

## ESTONIAN CULTURE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF HOFSTEDE'S MODEL (CASE OF HOTEL INDUSTRY) \*

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**Abstract.** Our study presents the measuring of Estonian culture in the framework of Hofstede's model. The questionnaire that consists of nine cases from a hotel's everyday activity was developed and the representatives of the hotel industry were interviewed. The position of Estonians was established in comparison with Italians and Egyptians. Two-dimensional models were composed for Estonians on the basis of the current study and the Hofstede's findings about Italians and Egyptians. Estonians were found to be close to Germans and the Swiss rather than the Scandinavian people according to our results.

**Keywords:** Hofstede's model, cultural dimensions, Estonians, Italians, Egyptians, hotel industry

### 1. Introduction

Cultural differences imply a question: how universal are the regularities of human behavior, in other words, to what extent is it possible to apply one culture's behavior patterns in another. The impact of culture-based differences and similarities on economic activities and other social spheres is increasingly taken into consideration. Until 1980 the concept of culture was applied mainly in anthropology, and afterwards cultural differences became topical in economic sciences as well. The reason for this was the internalization of US organizations in the 1950s-1960s and the success of Japanese organizations in the USA, caused by effective management of cultural differences. Many researches have proven that organizational operations depend on values of the host culture, but the level of this impact varies. Hence, there is no doubt that national culture influences organization; the question is rather how and to what extent (Aycaan 2000)? Hofstede's

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theory of cultural dimensions is one of the most known approaches that give answers to these questions. The present article analyzes how cultural dimensions are manifested in Estonia.

## 2. Hofstede's cultural dimensions

Speaking about the history of his widely known research, Hofstede emphasizes that initially he looked for the values that are common for all people (Hofstede 2003). He relied on the research done in the 1950s and conducted his study knowing that every society has to create an understanding of the relation to power, conflict, and attitudes toward an individual (rooted in the relations between the individual and the society, as well as in gender roles). Hofstede launched an extensive survey, in which work-related values were studied in 50 countries and three regions. These three regions were Eastern Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia), Western Africa (Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone), and the Arab countries (Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates). The survey was a part of the development process at IBM, whose headquarters were located in the U.S. Its purpose was to present to managers on different levels what employees think of their work, company and superiors. Later this survey became known as HERMES research program. Hofstede based his approach on the assumption that since all respondents work in the same company and represent common organizational culture, the differences in their estimations should stem mainly from national culture. There were over 60 work-related values presented in the questionnaire. The statistic analysis revealed four synthetic components (cultural dimensions).

Culture is characterized by four dimensions (Hofstede 2003). *Power distance* reveals to what extent power and hierarchical relations are considered essential in the given culture. It discloses the scope to which it is accepted that power in organizations and institutions is unequally allocated, or to what degree hierarchy engenders psychological detachment. Such tendencies are found in Austria, Israel, Denmark and New Zealand, and high power distance found in Malaysia, Guatemala, Panama and the Philippines.

*Uncertainty avoidance* explains whether tense and vague situations are tolerated or avoided and to what extent. This dimension is related to the acceptance of strenuous and uncomfortable situations and regarded by Hofstede in the chapter "What is different, is dangerous". In societies with low uncertainty avoidance, organizational rules can be violated for pragmatic reasons, conflicts are considered as a natural part of life, and ambiguous situations are regarded as natural and interesting. In case of high uncertainty avoidance, these tendencies are opposite. Such societies are rigorous, people depend on authorities and protests of citizens are not tolerated. In working relations the rules play an important role and are carefully followed. Specialization is considered to be essential both in organization and occupation. High level of uncertainty avoidance is found in

Greece, Portugal, Guatemala, Uruguay and Belgium. Uncertainty is less avoided in Singapore, Jamaica, Denmark and Sweden.

*Individualism-collectivism* dimension shows whether the interests of an individual or a group are more important. According to Hofstede, individualistic societies are characterized by weak relations between individuals and it is assumed that everyone's responsibility is to take care of himself and his family. On the contrary, in collectivistic societies people are connected to each other through strong and cohesive groups that protect them during their life; it is assumed that people are loyal to these groups. The most individualistic country is the USA, followed by other English-speaking countries – Australia, Great Britain and Canada. In collectivistic cultures, there is commune-based regulation of a society, and political systems are often unbalanced. People connect their identity with groups more than with other characteristics of personality. Collectivistic are Guatemala, Ecuador, Panama, Venezuela and Columbia.

Fourth dimension is *masculinity-femininity*, which shows to what extent culture is dominated by such masculine values as orientation on achievement and competition. Detection of self-assertiveness refers to masculinity, and discretion and modesty describes feminine behavior. Masculine societies are dominated by men and “masculine” values – independence and career. Masculine are Japan, Austria, Venezuela and Italy. Feminine countries are Scandinavian countries – Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands.

