

Cultural Identity Tools



Preserving traditions, bilingualism and Community Building

A practical guide to preserving and strengthening Hungarian cultural identity



Preserving traditions



**Bilingualism
Advantages**



Community building



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What is cultural identity?

Cultural identity is a fundamental part of an individual's self-definition, linking personal and community values, traditions and history.

Definition

Cultural identity is a person's or group's self-definition, which is based on a shared language, values, traditions, customs and history, and is constantly shaped by social interactions.



- ✓ **Dynamic process:**
Cultural identity is not static, but constantly evolves throughout an individual's life.
- ✓ **Multilayered phenomenon:**
Several cultural identities can be present at the same time, complementing each other harmoniously.
- ✓ **Community attachment:** Identity strengthens the sense of belonging to a community and social cohesion.
- ✓ **Individual interpretation:**
Each person experiences and interprets their own cultural identity in a unique way.

"Cultural identity is not only a legacy, but also a choice: a decision about which values and traditions we will carry forward and pass on to future generations."

— Dr György Csepeli

Components of cultural identity

Cultural identity consists of several components that together shape an individual's cultural self-definition and community ties.



Language

The mother tongue is one of the strongest carriers and means of expression



History

Knowledge and interpretation of a shared past, historical narratives



Art

Music, literature, visual arts and other forms of cultural expression



Customs

Food culture, holidays, traditions and rituals

The aim of the toolkit

To provide practical methods and strategies for preserving and strengthening Hungarian cultural identity, with a particular focus on young people living in a bilingual environment.

✓ Preserving traditions

✓ Bilingualism

✓ Community building

✓ Cultural bridge



The toolkit helps to strike a balance between preserving cultural roots and integrating into a new environment.



Hungarian youth Challenges I.

Identity challenges

Young people of Hungarian nationality living in a bilingual environment face a number of challenges in preserving their cultural identity. These challenges require unique tools and strategies.



Language loss

Due to the dominance of the majority language, the use of the mother tongue may be pushed into the background, especially in the areas of technical language and literary language. The process of language loss often goes unnoticed and begins with a narrowing of vocabulary.



Identity crisis

Dual cultural ties often cause an identity crisis, especially during adolescence. Answering the question "Where do I belong?" is a complex process in which young people must find a balance between the two cultures.



Community isolation

The geographical dispersion of Hungarian communities and the lack of personal connections can make it difficult to feel a sense of belonging to a cultural community, especially for generations growing up in the digital space.

Hungarian youth Challenges II.

Additional challenges faced by young Hungarians living in a bilingual environment and their impact on cultural identity.



Communication difficulties

Generational differences within the family and differences in language use can cause a communication gap, which makes it difficult to pass on cultural values and traditions.



Effects of globalisation

The spread of global culture and the dominance of digital media may overshadow local cultural values and traditions, especially among younger generations.



Extent of cultural identity challenges

The radar chart shows the relative extent of challenges in different areas among young people of Hungarian ethnicity. The greatest difficulties arise in the areas of language use and community relations.

● Extent of challenges ○ Ideal situation

Recommended approaches

Strategies for preserving cultural identity

For young people of Hungarian nationality living in a bilingual environment, the following approaches can help to preserve cultural identity and address challenges



Balance

Finding a balance between the two cultures and languages, consciously exploiting the advantages of dual identity.

Cultural flexibility

Cultural flexibility



Community

Active participation in Hungarian cultural communities, building and maintaining relationships with young people from similar backgrounds.

Community programmes

Cultural events



Awareness

Conscious learning about and nurturing cultural heritage, continuous development of language skills.

Language practice

Cultural knowledge



Development

Continuous development and enrichment of cultural identity, integrating new elements while respecting traditions.

Innovation

Adaptation

Preserving cultural identity is a continuous, conscious effort that requires effort at both the individual and community levels.



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Fundamentals of preserving traditions

Why are traditions important?

Traditions are the fundamental building blocks of cultural identity, connecting the past with the present and help preserve community values and history.

