarten and in school. Up to when they finish working. So when the mum is finished working, they catch up the child. In Germany, it's another culture; because sometimes the mums are not working and staying at home and in France this is not possible because they are loosing a lot of money. So when the German mums go abroad they want to take their babies to the language training but in France it is so uhm not wanted to have language training with accompanying children. So this is a typical cultural difference. And a typical one is also in regards to dinners and uhm yeah, because
the French ones are meeting very long time so the lunchtime takes about two hours and in Germany one hour and they are allowed to drink beer in the canteen, in French ones, and the Germans are not. Although it's always said that the Germans and the French are close together but when you take a look at it you see that there are a lot of differences.

Is there anything your employees miss especially from their home country?

S.H.: Yeah, uhm the reliability for e.g. for when they have a problem with a house and somebody is coming over to repair, they are not very punctual. so punctuality, reliability, and clear words. When a German says something it is very clear, in France it is like ‘can you please do it this way, may I kindly ask you?’ So, this I think are the most three differences what they are missing.

Thank you very much, this was the cultural part already. Finally: digital media. At first a very general question: when you need any information, where are you looking for information?

S.H.: As I am in the generation where we live with Google, I just type it into Google and check the result.

How often are you actually using the Internet?

S.H.: I am using it every day. It is just if I am looking for a dictionary I’m just typing into the Internet and pick up the words, so every day.

So you would say the Internet is the main source of information?

S.H.: Yes, definitely.

How important is this information for you in terms of trustworthiness and value?

S.H.: When I check it in the Internet, I only want to have the main picture. And uhm but when I want to have it in detail, I am not trusting it 100%. So I am going to an expert. E.g. when I have questions regarding taxes because I don't have the know-how, I just check the Internet what it is about. But then I get in touch with my expert for taxes because I can rely on his word and he is working with it every day.

How do you identify an expert?

S.H.: For me, an expert is someone who can answer my questions in a very high quality and I can rely on it. So to identify the expert uhm I think it is necessary to have some trust. Because uhm if you don't know this person at all or nobody knows this person and you don't get feedback from other persons. Then how do
you know it? So there has to be beforehand some communication and... to know that this person is good and an expert.

*Let's say you don’t have any information beforehand. What could be criteria when you are looking at his website to decide whether it is an expert or not?*

S.H.: The references. And uhm yeah and for sure when I’m getting in touch with someone from PWC, who is a big company for taxes, then I think that everybody of them should have a basic know how and yeah um all these persons are experts in taxes.

*So this would be kind of the name and brand recognition...?*

S.H.: Yeah the branding for example and yeah only when somebody tells that you can trust them then. I would also say ok, I have a look at it.

*What about the style of a website, is that influencing your opinion of a company?*

S.H.: Yes, when I see for example uhm a company which has different layouts, different uhm types of writings, for example, and everything is coloured and so on, for me it look very unprofessional. So I have a very clear picture in mind how it should look like and when I see this, it is a professional homepage. Then I get more trust and the service of the company for sure.

*You said you have something in mind how it should look like, could you please elaborate on that?*

S.H.: So first of all, when I take the uhm a big company like PWC, e.g. that is a tax company, for me it should be very structured and clear and yeah maybe the colour should be very, how should I say, black, white, dark blue, so very professional. But when I want to have a party for kids, so then I am searching for clowns, something like this, then it shouldn't be something like this, because that would be boring to have the clown when the website is looking like black and white.

*Speaking further about a professional website: What kind of content website do you expect from a professional website?*

S.H.: First I want to know how uhm what is the company about, so how long do they exist and the history of it. And I also prefer a to have faces of the company to see who is working for it. And uhm as well the contact details and uhm and for me its also important, the front page is very important, that it is structured and then you have a menu where you can select something out of it. And yeah as I
said, contact, the team, description of the company, and maybe also some tools, e.g. the latest news would be also good.

*Coming to the PROGEDO website, did you have a look at it?*

S.H.: Uhm no, unfortunately I didn't have a look beforehand, it was two years or so ago, but I think that was an older website.

*OK, no problem. What would make you visit the website, since you didn't have a look yet?*

S.H.: You said you wanted to change the layout so I would have a look today because I am curious to see what it is now. And yes, so when I'm searching for something in the Internet with Google and I am just clicking at it uhm so only because someone is saying about it so I want to know how it is now.

*Yes, but as I understand you are working with PROGEDO?*

S.H.: I am working with PROGEDO, yes, but not as often because I am taking care for those from Germany to France and there I'm working with other relocation agencies and to be honest the homepage should be... I'm not taking care of the quality of the homepage. Because the provider has to take care of it as well and it's important for the employees to have a look at it. But for me, to be honest, I am not looking the Internet pages of our providers.

*Why not? Is there no information that would interest you?*

S.H.: No, but I am so good informed by them that for me it is not necessary to have a look at it. E.g. when there is another tool that the employees or expats are using or have to use now, I would have a look at it only to make sure that it is easy to handle. But when I'm not concerned as an employee, for me only the feedback of the employee is important and when I receive the feedback I would have a look at it.

*Which features should it have? Would you like to add something to that?*

S.H.: The features, we said regarding the menu, that it should be very clear and that maybe yeah a tool but uhm Jörg already told me about something about where everybody is typing in information, kind of a questionnaire, if I am correct. This is for the employees quite nice to have because they can react quite well and are also updated because he told me a lot of the homepage already and what are his ideas and I know he is still working on it, so I still haven't checked it out. But I think the ideas he has for the features are quite good.
Which languages should the website have?

S.H.: For sure in English, for me it is important to have the website also in German because my employees form Germany to France are only speaking as I told you a bit English. So that is why it is necessary for them to understand it, it has to be in German.

Final and most important question: For you as a client looking at a relocation service, which information should be provided on the website?

S.H.: The contact persons and that the employees have the picture before they get in touch with the relocation assistant. As well, because we are living in a digital world, that we are having questionnaire for the house searching for example, on the homepage, so that all the paper work and so on is getting a bit down and uhm yeah because lots of employees are having so much paper work with all their transfers, also when they are going from France to Germany and they are very happy to make it more easy. So this would be awesome to have a tool that is very friendly to the employees, that is very easy to handle and yeah and also maybe news in regards to the host country they are coming to. I think that's the important things.

You already made it! Is there anything you would like to add?

S.H.: No.

Do you have any questions?

S.H.: No.

Then: Thank you very much for your help and your time!

1.8.2 Interview Transcript P.A.

The questions posed by the researcher will be marked in italic, the answers by the interviewee P.A., stress engineer at Airbus, who has been relocated by PROGEDO, in regular font.

(Introduction)

At first I would like to ask some basic questions: how old are you?


What is your nationality?

P.A.: Spanish.
What is your job position?  

For which company?  
P.A.: Airbus.

What is your work experience?  
P.A.: Five years in the industry, at Airbus.

You've been relocated by PROGEDO, right?  
P.A.: Yes.

How did the relocation procedure work?  
P.A.: Overall quite good, very good.

What where the different steps?  
P.A.: I was contacted via email.

By whom?  
P.A.: Uhm first by one agent, later I was redirected to Susanne Fischer-Appelt and uhm I was asked about my preferences regarding housing. And I also have the help of my expatriate department.

The expatriate department in Spain?  
P.A.: Yeah form Airbus.

Why did you decide to relocate?  
P.A.: Uhm because of the money and the personal experience to go to an unknown country. I was in Madrid for many years so I thought a change would be interesting. Also the salary conditions were good because I don't have to pay for an apartment basically. So that's the main thing basically. This relocation thing is the improvement let's say.

So that was very important for you?  
P.A.: Yes, that was good.

