

Cultural Differences between Austria in comparison to Serbia and Croatia relating to migration

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1 Abstract

The main purpose of this thesis is to examine the differences between the Austrian culture when it is compared to the Serbian and Croatian culture. Sources for the Serbian and Croatian culture will mainly be Serbs and Croats who migrated to Austria. The goal of this paper is to show what challenges the immigrants face when being confronted with a completely different culture from their own. Another objective is to highlight each culture's values and traditions in order to help culture A understand and accept rituals and customs when interacting or working with individuals from culture B and the other way around. As Serbia and Croatia are both located in the Balkans and were both part of Yugoslavia, their cultures are fairly similar. The few aspects that differentiate the Serbian and Croatian culture and their shared history will be examined and mentioned in this thesis as well. In this paper, the cultural differences between Austria, Serbia and Croatia will be explained utilising different approaches. The two methods used will be the analysis of the social environment based on the Hofstede dimensions and the values based on the Trompenaars dimensions. *Hierarchy, Identity, Gender, Truth, Virtue and Well-Being* are the Hofstede dimensions and *Universalism v. Particularism, Neutral v. Affective, Specific v. Diffuse and Achievement v. Ascription* are the Trompenaars dimensions that are applied in this research.

2 Vorwort

In Österreich ist das Thema Migration höchstaktuell und schon seit Jahrzehnten ein wesentlicher Bestandteil der Politik und Wirtschaft. Insbesondere Immigranten aus dem ehemaligen Jugoslawien gehören schon seit vielen Jahren zu der österreichischen Gesellschaft dazu. Trotzdem existieren immense kulturelle Unterschiede, welche während des Zusammenlebens dieser verschiedenen Kulturen deutlich sichtbar werden.

Als Personen mit Bezug zu allen drei Kulturen, haben wir uns dazu entschieden unsere Diplomarbeit der Erarbeitung der Differenzen und Ähnlichkeiten der Länder Österreich, Kroatien und Serbien zu widmen. Tatjana Petrovic, welche in Serbien geboren wurde und aufwuchs, lebt seit 10 Jahren in Wien und hat die Schwierigkeiten einer Integration in eine neue Gesellschaft selbst erlebt. Marija Martinovic hingegen, wurde in Österreich von kroatischen Eltern geboren und wuchs schon immer mit der Herausforderung auf, einen Mittelweg zwischen den beiden Kulturen zu finden.

Um zusätzliche Expertise zu erlangen, führten wir Gespräche mit Personen die ebenfalls Erfahrungen mit dem Leben in beiderlei Kulturen haben. Die erste Interviewpartnerin ist Expertin der serbischen Kultur, da sie die ersten 35 Jahre ihres Lebens dort verbrachte und anschließend nach Österreich zog. Unsere zweite Interviewpartnerin, lebte die ersten 9 Jahre ihres Lebens in Kroatien und hat die Integration in die österreichische Gesellschaft bereits als Kind durchlebt.

Um die Integration in ein neues Land erfolgreich zu absolvieren, ist Wissen von beiden Seiten notwendig, um Handlungen und Gedanken der Gegenseite besser nachvollziehen zu können. Mit dieser Diplomarbeit erhoffen wir uns ein gegenseitiges Verständnis der verschiedenen Kulturen zu erlangen.

3 Social Environment Based on Hofstede Dimensions

The social environment based on Hofstede dimensions is, as mentioned above, one of the methods that will be used for the analysis of the cross-cultural differences between Austria, Serbia and Croatia. These dimensions were established by Dutch psychologist Geert Hofstede. Hofstede's dimensions examine the differences between the values of different cultures and help make connections to how those values influence the behaviour and culture within a country. The study was first published by Hofstede in 1980. He had conducted a survey within the company IBM about the employees' values and their differences. The analysis was carried out between the 1960's and the 1970's and it included more than 100,00 IBM employees within 50 countries and three regions across the globe. Initially, the dimensions were composed of four dimensions: *Hierarchy*, *Identity*, *Gender* and *Truth*. In 1991 a fifth dimension, *Virtue*, was identified by a group of Chinese scientists. Finally, in 2010 a reproduction of the original study was conducted by Hofstede and Michael Minkov, a Bulgarian linguist, where 93 countries worldwide were included and a sixth and final dimension was acknowledged: *Well-being*.

3.1 Hierarchy

This dimension is measured with the *Power Distance Index (PDI)* with two extremes: *High Power-Distance* and *Low Power-Distance*. *Power-Distance* is "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally." (www.hofstede-insights.com, 18 December 2022). The topic that *Power-Distance* deals with the most is inequality. The inequality within a society and the power gap between an authority figure and their subordinate is not its only focus. Furthermore, it shows how the subordinates expect, accept and handle that gap and how important a position of authority is within a certain culture. Countries with a low *PDI* are very independent and do not rely on hierarchy too much. They do not appreciate to be ordered around by others and expect everyone to communicate with each other in an equal manner. On the other hand, countries with a high *PDI* accept that everyone has their own place in the societal hierarchy and even expect those above them to give them orders. Hofstede's survey acquired the data for his study by including three questions to evaluate the *Power-Distance* in a specific country. The IBM personnel was first asked how comfortable they would or would not feel with voicing themselves against a superior's opinion or decision. Next, they were presented with four different decision-making styles and asked to first choose what they

think their supervisor's style is. Finally, they were asked to select their preferred decision-making style for a superior to have. The answers to each of these questions was evaluated and analysed according to the countries the questioned employees came from in order to calculate the *PDI* to the corresponding countries.

3.2 Gender

The scale for the dimension *Gender* consists of two opposite ends of the spectrum, which are *Masculinity* and *Femininity*. "The duality of the sexes is a fundamental fact with which different societies cope in different ways; the issue is what implications the biological differences between the sexes should have for the emotional and social roles of the genders." (Hofstede 2001, p. 279). *Gender* within a country is measured with the *Masculinity Index (MAS)* and depending on whether the *MAS* is low or high the study places a country either into the masculine or feminine category. For this calculation Hofstede did not solely rely on his IBM survey but on multiple international studies such as Schwartz's *Value Survey*, *The European and World Value Survey* by Stoelzel and Inglehart and McClelland's *Content Analysis of Children's Books*. Using a combination of those studies the concept of masculine values was created and used to rank countries with the *MAS*. According to Hofstede a country's *MAS* score is primarily the result of a country's history. The results of Hofstede's IBM employee questionnaire showed that men tend to value ego goals more like their career or money while women were more focused on social goals like relationships and helping others out. In conclusion masculine countries are driven by rivalry, accomplishment and winning. They want to be the best at what they do regardless of what it is. In contrast to that, feminine countries goals are to care for others and living a qualitative life is the ultimate form of accomplishment there. It does not matter if they are the best in their field as long as they like what they are doing. The masculine culture follows the principle *live in order to work* while the feminine follows *work in order to live*. Feminine countries prefer a gentle approach to conflicts opposing to the masculine ones, which settle a dispute in a combative manner.

3.3 Well-Being

Well-Being is the newest addition to the Hofstede Dimensions. It demonstrates a society's urge to satisfy their desires based on the customary upbringing within a country. Whether citizens tend to their basic human needs, and if so to which extent, is also an important aspect that is displayed through *Well-Being*. Where a culture stands when asked about their opinion on someone taking a break from work, school, etc. is an

indicator for their position on the scale. Same as with the previous dimensions, the results of these questions can be placed into one of two classifications: *Indulgence* or *Restraint*. A country that is lenient and where citizens more often than not reward themselves is an indulgent country. They are generally optimistic and value their leisure time. Listening to their wants and needs is important to them and their outlook on life is positive. In comparison, a restrained country has a relatively negative attitude towards most matters. They are pessimists and do not think much of relaxing or rewarding themselves after a job well done and they might look down on other individuals that do. The social norms and customs in their country do not see indulgence as something that should be practised or praised. They are controlled and dedicated and believe that taking breaks leads to laziness and unproductivity.