Hofstede (2003) asserts that this model enables us to consider dimensions separately, or group them by two or three. In the latter case it is possible to present them in two- or three-axis diagram and thus to show their multiple effects in culture. Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions is often applied and we represent several aspects that are related to organizational activity. Soeters claims that, firstly, Hofstede's conception has a theoretical value that can be used when analyzing crisis situations on international level. Secondly, he highlights a practical aspect of the possibility of its application in international management (Soeters 1996:241). Cultural dimensions have been cohered with management philosophy, communication, conflict management, negotiations, organizational behavior and other questions. Also in marketing Hofstede's approach has been applied. For example, Kale finds that on the basis of the dimensions model it is possible to explain and understand how the barriers between buyer and seller arise in international trade (Kale 1991:23). This model enables highlighting the attitudes and the behavior in organization that is characteristics of a certain national culture. At the same time it is worth reminding that the findings represent average scores of the given country, i.e. the findings cannot characterize everyone individually.

There were several attempts to define Estonia's position within the model. Most profound research has been done with the individualism-collectivism dimension. The results of research conducted by Realo are accepted internationally (Realo, Allik 1999, Realo et al. 1997). The summary of these studies is published in the recent article *Comparison of public and academic discourse: Estonian individualism and collectivism revisited* (Realo 2003). In this article it is analyzed

why Estonians consider themselves individualistic, whereas several culture researchers claim that Estonians are collectivistic. The reason could be that under individualism-collectivism Estonians understand the extent to which it is preferred to act individually or within a group. In contrast, researchers of national culture define individualism-collectivism with regard to the extent of emotional and intellectual connection to the group.

The number of studies on cultural dimensions in Estonia is nevertheless quite limited, whereas the position of Estonia in the model is determined rather on expert estimations than on results of an empirical research. For example, Pajupuu defines the placement of Estonian culture among other cultures based on the so-called theoretical weightings (Pajupuu 2003). Also Hofstede relies rather on expert opinions than on representative empirical research when estimating Estonian cultural dimensions on the sample of 10 students (Hofstede 2003). Such simplification can lead to inadequate decisions, because cultural dimensions are applied to facilitate the arrangement of international cooperation between organizations. In order to fill this gap the authors of the present article set the objective to position Estonian culture among other cultures in Hofstede's cultural dimensions diagram. To achieve this goal, the authors developed a research methodology, conducted empirical research among employees of hotel industry, and then the results were placed in Hofstede's cultural dimensions diagram.

### **3. Comparative research on cultural dimensions**

#### *3.1. Methodology*

To measure the relationship between national culture and human behavior in an organization the questionnaire based on Hofstede's four cultural dimensions was developed in Estonian and English languages (Appendix 1). The questionnaire consists of nine cases from hotels' everyday activity; each of them is up to five sentences long. The respondents were asked to choose one of five reaction types that they think is the most appropriate solution. Described reaction types correspond to a certain cultural dimension, varying from lowest to highest level. Answers were estimated on 5-point scale, where 1 stands for the weakest and 5 for the strongest assessment of the given dimension. The first three cases measure power distance, fourth and fifth – uncertainty avoidance, sixth and seventh – individualism and collectivism, and two last ones measure the masculinity-femininity dimension. Composing the cases, the following was considered:

1) Power distance (Appendix 1, cases I, II, III) emerges in conflicts and situations when subordinates and their managers have different opinions. Therefore the goal of power distance cases was to measure the extent of acceptance of orders and directives given to an employee.

2) Development of the cases on uncertainty avoidance (Appendix 1, cases IV, V) was based on one of Hofstede's theses, according to which in case of low uncertainty avoidance, regulations refer only to the directly necessary instructions

and guidelines. On the contrary, if there is a tendency to avoid uncertainty, the emotional necessity for directives arises, so that many rules are created, including those that sometimes do not work.

3) When developing individualism-collectivism cases (Appendix 1, cases VI, VII) two of Hofstede's theses were considered. The first aspect regards the relationship between worker and employer. In individualistic cultures this relationship is strictly professional and expresses first of all business activity. In collectivistic cultures the working relationship is supported by friendship and kinship. The second aspect is the relation to the business partner. In individualistic cultures all business partners are treated equally. In collectivistic cultures, on the other hand, it is common to make better offers to friends and acquaintances (Hofstede 1997).

4) Development of cases on masculinity-femininity (further on masculinity) (Appendix 1, cases VII, IX) was based on Hofstede's statement, according to which in masculine cultures competition, antagonism and justice are considered to be valuable, whereas feminine cultures prefer intuition and soft dealing (Hofstede 1997). This dimension is manifested in the organizational members' relationships and attitudes towards each other. The cases on masculinity had the objective to find out whether there is a competition among workers or do they help and support each other.