- ✓ **Reaffirming identity** strengthens cultural identity and the sense of belonging to a community.
- ✓ **Transmission of values:** the transmission of traditions conveys the values and norms of the community to future generations.
- ✓ **Stability and continuity:** Traditions provide stability and a sense of security in a changing world.
- ✓ **Community bonds:** Practicing community roots strengthens social relationships and community cohesion.

"Tradition is not the preservation of ashes, but the passing on of the flame."

---Thomas Morus ---



Challenges of preserving traditions

Globalisation and modern lifestyles pose challenges to the preservation of traditions, especially for younger generations. Adapting and reinterpreting traditions is key to maintaining their relevance.

Family traditions

Practical preservation methods

Family traditions are the most direct forms of cultural identity transmission, passing on customs, values and stories from generation to generation. pass on customs, values and stories from generation to generation.



Family



Gastronomic traditions

Preparing and eating Hungarian dishes together during family gatherings. Passing recipes down from generation to generation, baking and cooking together with children, modern adaptations of traditional dishes.



Holidays and rituals

Celebrating Hungarian holidays (Easter, Christmas, name days) according to traditional customs. Developing family rituals that combine Hungarian traditions with local customs.



Stories and family history

Sharing family stories, anecdotes and family history with younger generations. Creating family trees, preserving and digitising old photographs and documents.



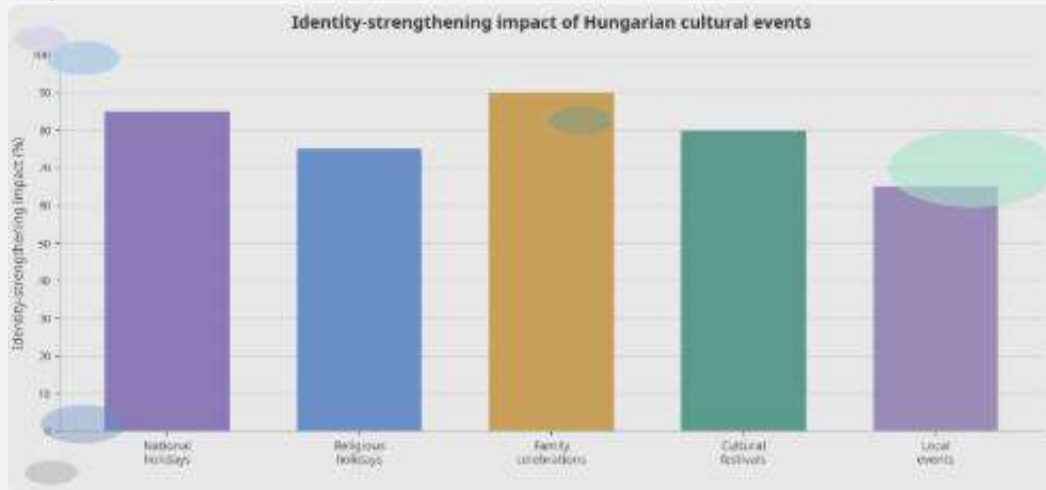
Craft traditions

Teaching traditional craft techniques (embroidery, wood carving, egg painting) to children. Collaborative creation combining traditional motifs and techniques with modern forms of expression.

Cultural customs and celebrations

Community traditions

The communal celebration of Hungarian cultural holidays and customs strengthens identity and ensures that traditions are passed on to future generations.



National holidays

15 March, 20 August, 23 October



Religious holidays

Easter, Pentecost, Christmas



Dance house meeting, Crafts festival

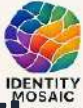
Practical tips for maintaining community traditions

Join local Hungarian cultural associations, dance groups or choirs

Organise or participate in Hungarian cultural events and celebrations

Use social media to share local Hungarian community events

Combine Hungarian traditions with local customs, create new, hybrid traditions



The importance of the mother tongue

The relationship between language and identity

The mother tongue is one of the strongest carriers and means of expression of cultural identity, connecting the individual with the community.