3.4 Identity

The dimension *Identity* divides people into two categories: *Individualism* and *Collectivism*. Individualist societies only take care of themselves and their immediate family. The interests and opinions of extended family members, friends or neighbours are not considered when it comes to making decisions, no matter what the subject is. Personal achievements and goals are very important and there is no interest in being part of a certain group. Parents enforce their children from a young age to stand on their own feet and it is preached that the kids should not depend on anyone, especially financially. It is normal, often even expected, that children leave their parental homes right after graduating or turning of age. After that it is quite common to reduce contact with the family or even break it off completely. Compared to that, there are Collectivist societies where the self-image as *We* plays a great role in one's life. People want to be part of groups, and relatives or friends are tightly embedded into the personal life. Principally everyone living nearby has at least a minor impact in the decisions one makes for their own life. In exchange for that it is usual to expect unconditional loyalty from them. Helping others and sacrificing one's own time is seen as natural. In this collectivist construct there are also different types of dependences, so it is often hard to stand up for one's own beliefs, if the group doesn't support it. Even after graduating and starting their own families, young adults still get input from their elderly. How individualist or collectivist a country is, is measured with the *Individualism Index (IDV)*. The higher the score, the more the nation is of an individualist nature. The questions on the survey, which the index is based on, take the work goals of people from different regions into account. Leisure time, freedom and personal challenge highlight the ideal position for countries with a high *IDV*, whereas training, physical conditions and skills tend to be

more significant for a collectivist position. It is highly insightful how the criteria of individualistic people concerns mostly their private life, and the opposite mentions mostly the services the company does for the employees and therefore represents their dependence on it.

3.5 Truth

Hofstede's dimension *Truth* "expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity." (www.hofstede-insights.com, 18. December 2022). The dimension truth is split up into *Uncertainty-Avoidance* and *Uncertainty-Tolerance*. Societies that lay on the side of *Uncertainty-Avoidance* don't feel comfortable with the unknown or unpredictable events occurring. Laws and regulations are imperative, even minor schemes are planned out and prepared for step by step. Matters need to be done in the traditional and common way and there is no space for unconventional routes. People from those cultures often are more stressed and anxious and therefore need everything in their lives to be structured. *Uncertainty-Tolerance* is the exact opposite. Cultures here have no problems with changes happening and the use of alternative and new methods. Fewer rules are not seen as a problem, and unstructured situations make the people feel more comfortable. Informal norms are enough to control the behaviour of individuals. People from such cultures show lower anxiety levels and are often more open-minded. It is easier for them to interact and communicate with people who are different than them. Being creative and original is more valued than the use of traditional and already known ways. To measure this in different nations, the *Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)* was established. Higher numbers show that countries avoid uncertainties and lower numbers show they tolerate them. The asked questions in this survey involve job stress and the need for regulations in companies.

3.6 Virtue

Virtue refers to a society's view on time. The two categories of time orientation are *Long-Term Orientation* and *Short-Term Orientation*. Long-Term orientated nations' perspectives are focused on the future and don't hesitate to abandon currently used methods to gain success in the future. People are highly persistent and don't give up easily on plans if they know that it will pay off in the long run. Also, the importance of relationships is determined by status. Relationships with people in higher positions or the elderly are more respected than others. It is important and required to be flexible

and adaptable in the workplace while leisure time doesn't play quite a big role. The definition of morality is rather relative, and it is believed that there is no real right or wrong, it usually depends on the situation. Short-Term orientated countries value traditions from the past more and don't thrive to change present ways of thinking and handling things. Social obligations have to be fulfilled and solving current problems or meeting current needs is of higher importance than achieving efficient results in the future. Personal steadiness and stability are the key. There are absolute truths, like good and bad, that need to be respected. Protecting face and the reciprocation of greetings, favours and gifts is necessary. Especially in business, quick results and profits are expected. To scale this dimension, the *Long-Term Orientation Index (LTO)* is used. It is based on the teachings of Confucius, a Chinese philosopher, and his long- and short-term thinking aspects. Countries with a higher index are oriented towards future accomplishments whereas the lower ranked ones focus on present day obligations.

4 Comparison: Serbia v. Croatia

This chapter is devoted to pointing out the similarities and few but significant dissimilarities between Serbia and Croatia before they are compared to Austria. To understand the rest of this paper it is important to understand each country individually as well as to know the connections which have shaped their cultures to be so alike today.

4.1 Serbia (Србија)

Serbia is located in Southeast Europe and part of the Balkan Peninsula. Its population amasses 8.4 million (including Kosovo, an area in Southern Serbia, which has been fighting for its independence from Serbia since 2008). The rivers Danube and Sava both flow through the capital city Belgrade, which has 1.3 million inhabitants. The Republic of Serbia has been an independent state since its split with Montenegro in 2006. Serbia is a parliamentary republic with the current president and prime minister being Aleksandar Vučić and Ana Brnabić, respectively. Vučić is chairman of *CHC* (Serbian Progressive Party), while Brnabić is non-party. The dominant religion in Serbia is Orthodoxy (85%) with a smaller Catholic, Muslim, Protestant and Atheist population.

4.2 Croatia (Hrvatska)

Croatia intersects into both Central and Southeast Europe. It is part of the Balkan Peninsula with access to the Adriatic Sea. 3.9 million people live in Croatia with 760,000 living in the capital Zagreb. The Republic of Croatia declared their independence as a sovereign state in 1991 and has been a member of NATO since 2009. Croatia is a parliamentary republic that joined the European Union in 2013 and the Schengen Area in 2023. The country's president, Zoran Milanović is part of *SDP* (Social Democratic Party of Croatia) while the prime minister, Andrej Plenković belongs to *HDZ* (Croatian Democratic Union). While Croatia has no official religion, 86.28% of its residents identify as Catholics, along with minorities identifying as Orthodox, Muslim or Protestant.

4.3 Serbia and Croatia: A Shared History

Serbia and Croatia's paths have been crossing each other for centuries. Besides having one language and mentality in common, these countries share a long history together. After sharing so much in their past, including land and leaders, it is natural that certain viewpoints, traditions and characteristics will develop in a similar manner.

The mutual history between Serbia and Croatia dates back to the 20th century when *The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes*, also referred to as *The Kingdom of Yugoslavia*, was formed in 1918 following the end of World War I. A mutual dislike and conflicts between Serbs and Croats had already begun then since the latter refused to renounce their independence to the monarchy completely. The breakout of World War II however, led to the division of The Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In 1941, when Yugoslavia was conquered by the Axis Powers, Serbia was seized by Germany and converted into a puppet government. Likewise, Croatia was given a new name, *The Independent State of Croatia*, which was governed by Croatian fascists, the *Ustaše*. An estimated 200,000 Croatian and 300,000 Serbian casualties were the result of World War II.

However, another conflict plagued Yugoslavia during the 1940s besides World War II. A civil war between Serbian nationalist *Četniks* and communist *Partisans* was unfolding simultaneously. After the capitulation of the Axis Powers in 1945 the Partisans took over and introduced the *Communist Party of Yugoslavia*. The one-party state, *Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)*, consisting of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia was established. Yugoslavia was led by Josip Broz *Tito*, who was the leader of the Partisans during the war.

The new and reformed Yugoslavia did not stop tensions from building up within its borders, but Tito successfully kept them from escalating until his death in 1980. Shortly

after his passing the economy and the citizens' confidence in communism started to plummet. Croatia sought more autonomy from the federation and nationalist ideologies started to spread throughout Yugoslavia again. Ultimately, Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia following suit in 1992, which is when the *SFRY* inevitably collapsed. Serbia and Montenegro formed the new *Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, FRY*.

Following Croatia and Slovenia's declaration of independence, the Yugoslav War had officially begun. The most brutal battles and war crimes took place in Bosnia and Croatia due to their large Serbian population who resisted their separation from Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav War finally came to an end in 2001 leaving behind countries plagued with poverty, unemployment, famine and inflation. An estimated 140,000 people were killed in the war of which 23,000 were Croatians and 32,000 were Serbians. In the aftermath of the war, the *FRY* dissolved in 2003 and a looser alliance *Serbia and Montenegro* was formed until 2006 when Montenegro made the decision to peacefully separate from the union.

Therefore, to understand the further inspection of the values and traditions of Croatia and Serbia, and that while they share a lot of the same principles, one must be aware that over the course of their shared journey they rarely saw eye to eye and still harbour resentment towards one another for past disagreements and battles. Regardless of their current diplomatic relationship, both nations are still heavily prejudiced towards each other.