### *3.2. Sample characteristics*

In order to define the position of Estonians in the diagram of cultural dimensions there is a need to find matching samples. It was decided to conduct the research in the hotel industry, because the representatives of the communications sphere have the experience to solve in their everyday activity the situations where cultural differences play an important role. In the present research Estonians are compared with Italians and Egyptians, whose positions in the model have been found in previous researches (Hofstede 2003). The survey was conducted in August and September 2002. 120 questionnaires were sent to potential respondents, out of which 80 i.e. 66.7% were returned. The sample consisted of 25 Estonians, 27 Italians and 28 Egyptians. The Egyptians, Italians and 6 Estonians worked in hotels in Sharm El Sheikh (Egypt), and the rest of Estonians worked in hotels in Estonia. There were 49 men and 31 women in the sample. Among Estonians there were 10 men and 15 women, among Italians 13 men and 14 women, and among Egyptians 26 men and 2 women. Besides the nationality and gender also the age was taken into consideration. The average age of all respondents was 23.2 years (Standard Deviation,  $SD = 3.07$ ). The youngest respondent was 18 and the oldest 31 years old. Average age of the Estonians was 24, Italians 22, and Egyptians 23 years. From the viewpoint of the position in the organization the condition was that the respondent should work as an attendant in the direct customer service. Therefore, the sample was composed of people in the same position but of different nationalities.

### 3.3. Results of the study

To analyze the data, cross-tabulation was conducted that enables us to sort the answers. The findings were clustered on the basis of nationality, whereas the maximum and minimum scores were analyzed separately from middle scores of the dimensions scale. The cross-tabulation technique was applied and the results are presented in Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4. Figure 1 demonstrates estimations given to power distance.

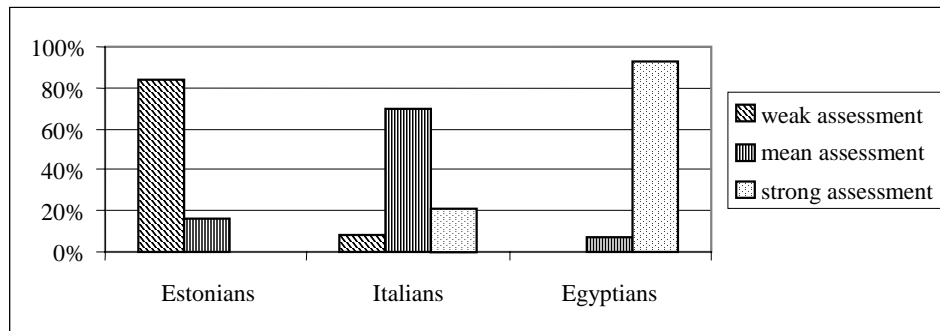


Figure 1. Estimations of power distance among nationalities on the basis of the 1st case.

The first case on power distance, discussed in the methodology part, has revealed significant differences between the groups. 84% of Estonians thought that the attendant should first serve a client and only then fulfill the order of his/her boss. 80% of those argued that client service is primary and 20% referred to the fact that the boss did not ask the task to be dealt with immediately. 16% of the respondents thought that the attendant should ask the superior for advice and act according to directions. None of the Estonian respondents thought that the attendant should stop serving the clients and fulfill the boss's task immediately.

70% of Italian respondents found that the attendant should clarify the order of fulfilling the tasks with the boss and act accordingly. 8% thought that the attendant should first serve the client and 22% that the order should be fulfilled immediately. 93% of the Egyptians thought that the attendant should fulfill the task immediately, 50% of which explained it by the fact that the order came from the direct boss. 7% of the Egyptians found that the attendant should ask for advice from the supervisor and act accordingly.

Figure 2 presents a summary of the results on both dimensions: power distance and uncertainty avoidance. For the better overview of the differences, the medial is left out and only extremes are considered. The first two columns in Figure 2 signify the estimations on power distance, and the two last ones signify the estimations on uncertainty avoidance.

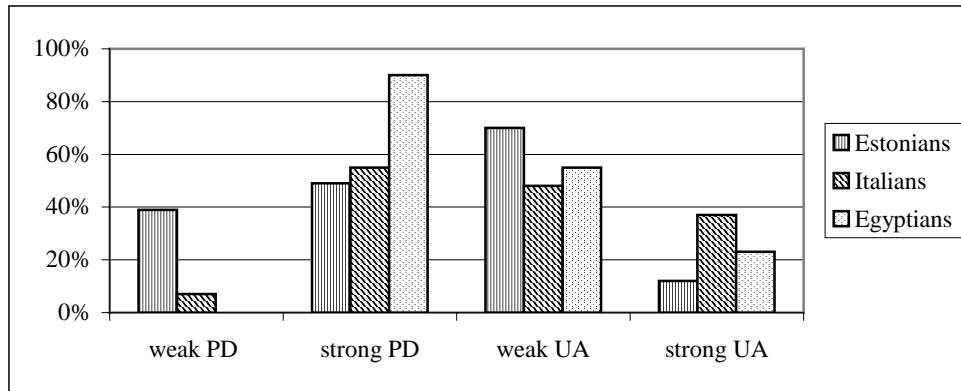


Figure 2. The comparison of the weak and strong assessments of power distance (PD) and uncertainty avoidance (UA) among nationalities.

