EXERCISE 5
Influence of religion on business across countries

Religion is the set of beliefs, feelings, dogmas and practices that define the relations between human beings and the sacred or divine. The main religious groups include Christianism, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Judaism, etc.

Some religions, particularly Islam, have a strong impact on business life in the countries in which a majority of the population professes them.

Sharia is the set of religious and civil laws related to the Muslim faith. Also known as **Islamic Law**, Sharia has its roots in the Koran and other accounts of the Prophet's words and deeds.

Sharia has developed over centuries in Muslim countries and still has a strong impact on the functioning of some societies. In recent years, the influence of Sharia on finance and other industries has expanded rapidly in some Muslim societies. Even in Europe, and other societies with Muslim minorities, Sharia-compliant products are entering the market. Concepts related to Sharia prohibitions such as *gharar*, *riba* and *maysir*, and products and practices such as *mudharabah*, *takaful* and *tubarru*, which are presented in Unit 2, are becoming increasingly common in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries.

A) **Report goals**

The impact of Sharia on law and on social and business practices exhibits strong differences across Muslim countries. This often leads to misunderstandings for foreign professionals trying to do business in those countries. The aim of this exercise is to compare the various levels of penetration of Sharia at legal, social and business levels.

You may also focus on other religious groups whose religious practices strongly influence the business life of the countries most of whose population professes those faiths.

B) **Methodology**

Exercise 5 is a group activity. The groups, each of which will have up to 4 members (never more than 4), will deliver a written report and prepare a PowerPoint presentation. The report will have a maximum length of 6 pages, a font size of 10 points (Arial), and a line spacing of 1.5. Only certain essays will be selected to be presented in class (on 8th October). The oral presentations should last between 5 and 7 minutes.

The essay consists of analysing the impact of Sharia on legal, social, and business practices in two Muslim countries. At the practical session to be held on 1st October, **each team will be assigned those two countries** (from the following list):

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Brunei, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Surinam, Syria, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen.

The essay must analyse the extent to which Sharia influences social and business practices. It should also focus on the role of Sharia in the judicial system, how it applies to business transactions, commercial law and personal status, and, if applied in full, how it affects criminal law.

The essay must include the country-specific side of Sharia and how it affects aspects such as:

- The products forbidden by Sharia (e.g. alcohol: are any alcoholic products legal in the country?). Do any local companies produce them? What is the market volume for these products, imports and exports?
- Specific restrictions for foreign exporters of products affected by Sharia regulations.
- The role of women in society (e.g. the extent to which women have the same rights as men; the presence of women on the boards of main companies; women in the political arena, etc.).
- The influence of the religion on the government and political decisions.
- Regional variations of the application of Sharia in the country.
- The impact of Sharia-compliant financial and insurance products in the country.
- Islamic marketing.
- Sharia-compliant hotels.
- Etc.

Teams may also propose to focus their reports on the impact of **another religion** on the business life of another country a significant proportion of whose population professes that faith.

1. *Methodological approach*

   You may use any source of information, including academic articles, books, databases, the Internet, the press, etc.

   - References (all references must be correctly cited in accordance with APA rules http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx).

2. *Composition of the teams*

   The teams will be decided during the practical session to be held on 1st October. Each team will have up to four students. All team members must have different nationalities. No group can have two members of the same nationality.

C) **Delivery and assessment of the report**

The deadline for uploading this activity is **11.55 pm** on **7th October 2020**. The documents should be submitted to the online campus http://aulavirtual.uv.es. The files containing the documents must be labelled as follows:

- **CCM2021_Sharia_X.doc.** This file will contain the written essay. Each group will be assigned a different number. For example, when submitting its report group 3 should label its file: CCM2021_Sharia_3.doc
- **CCM2021_Sharia_X.ppt.** This file will contain the slides used during the oral presentation. (e.g. CCM2021_Sharia_3.ppt).

No reports will be accepted after the deadline.

Reports that display depth and rigour in the literature review, clarity in developing the concept, clarity in structuring the content, and innovation and creativity in its methodological approach will be assessed positively. Plagiarism will be severely penalized.