4.4 Serbia and Croatia: Cultural Similarities and Dissimilarities

	<i>Hierarchy</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Well-Being</i>	<i>Identity</i>	<i>Truth</i>	<i>Virtue</i>
<i>Serbia</i>	86	43	28	25	92	52
<i>Croatia</i>	73	40	33	33	80	58

Table 1: Hofstede Dimensions - Serbia and Croatia

When the Hofstede Dimensions of Serbia and Croatia are looked at simultaneously and compared to each other, merely minor variations are recognisable within the scores. While the numbers on each scale may fluctuate slightly, they are both within the same range and on the same side of the scale. For example, both countries share an extremely high score on the *Power Distance Index*. Those results are not surprising, when one remembers they were under the communist regime for almost fifty years. A shift to democracy has only been made in the 21st century, therefore a strict image of hierarchy

and roles in society is expected. The *Masculinity Index* places both onto the side of the feminine societies meaning they are more nurturing and fixated on human connections than others. As far as *Well-Being* is concerned, each of them are highly restrained countries. Additionally, their low *IDV* score undoubtedly marks them as collectivist. These marks were most likely shaped by the communist values, which were respected in both countries until recently. Viewing yourself as part of a group and making decisions based on the benefits of that group instead of solely one's personal interests is a distinctive trait of collectivists. The prospect of receiving praise or rewards for an accomplishment is absurd. Completing tasks and chores is something that is expected in these cultures and finishing them is not looked at as something to be celebrated. In terms of *Truth, Uncertainty-Avoidance* is practised in Serbia as well as in Croatia. Having a plan and set of guidelines is imperative for these societies to function properly. One dimension where both positions are not obviously stated is *Virtue*. A slight lean towards *Long-Term Orientation* is present in both, though they are near to the middle of the spectrum.

Concludingly, Serbia and Croatia have almost identical values and traditions according to the Hofstede Dimensions. They share many customs and habits to the point where in certain situations a distinction cannot be made. Even in the interviews conducted with the Serbian and Croatian expert, the answers to each of the questions asked were almost undistinguishable. Because of those parallels they will be compared to Austria collectively in this thesis. However, aside the fact that they dislike being grouped together and demand to be seen independently and usually take great offence when those wishes are not respected, few crucial differences are present within the two cultures. Primarily, the religions in the two states differ. Even though both are part of the Christian church, they belong to different denominations of it. Whilst Croatia has a predominantly Catholic population, Serbs are of Orthodox faith. Because religion plays a major role in both regions, the beliefs, traditions and superstitions that stem from them are heavily incorporated into each culture, which variate depending on the specific church. Another factor are the geopolitical alignments of the countries. Croatia identifies as one with the European Union and the western world, focused on globalisation. Serbia on the other hand is heavily tied to the philosophies of the east. Those aspects are cause for further arguing and mutual wish to differentiate themselves from each other as much as they can.

5 Hofstede Dimensions: Serbia and Croatia v. Austria

	<i>Hierarchy</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Well-Being</i>	<i>Identity</i>	<i>Truth</i>	<i>Virtue</i>
Austria	11	79	63	55	70	60
Croatia	73	40	33	33	80	58
Serbia	86	43	28	25	92	52

Table 2: Hofstede Dimensions - Austria, Croatia and Serbia

5.1 Family

In this chapter the differences between an average Austrian family in comparison to a Serbian or Croatian one will be reviewed. When moving to Austria, Serbian and Croatian immigrants do not have to assimilate their parenting style or family structure to the Austrian one, but they are confronted with different approaches to raising children, building a family or taking care of family affairs. Serbian and Croatian children who either move to Austria young or are born there but raised by Serbian or Croatian values are met with an almost completely opposite family dynamic when interacting with Austrian children and their families. The formation and order within a Balkan family looks fairly different from one in Austria. These differences will be pointed out and compared using the dimensions *Hierarchy* and *Identity*.

5.1.1 Hierarchy in Family

With a *PDI* of 11 Austria is one of the countries with the lowest *PDI* in the world meaning it barely has any *Power Distance* at all. On the other hand, Serbia and Croatia are almost completely on the other side of the scale with an extremely high *Power Distance*. Obviously, the expectations and tasks of each culture for parents, children and families in general shift heavily depending on its views on *Hierarchy*. For instance, a country with *High Power Distance* will have much stricter and controlled rules for family than the others. The power dynamic and authority within a Serbian or Croatian family is much stronger than in an Austrian family. Children in Serbia and Croatia are taught respect very early on. Any adult in the family is to be respected whether it be the parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles regardless of the situation and their relationship with them. Nearly every family member has a hand in raising and disciplining the child. That is seen even in adult age, as the authority is carried on after the child has grown up.

Parents and other elder members of the family still influence the child and sometimes have say in the decisions it makes. Basically, no matter how old someone is, in a Serbian and Croatian household the elder family member will always regard one as a child and treat them as such. Even after that child has a family of their own, that view will not change and the elders will give their input and opinions on almost every aspect of the younger one's life. "Mislim da mi više trčimo za decom nego oni kao roditelji. Da se poturamo – *Nemoj ti, nemoj ti.*" (Interview, Anhang S. 50)¹

That power dynamic within the family doesn't vanish as long as the parents are alive. However, that outlook manifests differently in the parents. The mothers tend to always look at their children as someone who needs to be looked after and constantly needs support, whether it be emotionally, housework, cooking, or cleaning. In their eyes, their children cannot take care of themselves, even as a grown-up with a spouse and children of their own. This is much more common with male children as most boys within a Serbian or Croatian family are not taught to clean, cook, or take care of others in any way except financially. Fathers on the other hand simply see their children as incapable of building a life and surviving on their own. They often dismiss their children's opinions and decisions only to suggest *better* ones, provided by them. For fathers it is much more important to keep a certain level of authority over their child and guide them with their life experience rather than through actions and services like the mothers.

The family dynamic in an Austrian family looks vastly different from the one described above. First off, Austrian children are not expected to respect every single one of their relatives for the sole reason that they are related. Respect in an Austrian family has nothing to do with relation but with the relationship the family members have with each other. Respect is earned and it is not automatically included with the title *family*. The overall construct of family is different in Austria because there is no involvement from outside members. Parents are the only ones responsible for raising their child and while grandparents, siblings and cousins might be there to take care of them in select situations they play no part in actually disciplining them. Also, raising the child does stop at a certain point, in contrast to the Balkan culture. Parents raise their children to be able to take care of themselves without their help. Children are treated as their own person as soon as they are able to comprehend their actions and everything around, almost as if they were adults themselves. They are encouraged to go off on their own and separate themselves from the parents. Those values are carried on after the child grows up, because Austrians do not have a parent-child relationship with their adult

¹ „I think that we as parents run after our children more than they do. We offer ourselves – *You don't have to do it, you don't have to do it.*”

children but an adult-adult relationship. Parents do not dote on their grown children and they are not expected to do so either.

Those are not the only differences in the power distance between Austrian and Serbian or Croatian families. Balkan parents raise their children to be obedient, whether that is obeying them or a different family member. The goal is for the children to grasp that they are to listen to what an authority figure orders them to do and that they are not to talk back. In order for that to stick the parents usually set up a strict set of rules for the children to follow and any form of disobedience will be punished. Defying the rules set up by parents or other relatives is seen as severely disrespectful and needs to be corrected immediately in order for it not to happen again. Most high power distance countries, including Serbia and Croatia, are not hesitant to use physical punishment as a form of discipline as well. Even a simple getting told off is much more intense in a Balkan household than by the time the kids are old enough to grasp what is allowed or is not they are too afraid to disobey their parents because of what might happen as a consequence to that. This hierarchy and disciplining system does not only apply to the adult-child relationship however, because it is often visible among siblings as well. The older siblings usually tend to take on a sort of parental role in a household. Parents rely on their eldest children to take care of their younger siblings in situations where they cannot. For example, at school or if the parents are working and the kids are home alone the elder sibling is to take on a parental position. That means that the younger kids have to listen to the oldest ones and puts them at the bottom of the hierarchy in a typical Balkan household. While being in a slightly more powerful position the oldest child has to take on the responsibilities and chores of an adult in their absence and will also be held responsible for all of their and their siblings' mistakes while they are in charge.

Compared to that, Austrian families operate rather differently when it comes to creating rules and enforcing them. While there are still rules to be followed, the process of execution and reprimand is noticeably milder than the one previously described. The guidelines that these children have to follow are typically not extremely strict and if the children feel that they are, they may discuss that with their parents. They are allowed to contradict the adults around them, as long as they do not overdo it, without it being seen as a sort of disrespect. The punishment for disregarding existing rules and instructions will be much gentler. Usually, a scolding and or taking away toys, phones or similar will suffice in the adult's eyes. A physical punishment is never accepted within these communities. As for a hierarchy among children, there rarely is one. Naturally an older sibling will take on somewhat of a leadership role in most households yet parents never place a responsibility like parenting their sibling onto their child.