Compared to Italians and Egyptians, Estonian attendants were more independent, expecting advice rather than orders from their bosses, and were more willing to negotiate. At the same time Estonians had a comparatively lower need for work-related instructions and regulations.

Figure 3 shows the weak and strong assessments on collectivism among national groups. The results reveal that the level of collectivism among Estonians and Italians is similar.

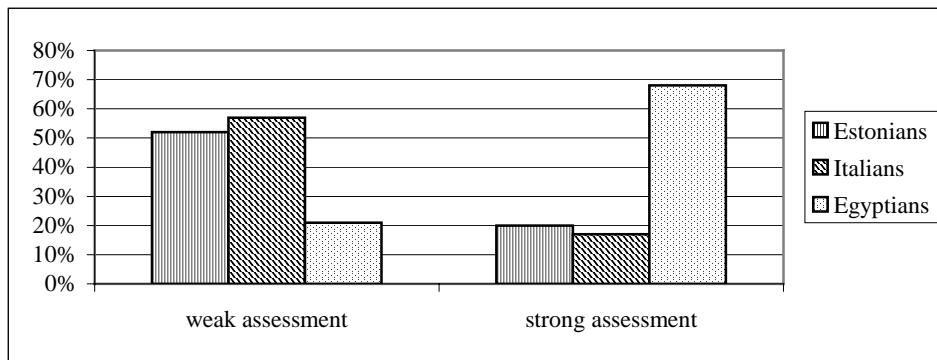


Figure 3. Comparison of weak and strong assessments of collectivism among nationalities.

In the first situation on collectivism, the respondents asked to solve a situation where the hotel has a long-term business partner Company A, which provides a certain service, and also uses the hotel's services by directing its guests from abroad to be accommodated in the hotel. The cooperation has been successful; the bosses of the companies know each other personally and often have business lunches together. At the same time the hotel got an offer to provide the same

service from another well-known company B. The hotel management has no cooperation experience with the new company and does not know the management of that company personally. Company B offers the service at a lower price. The respondents had to say which company's service they preferred.

The answers of the Estonians were surprising. Only 3 respondents or 12% found that the service should be bought from the company that offers a lower price, and 66% of those thought that it should be done even if the result would be the termination of the companies' cooperation. 48% of the Estonians thought that the service should be bought from both companies. 40% decided that cooperation with the old partner company should be continued, but the hotel has to start price negotiations with its partner. The results of the second situation suggest that Estonians are not very collectivistic. 40% of the Estonians thought that the decision of the human resource manager should not be influenced by advice or personal acquaintances. 60% thought that every applicant should be tested and interviewed. 86% of those agreed to the additional condition that the recommendations and relations with the company where the candidates were previously employed should be considered, and 14% thought that internal workers should be preferred when making a recruitment choice. None of the Estonian respondents thought that recruitment decision should be based purely on recommendations or personal acquaintance.

Comparing the weak and strong assessments of masculinity cases (Figure 4) it was found that the values of Estonian attendants were more feminine than those of Italians and more masculine than those of Egyptians.

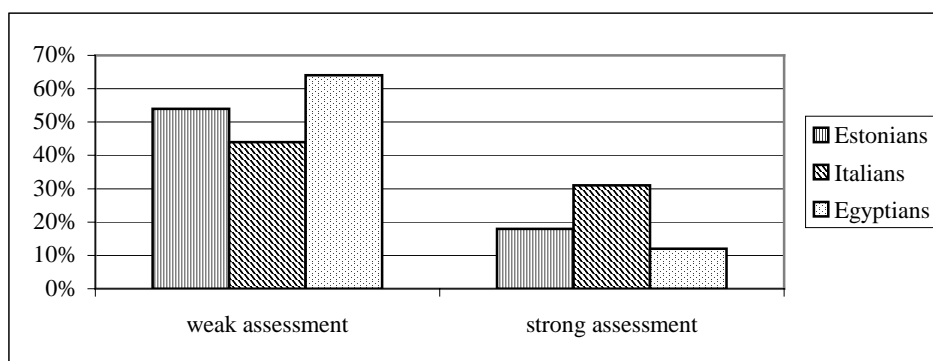


Figure 4. Comparison of weak and strong assessments on masculinity among nationalities.

In the situation of electing the best worker, 36% of Estonians preferred a worker who had better working results and 8% supported an attendant who was outstanding in terms of social activity. At the same time none of the Estonian respondents supported either of these alternatives by maximum points of scale 100%. Unlike Estonians, 7% of Italians and 7% of Egyptians preferred an



attendant with outstanding communication skills and social activity and 26% and 4%, respectively preferred absolutely an employee who had better work results.