Shaping thinking:

- ✓ The mother tongue determines thought patterns and worldview.

Emotional attachment:

- ✓ There is a strong emotional connection to the mother tongue, which is a fundamental part of identity.

- ✓ **Cultural access:** The mother tongue provides access to cultural heritage.

- ✓ **Community ties:** Using one's mother tongue strengthens the sense of belonging to a community.

"A nation lives in its language."

— István Széchenyi

Challenges of preserving the mother tongue

For young Hungarians living in a bilingual environment, it is particularly important to consciously cultivate and use their mother tongue.

The narrowing of everyday language use
Lack of technical terms

→ Language mixing and code switching

→ Lack of native language environment

→

Hungarian literature and Culture

Cultural consumption

Consuming Hungarian literature, poetry and other cultural content is key to developing language skills and strengthening cultural identity.



Hungarian poetry



Developing reading habits

Incorporate regular reading in Hungarian into your daily routine. Start with shorter texts and poems, then gradually move on to longer works. Organise reading challenges and reading circles with young people who share similar interests.



Audiovisual content

Regular consumption of Hungarian-language films, series, podcasts and audiobooks. These are particularly useful for improving pronunciation and learning contemporary language usage.



Musical culture

Listening to Hungarian folk music and contemporary Hungarian music, analysing lyrics. Music and lyrics help to understand linguistic expressions and cultural references.



Online cultural content

Following Hungarian-language blogs, news sites and social media. Using digital libraries and cultural databases, which are often accessible free of charge.

Recommended reading for young

Contemporary Hungarian literature / Classical poetry / Youth novels / Bilingual publications

Digital tools for language learning

Modern methods

Digital technology offers numerous opportunities for developing and practising the Hungarian language, especially for young people living in a bilingual environment.



Online Hungarian language content

Regularly read Hungarian-language websites, blogs and news sites. Use virtual libraries and digital archives to access Hungarian-language content.



Join Hungarian-language online communities, forums, and social media groups.

Join Hungarian-language online communities, forums, and social media groups. Find virtual language

Recommended language learning apps



Mondly

Interactive Hungarian language



iTalki

Native speakers

HungarianPod101

Audio and video lessons, cultural notes, vocabulary building tools

Duolingo

Gamified language learning, gradual difficulty levels, daily exercises

Practical tips



Set the language on your phone or computer to Hungarian for one day a week



Use a Hungarian keyboard to practise accented letters

Create digital flashcards for less commonly used Hungarian words



learning partners with whom you can practise regularly.

Advantages of bilingualism

Cognitive and career advantages

Bilingualism has many cognitive, social and career advantages that have a significant impact on an individual's development and opportunities.



Cognitive flexibility

Better problem-solving skills, creativity and flexibility of thought in different languages due to switching between systems.



Better memory

More developed working memory and long-term memory, which helps with learning and information processing.



Career opportunities

More job opportunities, higher salaries and better career prospects in the international labour market.



Cultural competence

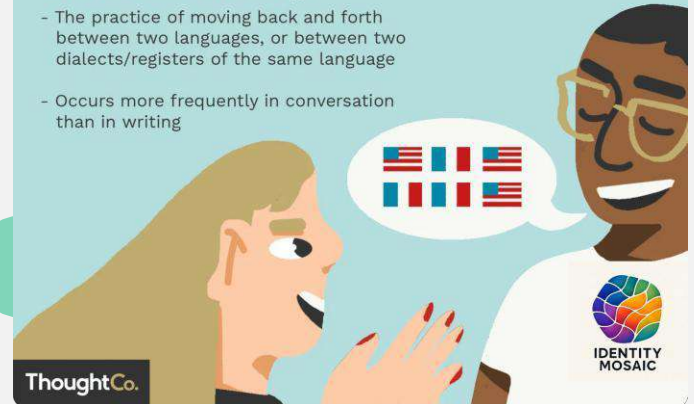
Better adaptability in different cultural environments, more developed empathy and communication skills.