All the strictness and external influence within the Serbian and Croatian families are simultaneously the result of and the cause for a strong sense of family within the

cultures. Family is extremely important to both of them to the point where having a family of your own is considered crucial in order to live a fulfilled life. Having a child with your spouse is vital in cultures with a high *PDI* and if the pair is unable to have children for whatever reason, it is seen as a valid reason for divorce. Children are imperative in these societies for multiple reasons, the main one being the security that a child offers their parents later in life. Just as the parents guided the children their entire lives, in turn the children are expected to take care of their parents once they are unable to do so themselves. Financial support is the most common type of security offered by a child, but beyond that it is house visits, medical assistance and anything the parent needs. "Znači mi i kasnije kad ta deca odrastu, ili naši roditelji od nas traže veću pažnju i veće poštovanje." (Interview, Anhang S. 50)²

On the other hand, low *PDI* countries do not necessarily strive for a child. It is much more acceptable for a couple to decide that they are not going to have children in this culture. A couple's fulfilment does not automatically coincide with raising a child together and infertility is something to overcome together not necessarily a reason for a split. The need to have a child is also not so urgent in these cultures because they do not look after the parents when they are old. Just the same as the parents leave their child alone when it is grown up, moves out and starts a life of their own, the parents do not expect to be supported by the child once they retire or get too old to do certain chores themselves.

5.1.2 Identity in Family

Serbia scores a 25 on the *IDV* scale which makes it a highly collectivist country. While Croatia's results show a 33, which is slightly higher than Serbia it still falls into the collectivist side. On the other hand, Austria's 55 on the scale makes it an individualist country. The reason why Serbia and Croatia follow a strong collectivist mindset is likely because of their communist past. Other countries that were once or still are under the communist regime such as China and Vietnam also score extremely low on the *IDV* scale today. Because Austria has never had a communist leader and has been a sovereign country since the end of World War II a high level of independence developed in its citizens.

Based on that, it should be no surprise that the views on family differ within a collectivist and individualist society. Who belongs to family, how everyone acts around each other and the living situations all have a different answer depending on a country's placement on the *IDV* scale.

² „So later, when these children grow up, we or our parents expect more attention and respect.”

For example, Serbs and Croats have a much broader meaning of family. The relationship with extended family members is very close and everyone is included. Grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins are all equally involved in someone's life. However not only family is incorporated into this structure. "Dole je to kao jedna čoporativna zajednica. Znači što dalje i više se poznaješ i što više familije imaš, to si nekako snažniji i jači." (Interview, Anhang S. 53)³ In Serbia and Croatia, especially in smaller cities or rural areas, it is common for neighbours or friends to play a big role in one's daily life and be kept in the loop about happenings within the house. Because the importance of those relationships is different, the intervals and procedures around seeing each other and gathering with family are different from Austria as well. These types of families will get together more frequently. Here it does not matter what time of day it is, any relative or neighbour can visit at any point they wish to. It is even common for those visits not to be announced. Guests may arrive at one's house and let themselves in, in order to announce their visit. This is generally a habit in villages and rural areas, as doors and gates are usually always unlocked. Families usually try to live in each other's vicinity or to stay in constant contact over the phone if visiting is not possible. Not calling family members regularly or not visiting for a longer amount of time is considered rude.

The configuration of an Austrian family and their views on who belongs to it are much narrower than in Serbia and Croatia. The main part of a family are the parents and their children. In most cases the grandparents are also considered to be a part of the closer family. Siblings of the parents and their children are usually close to the family as well but apart from that everyone else is barely kept in contact with. Siblings of the grandparents and second or third cousins are members of the extended family and some may not even know each other. "Oni su svi iznenađeni kad vide koliko mi imamo neke familije i koliko poznajemo." (Interview, Anhang S. 53)⁴ Seeing as they are strict with their blood relatives, neighbours are not even considered to be let into that tight-knit circle. Friends may be involved in the life more than distant relatives but they will likely not achieve *family* status. Because of the higher divorce rate in individualist countries, nuclear or patchwork families are also common in them. Meaning that the classic mother, father and child formation is not the case in every Austrian home. Often only one parent will live with the child or a parent's new partner with their children will join to the family as well.

In collectivist countries there are fewer divorces and the concept of remarrying is not entirely accepted by society so this structure will be found less in Serbia or Croatia. However, that is not the only difference regarding living situations between Austrian

³ „It's like a pack down there. The more people you know and the more family you have, the stronger you are.”

⁴ „They are always surprised when they see how much family we have and how much of them we know.”

and Serbian and Croatian households. Serbian and Croatian children are not expected to move out of their parents' house as soon as they are of age. They stay with their parents during school, university and even after they get a job. Women usually continue to live with their parents until they are engaged or married, only then they would move in with their husband. As for men, it is common for them to continue to live in the parental house and simply take over as *man of the house*. That means that even after he gets married, he will stay in the house and his wife will just move in with him. Living with the in-laws is extremely common in both Serbia and Croatia. That living arrangement serves two purposes. Firstly, it is a financial security for both the young couple and the parents. Buying or building a new house as newlyweds is highly expensive and not everyone can afford it because the average income in Serbia and Croatia is low. So, to already have a house to live in is a big help for a new couple. The second reason for this custom is to take care of the parents of the husband. As briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, the duty of a child as it grows up becomes taking care of its parents just as they have done for it. Because of the low pension in these countries, it is difficult for elders to sustain themselves once they stop working. Because of that their daughters will support them with parts of their salary if they can afford it, and sons who are living with the parents will take care of bills, gas, groceries and similar expenses. As they grow older the parents may not be able to do everything themselves and may need help with certain tasks and that is where the son and daughter-in-law are needed. In return for that the parents are always there to watch their grandchildren and the parents again save money on day care and kindergarten once the mother goes back to work.

Living arrangements in Austria are the complete opposite of the ones in Serbia and Croatia. Because Austrian children are encouraged to be highly independent and do everything themselves, and because the idea of *Individualism* revolves around *I*, they seek to become independent as soon as possible. Children in Austria move out as young as 18 if they can afford to and parents will support them in most cases. "Samim tim što oni decu puštaju od 18 godina da žive sami. Mi i kad imamo tih mogućnosti – *A gde ćeš? Što bi? Kako ćeš?*" (Interview, Anhang S. 50)⁵ Even if they continue to live with their parents for a while, once they are in a serious relationship, it is customary to find a place to live with the partner, never to move in with the in-laws. If someone does end up living with their parents as an adult it would be considered odd.

Naturally, the relationship with the parents does turn out to be somewhat more distanced and once they are too old to take care of themselves the children usually do

⁵ They let their children live alone from the age of 18. Even when we have that opportunity we say – *Where are you going? Why? How?*"

not see it as their duty to take over as caretakers. If necessary and financially possible, most Austrians will choose to put their parents into a retirement home when they need to.

With such a strong bond to family that Serbs and Croats have, certain perks but also obligations come with it. Unconditional loyalty towards and from family is expected. People are expected to put their family's interests first and help them out whenever they need to. If a family member is struggling financially you are obligated to help them out if you are able to and paying the so-called loan back is not expected or required, but the money is usually always returned as a sign of thanks. In business, family has to be taken into consideration for jobs. In fact, many Serbs and Croats look to hire their family members and close friends and give them a chance before looking at outside applicants, regardless of their qualifications. Family members feel a certain sense of duty towards each other and try to support each other in every way they can. However, undeniable disadvantages are found when the family has such a close relationship. Members of tight-knit families like these can expect little to no privacy. "Mislim da smo mi više posesivniji. Mi mislimo da smo mi upućeniji, da treba da budemo upućeniji, da sve treba da znamo. I po tome mislimo da smo mi brižniji roditelji." (Interview, Anhang S. 50)⁶

With everyone always knowing what the others are doing, it has become customary to share all sorts of information with family, and not doing so is considered disrespectful and as if one were trying to hide something. There is almost nothing someone can do within a family without everyone else finding out about nearly right away.