Did it convince you to go, having a relocation service?  
P.A.: Yes, definitely. Because I did not know what to expect of Germany exactly. It was some place I have interest in living in, a Nordic state for some time of my life, so it was quite interesting. But of course money was also important.

Was there any information you received before you were contacted by PROGEDO?
P.A.: About Germany? Culturally? No. Just from colleagues, it was my only source. Some colleagues, one or two, were here before and they told me it was a good place to live. Let’s say like more or less in Madrid overall also. 

*Just that I understand it right, you were offered to go to Germany and you only got then information from PROGEDO, not from Airbus at all?*

P.A.: Regarding the relocation and the conditions and the services, I knew it from my company. Regarding what to expect personally, I don’t know, I travel around a little bit so my own experience and colleagues references and from PROGEDO. Just the formal, they just asked me for my housing preferences, like directly in the city. And in order to have an opinion about it, I had to ask my colleague again, the one who was there. Indeed, this point was a weaker one in the whole thing because my colleague was advising me actually what to search for. Extremely successful because I ended up being his neighbour. But really, the place where I live I am not quite satisfied, this is the only thing. But the relocation was great because I was 30m away from him so I mean he was in Madrid, he were in Hamburg before, he left one month before me by coincidence and in the end he was living here the moment the same guy my main source of information. You know, somebody who has actually been living here. 

*Would you like to have another source of information beforehand, not just your colleague?*

P.A.: That was the only thing that I wrote in the feedback form, that it would have been good to be maybe uhm better advice regarding the conditions but actually e.g. I remember Susanne told me I was looking at another place and she told me this place is actually closer to your work. But from my point of view I had the impression that it was not. Now I know the city and it was a good indication, maybe I should have taken that one. But in the end it is difficult because it is difficult to know how the city before having lived there. And actually from the agency point of view, if they kind of press or recommend you too much, you can also feel… Because I have some friend, e.g. she didn’t ask for housing in Blankenese or find an apartment there. Her agent showed her repeatedly two or tree apartments there. And she was a little bit annoyed, you know: “I am not very interested in this, why are you keeping searching in this area?”. But maybe she would have been happier there, but… quite difficult, you know, because you have
somebody who really doesn't know what you want but you can't contradict in a lot. So maybe some solution or way to improve this could be worked out. But that was the only more or less low point. The rest was perfect, outstanding. It was very good.

*You basically already answered my question but do you want to add something to what went well communication wise?*

P.A.: Let's say on the top from what should be expected, Susanne was quite patient with me. She has to stay during two or three days with somebody and making important decisions because afterward with our commissions for example it is not easy to move again. Regarding the housing it is a decision you have to make in two days. She was quite understanding. And we really had some conversations about first impressions I had so it was good to have a personal touch in the first days. You are coming towards one city you are going to spend a lot of time and suddenly everything around you is new. So it is good to have somebody to talk with about some impressions, some things, for me it was perfect.

*Something you would like to improve apart from what you said already, communication-wise?*

P.A.: I am thinking a lot about housing, the rest of the thing was, the bank account thing went absolutely smooth, no, I am sure that I forget something. That’s good, there was not a problem. The only thing is that towards the end I found myself in the city location, the flat was good, but the location was not very convenient for me because I have to spend almost 50-something minutes from door to door, so this is a real thing. 20 to 30 up to 40 is ok, but when it's almost up to two hours per day, that’s really burning. So maybe an improvement would be a personal link that the agent can make with an assignee in the two or three days. Through that ask for a good feedback. Say: "hey, now I am living in this way, I have changed". And with the feedback of the new assignee trying to recommend that suit him more. That could be a way. I am probably going to move closer to work to stretch the travel time down to 20 minutes.

*Thank you, that was already the relocation part. Let’s come to the cultural part. You are from Spain. Where are most of your colleagues from?*
P.A.: My colleagues here are from Spain. I also have a group of Germans, but they are not very close at all.

*Is there anything you would say is very typical Spanish?*

P.A.: Maybe communication when you are living abroad. At some extend it's just not to get crazy or something. So that's very difficult to avoid: Not to have only Spanish colleagues. Also e.g. the way of going out, the way of partying or whatever.

*What is the main difference between the Spanish and the Germans?*

P.A.: Actually I don't know the Germans that much. I mean, as group of friends.

*But what are the things that are e.g. striking you every day at work?*

P.A.: Maybe the respect for... ah no. Uhm. Some kind of harshness, lack of flexibility in some aspects. The way of saying things when you are not doing something correct that it's completely clear the way of saying things sometimes is too harsh, I've seen it in the street, in personal relations, so that's the thing. In many cases, compared to the Spanish, lack of empathy and emotional intelligence on average because of course you see big differences. And I was thinking maybe among theses societies will be more differences regarding this aspect than in Spain because I think everything comes form the harsh weather, the lifestyle, the amount of time that many people spend on the street in big groups. The way of life of many villages and cities in Spain and I guess I also have been in the countryside here and uhm I need this social collective relation. I mean, they are different. Uhm yeah a lot of Germans, they lack a bit of empathy, emotional empathy and emotional intelligence, that's it.

*Ok, anything else?*

P.A.: More differences are the respect of the rules and to some extend they also understand the rules because he can just follow the rules. If the guy who is making up the rules was a wise guy it's no problem. I perceive a good honesty in the whole German system, I like. Maybe bureaucracy and precision, but it's good. Here everybody respects a lot the rest, how it should be, yeah. That's not the case with the Spanish. We have improved from complete chaos; we have walked away through the ideal thing. We are somehow in the middle, even closer to a complete mess, I mean form the point of... on the ground of morality uhm I also wonder also if the catholic education has something to do with it because it
makes you a good person, later you lose your faith in god and it's like uhm a freestyle morality. And actually the German society is much more civilized than the Spanish society. Anyway, that still looks like Europe, no? So actually the quality of life there is good.

*What are you missing most from home?*

P.A.: From Madrid, the city itself. The cultural offer and leisure offer in free time, it's wider. It's a bigger city with a lot of people willing to do something. With thousand of places. And my friends, I kind of miss them. But as soon ... it changes when you meet with expatriates, in my case mostly Spanish, unlucky. But you start living a quite dynamic life. So I am happy at the moment here. I don't know. I don't see myself living here my whole life but I know that even due to my commissions you can spend here many many years. I assume that it won't be for too long, so nowadays I am sure that in the next years I'm quite happy here.

*How long are you planning on staying here?*

P.A.: I would say, two or three years. It depends on my contract and professional decisions.

*You are already here for one year?*

P.A.: Yes, and I feel in some ways like a newcomer. And I suppose as my German knowledge improves, that's something to remark regarding the Spanish integration, we are really... all my friends have German lessons but the German mastery or the moment that you can really speak German comes for us after two years. Because we work in English and the German people know a lot of English, it is quite difficult to practice. In Spain, our skills in English are much lower and for some reason everybody is very lazy about it. So if you go to Spain, you learn Spanish very quickly. That is quite rude or impolite from our side but if you want to learn our language, you will suffer in the beginning but you will learn fast. The thing is that the Spanish that come here just abandon and you can find a lot of people who are here for three or four years who really don't know German.

*Which languages do they speak? Spanish and...?*

P.A.: English. And my case is I was working for one year in English, at the moment I am working in Spanish. That's the thing, if you can't command the language, how could you spec you impression of society that's why I can't make a fair point or I can't say things about it. Maybe I would really know how it is to
live here or how is the relation with the people when I improve my German. And when that time comes, maybe you already spent two or three years maybe it’s time for a new assignment. Because in this business every three or four years you should change.

*Thank you, this was the intercultural part. Let's come to digital media. First a very general question: When you need information, where do you get it?*

P.A.: The Internet.

*How important is the Internet for you? How often are you using it?*

P.A.: All the time.