"Bilingualism is not just knowing two languages, but a special way of thinking and worldview that enriches an individual's life and opportunities."



What Is Code Switching?

- The practice of moving back and forth between two languages, or between two dialects/registers of the same language
- Occurs more frequently in conversation than in writing



Scientific facts

Bilinguals perform better in tasks requiring attention and concentration

Bilingualism may delay the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's disease

Bilingual children think more flexibly and learn new languages more easily



Language switching strategies

Practical techniques

Code-switching is a natural ability of bilingual speakers that allows for a smooth transition between languages in different situations.



Neither of these kids have DLD. Code-switching



Context-based code-switching

Using different languages in different situations or for different topics. For example, using Hungarian in a family setting, while using the majority language at school or work.



Interlocutor-based switching

Choosing the language based on the language skills or preferences of the conversation partner. This helps to maximise communication efficiency and ensure mutual understanding.



Expression-based code-switching

Using certain expressions, idioms or technical terms in one language, while the rest of the sentence is in the other language. This often occurs when the expression better conveys the intended meaning.



Emotional code switching

Changing languages based on emotional state or the mood of the conversation. Many bilingual people use different languages in different emotional states or when discussing certain topics.

Examples of code-switching

"This morning I went to the market and bought some fresh vegetables for dinner."

"I don't know whether I should apply for that job or not."

*"The teacher said that the
The deadline is next Friday."*

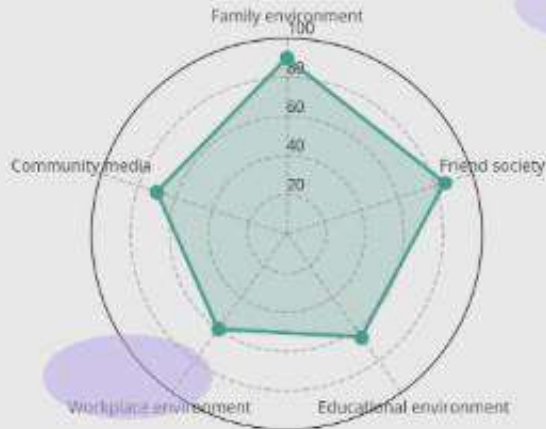


Code-switching and cultural context

Natural language use

Code-switching is not a flaw, but a natural part of bilingualism that reflects the speaker's cultural and linguistic flexibility and identity.

Frequency of code-switching in different environments



Conscious code-switching strategies

- 💡 **Situation awareness: Recognize when code-switching is appropriate and when it is less appropriate in a given situation.**
- 💡 **Language balance: Strive to use both languages equally in different situations.**
- 💡 **Conscious vocabulary building: Develop your vocabulary in both languages, with a particular focus on technical terms.**
- 💡 **Cultural context: Understand the cultural implications of language use and the social significance of code-switching.**

Advantages of code-switching

- ✓ More accurate self-expression and nuanced communication
- ✓ Fulfilling a cultural mediating role
- ✓ Flexible adaptation to different social situations Expression and
- ✓ reinforcement of dual cultural identity

"Code-switching does not indicate a lack of language skills, but rather bilingual speaker's special ability to use linguistic resources creatively."

Family environment

Code-switching is common in family conversations, especially when family members have different language skills. Code-switching within the family strengthens shared identity and cultural ties.



Friends

In peer groups, code-switching is often a means of expressing group identity . Creative language mixing is particularly common among young people, creating a unique form of expression.



Educational environment

At school, code-switching can help students better understand and process the curriculum. Technical terms often remain in the language of instruction, while explanations can be given in the native language.