Austrians, due to their individualistic nature, have weaker family connections and don't share those expectations towards family. Everyone looks out for themselves and their own, a general desire to help is there but usually no one would go out of their way to do somebody a favour. In business, family does not get any special treatment and is only considered for the post if their requirements for employment are met. Privacy is usually not an issue in Austrian families, as everyone has boundaries set. The privacy of others is respected and information is only shared when it is wanted to. Extended family members do not expect somebody to talk about everything that is going on in their life just as they do not share everything that is going on in theirs. Even if sensitive topics are shared and someone confides in them, they will not spread that information to other family members.

A good example for the involvement of families in one's personal affairs is the selection of a partner. Austrian parents will be satisfied with someone who makes their child happy and can provide them with a good life. If their child is confident in their partner

⁶ "I think that we are more possessive. We think that we are more informed, that we should be informed, that we should know everything. And because of that we think that we are more caring as parents. "

and in love, the parents will accept them and give their blessings. Serbs and Croats are pickier when it comes to their child's spouse. They look at the social status, job and income or family in order to assess their approval. If they do not think the match to be fitting, they will protest against the union. "Mnogo se mešaju svi. Znači čak i komšije a kamo li uža porodica. Znači veoma je teško i u 90% se završavaju i veze i brakovi tamo gde porodica nije saglasna sa tome." (Interview, Anhang S. 52)⁷ The last important topic to mention regarding *Identity* in the family is the *shame vs. guilt culture*. Serbia and Croatia are both part of the shame culture. The reason for that is because the values of collectivists concern the comfort of the group. If someone performs an action which is not accepted within the society, the person would be more worried about the public finding out about it rather than feeling bad about what they had just done. That is because the honour and reputation of the family depends on every person belonging to it. Someone destroying that reputation and having others talk badly about the person and in relation the person's family is one of the worst outcomes for collectivist cultures. If such a scenario were to happen, the family would do their best to deal with the issue quietly and without anyone else finding out about it. The guilt culture, which Austria is part of deals with mistakes like these differently. Because individualist cultures revolve around *I*, the task of problem-solving lies entirely upon one person. Individuals from guilt cultures feel bad about their actions and are more conflicted with themselves than concerned about the opinions and judgments of others upon finding out about it. Upon resolving the matter, Austrians try to make their mistake right again disregarding if others are informed about the incident or not. Blame or shame does usually not fall upon the family of the person. The only one held accountable and criticised for their wrongdoings is the person that committed them.

5.2 Religion

This chapter will analyse the differences and similarities regarding religion and the way it influences the lifestyle of people. Generally, religion has a great impact on the culture of each country. It defines the worldview of people and how they act and think in different situations.

Austria and Croatia are both of Roman-Catholic faith and share the same traditions and holidays. Serbia's population is mainly Serbian-Orthodox, which is still similar to Austria and Croatia because it is a Christian religion, but also has differences that change some cultural aspects. One might think it is easy to adapt to the Austrian lifestyle because of

⁷ „Everyone is always in your business. Even neighbours let alone family members. It is very hard and in 90% of the cases a marriage will end if the family does not approve. “

the similar or even same religion but that does not mean that the religion is equal in terms of importance in the daily life and the status it has for people. Adjusting to a different perception of religion can be especially difficult for immigrants because it is a personal and sensitive topic and is often the basis for a person's beliefs and opinions in various subjects. It is fair to say that religion has a higher significance in Balkan states. "Dole su ljudi više zaneseni verom nego ovde. Ne kažem da se ovde ne poštuje ali je dole, kako da kažem, mnogo se na to daje." (Interview, Anhang S. 49)⁸ People's opinions and decisions still highly rely on religious values.

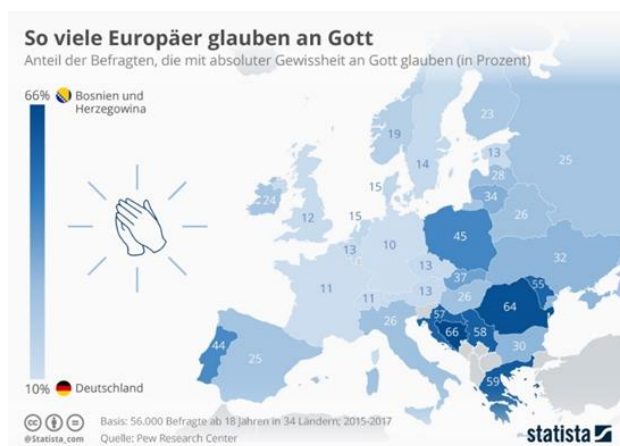


Figure 1: The Importance of Religion in Europe

This graph represents how the importance of religion differs in these three countries. 56.000 people were questioned across 34 European countries between the years 2015 – 2017. It is clearly visible that the Balkans are one of the few nations in Europe where the majority of the people still believes in God with an absolute certainty. With 57% in Croatia and 58% in Serbia there is a great difference between them and Austria's 13%. One can observe that the western world generally displays a quite minimal percentage, including Austria. The high numbers in South Slavic states could have turned after gaining independency from the communist regime in the former Yugoslavian state. During the communist rule under Josip Broz Tito, the free practice of religion was restricted, similar to other communist countries like the Soviet Union. Especially Croatia had a Christian awakening when war ended in 1995. Finally, people could represent their religion freely again without being afraid of punishment. Therefore, there is now a great Christian presence within the public. The nation likes to practice the religion very demonstratively. It is somehow part of the nationality to be religious because after

⁸ „There the people are more carried away by faith than here. I'm not saying that there is no respect for it here, but there, how do I say it, a lot is given to it.”

gaining autonomy this had become possible again. For instance, one will rarely see a car without a rosary hanging inside of it. Also pilgrimages and processions are something that everyone does at least once a year. The exertion of Christianity is a sign of freedom and independence for these countries and the people appreciate that they have the opportunity to act out their beliefs. Another matter that distinguishes these three countries is superstition. In Austria it is not really a big topic and does not influence the broad public while in Serbia and Croatia it effects it heavily. In these two nations superstition has a great influence on a person and the actions they take. "I do nekih sitnica i detalja i nekih gluposti, nebuloza što i vera nije, dole narod više veruje u takve neke. I što je vera i što su sujeverja" (Interview, Anhang S. 50)⁹ Doing household chores on specific holidays is seen as an immense disgrace and there are tons of conclusions to what will happen to someone if one does do them regardless. It is impossible to escape hostilities from elderly persons after disrespecting such unwritten rules. Especially in Serbia and the Orthodox faith there are unique practices and no-go's on some holidays and feasts. Amongst the Serbian population it is not only forbidden to do the housework on Sundays and saints' days but also other activities that depending on the particular saint being celebrated. For instance, there is a feast where one should avoid using or doing anything that resembles a snake like putting one's hair into a ponytail or vacuuming, because of the cable that looks like a moving snake. On another saints' day swimming in a pool, lake or the sea is a taboo because it brings bad luck, and the possibility of drowning is very high. These specific rules are not only followed by extremely religious Serbs but by everyone else as well. But God is not only made responsible for bad outcomes and incidents. People also mention God when good events occur. The saying *Thank God* exists and is used in both, the Austrian and Serbo-Croatian language, but in the Balkan states it is not only used colloquially. There is still a real gratitude and appreciation behind the saying and people are indeed convinced that it would not have happened if it had not been God's will. To compare the three states more detailed the aforementioned Hofstede Dimensions will be used, concentrating on *Identity* and *Well-being*.