*What about the importance and trustworthiness of the information in the Internet?*

P.A.: I am quite able to distinguish what is false and what is honest or not.

*How do you do that?*

P.A.: If I want to know if something is reliable or not, well in English it’s more difficult but in Spanish, I analyse the way the people write. You can know if it’s a wise person or not. You also can see if some information is solid to something or just informing or contrasting opinions. In your native tongue you can spot if somebody’s less or more intelligent. So that’s a way to select the good thing.

*And the style of the website, is that important as well for selecting a valuable source?*

P.A.: Style is important, yes of course.

*Which style would make it look professional?*

P.A.: Not html raw code. Even the logo. Complete information, like covering all the aspects of the thing like ensuring you that it’s reliable.

*Let’s say you are using a relocation service. Is the website of the company important for you as a first point of information of the company?*

P.A.: Yes, but if we are talking about this relocation, there are two points of view actually: when somebody approaches or when a company approaches. The differences could be huge. If we are talking about something important for customers, if it’s a relocation agency, wow, I would expect some … I would say some friendly style or something warm. Maybe more than professional because they are covering something related to completely professional things but for you it’s completely personal. Bu if I were a company, it would be different. Something more sophisticated or another design I would say. That's difficult in
this case. Maybe you can redirect to one place or the other. Like how you spread information. I don’t know if you want advertise in particular to companies. Maybe that’s including one from the other. I saw the PROGEO website and I found it a little bit cold for somebody who is going to be relocated.

That would actually be my question: you as someone who is going to be relocated, what kind of information would you expect on such a website?

P.A.: Difficult. Since it is linked to a city, it should have some information from the city. Information that you need, like the housing. You are working in many cities, that would imply to duplicate for each city. Maybe that’s not convenient and it would be better to send it via email. Maybe I forget a lot of things because I have my expatriate manager. If not of course you need to know the time you will need for everything and the things you will need like paper or whatever and how it will go. I guess the time for car plates change, how it will be. Maybe some things could be in advance, like insurances.

Did you actually have a look on the website before you came here?

P.A.: Yes.

How did you like it?

P.A.: I think it could be improved. But the first difficult question was to improve to whom? To the company or the assignees? Even for both I saw some improvements anyway. From a neutral angle it’s decent. Maybe for this business it’s reasonable but it could be improved.

You said before that you were very satisfied with the service.

P.A.: Yes.

Do you think this very good service is mirrored on the webpage?

P.A.: For me the impression of the website is part from the satisfaction of the service, yeah.

Do you have the feeling that German websites in general are different from Spanish website?

P.A.: Quite similar.

And the content as well?

P.A.: Yes. I saw some newspapers. Here I would say here the website design is good. In Spain I would say it’s similar.
OK, one final question: For you as an expat, which information should be on the website if it's targeted to you?

P.A.: Uhm. I think the description of the services. I think that the website itself, the first website, the front page, should be for the company. Later you should have some kind of private media. Describe what you need, the time. It would be super if you had a description of the parts of the city. Some description of the neighbourhoods, average prices, maybe square meter prices, rent furnished or not furnished. You could probably write a bible there. If it would be possible to customize to the city and the neighbourhood of the city, that would be awesome.

You said you had your colleague who could tell you a lot, right?

P.A.: Yes.

If you did not have this colleague, where would you have gotten the information from then?

P.A.: Maybe previous views of the important parameters, like bus lines to work.

But do you get this information from Airbus or PROGEDO?

P.A.: No, well the bus lines or the stuff ... your agent could forward to your website. Should be also quite impressive to a company "look, this is our private area". It would be very good for your engagement and the satisfaction of the employees. It would be great for a good experience during theses years of your employees that they make and offer, "we are offering you the information for the area and so on" and they can have a look. You do it once and with that you can have some base. You would not have to repeat everything.

Do you want to add anything that we did not talk about yet?

P.A.: Maybe I was very negative with the Germans but I mean I really live in harmony here. So that's something... In one year I never had somebody doing me wrong, you know. Probably in very few countries in the world someone could say something say similar. In the metro in the bus or in the shops, they didn't try to take advantage of me, they didn't treat me different because of my look. Living in such harmony, I think in very few countries that's possible.

Would you say Germany is a welcoming country?

P.A.: No more than welcoming, just coming. A touristic place could be welcoming but no need to be more, it's normal. You come and you live in harmony with other citizens. We were talking about friendships and going deep into a personal
level and then we find difficulties but the overall experience, and that’s quite important, to feel at home. I didn’t know the language, everyone around me was speaking German and you feel at home. That’s very important. When you are coming there, you know that you are going to be ok when you are making some friends. You are not in a harsh place I mean. Maybe that was most important. All the expats here, we are ok. Everyone who is not good, maybe he is alone, and the weather and the stuff. But the rest we are fine, we are happy.

Do you have any questions?

P.A.: No.

Thanks a lot for your time and help!

1.8.3 Transcript Interview A.A.

The questions posed by the researcher will be marked in italic, the answers by the interviewee A.A., relocation consultant among others for PROGEDO on a freelancing basis, in regular fond.

(Introduction)

Verrate mir bitte deine Nationalität.

A.A.: Deutsch

Und dein Alter?

A.A.: 47

Was ist deine Job Position?

A.A.: Relocator

Was sind deine Arbeitserfahrungen, wie lange machst du das schon?

A.A.: Also ich mache das seit 15 Jahren.

Das Interview ist in drei Teile unterteilt. Der erste ist über die Relocation Prozedur, der zweite über interkulturelle Aspekte und der dritte über digitale Medien. Fangen wir mit der Relocation Prozedur an: Wenn du diese Prozedur startest, wie genau läuft das alles ab?

A.A.: Ich nehme Kontakt zu den Kunden auf per E-Mail, stelle mich vor, wer ich bin und von welcher Firma und uhm dass es mich freut ihn zu betreuen. Und dann stellt ich ihm die Fragen, die für mich wichtig sind, um ihn zu betreuen. Das ist für mich in erster Linie was sucht er Wohnungs- oder Hausmäßig. Alles andere
was dann danach folgt und auch die Behördengänge, das ergibt sich, das bespreche ich mit dem Kunden persönlich wenn er dann hier ist. Das ist auch nicht so wichtig, den meisten drückt erst mal die Wohnungssuche.

Wie kommst du an die Kunden und Informationen?
A.A.: Meine Auftraggeber informieren mich, dass ein neuer Mitarbeiter nach Hamburg kommt und geben mir dann die Daten des Mitarbeiters.

Die meisten Mitarbeiter, die du betreust, kommen die allein nach Deutschland oder mit Familie?
A.A.: Das ist ganz unterschiedlich. Das hat sich auch im Laufe der Jahre verändert, aber aus’m Bauch raus würde ich sagen überwiegend Singles und vielleicht noch junge Paare und weniger Familien, sagen wir mal 40% Familien und 60% Singles und Paare.

Was ist dein Gefühl, warum entscheiden sich die meisten dazu zu relocaten?
A.A.: Es wird ihnen von der Firma angeboten um ihnen das Einleben hier leichter zu machen. Es ist natürlich immer ein Problem für jemanden, der kein Deutsch kann, der die Stadt nicht kennt und für die Firma ist es ein gutes Mittel Mitarbeiter hierher zu bekommen, die vielleicht sonst sagen würden "Nein, ich bleibe an meinem Standort".

Was glaubst du ist die Hauptmotivation der Mitarbeiter, dass sie nach Deutschland kommen?
A.A.: Karriere. Grundsätzlich haben sie zwar auf dem Papier die Möglichkeit nein zu sagen, und dort zu bleiben wo sie sind, aber dann wissen sie auch, dass ihre Karriere stagniert oder beendet ist und da die meisten ja relativ jung sind, nehmen die das natürlich wahr.