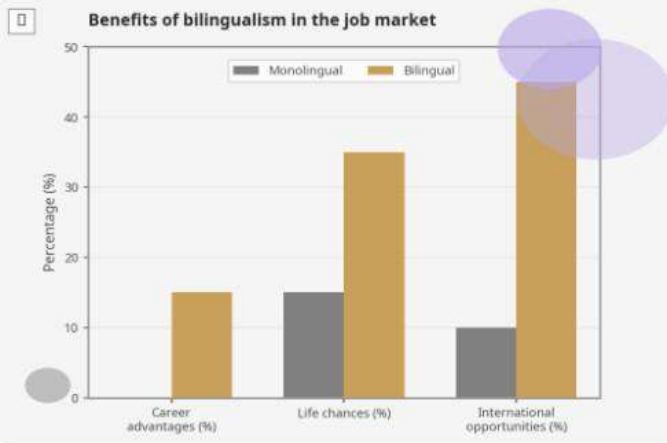
Workplace environment

In a professional environment, code-switching is often related to technical terms . Bilingual employees can play a valuable mediating role between colleagues who speak different languages.

Professional application

Career opportunities

Bilingualism offers numerous professional advantages and career opportunities, especially in a globalised labour market where linguistic and cultural competences are increasingly valuable.



Translation and interpreting

Bilingual people have a natural advantage in the translation and interpreting professions. Technical translation (legal, medical, technical) is a particularly sought-after and well-paid field.



International relations

Bilingualism and cultural competence are highly valued in the fields of diplomacy, international organisations and foreign trade. The Hungarian-majority language combination is particularly valuable in regional cooperation.



Education

As a language teacher, in bilingual education programmes or intercultural training courses. Personal experience of bilingualism lends credibility to the teacher and enriches teaching with practical examples.



Digital media and marketing

Multilingual content creation, localisation, cultural consulting. Bilingual professionals can help businesses enter new markets and develop culturally relevant marketing strategies.



Communication skills

Advanced verbal and written communication skills in both languages, understanding of cultural nuances



Mediation skills

Ability to bridge cultural and linguistic differences, manage conflicts

Problem solving



Flexible thinking, consideration of multiple perspectives, creative solutions



Cultural intelligence

Ability to function effectively in different cultural environments

How to incorporate bilingualism into your CV?

- ✓ List both languages and your level of proficiency level
- ✓ Highlight your cultural competencies and mediation skills
- ✓ Give specific examples of when your your bilingualism has been an advantage
- ✓ Emphasise your international experience and connections

The role of cultural communities

Why are they important?

Cultural communities play a key role in preserving and strengthening cultural identity , especially for young Hungarians living in bilingual environments

"A community is not just a group of people, but a feeling, a sense of belonging that gives strength to preserve and pass on cultural identity."

— Dr. Attila Papp



A safe cultural space

Cultural communities provide a safe space where young people can freely express their cultural identity, practise their native language and live their traditions without feeling oppressed by their "otherness".

Social support

A community of young people with similar backgrounds provides emotional support, helps them cope with the challenges of bilingualism and dual cultural identity, and reduces feelings of isolation.

Transmission of cultural knowledge

Through community events, programmes and activities, young people can learn about different aspects of Hungarian culture, history, traditions, art and literature, which are often missing from the mainstream education system.

Opportunities for language practice

Community meetings provide a natural environment for practising and developing Hungarian language skills and to learn different registers of the language, which is particularly important for maintaining language skills.



Community- building strategies

Effective methods

Successful cultural community building requires conscious planning and diverse methods that take into account the needs of young people and the challenges of modern society.



Cultural events and celebrations

Organising traditional Hungarian holidays, festivals and commemorations, which provide an opportunity experience and pass on cultural traditions. It is important that these events are interactive and attractive to young people.

Artistic and creative activities

Folk dance, folk music, crafts, theatre and other artistic activities that not only help to raise awareness of cultural heritage, but also provide a community experience. Contemporary art involving young people in these activities can be particularly appealing.



Educational programmes

Hungarian-language weekend schools, language courses, historical and cultural educational programmes, which help to develop language skills and expand cultural knowledge. The use of modern pedagogical methods increases their effectiveness.

Digital community building

Online platforms, social media groups, virtual events and the creation of digital content, that enable geographically dispersed communities to connect and reach young people in their natural digital space.