5.2.1 Identity in Religion

Hofstede's country comparison implies that Austria is an individualist country. Individualists like to be in their own tight circle and do not bother with anyone outside of it. Croatia and Serbia both fall into a collectivist, society where it is impossible to

⁹ "And down to some trivialities and details and some other nonsense, mumbo jumbo that is not even faith, the people there believe in such things. Some that are faith and some that are superstitions."

imagine life without socialisation and spending time with friends and relatives. In-groups are easily made and communicating and bonding with strangers is not an infrequency. In terms of religion, the *Individualism Index already* says a lot. Croatia and Serbia, as are always looking for a new possibility to have a feeling of belonging within a group. Religious communities and parishes offer a perfect chance to do that. Weekly gatherings in the church are a fixed part of people's lives. People of all ages are represented there and perceive it as natural to go to the mass every Sunday. "Viel mehr Leute sind in der Kirche, besonders Junge." (Interview, Anhang S. 55) Just as ordinary as the weekly mass, are also the get-togethers afterwards. It is almost impossible to catch someone simply walking out of the church and going home. The people chat and keep up with each other's lives afterwards and greet nearly everyone who passes by. There is always an acquaintance or friend who will offer coffee and lunch at their house or a local restaurant. Most of the time such offers are accepted and a short visit to church turns into a whole day spent connecting with others. "Wir mögen es auch einfach mit anderen Leuten oder Nachbarn zusammen zu sein und das ist man eben in der Kirche" (Interview, Anhang S. 55) On the other hand, the prospect of connecting through religion is not as common for Austrians. People who are devout go to church because of their personal beliefs and do not bother with gatherings which might come along with that. However, Austria's rural areas resemble the South Slavic approach to church visits a lot more. There it is also a habit to communicate with others who visit the same church. This kind of village lifestyle where everyone know everyone is also established in Austria, so conversations and encounters are a part of the religious manner even though Austria ranks as an individualist country. Notably elder women and men stick to the weekly Sunday mass, whereas in Croatia and Serbia it is natural for adolescents to attend church as well. Likewise, it is not only limited to the countryside but also spread out to urban regions and cities. As Croatian and Serbian immigrants have been living in Austria for decades and started to understand the people's approach to religious gatherings, they began to establish their own religious communities. In Vienna there are various churches and unions that were founded to meet and connect with other immigrants who also want to continue living out their religion how they are used to at home. Not only in Austria, but in most western countries the ritual and tradition of regularly visiting religious places and strictly following religious values is decreasing. Especially younger generations often choose to leave the church and detach from old-established traditions. Teenagers and youngsters are more cosmopolitan and oftentimes associate the church with conservative values. Another reason why Croatians and Serbians stick to their beliefs very firmly is because they have never been confronted with a lot of different religions or communities like people in Austria have. Austria, especially Vienna, is a multicultural place where you can find people of all nations and faiths, whereas

Croatia and Serbia are quite homogenous countries regarding religion and ethnicity. "According to 2011 Census population of Croatia is predominantly Roman-Catholic (86.28%)" (www.national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu, 2 January 2023) "Serbia is a predominantly Christian country, particularly Orthodox Christian (85%)" (www.worldatlas.com, 2 January 2023). Austria has always been a very attractive country to immigrate to and has had many so-called migration waves until now, which has led to a widespread understanding of other ethnicities and religions. On the other hand, Croatia and Serbia do not have a broad variety of established denominations so mostly the people do not even get to experience other lifestyles besides the typical Christian one. As mentioned above, the people in Austria, only represent their personal beliefs and do not allow their parents or anyone else determine to their religious mindset. Unlike in Croatia and Serbia, where a person mostly follows the traditions and opinions of their elderly. If a certain religious ritual is done in the family or in the society, newer generations will simply carry it on. It is extremely unusual to convert to a different religion or to stop actively practicing it. Not rarely are young people faced with problems in their social environment if they stop believing in God. They become the new topic for gossip of the neighbourhood. Because of that, a lot of people continue practising the customs and traditions they grew up with to avoid disappointing their families. Because of the unconditional loyalty that is demanded in collectivist societies, people feel obligated to carry on the rituals they have been taught, in order to continue the ways of their ancestors.

5.2.2 Well-Being in Religion

With a score of 63 on the *Well-Being* scale, Austria is an indulgent country. The society values and respects human needs and desires. Leisure time, happiness and freedom of speech are important in contrast to restrained countries. Croatia displays a mark of 33 and Serbia of 28 on the scale which makes them restrained countries. This indicates a more pessimistic approach to life and a strict moral discipline. The assimilation to social norms is extremely relevant. Particularly in terms of religion, the aspect of social norms and moral discipline plays a great role. People still restrain themselves a lot to fit in and be regarded as a good man or woman by others. As previously mentioned, a person from the two collectivist states already follows guidelines for the sake of unquestionable loyalty that is expected from them. Additionally, *Restraint* makes it hard for one to be truly independent and make decisions based on one's own satisfaction and desires. Looking at it from a religious perspective, resignation from the church would mean an immense break of societal norms and possibly an exclusion from the particular in-group.

Holidays and feasts point out the big difference between Austria and the South-Eastern countries as well. In Austria, due to the decline in religious practice, the celebration of holidays like Christmas for instance, has become more of an event without a real meaning. The highlight of Christmas are the presents and an extravagant dinner but not the genuine celebration of the birth of Jesus according to the Bible. In Croatia and Serbia holidays are still celebrated for their intended purposes.

In Österreich habe ich das Gefühl, dass mit der Zeit man Weihnachten nur feiert weil es eben so ist. Bei uns gedenkt man da wirklich noch an die Geschehnisse aus der Bibel und erklärt den Kindern beim Weihnachtsessen wie das alles angeblich passiert ist" (Interview, Anhang S. 55)

Continuing with the example of Christmas, there are many duties a family has to complete in order to satisfy society. Fasting on specific saints' days is crucial, for example on Christmas Eve, 24 December for Croats and 6 January for Serbs. Furthermore, not visiting the midnight mass on Christmas Eve would be a big shame for the family. Prayers and bible readings during family gathering are a must and the presents are just a minor, if even a part of the celebration. While Croatians included presents in their Christmas routine, they are small and meaningful gifts from family rather than expensive products. The Serbian Christmas festivities do not even include presents apart from candy for small children.

5.3 Educational Systems

While moving to a new country with a different culture and language is easier at a young age, children are still faced with difficulties and are met with new customs just as much as adults are. The educational system in Austria is not only different by its structure and duration, but also by the rules of behaviour within the facility. In this chapter these differences will be pointed out and compared using Hofstede's dimensions *Hierarchy* and *Identity*.

5.3.1 Hierarchy in Educational Systems

The hierarchical order of the educational system in a country does not differ much from the order within a family. The relationship between the parent and the child is simply replaced by the relationship between a teacher and the student. Naturally, the power distance in schools and universities in each of the three countries will variate depending

on their *PDI*. “Lower-PDI countries generally have more literate, better-educated populations.” (Hofstede 2001, p. 101) Because nations with a lower *PDI* are usually also wealthier than ones with a high *PDI*, they can afford and hence have access to a better and higher education.

Because Serbia and Croatia have a high *PDI* and a rather strict structure of family, the teacher-student connection is relatively similar as well. There is a clear hierarchy, where teachers are far above their pupils. In Serbia and Croatia, a teacher’s job is to educate but also to discipline the child when it is away from home. Their relationship is a professional one and various rules are set to keep everyone in order. Just like with family members, teachers have to be respected at all times. No matter the situation, a student has to listen to the teacher’s orders because a teacher’s word is absolute. Contradicting or criticizing a teacher is absolutely forbidden and students will be punished for doing so. Speaking of punishment and discipline in a classroom, it is much more rigorous than in *low power-distance* countries. The slightest form of disobedience or misbehaviour is punished immediately.

A teacher’s role in Austria, just like in other low *PDI* cultures is defined quite differently in comparison to high *PDI* cultures. Teachers are there to take on the role of a guide or a counsellor. They are supposed to take care of the child and support it while its at school rather than to discipline it. There is a mutual respect between students and teachers as both sides treat each other as equals. Of course, the children have to listen to what the teachers say, however the strictness of this rule is significantly more lenient. If a child feels that a teacher has said something wrong or explained it badly, they are encouraged to ask questions and have discussions with the teacher. This practise is a polar opposite from Serbia and Croatia, where any *questioning* of the teacher’s skill is forbidden as it is considered immensely ill-mannered. Even when an Austrian student is out of line the punishment is gentler. Telling the student off is the most common way of reprimanding a student but in any case, physical punishment is never used whereas schools in the Balkans are more accepting of physical punishments.

The parents’ involvement and opinions on disciplinary methods of teachers also differ based on their placement on the *Power-Distance Index*. Austrian parents will most likely take their child’s side and defend them in front of the teacher. Serbian and Croatian parents will side with the teacher and encourage them to reprimand their child even further and join in on lecturing it as well.

To further touch on the authoritarian values in the Serbian and Croatian educational system, the strict authority is constant throughout the educational path. As the students grow older the strictness of the teachers does not decrease, but it stays at a constant level. It does not matter whether a teacher is dealing with a child that has just entered school, or a young adult that is about to graduate, they are regarded to be at the same

level. Pupils are never seen as capable adults and are supposed to be disciplined by their teachers at any given time because they are less experienced. The Austrians deal with authority in schools differently in two ways here. They do not only have fewer authoritarian rules within the school overall, but the level of authority they practise decreases with time. While Austrian schools may be slightly stricter with young children while they are still learning how to behave, that sternness gradually fades through the years. More freedom is given to the students as they grow up and they are treated as equal adults by their teachers. With time, teachers do not see themselves as responsible for what the student does or does not do and accomplish in their classroom, because the student can decide whether or not they will participate and complete their assignments. The teacher will simply judge the student's performance and not bother themselves with chasing after students to do their work and correct their behaviour.