Was ist deine Erfahrung, welche Informationen haben die Mitarbeiter schon bevor du sie kontaktierst?
A.A.: Fast gar keine. Sie bekommen gesagt, dass es eine Relocation Firma gibt. Manchmal sogar auch schon die Kontaktdaten, aber meistens werden sie dann nicht weiter gebrieft. Das überlasst dann die Firma, der Auftraggeber, der Relocation Firma.

Gibt es irgendwelche Kommunikations- oder Informationsprobleme, die immer wieder auftreten?
A.A.: Also da die Kunden aus anderen Ländern, und selbst wenn sie in Europa
leben, aus anderen Kulturkreisen, also da ist selbst zwischen Deutschland und Holland ein großer Unterschied in einigen Bereichen, kommen, ist es manchmal sehr schwer, dass es hier anders ist. Selbst solche Kleinigkeiten, dass man wenn man eine leere Wohnung hier mietet, die Gardinen und Lampen selber mitbringt, stößt oft auf Unverständnis und auf erstes Unwohlsein, und das ist nur ne Klei

nigkeit, also da gibt es noch ne ganze Menge anderer Beispiele. Das Andersartige ist eigentlich das Problem für die Mitarbeiter. Es gibt Firmen, die machen interkulturelles Training, d.h. die Mitarbeiter, bevor sie ins Ausland geschickt werden, werden gebrieft, kriegen einen kleine Unterweisung, was ist anders, worauf müsst ihr euch vorbereiten. Das hat sich aber leider noch nicht so rumgesprochen, bzw. das war in den 80er Jahren, da habe ich solche Trainings selber gemacht für meinen damaligen Arbeitgeber, und da war es sehr verbreitet, aber das ist wieder eingeschlafen. Ich habe das Gefühl, dass die Firmen glauben, aufgrund der Globalisierung wüssten die Mitarbeiter, ein Chinese, was ihn in Deutschland erwartet, ist aber leider nicht so.

*Wenn solche Probleme auftreten, wie gehst du damit um?*


*Gibt es irgende welche konkreten Ideen die du hast, wie man das verbessern könnte?*

A.A.: Ja also wie gesagt, ich finde es sehr gut, wenn Mitarbeiter bevor sie ins Ausland geschickt werden, ein interkulturelles Training bekommen. Bei einem unserer Kunden ist es so, dass sie einem „Look and see trip“ bezahlt bekommen, d.h. der Arbeitgeber zahlt ihnen eine Woche Hotel und die Flüge für die ganze Familie. Das beinhaltet aber nur sie können die Stadt angucken. Das ist ein bisschen wenig um wirklich die Verschiedenartigkeit zu sehen, weil dieser Look and see trip ist mehr ein Urlaub, es ist noch nicht das wahre Leben. Und ich finde diese cultural trainings eigentlich sehr schön.

*Ok, das war schon der erste Teil über die Relocation Prozedur, gehen wir zum*
nächsten Teil, intercultural aspects. Die erste Frage ist: welchen kulturellen Hintergrund haben die meisten deiner Kunden?

A.A.: Also es sind im Grunde alles studierte Leute, was aber nicht unbedingt auf ein soziales, gesellschaftliches Level schließen lässt. Es gibt auch einige Akademiker, die ... da merkt man sie kommen aus ... also es sind im Grunde schon Kunden die ... also kulturell würde ich jetzt nicht sagen, dass das so die high... es sind ganz normale Leute.

Und interkulturell gesehen? Woher kommen die meisten?

Von überall auf der Welt, also von allen Kontinenten, das ist ganz unterschiedlich. Viele aus Europa natürlich, aber wir haben asiatische Kunden, Neuseeland, Australien, Afrika, Südamerika, überall her.

Gibt es irgendwelche Sachen, bei denen du sagen würdest, das ist wirklich typisch für Kunden aus diesem oder jenem Land?


Welche sprachen sprechen die meisten?

A.A.: Englisch. Also neben ihrer eigenen Sprache eigentlich nur English.

Was ist das, was am merkwürdigsten für deine Kunden in Deutschland ist?

A.A.: Also die meisten meiner Kunden bemerken positiv, dass es hier ziemlich frei zu geht. Weil viele Kunden kommen aus asiatischen, orientalischen Ländern, Südamerika, wo man sich nicht einfach so frei auf der Straße bewegen kann als Mittelklasse. Also die freuen sich einfach, dass man hier einfach über die Straße gehen kann ohne überfallen zu werden, die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel werden hoch gelobt, ja, und die Freundlichkeit der Hamburger. Das ist eben nicht wie in den Hamburg Führern, dass wir keine spröden Sprossen sind, sondern dass wir hilfreiche und nette Leute sind.

Gibt es eine Sache, die sie besonders aus ihren Heimatländern vermissen, nach denen du oft gefragt wirst?
A.A.: Das sind eigentlich Familie und Freunde.

Und sonst?
A.A.: Na ja, die Leute, die aus sonnigen warmen Ländern kommen finden hier oft die Kälte nicht so prickelnd. Aber so tiefgehende Gespräche führen wir selten.

Ok, das war schon der interkulturelle Part. Letzter Teil: digitale Medien. Benutzt du die PROGEDO Website?
A.A.: Nicht wirklich.

Warum nicht? Gibt es keine Informationen, die relevant für dich wären um auf diese Website zu gucken?
A.A.: Für mich? Nein. Ich bin ja quasi PROGEDO, also warum soll ich auf meine eigene Website gucken?

Und wie findest du die jetzige Website?
A.A.: Schlecht.

Was wären deine Verbesserungsvorschläge?

Und der Inhalt, fällt dir da was ein?
A.A.: Ich habe da so lange nicht mehr drauf geguckt, inhaltlich schon gar nicht, weil das was da steht, das weiß ich ja sowieso. Ich mag das Design einfach nicht, das ist so... wenn man auf die Seite geht, dann sind da so komische Zeichen, die finde ich nicht zuordbar, was sollen die da, was bedeutet das, das sieht alles ein bisschen Kinderkram mäßig aus.

Wie sieht denn für dich eine professionell aufgebaute Seite aus?
A.A.: Also ich ärgere mich über unübersichtliche Websites, die viel Text bieten, die nicht klar strukturieret sind, sodass ich nicht auf Anhieb sehe, wo ich welche Information finde. Eine Website soll erst mal nur graduell informieren, sie muss nicht ins kleinste Detail gehen und sie muss auf einem Blick erfassbar sein für den Nutzer, dass ich weiß aha, Kontakt, Preise, Leistungen, mehr Informationen brauche ich nicht. Was Relocation ist braucht da auch nicht in drei Seiten stehen, weil wer auf diese Website geht weiß es.

Welche Informationen sollten deiner Meinung nach unbedingt auf der Seite sein?
A.A.: Das kann man gerne als Gimmick machen, ich bezweifle, dass die Kunden darauf schauen. Also weder die Personalabteilungen, die interessiert das eh...

Irgendwelche Fragen, die du schon 1000 mal beantwortet hast?
A.A.: Das kann man gerne als Gimmick machen, ich bezweifle, dass die Kunden darauf schauen. Also weder die Personalabteilungen, die interessiert das eh...
nicht, weil die denken ja das ist unsere Aufgabe den Kunden das zu verklickern, noch den Kunden, die wir betreuen. Ich glaube nicht, dass das genutzt wird als Informationsquelle. Ich finde dann auch den persönlichen kontakt schöner, ich denke das sehen unsere Kunden genauso.

Das war es auch schon! Möchtest du noch irgendetwas hinzufügen?

A.A.: Nein.

Hast du irgendwelche Fragen?

A.A.: Nein.

Danke für deine Zeit und deine Hilfe!