#### 4. The position of Estonians on the cultural dimensions diagram

Describing the impact of culture on organization, Hofstede refers to an old saying: In Great Britain everything is allowed that is not forbidden; in Germany everything is forbidden that is not allowed, and in France everything is allowed, even what is forbidden (Hofstede 2003). These principles are reflected in the two-dimensional matrix where the power distance is on the horizontal axis and uncertainty avoidance – on the vertical axis. The position of Italians and Egyptians<sup>1</sup> is in the quarter corresponding to the ‘pyramid’ type of culture (Hofstede 2003). This type is characterized by large power distance and high uncertainty avoidance that in turn suggests that the organizations are bureaucratic and hierarchy has an important role in them. On the basis of the collected data, Estonian attendants have got lower estimation on power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Hence, Estonian attendants were conditionally placed into the matrix to the quarter corresponding to the ‘well-oiled machine’ type of culture with a low power distance and relatively small uncertainty avoidance. In case of such cultural type the situations are solved according to the rules and regulations (Hofstede 2003). According to Hofstede’s research, Finland, Germany and Switzerland also belong to this group of countries.

Figure 5 represents Hofstede’s power distance and uncertainty avoidance matrix, the egg-shaped area of which signifies the conditional position of the Estonian attendants according to the results of the present study. Compiling the typology, Hofstede relied on the research by O. Stevens on the basic understandings of the functioning of the organization in different cultures (Hofstede 2003). Based on this typology and our empirical research we can say that the model of a ‘well-oiled machine’ should be preferred describing the organizational culture in Estonia. The bureaucracy, robust structure and fulfilling of the well-regulated work tasks play a very important role in Estonian organizations. Therefore it can be stated that precise definition and regulation stems from Estonian culture. The position of Estonia on the diagram shows that the power distance and uncertainty avoidance dimensions are close to the center. Therefore, *well-oiled machine* is not necessarily the dominating understanding of organizational functioning.

Figure 6 illustrates the matrix compiled on the basis of Hofstede’s individualism and uncertainty avoidance dimensions. The egg-shaped area signifies the conditional position of Estonian attendants based on the results of the empirical research. The placement of this area came from the finding that the level of uncertainty avoidance of Estonians was lower and the level of collectivism a bit higher than those of the Italians.

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<sup>1</sup> Egyptians are considered to belong to the group of Arabic countries.

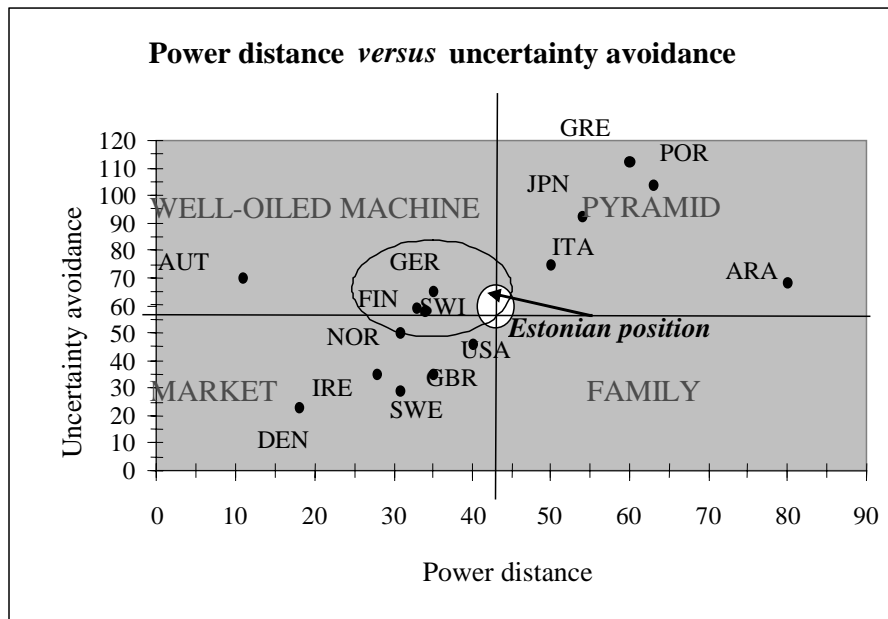


Figure 5. The Estonian position in respect with the preferred organizational type (on the basis of Hofstede 2003 and empirical research)  
 Note: The axes start from 0-point (unlike Hofstede's mode of arranging the matrix).