The Serbian and Croatian educational system is focused on learning and studying. The teachers are there to transfer wisdom and the students are there to learn it, any further aspects are principally disregarded. Education is put over anything else because the expectations for academic achievement are extremely high in these countries. Everyone is oriented towards the top and always aiming for more. Teachers and parents expect the highest grades from the children. Because the best results are the norm, children will receive no praise for achieving high scores, only punishment if they score badly.

Learning is important to the Austrian educational system, but there are enough other factors that are considered to be just as important during a kid's educational years. Aspects like one's personal development, comfort and leisure are essential and teachers do their best to make these possible for their pupils. The key is for students to feel comfortable in their classroom, with their classmates and obviously the teachers as well. Extracurriculars and excursions are normal in an Austrian school in order to boost morale and help classmates bond with each other and teachers. Personal strengths and weaknesses are recognised, so doing better in some and worse in other subjects is completely normal. Usually, expectations for students do not go beyond the average, so if a student does present with high marks, they will be applauded by teachers, parents and other students in their class.

Overall, the relationship between a teacher and a student is more distant in Serbian and Croatian schools. Teachers control the classroom completely, so much even that they alone initiate the conversations in class and students are not allowed to speak unless they are requested to. "Wir durften dort wirklich nichts dazwischenreden oder sagen außer wenn man aufzeigt. Es war in Österreich nicht so streng, wenn man mal was in der Klasse macht oder jemanden dazwischenredet." (Interview, Anhang S. 54) The distance between the teacher and the student is significantly smaller in Austria. Because the teacher is supposed to be a sort of guide for the students, there has to be trust

between them and children are supposed to feel comfortable when they are around their teachers. The atmosphere in a classroom is far more relaxed because the act of speaking up is not reserved for the teacher only. In fact, students are encouraged to participate actively even, without the teacher having to request it specifically.

5.3.2 Identity in Educational Systems

The distinction between *I* and *We* is already decided for children in their home life. Parents, family and neighbours insert the idea of looking out for yourself or looking out for the group into the child's head at a young age. Those values are only further reinforced by the environment at school.

In Serbia and Croatia, the values that are strengthened further during the school years, are the collectivist values. Teachers in collectivist societies deal with their students as a group. They are not seen as individuals but as part of one large unit. As mentioned above, pupils are not expected to express their opinions excessively but rather sit quietly and listen to their teachers talk. Discussions and contradictions are not customary, because that would single one out from the rest of the group. Standing out is considered bad because what the group marks as right and good is the standard that everyone else is supposed to follow. Going against those rules will brand someone as a troublemaker not only by the teachers, but by the students as well. Because Serbia and Croatia are both shame cultures, shaming inside the school building is a common practise. If a student opposes the group's ideas, acts out or simply underperforms they will be cast out. Being an outsider in a collectivist society makes it hard to complete tasks and achieve goals because in order to do so, one needs the help and support from the group. The grouping together of the students dates back to the *SFRY*, when communism was the political regime of the country. Before Yugoslavia was dissolved, students in every grade were obligated to wear a *pioneer* uniform and therefore looked alike. The uniforms further contributed to the view that all students are one and the same because it was harder to make a distinction between them.



Figure 2: Pioneers in Yugoslavia, 1986

On the other hand, Austrian students are treated as their own person because Austria is a highly individualist culture. The teacher focuses on every student separately and gives individual feedback and improvement suggestions. The goal is to help each students develop a sense of self as much as to support them in focusing on their individual strengths and improving on their weaknesses. Children are supposed to be independent and state their opinion. Participation is an important part of the lessons and there to help the teacher grasp how much of the material the pupils understood. Setting yourself apart is imperative in order to leave an impression on the teacher for them form their own opinion about the student's abilities. Having flaws and different ideas is seen as normal and not out of the ordinary at all. The students respect each other and understand that everyone struggles individually, so if someone is not performing well there will be no judgement from the peers. Students shaming each other because of bad grades is not seen as normal but rather as bullying.

It is worth mentioning that countries that score low on the *IDV* scale tend to be ethnocentric. Because they are so focused on their in-group and try to act for their benefit, they are prone to feeling superior and looking down on anyone that is not a part of that group. They feel that their views and actions are correct and simply better than everyone else's. Should they encounter somebody from a foreign culture, where customs are different, they will most likely judge and make fun of them because of their ethnocentric worldview. Members of one group are close to each other and help each other out while they will deliberately exclude and avoid people outside of the group. A suiting example of that is when members of one group find themselves abroad. For instance, Serbs and Croats in Austria would rather bond with other Serbs and Croats that also find themselves in Austria instead of Austrians or other nationalities. They will immediately form a connection with them and rarely accept anyone else into that group. Serbs and Croats will expect special treatment by members of their in-group regardless of their relationship status, which is why they prefer to make acquaintances with people

from their own country. These views and expectations do not only apply to the educational systems.

Because Austria is an individualist society, their views are aligned with the ideas of ethnorelativism. Austrians recognise and accept that people belonging to other cultures have different values and ideas. While they might practise different rituals and might not be familiar with the way other cultures practise theirs, they are aware that such processes are the norm in those countries. In turn, they are aware that foreign countries might feel like Austrian rituals are odd and unusual. Ethnorelative cultures know that customs and traditions vary in different parts of the world, depending on the beliefs that each culture carries. Because they accept different worldviews and solution ideas, they do not exclude members of other groups. A person with an ethnorelative outlook will not only stick to their own and will not shy away from forming connections and developing relationships with somebody belonging to a different group. Therefore, treating someone better solely because they are in the same group as you is looked down on. The preferential treatment from in-groups is also not expected from others and will receive a bad reaction from them. Austrians will not treat anyone better based on their placements in a certain group but based on their individual abilities.

The purpose of education varies depending on the placement on the *IDV* scale in each country. There is a difference between *learning how to learn* and *learning how to do*. Serbia and Croatia, like other collectivist countries follow the philosophy of *learning how to do*. "Learning is more often seen as a one-time process, reserved for the young only, who have to learn *how to do* things in order to participate in society." (Hofstede 2001, p. 235) Learning is there to teach a person the abilities and the knowledge, which they have to apply in order to become a valuable member of their society. Children and adolescents are taught everything that the culture and state deems necessary for them to sustain themselves. According to these societies learning stops once one finishes school. Austrian citizens learn *how to learn* because they do not regard learning as a singular procedure. For them, learning is a process that continues throughout a person's entire life. Furthermore, age plays no role in one's ability to learn. In contrast to *how to do* societies, learning is not only something which young adults are allowed to partake in. A person can learn something new and better themselves at any point in their life. Continuing to learn is accessible to adults in *how to learn* cultures because people there learn in order to make life easier for themselves and to navigate themselves through the world today more conveniently. A practical example for those philosophies is the school diploma. While *how to learn* societies strive for a diploma to increase their chances of an even higher education and great career, *how to do* societies are more enticed by the prospect of others around them perceiving them as better and smarter once they obtain a diploma. Concludingly, the difference between *how to learn* and *how to do* is that the

former is solely concerned with themselves and cares about paving a way for themselves, while the latter cares about others' perspective on their life and their achievements.

5.4 Workplace

The workplace is the place where immigrants from Croatia and Serbia have to adapt to the Austrian rules and norms. The private life can always be handled as one personally wishes, however in a company or corporation one needs to stick to the established guidelines in Austria. In general, there are lots of cultural differences between Austria and Croatia and Serbia. Austrians are punctual and always arrive well-dressed in good-quality clothes. They introduce some personal details but do not like to share too much. They are very attentive listeners and respect others' opinions and agree to most proposals. They rarely try to change someone's argument in order to persuade them. "They avoid confrontation whenever possible and compromise rather than make a solid decision." (Lewis 2006, p.236) Contrary to that, Croats and Serbs do not really prioritise punctuality. "Serbs usually turn up late for meetings and wish to carry on small talk for some time (30-60 minutes)" (Lewis 2006, p.316) People from Croatia and Serbia have no problem oversharing about their personal life and start almost every business encounter with a personal story about themselves. They have strong opinions and unlike Austrians tend to force them on their business partners. "On meeting resistance, they exhibit less cordiality and will continue to press their proposals until they see an impasse." (Lewis 2006, p.316) In this chapter more differences and similarities between the three countries will be examined on the basis of the Hofstede Dimensions *Hierarchy, Truth, Identity* and *Virtue*.