1.8.4 Transcript Interview S.F.

The questions posed by the researcher will be marked in italic, the answers by the interviewee S.F., relocation consultant among others for PROGEDO on a freelancing basis, in regular fond.

(Introduction)

Verrate mir bitte deine Nationalität.

S.F.: Deutsch

Und dein Alter?

S.F.: 46

Was ist deine Job Position?

S.F.: Selbständige Relocatorin.

Was sind deine Arbeitserfahrungen, wie lange bist du dabei?


Das Interview ist in drei Teile unterteilt. Der erste ist über die Relocation Prozedur, der zweite über interkulturelle Aspekte und der dritte über digitale Medien. Fangen wir mit der Relocation Prozedur an: Wenn du diese Prozedur startest, wie genau läuft das alles ab?

S.F.: Ich bekomme die Nachricht der und der kommt, dann kontaktiere ich den normalerweise per Mail oder per Telefon und bespreche mit dem was er so braucht, wo er so steht, was er gerne möchte, was ihm wichtig ist. Dann bespreche ich mit ihm, was dann so in etwa sein kann, rede mit ihm darüber.
passt das alles auch zusammen und um ja, dann bespreche ich mit ihm wann er kommt um Wohnungen anzugucken, das ist ja das Eheste normalerweise.

Was ist die Hauptmotivation für die Leute die du betreuust, warum sind die nach Deutschland gekommen?

Die Kunden, die du betreuust, kommen die meistens allein nach Deutschland oder mit Partnern oder Familie?
S.F.: Alles drei, ich würde sagen gedrittelt.

Was ist deiner Erfahrung nach die Information die, die Expats schon haben bevor du sie kontaktierst?
S.F.: Sie wissen wo der Arbeitgeber ist auf dem Stadtplan, sie haben manchmal schon bestimmte Wohngebiete durch Kollegen erzählt bekommen. Das war’s.

Und während des Relocation Prozesses, treten da immer wieder irgendwelche bestimmten Informations- oder Kommunikationsprobleme auf?
S.F.: Natürlich ist für alle interessant wie sind die Public Transport Verbindungen zu den einzelnen Punkten, die für sie wichtig sind. Es interessiert sie... also da kommt es halt drauf an... aber das wollen alle wissen. Oder wenn für sie ganz klar ist, sie fahren sowieso mit dem Auto, dann interessiert sie das nicht. Ja, da kommt es einfach auch darauf an, ob es Singles oder so sind... Wo sie einkaufen können, das ist auch immer ganz wichtig.

Ok, kommen wir zum Thema interkulturelle Aspekte. Welchen interkulturellen Hintergrund haben die meisten deiner Kunden?
S.F.: Also, die meisten sind europäischer Hintergrund, und davon auch relativ viele Franzosen, aber durchaus auch weltweit.

Gibt es ein Merkmal, das besonders typisch für Kunden aus bestimmten Ländern ist?
S.F.: Spanier schreiben sehr kurze E-Mails. Sonst, wüsste ich so nichts. Also man muss die Bürokratie erklären, weil die natürlich in jedem Land anders ist.

Aber das merkst du dann schon, dass da Unterschiede sind?
S.F.: Die meisten französischen Kunden freuen sich, dass hier die Bürokratie, die Anmeldungen, etc. dass das hier einfach geht. Und die Spanier auch.

Welche Sprachen sprechen die meisten deiner Kunden?
S.F.: Also auf jeden Fall Englisch, viele auch Französisch oder auch nur Französisch oder auch nur Spanisch oder auch nur Italienisch.

_Gibt es etwas, das oft merkwürdig oder komisch für deine Kunden in Deutschland ist?_

S.F.: Das kommt darauf an wann, also am Anfang, also ich glaube was fürs viele komisch ist, also für die Spanier z.B. das hier halt überhaupt nichts los ist auf den Straßen. Und ach so genau, dann wundern sich die Franzosen, dass hier in Hamburg doch wie wild gefahren wird, obwohl sie gedacht haben, dass es hier nicht so ist.

_Gibt es etwas, das deine Kunden ganz besonders von ihrem Heimatland vermissen?_

S.F.: Das Wetter.

Ok, das war schon der interkulturelle Part. Letzter Teil: digitale Medien.

_Kennst du die PROGEDO Website?_

S.F.: Ja.

_Benutzt du sie?_

S.F.: Nein.

_Weil du keine Informationen daher beziehst?_

S.F.: Richtig.

_Wie findest du denn die Website?_

S.F.: Schön grün, also ganz nett.

_Gibt es irgendeinen Inhalt, der deiner Meinung nach unbedingt auf der Website sein sollte?_

S.F.: Uhm für mich? Für den? Für wen? 

_Gibt es z.B. irgendetwas, wie du gerne haben würdest, wie PROGEDO dich als dein Arbeitgeber repräsentiert, oder irgendwelche Fragen, die du schon 1000 Mal gefragt wurdest?_


_Wie sieht für dich eine professionelle Website aus? Hast du da irgendwelche besonderen Vorstellungen?_

S.F.: Sie sollte ein bisschen konkret sein und nicht so blabla.

_Das war es auch schon! Möchtest du noch irgendetwas hinzufügen?_

S.F.: Nein.
1.8.5 Interview Transcript D.J.

The questions posed by the researcher will be marked in italic, the answers by the interviewee D.J., project manager at American Tobacco, who has been relocated to Germany by another relocation agency, in regular fond.

(Introduction)
At first I would like to ask some basic questions: how old are you?
What is your nationality?
D.J.: British.
What is your job position?
D.J.: Project manager.
For which company?

We are coming to the main part of the interview now, which is separated into three parts being relocation procedure, intercultural aspects and digital media. So I would like to start with the first one: What was the procedure of your relocation service like? What were the different steps?

D.J.: When moving from England: Not much, we went with the HR person in Germany to register at the town hall and set up a bank account, most of the rest we did ourselves. But HR did also help find an apartment. When moving out of Germany / in to Holland: A lot better. Our contact person went through de-registration for everything (town hall, bank, service companies like water and gas) and same procedure in Holland for other way around (i.e. setting everything up) and help finding a house etc.

Why did you decide to relocate?

J.D.: For work, my career.

Which information did you receive from your company before the relocation service contacted you?
D.J.: I think just name and details of the relocation agency

What went well?

D.J.: Finding an apartment

Which problems concerning communication evolved?

D.J.: Intercultural aspects. Different insurance packages we needed to have set up, e.g. for house and property etc. These differed from England and were hard to translate by the agent and explain what we needed and why.

You already mentioned intercultural aspects, which happens to be the next part of this interview, which we will start now. Which languages do you speak?

D.J.: English, a little bit of German

What do you think is typical for your culture?

J.D.: Politeness

What was strange for you in Germany?

D.J.: At first, the lower cost of living and fact we could go out to a lot more to restaurants and cafes. We have a different eating culture in the UK.

What do you miss most from your home country?

D.J.: Certain food and drinks I can't get outside of England. You can however find a lot on websites... if you are prepared to pay a premium price.

Thank you very much, this was the cultural part already. Finally: digital media.

D.J.: Actually, I had a look at the website to prepare for this interview, I wrote it down for you:

General feedback on website:

1) No clear picture of which customers they are trying to attract, or differentiation of services for each customer type:
   - Private individuals or families, i.e. moving to a new country with no support. They have no idea of local rules or what is needed so would likes the agency to make their move as smooth as possible.
   - Companies looking to move one or more people. Usually done by HR in a
company, but would still like the agency to handle all the paper work, house finding etc and get their new employee settled and ready to work as quickly as possible.

2) No sales pitch or marketing of what the company can do for you (as an individual or company). Moving countries is not easy and be confusing or difficult, so main message the expat / company wants to see is "We are going to make your life easier".