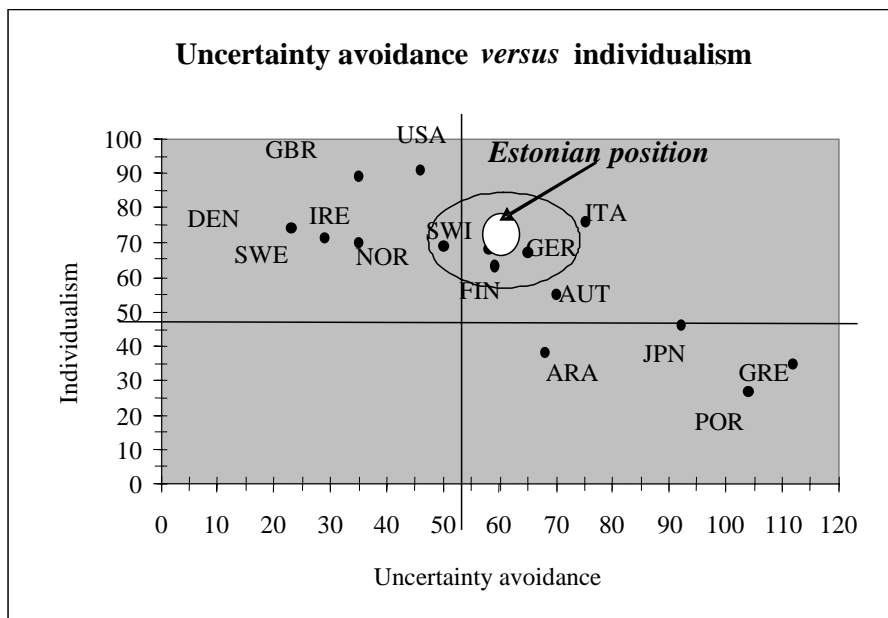


Figure 6. Individualism versus uncertainty avoidance (on the basis of Hofstede 2003 and empirical research).  
 Note: The axes start from 0-point (unlike Hofstede's mode of arranging the matrix).

Estonian attendants were placed in the quarter of the matrix where the high uncertainty avoidance is combined with individualism. According to Hofstede's approach, such combination indicated a culture, where there is a significant confrontation towards the minorities, but at the same time the official policy tries to ensure that everybody's interests are protected equally (Hofstede 2003). Consistent with Hofstede's research, among the countries belonging to this group are, for example, Finland, Germany, and Italy.

In his research Hofstede joined the results on masculinity and uncertainty avoidance and demonstrated how different motivation models are shaped under the influence of these two dimensions together (Hofstede 2003). Figure 7 illustrates the matrix of masculinity and uncertainty avoidance, the egg-shaped area of which represents the conditional position of the Estonian attendants on the basis of the present empirical research. Defining the uncertainty avoidance axis it was considered that one of the sources for motivation is the need for achievement-need for security ratio, the masculinity axis characterizes how important are ego needs (recognition) or a need for affiliation.

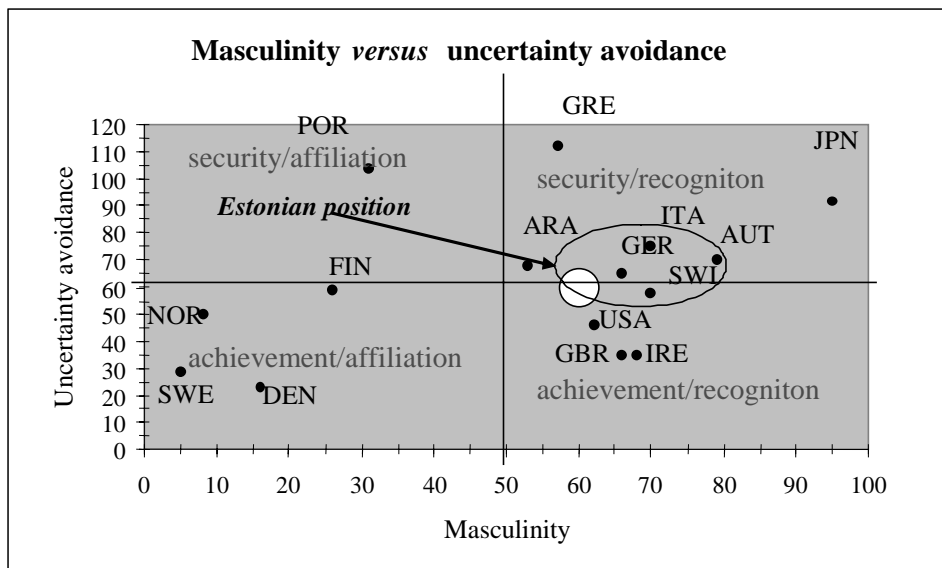


Figure 7. Uncertainty avoidance versus masculinity (on the basis of Hofstede 2003 and empirical research).

Note: The axes start from 0-point (unlike Hofstede's mode of arranging the matrix).

On the basis of gathered data the Estonian attendants are placed where the motivating factors are security and recognition. In Hofstede's research, such countries as Germany, Italy, Japan etc. were placed in the same quarter. According to Hofstede, people in these cultures believe that wealth is achieved by hard work (Hofstede 2003). Hofstede emphasizes that dividing cultures into quarters

excellently demonstrates how far the real human motivation is from the simple human needs hierarchy approach by Maslow. However, since Estonia is situated very close to the border between the quarters in the matrix, also the achievement need can be an essential motivator in Estonian organizations.