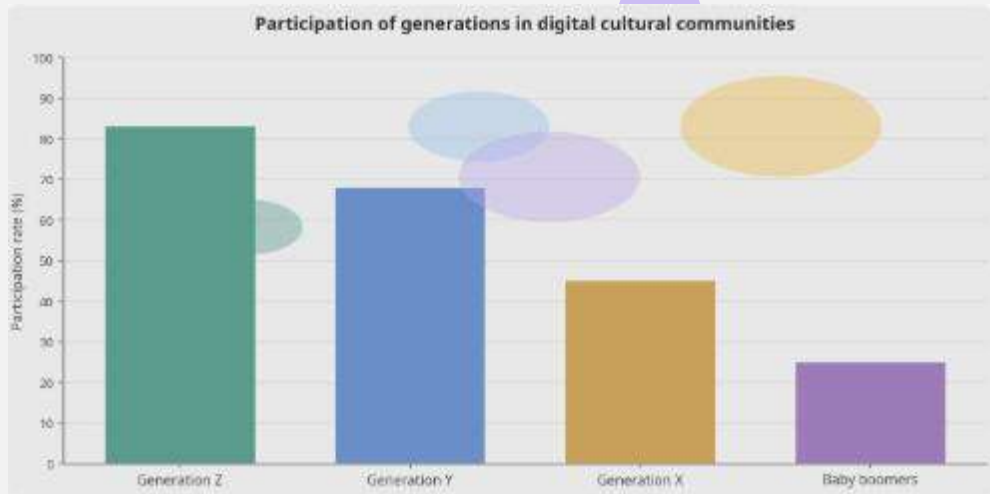
Mentoring programmes

Connecting older and younger generations through mentoring programmes that help young people knowledge transfer, language skills development and the formation of personal relationships within the community.

Digital communities

Virtual cultural spaces

Digital platforms open up new opportunities for cultural community building, especially for young people, for whom virtual space is a natural part of everyday life.



Overcoming geographical barriers

Digital communities make it possible to connect geographically dispersed young Hungarians, regardless of where they live. This is particularly important for smaller diaspora communities.



Flexible participation

Online platforms allow for flexible scheduling and different levels of participation, which

THE INTERCULTURAL BRIDGE CONCEPT

powered by EIFID



And how to apply it through effective communication

ONLINE WORKSHOP

Beata van Velzen

21st of June, 2023

6 pm - 9 pm Amsterdam



Social media groups

Closed or public groups that provide opportunities for regular communication and information sharing



Virtual meeting places

Discord or other platforms where real-time conversations and joint activities can take place



Online events

Virtual cultural events, workshops, language learning opportunities and community discussions



Hungarian-language content

Podcasts, videos, blogs and other digital content in Hungarian on topics relevant to young people



Cultural bridge role

Mediating role

Young people with a bilingual and dual cultural identity can play a special mediating role between different cultures, which is a valuable skill in a globalised world.



Language mediation

Bilingual young people are able to bridge language barriers, enabling communication and the flow of information between communities that speak different languages. This skill is particularly valuable in multilingual environments and international relations.



Cultural translation

Young people with a dual cultural background are able to 'translate' not only words, but also cultural meanings, customs and values, making them understandable to people from different cultural backgrounds.



Building relationships

Young people who act as cultural bridges can help build relationships and trust between different cultural groups, which can contribute to strengthening social cohesion and reducing conflicts.



Innovative perspectives

Young people who are comfortable in multiple cultures are often able to find new, creative solutions to problems, as they see the world from multiple perspectives and are able to combine the strengths of different cultural traditions.