3) Too technical (also see point 1 and 2). Website services go straight in to long list of different options including different permits etc they can support with. Do not expect most people to know whether they need these or not so this only adds to the confusion and fear of moving rather than making things seem simpler for the expat. The packages go some way to helping but are still not very clear. Assume the company put all the content together themselves rather than getting a marketing agency to do it for them.

4) Image of the website + content: Overall not very visually appealing, quite dull and navigation icons look ugly. Only read the English version, the main pages are mostly OK but quite a lot of mistakes when going through the later pages - does not give a professional impression.

Specific pages:

1) Profile: Very factual (i.e. history of company). Make less technical / more 'This is what we can offer you as a company'.

2.1) Services - Relocation: See previous comments, very factual and technical. Start with the basic offer, e.g. relocation for individuals or relocation for companies and then go in to these sorts of details on a later link page.

2.2) Services - Packages: Some improvement vs long list of services but prices would be useful, or at least the sales message "We can do all this for you at a low / reasonable price".

2.3) Services - Eura: No idea what this is or why it should be relevant (lots of the pages seem to be like this - info the company want to tell you about but no customer will care about = site not so easy to navigate / too cluttered).

2.4) Services - Establishing: Examples not very useful. These should be the things the company are trying to show off about (i.e. success stories) but the opportunity is wasted.
2.5) Services - Real estate management: Doesn't seem to fit with the others services. However, this page one of the best - simple page which tells what they can do for the customer without getting too technical / factual.

3) Consulting: What is the point of this? Points in bold at the start are terrible!

4) Contact: Imprint and disclaimer should be else where (e.g. at bottom of page).

5) News: Sure this is nice for anyone who works for the company, but not for a customer - why would they care about all this info? English also bad.

Overall:

Needs a lot more marketing and sales pitch - put themselves in mind of what the customer wants, not what they want to tell you. Keep simpler and focus on what the customer wants / needs to know, remove any irrelevant pages that aren't going to do this. Always a risk when you get experts on a subject talking to non-experts, they overload with too many details. Q&A / commonly asked questions section would be useful, e.g. "Moving to a new country and don't know where to start? These are some of the things you should think of". This could make the prospect of relocating less confusing and scary AND then links in to the services the company can offer you to help. No prices mentioned that I could see. They are trying to get you to use their services vs managing the whole relocation yourself so some idea about how much they charge would be useful, or least a message like "We can do all this for you at a low, very reasonable price" (and it will cost you a lot more time and effort if you try to do it yourself!)

Wow, thanks a lot, this is very helpful feedback!

D.J. You're welcome.

Is there anything you would like to add?

D.J.: No.

Do you have any questions?

D.J.: No.

Well, thank you very much for your help and your time!
1.9 Interview Summaries

1.9.1 Interview Summary S.H.

In the following, the findings of the interview with S.H., who is working in the expatriate department of Airbus, PROGEDO’s most important client, will be summarized according to the key concepts.

Relocation procedure
S.H. initiates the relocation, takes care of the quality of the service, is in touch with the relocation agency to have a good relation and checks that the pricing and the agreement for the services are OK. If she receives negative feedback from an employee, she has to record it and investigate what went wrong.

Most of the employees (many of them are Blue Collars) mainly relocate because of monetary rewards, some also because they want to experience different cultures, learn new languages or live in a better climate. S.H. estimates that around 60% of the people who are relocated are Singles, ca. 40% move with their family.

In the beginning of the relocation procedure, S.H. briefs the employees for one hour about who is the company is, who will get in touch with them for the relocation, an what are the tasks of the relocation agency are. Any other information e.g. about the country or culture is provided by the relocation service.

As positive point, S.H. mentions the function as “first friend abroad”. The relocators know the host country and they can help the employees a lot. Sometimes it is problematic that the employees are not satisfied with the relocation service although it is not the agencies fault, e.g. when the house market is tense it is very difficult to find an apartment to the employee’s liking.

In S.H.’s opinion, much communication is a sign of good service. She thinks e.g. a newsletter to keep the employees up to date would be good.

Intercultural Aspects
S.H. supports employees who are going from Germany to France, so the employees who she is taking care of are German. Her French colleagues say that
Germans are structured and tough. And the hierarchy is not that high in Germany.

Considering languages, not all of the employees are highly educated but some speak English quite well. However, it is difficult to handle more complex matters such as tax issues in English. Around 5-10% of the employees also speak French.

A grand cultural difference between Germany in France is the child care and the Germans’ appreciation of punctuality, reliability, and clear words.

**Digital Media**

S.H. is using the internet daily and as main information source. When she is looking for detailed information, she is not trusting any website but looking for experts. She identifies experts references and established names, such as PwC for taxes.

According to S.H., a professional website should be very structured, clear and use professional colours. However, it also depends on what one is looking for, e.g. a website for a children’s birthday party business should look much different from a tax business. Regarding the content, S.H. wants to know what the company is about, how long they exist and their history. She also prefers to have faces of the company to see who is working for it.

S.H. is not looking on the websites of their service providers because she thinks she is informed well enough. She would access it though it there was a tool the expats had to use to ensure that it is easy to handle. Besides, if the feedback of an employee required it she would look at it.

S.H. thinks the site should be at least available in English and German. In addition, the photos of the consultants should be provided so the employees know who they are talking to. Since we are living in a digital world, she notes, it would be good to have the questionnaire for the house searching, for example, on the homepage, to decrease the paper work, which is massive. Thus, she would appreciate such an easy-to-handle tool as well as news about the host country.
1.9.2 Interview Summary P.A.

In the following, the findings of the interview with P.A., who was relocated from Spain to Germany by PROGEDO, will be summarized according to the key concepts.

Relocation procedure

P.A. is very satisfied with the relocation service. His main motivations to relocate were high monetary benefits and personal experience. To be supported by a relocation service was an important aspect in convincing him to move to Germany.

In addition, he had the help of his Airbus expatriate department. However, Airbus only gave him information about the relocation, the conditions and the services. Apart from that, he did not know what to expect besides what he experienced during his travels.

Moreover, before he was contacted by PROGEDO, he received information from his colleagues. They have been to Hamburg before and told him it was a good place to live. They were answering his questions, sharing their experiences and giving him information.

At first, P.A. was contacted by a PROGEDO relocator and was asked for housing preferences. In order to have an opinion about it, he had to ask his colleague again. This could be improved i.e. more information about the possibilities and areas. Housing is an especially important issue for P.A. On the other hand, he thinks, if the relocator recommends too strongly, the expat can also feel pushed. He suggests to provide more information on distances and traffic, as well as to establish a personal link between relocator and expat to be able to individually recommend the best housing possible.

P.A.’s relocator was very patient, he appreciated that as well as conversations about his first impressions. In his opinion, it is good to have somebody to talk to when newly arrived in Germany.

Intercultural aspects

P.A. has (almost) only Spanish friends and colleagues. As a difference to Spain, he perceives harshness, lack of flexibility, great respect of the rules, lack of empathy and emotional intelligence in Germany. He thinks that it might also be due to the
harsh weather. He likes the honesty, bureaucracy and precision and calls the overall system “more civilized”.

P.A. misses the life outside, the cultural and leisure offer, and the interaction on the places and streets. As he says, he needs this social collective relation. Also, he misses his friends, but he says he started living a very dynamic life and that he is happy at the moment in Hamburg.

He is here for on year now and feels in some ways like a newcomer. He thinks that it has also to do with German. He would only really know what it is like to live in Hamburg or what the relations with people are like when he improved his German. According to him, it takes Spanish people around two years to speak German. And when that time comes, it might already be time for a new assignment because in his business one should change every three or four years.

Digital Media

P.A. uses the Internet daily and as main information source. He consciously distinguishes between false and true information and uses parameters such as language style, content, and web design to do so. A professional website should provide complete information.