To sum up, it can be said that the biggest difference between nationalities appeared in their relations to power. It can be explained by the fact that the research dealt with working (organizational) relations. Regarding organizational culture Hofstede considered power distance and uncertainty avoidance to be more important dimensions than the other, because they directly reflect an individual perception of an organization (Hofstede 1983).

To some extent surprising was the amount of choices related to high level of collectivism made by Estonians. In fact, it corresponds to the opinions of many researchers about Estonians (e.g. Triandis 1995), but is opposite to the autostereotype of the Estonians. Looking at the content of the solution it can be seen that it focuses on the affective relations between workers. The result is well discussed by Realo (2003) who reports that Estonians themselves refer collectivism to collective activity, whereas scientific research focuses on other aspects. This interpretation is supported by the statistical results for the second situation that focuses rather on the activity and according to which the level of collectivism appeared to be relatively low.

The findings on Estonians were three times in the same quarter of the matrix with those of Germans and the Swiss, and two times in the same quarter with those of the Finns. Comparing our findings with Pajupuu's assumptions, we can see that the findings are concurrent. Similarly to the findings of Pajupuu (2003) our research has found that power distance is not large in Estonia. We also placed Estonians in the quarter with a rather high level of individualism. Research results allowed us to estimate masculinity level as high and uncertainty avoidance as medium. Quite significant concurrence is that the culture tree corresponds to Hofstede's indexes (Pajupuu 2003), our findings support this hypothesis. In the culture tree Estonia is also situated in the same cluster as Germany and Switzerland, and Italy is in the closest cluster as our study confirmed. The biggest difference is related to the position of Finland, which according to the culture tree is quite far from Estonia. However, in two matrixes of dimensions Estonia and Finland were in the same quarter. This is the main difference in the findings after the comparison to the above mentioned culture tree is made. This matter certainly requires clarification.

The present research enabled us to conclude what the position of Estonia is in cultural dimensions model. Definitely the results would be better comparable if Hofstede's research methodology were applied, but due to several reasons (e.g. the problems of adapting the questionnaire) it has not yet been done. Another limitation is connected with the size of the sample, because the number of respondents is rather small. We tried to compensate it with the unification of the respondents' age, activity area and position in the organization. Undoubtedly the better overview of the veracity of the research findings would be achieved when

the according data on other cultures would be added. It is necessary, since Hofstede's cultural dimensions are applied widely both in scientific and ordinary language when characterizing the special features of cultures (Yates and Cutler 1996). Hence the role of a correct definition cannot be overestimated. Positioning of Estonia in the model would facilitate the characterization of this culture to those who want to understand it and apply this knowledge in managing the organization. The elucidation of these phenomena is necessary since ex-Eastern Block countries are considered homogeneous. As Gilbert (2001:409) has put it, "Some early Western management analysis of management change in the countries of CEE tended to approach the topic as though the events of the second half of the twentieth century rendered the whole region culturally homogeneous." We opened an agenda, not closed one.

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*Appendix 1.*

**The cases for measurement of cultural dimensions**

**I.** At the reception the new guests are being checked in. In front of 3 receptionists the queues of 5–6 people have formed. The reception manager approaches one of the receptionists and asks him to print out the weekly reports of the rooms. This task would take approximately 15–20 minutes, which is the same amount of time the receptionist would spend on serving the people in the queue.

What should the receptionist do?

1. First serve the clients in the queue and only after that carry out the task. The most important thing is the quality of service.
2. Print out the reports after serving the people in the queue, because the reception manager did not say that it must be done immediately.
3. Ask the reception manager to specify the task and then act accordingly.
4. Finish serving the client he was talking to at the moment and then ask the others to turn to other two receptionists. Then he should carry out the given task.
5. Carry out the task immediately, because the order came from his superior.

**II.** At the end of the day the hotel restaurant manager gives one of the employees a list of products which should be ordered from the stock for the next day. Noting down the order the employee notices that refreshments are not included in the list, although the supply of refreshments would not even cover two days. Generally the minimum supply of refreshments in the restaurant is considered to be for two days. Usually the order is also placed for the average amount of refreshments for two days.

What should the employee do?

1. Order the refreshments. The amount should depend on the season and the number of visitors in the restaurant.
2. Order the refreshments so that there will be a supply sufficient for two days.
3. Turn to the restaurant manager for help.
4. Order the products in the list made by the restaurant manager, but if possible specify the order regarding refreshments.
5. Order the products in the list made by the restaurant manager.

**III.** The hotel management is planning to give a dinner party to honor a VIP guest from x country. The two chefs of the restaurant are asked to put together the menu. One of the chefs is of the opinion that the menu should be based on traditional food of the visitor's country. The other is sure it should be based on local food and this has caused a conflict between them.