Cultural diplomacy

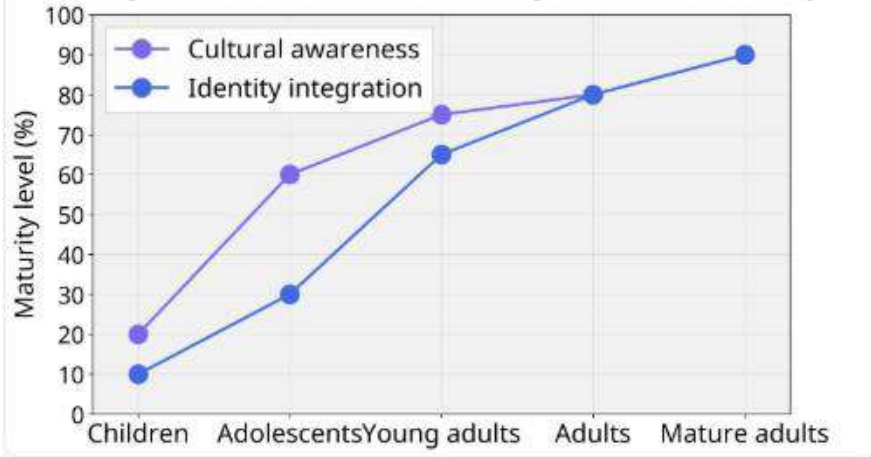
Bilingual young people can act as natural cultural ambassadors, able to present and promote Hungarian culture to the majority society, while helping the Hungarian community to understand the values of the majority culture.

Vision for the future and development

Development of cultural identity

Cultural identity is not static, but a lifelong process of development that goes through different stages and is influenced by various factors.

Development of cultural identity across the lifespan



? Discovery

Who am I? Where do I belong?
What cultural elements are important to me?

🧩 Experimentation

Trying out different cultural practices, testing boundaries

♥ Acceptance

Acceptance and appreciation of dual cultural identity

★ Integration

Harmonious blending of different cultural elements

Safe space

Cultural resources

Encouraging reflection





Exploration and experimentation

Young people experiment with different cultural elements and identities, searching for the right balance for themselves. This phase is often most intense during adolescence and young adulthood.



Integration and balance

Integrating different cultural elements into a coherent identity that is not mutually exclusive but complementary. This stage usually develops during young adulthood and adulthood.



Flexibility and adaptation

The flexible application of cultural identity in different situations, according to the context. This skill is a hallmark of mature cultural identity, enabling successful navigation in different cultural environments.



Passing on and mentoring

Passing on cultural identity and knowledge to the next generation through mentoring and role modelling. This stage usually becomes important during adulthood and old age.

Supportive measures

- ✓ Providing an environment where young people can freely explore their identity
- ✓ **Positive role models:**
 - Introducing successful adults
- ✓ Ensuring access to Hungarian cultural content
- ✓ Supporting reflection on cultural identity



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Summary and next steps

Cultural identity toolkit

The IMELO cultural identity toolkit aims to support young Hungarians living in a bilingual environment in preserving, developing and positively experiencing their cultural identity.



The value of cultural identity

Dual cultural identity is not a burden, but rather an asset and a resource that enriches an individual's life and opportunities. Preserving Hungarian cultural heritage and successfully participating in the majority culture are not mutually exclusive goals, but rather complementary ones.



Balance and integration

The key to successful cultural identity development is finding balance and harmoniously integrating different cultural elements. This is a process that requires time, reflection and a supportive environment.



Community support

The development of cultural identity is not a solitary journey, but a community process in which the community plays a key role. Families, cultural communities, educational institutions and peer groups play a role.



Global perspective

Dual cultural identity provides a unique perspective and skills for successfully navigating a globalised world and offers the opportunity to act as a cultural bridge.

Kulturális identitás jövőkép

Preserving traditions

Cultural customs,
family traditions and
celebrations

Language heritage

Development of native
language, Hungarian
literature and digital tools

Advantages of bilingualism

Cognitive, social and
professional advantages

Community building

Cultural communities and
digital connection opportunities

Next steps

- ✓ **Personal cultural plan:** Developing individual goals and strategies for developing cultural identity
- ✓ **Community connection**
- ✓ **Mentoring:** Supporting younger generations in developing their cultural identity
- ✓ **Continuous learning:** Regular development of cultural knowledge and skills