In the case of a relocation service, the website style should be friendly and warm because it is covering something related to completely professional things but for the expat it is completely personal.

He thinks, important aspects that should be provided are information about the city, explanation of the services, description of the parts of the city and housing. For example, some description of the neighbourhoods, average prices, e.g. square meter prices, rent furnished or not furnished, would be helpful.

In general, he thinks the impression of the website is part from the satisfaction of the service. German websites are quite similar to Spanish websites.

Adding

P.A. emphasizes that he lives in harmony in Hamburg. Noone was ever doing him wrong, tried to take advantage of him or treated him differently because of his look. He thinks there are very few countries in the world where he could say the same. However, he does not perceive Germany as welcoming. But “normal”. You come and you live in harmony with other citizens. P.A. says that all the expats in
Hamburg are fine and having a good live. He thinks that this is probably the most important aspect: to be happy and feel at home in Hamburg.

1.9.3 Interview Summary A.A.

In the following, the findings of the interview with A.A., who is working as a relocator for PROGEDO for 15 years, will be summarized according to the key concepts.

Relocation Procedure

At the beginning of the relocation process, A.A. receives the client details from her remitter and contacts the client. First of all she sends him a welcoming e-mail to introduce herself and the company asks him questions concerning the housing. This is usually the most important issue for the client.

A.A. estimates that around 40% of her clients are relocating with their family and around 60% as Singles. For the companies, the relocation service is a tool to make the immigration to another country easier for their employees and thus also a tool to convince them to relocate.

According to A.A, the main motive to relocate lies in career. The employees theoretically have the possibility to refuse to relocate but know that this will negatively influence or end their career. Also, most employees are still young and thus take this opportunity.

In A.A.’s experience her client’s do not receive any information from their company, this task is left to the relocation agency. Information-wise, there are some difficulties due to cultural differences. A.A. tries to explain that things are different in Germany than they might be in their home country. A.A. herself gave intercultural trainings already in the 80s, but she has the feeling that companies believe that they are not necessary anymore because of globalization. However, in her experience, intercultural training would still be needed and desired.

Intercultural Aspects

A.A.’s clients are all well educated people but she still perceives them as “normal”, i.e. not showing a high-class attitude. She supports clients from all over
the world, many of them are from Europe. In A.A.’s opinion, differences were stronger 15 years ago, when people did not have access to worldwide information, brands or movies. Today, she perceives them as being more similar. Most of A.A.’s clients only speak their mother tongue and English. As a positive aspect, her clients point out the security and freedom to just walk along the street without fear. This is especially important for middle or higher class business men from e.g. Asia or South America. In addition, her clients appraise Hamburg’s public transport and the friendliness of the Hamburg citizens. Primarily, her clients are missing their family and friends from home, people from warmer countries also the warm climate. However, in-depth conversations with the clients are rare.

Digital Media
A.A. does not use the PROGEDO website because she wonders why she should look on her own website. Nonetheless, she does not like the design of the current website. She thinks the currently used signs and symbols are confusing and that the web page looks unprofessional. In general, she is annoyed by unclear and unstructured websites with a lot of text. In her opinion, websites should inform gradually rather than going into detail. A professional website should be ascertainable in one look and offer the most important information: contact, prices, and services. A.A. thinks to explain into detail what relocation is is not necessary because people looking for it know what it means. Moreover, A.A. doubts that the website will be used as information source, neither by the human resources departments nor the clients. A.A. prefers personal contact instead and believes her clients to feel the same.

1.9.4 Interview Summary S.F.
In the following, the findings of the interview with S.F., who is working as a relocator for PROGEDO for 15 years, will be summarized according to the key concepts.

Relocation Procedure
At the beginning of the relocation process, S.F. receives the client details from
her remitter and contacts the client. First she contacts the client via mail or telephone and asks him about his current situation, what he would like and what is important for him. I then talk about the possibilities and how to realize his preferences. Next, she discusses with him when he comes over to look at apartments, which is usually the first step in the relocation process.

S.F. states that the main motive to relocate is career, since an international company employs them. She estimates that a third each relocates as Single, with a partner of with family. Usually S.F. clients know where their employer is situated on the map and exchanged information about e.g. living areas with colleagues who have already been to Hamburg. Often, her clients want to know about the public transport and how to get around in the city, as well as about shopping possibilities.

**Intercultural Aspects**

Many of S.F. clients have a European background, many of them are French, but she also supports clients from other continents. She does not recognize severe cultural differences, apart from different bureaucracies and that e.g. Spanish people tend to write very short e-mails.

Her clients speak English, many also French or only French, Spanish or Italian. For many of her clients, especially for the Spanish ones, it is strange that there is no life on the streets in Germany, many are missing the good weather from home.

**Digital Media**

S.F. does not use the PROGEDO website because she does not require any information from it. She thinks the website is nice, she likes the green colour. Regarding the content, she thinks that it should be concrete. However, most things are clarified in a personal conversation.
1.9.5 Interview Summary D.J.

In the following, the findings of the interview with D.J., project manager at American Tobacco, who has been relocated to Germany by another relocation agency, will be summarized according to the key concepts.

Relocation Procedure
When D.J. was moving from England to Germany, he was only assisted in registering at the town hall, setting up a bank account and finding an apartment. Most of the things he and his wife organized themselves. When he was relocated to the Netherlands, he felt much better supported by his contact person regarding deregistration for everything and also regarding settling in in Holland. He moves countries for his career.

Before the relocation started, he just knew the name and the details of the relocation agency. He thinks that finding an apartment went well. D.J. experienced intercultural differences, e.g. when choosing the right insurances, since they are hard to explain and translate.

Intercultural Aspects
D.J. speaks English and a little bit of German. He sees politeness as a typical British characteristic. In the beginning, the different eating culture for him was strange in Germany. The lower cost of living allowed them to go to cafes and restaurants more often. Nevertheless, he misses certain foods and drinks from home. He found them available on websites but only for quite high prices.

Digital Media
D.J. prepared a very detailed feedback for the current PROGEDO website. In his opinion, it is unclear who PROGEDO is targeting or respectively no sign of a differentiation of customers, e.g. private individuals or families. These customers desire a smooth relocation and do not know what to expect. D.J. also thinks that companies who are looking to move one or more people are not addressed.

Moreover, D.J. is missing a clear sales pitch or marketing of what PROGEDO can do for the customer. He points out that moving countries is never easy, so the main message should be "We are going to make your life easier".
In addition, D.J. perceives the website as too technical. The website provides a long list of services, but PROGEDO should not expect their customers to know what these services mean and which of these services are necessary. He thinks it creates confusion and fear rather than making things simpler for the expat. He assumes that no marketing agency was involved to take care of the content.

Also the design of the website is in D.J. not very appealing but quite dull, he calls the icons ugly. Having read the English version of the website, he thinks that the main pages are mostly OK, but later pages have several mistakes which gives an unprofessional impression.

In specific, D.J. thinks that the profile is too factual. The same goes for the relocation services site, prices would be useful, too. He has the impression that many pages provide information the company wants to bring across although no customer will care about it. Regarding the establishing services, he thinks the examples are not useful. Indeed, PROGEDO wasted this opportunity to present itself and its success stories.

Overall, D.J. has the opinion that PROGEDO needs a lot more marketing and sales pitch. He suggests focusing on what the customer want, rather than what PROGEDO wants to tell them. He also warns about too many details from experts that can overpower non-experts and proposes a Q&A section.
### General

As an International Communication student from the Hanze University Groningen, I am currently writing my Bachelor Thesis for PROGEO relocation services Hamburg. By participating in this survey, you will help me to give recommendations on how to improve the PROGEO website. The survey will take approximately 5 minutes and will be processed anonymously. All information will be handled confidentially and will not be handed to any third parties.