How to solve this conflict?

1. A meeting with the rest of the catering staff should be held. Both chefs get the opportunity to defend their position. After discussing the matter together a solution will be found.

2. The catering staff should discuss the problem. If necessary the opinion of the catering manager should be asked.
3. To solve the problem it is necessary to ask the opinion of the catering manager.
4. Both chefs give reasons for their choice to the catering manager who makes the final decision.
5. The catering manager should give orders for carrying out this project.

**IV.** A receptionist notices a piece of paper on the floor. Although he is not dealing with a client at the moment he does not pick it up. In his opinion it is not one of his tasks because it is not in his job description. According to the company rules an employee should keep his working environment neat and tidy, but the paper is outside the receptionist's immediate place of work.

Should the job description and company rules be changed?

1. The job description and company rules should not be changed because they determine only the main tasks of an employee and general rules. Every single thing cannot be regulated.
2. The job description should not be changed but the company rules could be made a little bit more detailed.
3. The job description should not be changed. On the other hand the company rules should be made so detailed that situations like this will not occur in the future.
4. The job description should be made a little more detailed. It is also necessary to have stricter company rules.
5. The job description should be made more detailed and company rules stricter and more particular.

**V.** There are 3 receptionists at the reception working at the same time. According to the company rules the receptionists can take lunch breaks one by one in every hour and they last for 45 minutes.

What should a receptionist do when it is his time to take a break but his colleague has not come back yet?

1. It depends on the situation. If there are a lot of guests in the lobby he should postpone his lunch. Otherwise he could go and have his lunch.
2. He should wait until his colleague comes back and only then take the break although in that case he does not follow the lunch hours prescribed by the rules.
3. He should wait until his colleague comes back and then take a shorter lunch break. This allows the third receptionist to have his lunch on time.
4. In any case he should have his lunch at the time prescribed by the company rules.
5. If the company rules do not say what an employee should do in a situation like this he should contact his superior and do as he says.

**VI.** The hotel has been in a long-term business relationship with company A. It buys services from the company but at the same time company A uses the services

provided by the hotel and accommodates its foreign guests in the hotel. So far the co-operation has been successful. The executives know each other personally and often have business dinners together. But now company B has offered its services to the hotel as well. It is a well-known company in the market but the hotel management does not have any experiences in working with them and they do not know the company management personally. However, company B offers its services at a cheaper price.

Should the hotel buy the services from company A or company B?

1. From company B because it offers its services with a cheaper price and even in case company A will stop using the services provided by the hotel.
2. From company B but only in case the hotel could continue providing their services.
3. Partly from company B to cut down on expenses, partly from company A to continue co-operation.
4. From company A but if it is possible they should try to negotiate a better price for the services.
5. From company A because long-term business relationship is more important than cheaper service price.

**VII.** The hotel is looking for someone for a position of reservation manager. The personnel department has received a number of applications. Some of them include recommendations from influential persons though the personnel manager does not know these people personally. At the same time 4 people from the reservation department would like to apply for this job. The personnel manager has a good working relationship with all of them and because of their personal qualities and achievements they will be suitable candidates for the position. The hotel management has asked the personnel manager to select 3 candidates for the position.

Who should the personnel manager choose?

1. He should test and interview all the suitable candidates on equal terms and as the result of this select the top 3. Recommendations and personal relationship should not influence his decision.
2. He should test and interview all the suitable candidates but also take into consideration the recommendations and regard the fact that 4 of them have already been working for the company as an advantage.
3. He should test and interview all the suitable candidates. However, he should favor the company's employees while making the decision.
4. He should test and interview only the candidates who either have recommendations or have been working for the company.
5. He should choose from the people working in the company.

**VIII.** There are two receptionists working at the reception. A hotel guest comes to one of them to check out and make the payment. As the receptionist has been working only for a few days it takes him a lot of time to serve the client. This



makes the client impatient. The other receptionist is experienced and at the moment he does not have any clients.

What should the experienced receptionist do?

1. He should definitely help and support his new colleague.
2. If possible he should help his colleague because quality service is achieved by team work.
3. He should help his colleague only in case he cannot manage on his own and asks for help.
4. He should not interfere because the new receptionist should manage on his own. This is also the quickest way to learn things.
5. He should not interfere because everybody should manage on his own. Besides, people working in the same field are competitors.

**IX.** The hotel management is going to choose the best employee of the year from every department. In the booking department there are two suitable candidates for this title. Employee A has good communicative skills. He has trained several new employees and helped to organize a number of events in his free time. As he is always friendly and helpful he also gets on well with his colleagues. Employee B stands out because of his excellent work results. He is punctual, his reports are always on time and he has the right attitude towards work.

Who should get the title of the best employee in that department?

1. 100% employee A
2. 60% employee A and 40% employee B
3. 50% employee A and 50% employee B
4. 40% employee A and 60% employee B
5. 100% employee B