1. **How old are you?**

   - [ ] 16-20
   - [ ] 21-30
   - [ ] 31-40
   - [ ] 41-50
   - [ ] 51-60
   - [ ] 61-70

2. **What is your home country?**

   - [ ] Spain
   - [ ] France
   - [ ] Russia
   - [ ] UK
   - [ ] Poland
   - [ ] Italy
   - [ ] Other (please specify)

3. **Which languages do you speak? (Multiple answers possible)**

   - [ ] English
   - [ ] French
   - [ ] German
   - [ ] Italian
   - [ ] Spanish
   - [ ] Russian
   - [ ] Other (please specify)

4. **Which business field are you working in?**

   - [ ] IT
   - [ ] Engineering
   - [ ] Marketing
   - [ ] Sales
   - [ ] Human Resources
   - [ ] Consulting
   - [ ] Project management
   - [ ] Other (please specify)

5. **For what reasons did you come to Germany? (Multiple answers possible)**

   - [ ] Money
   - [ ] Career
   - [ ] New experiences
   - [ ] Living in a foreign country
   - [ ] Learn another language
   - [ ] Other (please specify)
### Relocation Procedure

6. Before the start of your relocation, did you receive information from your company about...

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the relocation agency?</td>
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<td>the relocation services?</td>
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<td>the relocation procedure?</td>
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<td>what to expect from</td>
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<td>living and working in</td>
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<tr>
<td>your new designated home</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. How concerned were you about the following issues when moving to Germany?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little bit</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language &amp; culture</td>
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<td>Housing &amp; facilities</td>
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<td>Finding new acquainances &amp; friends</td>
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<td>Integration of family</td>
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<td>New living environment</td>
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<td>Work satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Success of the relocation procedure as a whole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Living Abroad

8. Which was the most difficult problem that occurred? (Please use key words)

9. What is still strange for you in Germany? (Please use key words)

10. What do you miss most from your home country? (Please use key words)
### Distribution of Information

11. What are the three most important pieces of information that should be provided for you on the relocation agency’s website? (Please use key words)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. If your relocation service introduced a platform for the exchange of information among experts, would you use it?

- Yes, definitely.
- Maybe.
- No, not interested.

13. Do you use Facebook?

- Yes, all the time.
- Sometimes.
- No, never.

14. Would you be interested in a newsletter from your relocation service?

- Yes, definitely.
- Maybe, depends on the content.
- No, not interested.

### Overall Satisfaction

15. Would you recommend Germany as a working place?

- Yes, of course.
- I’m not sure.
- No, not at all.

16. How content are you with your life in Germany?

- Very content.
- It’s OK.
- Not content at all.
- I don’t know.

17. Does your life in Germany match your expectations?

- Better than expected.
- Just as I expected.
- Worse than expected.
- I don’t know.

### Thanks a lot for your participation!

Have a great day!
1.11 Survey Findings Charts

**Q1 How old are you?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Beantwortungen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesamt</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q2 What is your home country?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Beantwortungen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesamt</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q6 Before the start of your relocation, did you receive information from your company about...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the relocation agency?</td>
<td>60.87%</td>
<td>39.13%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the relocation services?</td>
<td>70.00%</td>
<td>21.74%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the relocation procedure?</td>
<td>73.91%</td>
<td>26.09%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what to expect from living in your new designated home?</td>
<td>56.52%</td>
<td>43.48%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q7 How concerned were you about the following issues when moving to Germany?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little bit</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language &amp; culture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43.40%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.74%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing &amp; facilities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43.40%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.74%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding new acquaintances &amp; friends</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21.74%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34.79%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of family</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20.12%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37.20%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New living environment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.12%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37.20%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work satisfaction</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26.09%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26.09%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success of the relocation procedure as a whole</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38.33%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26.09%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q8 Which was the most difficult problem that occurred? (Please use key words)

visa receiveal
06.05.2013 14:52 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
real estate agency provision
06.05.2013 13:53 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Language, Paperwork, Weather
06.05.2013 11:58 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Some time at government offices (some officers seems to be biased if you want ot communicate in English)
06.05.2013 10:50 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
various issues with landlord
06.05.2013 10:38 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Bureaucracy
06.05.2013 10:22 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
taxes
06.05.2013 10:16 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
None
06.05.2013 08:59 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Finding an accommodation, language difficulties, rigid bureaucracy
29.04.2013 18:34 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
None
29.04.2013 12:50 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
TV & internet
29.04.2013 11:46 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Child care
29.04.2013 11:21 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen

Finding an apartment that I liked
25.04.2013 14:54 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
finalise the appartment with given choices in short time
24.04.2013 14:27 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
our personnal car and the technical control
24.04.2013 14:11 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Integration
Finding a suitable furnished accomodation
24.04.2013 12:01 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen

Q9 What is still strange for you in Germany? (Please use key words)
Beantwortet: 23 Übersprungen: 2

people, weather
06.05.2013 14:52 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
weather
06.05.2013 13:53 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Germans
06.05.2013 11:58 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Despite most of government office work is online but still ot of communication by post
06.05.2013 10:50 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
everything is closed on Sunday
06.05.2013 10:38 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Organization
06.05.2013 10:22 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
language
06.05.2013 10:16 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
people
06.05.2013 08:59 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
The bureaucracy
29.04.2013 18:34 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
I'm German native
29.04.2013 12:50 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Nothing
29.04.2013 11:46 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Child care
29.04.2013 11:21 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
fao
29.04.2013 10:49 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Learning the Language
29.04.2013 08:51 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Too many rules
26.04.2013 11:56 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Language
26.04.2013 10:30 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Too many rules for everything
25.04.2013 16:37 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Discipline
25.04.2013 14:54 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Language!
25.04.2013 14:49 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
robust rules
24.04.2013 14:27 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
to eat all along the day
24.04.2013 14:11 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
-
The working practices
24.04.2013 12:01 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen

Q10 What do you miss most from your home country? (Please use key words)

bewertet: 23 Übersprungen: 2

friends, parents
06.05.2013 14:52 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Good food
06.05.2013 13:53 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Food, Friends, Social life
06.05.2013 11:58 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Social life and interaction
06.05.2013 10:50 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
family, friends, see
06.05.2013 10:38 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Family, friends
06.05.2013 10:22 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
friends family
06.05.2013 10:16 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
people
06.05.2013 08:59 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Flexibility and easy-going of the people, the food
29.04.2013 18:34 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
I'm German native
29.04.2013 12:50 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Food
29.04.2013 11:46 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
food
29.04.2013 11:21 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
lakje
29.04.2013 10:49 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Friends and Family
29.04.2013 08:51 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Sun and beaches
26.04.2013 11:56 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Certain food and drink
26.04.2013 10:30 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Beaches :) 
25.04.2013 16:37 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
Dynamic, Sun
25.04.2013 14:54 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen
The choice of food. Bavaria tends to have a traditional menu
25.04.2013 14:49 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen

Graduation Report  liv  Anna-Lena Schulte
External Activities


The weather

24.04.2013 12:01 Beantwortungen von Befragten anzeigen

---

**Q11** What are the three most important pieces of information that should be provided for you on the relocation agency’s website? (Please use key words)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antwortmöglichkeiten</th>
<th>Beantwortungen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Befragte gesamt: 20

---

**Q12** If your relocation service introduced a platform for the exchange of information among expats, would you use it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antwortmöglichkeiten</th>
<th>Beantwortungen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, definitely</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>55,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, not interested</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesamt</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q15 Would you recommend Germany as a working place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, of course.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm not sure.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, not at all.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q17 Does your life in Germany match your expectations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worse than expected.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just as I expected.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better than expected.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>