5.4.1 Hierarchy in Workplace

There is a vast difference between Austria's extremely low *PDI* and Croatia and Serbia's high one. When it comes to doing business with these countries or even just accomplishing the daily and ordinary tasks within a firm from the opposite side of the spectrum, one will immediately notice the differences between them. In a country with a low *PDI* like Austria the hierarchical structures are rather flat and the superiors consult their decisions with their subordinates. Austrian managers practice a participative leadership where "The ideal boss is a resourceful democrat; sees self as practical, orderly, and relying on support." (Hofstede 2001, p.107) There is rarely any power abuse by managers or directors and even when it does happen, there are institutions which

support employees that have made such experiences. Status symbols and privileges are not necessary for Austrian superiors, they are even frowned upon. For authority figures in *High Power-Distance* societies, status symbols are an opportunity for another display of power. A wealthy and successful individual will do their best to show it to the world. On the other hand, the work atmosphere and behaviour of a superior from Croatia or Serbia are the complete opposite. There are tall organizational pyramids where everyone has to know their place and position. In most of the cases there is also supervisory personnel which checks the work attitude and behaviour of the employees. The image of the ideal boss is also completely different than one from a low *PDI* country. "The ideal boss is a well-meaning autocrat or good father; sees self as benevolent decision maker." (Hofstede 2001, p.107) A manager decides solely based on their opinion and does not consult with other colleagues, particularly not with lower ranked ones. Because there is a clear division into submissive subordinate and dominant superior, power abuse is a frequent occurrence, usually with no consequences for the superior.

5.4.2 Truth in Workplace

With scores of 70, 80 and 92, Austria, Croatia and Serbia are all located on the side of *Uncertainty-Avoidance*. Austria scores the lowest out of the three but is still visibly in the sphere of *Uncertainty-Avoidance*. Company loyalty is something they all have in common, and they tend to stay employed at one place for a long time period. In Austria this may be the result of a respectful and traditional approach towards the employees. In Austrian companies it is common to reward employees after a long duration of employment. Usually, this is first the case after ten years and then the cycle continues every five years. Vouchers, money or ducats are items that mostly are gifted to people. Workers are also granted a sixth week of vacation after 25 years in the same firm. The main aspect which defines an uncertainty avoidant nation is the fear of unplanned situations and circumstances occurring. To counter surprising conditions there is a well thought out set of guidelines and rules. Norms and regulations convey a feeling of safety to members belonging to uncertainty avoidant societies. This cultural aspect makes it hard for innovators to be creative and establish new ways of solving a particular problem. People who want to make a change oftentimes feel restrained by the strict policies. Even though innovations are not gladly seen, once they are accepted and applied, they stay rather consistent in such societies.

In summary, it seems that in higher-UAI countries innovations are more difficult to bring about. At the same time, the example of Japan, a high-UAI country, suggests that once innovations are accepted, they are taken more seriously than in low-UAI countries. (Hofstede 2001, p. 167)

5.4.3 Identity in Workplace

Austria, as an individualist country, values the individual's particular skills and knowledge more. These factors should prevail during the hiring process but as Austria scores a 55 on this scale, which is more or less in the middle field, other approaches are also practiced. Like in collectivist societies, the relations one has with another person working in the company are also taken into account. The so-called *Freunderlwirtschaft*, how the Austrians like to call it is an established method to get hired for a job. This is definitely one of the main similarities between Croatia, Serbia and Austria but one still has to mention that this system has a greater meaning in the Balkan states, where hiring people just because one knows them or their family is deeply rooted in these societies' culture. Between an Austrian and his boss there mostly is no other kind of relationship besides a professional one. Their relationship could be described as a business deal from which both parties profit. "In the individualist society, the relationship between employer and employee is primarily conceived as a business transaction, a calculative relationship between actors on a labor market." (Hofstede 2001, p. 237) Personal links with colleagues are avoided in the workplace and more than sitting down for a cup of coffee together during lunch is unusual. Teamwork is a method rarely used in individualist societies because a person performs better on their own. In Croatia and Serbia, it is completely normal to be acquainted with one's superior privately. Naturally, this automatically creates a different relationship between both parties. It is ordinary to be friends amongst colleagues and bosses and to involve these persons into one's private life. More than often does the relationship exceed business and guarantee reciprocated devotion. "It resembles a family relationship, with mutual obligations of protection in exchange for loyalty." (Hofstede 2001, p.237) In collectivist nations teamwork and trainings done in a group setting are more effective. People feel safer when they have someone by their side to support them in their tasks. Furthermore, the interest of the in-group is the most important one, so it is necessary to adapt to the group's values and views. Expressing independent ideas becomes quite challenging because one is constantly required to share the group's opinions.

5.4.4 Virtue in Workplace

According to Hofstede, Austria, Serbia and Croatia are all quite in the middle regarding Virtue but leaning more towards *Long-Term Orientation*. With marks of 60, 58 and 52 they have a similar approach to business regarding this subject. As a long-term orientated country persistence and perseverance are key. Business goals are made with a look ahead into the future. Quick results are not the objective but a sustainable and long-term benefit as a result of them. These are particularly similar practises in all three countries. Despite them being on the same side of the *Virtue* scale, there are still some points defining a long-term oriented country that do not apply to Croatia and Serbia. One matter are status symbols and the society's approach to spending. In Austria someone who is financially well off, will be rather modest and frugal. Going easy on resources and consuming less are traits that will be praised. "Nice people are thrifty, sparing with resources." (Hofstede 2001, p.360) The opposite is the case in the South-Slavic countries. Being thrifty means being stingy and that is not well-received. A nice person is someone who is very generous and likes to spend and even pay for others as well. Wasting resources is not seen as immoral as it is by the western world. People respect a person's earned money and view it as their right to spend it as they see fit. In Austria there is more of a general responsibility, which is very typical for a society reaching higher numbers on *Long-term Orientation*. The reciprocation of greetings, favours and gifts that typically define a short-term oriented country is also completely normal in Croatia and Serbia. It is common to gift something to the person one is making a business deal with, or at least pay dinner or lunch as a way of saying thanks. Also, in such communities great importance is attached to status. People choose carefully with whom they will go into business with. The status of one's business partner automatically has an impact on one's own status. Moreover, there is a general sense of shame present within the society. One is careful not to do something shameful or inappropriate because this could be fatal for one's reputation. Especially in business relationships this is essential since others' willingness to cooperate depends on one's reputation. Meanwhile reciprocations are seen as more problematic in Austria because they imply a sense of influencing one's partner to seal the deal. Another factor differentiating these countries is the respect for traditions. In Croatia and Serbia, it is utterly necessary to respect traditions and to continue already practised processes. Adapting traditions to new circumstances is quite uncommon and one will definitely be criticised for changing old ways of operating. On the other hand, in Austria it is completely adequate to adjust standards to the current situation and that even seen as progressive and impressive.

5.5 Gender Roles and Sexual Behaviour

Throughout the human history certain responsibilities and functions were established for the male and female gender. These so called *gender roles* consist of all kinds of expectations for both of the genders. The way that people are supposed to look, dress, act and live based on their gender are all encompassed by the *gender roles*. There are differences for the expected personality traits, occupations and behaviour for men and women depending on the different values in society. A big component of the male and female behaviour includes the sexual behaviour.

Sexual behaviour encompasses all activities which gratify an individual's sexual needs. Sexual behaviours have been studied in the context of sexual practises, sexual relationships, reproductive health, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and contraception. (www.journals.sagepub.com, 23 March 2023)

Just like the distinctions between the expected tasks of each gender, there are differences between the sexual behaviours of people vary based on each country's beliefs and principles. In this chapter both the gender roles and sexual behaviour will be analysed using Hofstede's dimension *Gender*. However, a few contradictions can be found between the literature used for this paper and the interviews conducted with the two experts.

5.5.1 Gender in Gender Roles

On Hofstede's *MAS* scale Austria scores 79, which is relatively high, meaning that the Austrian society is quite masculine. Serbia and Croatia score much lower than Austria, but close to the middle of the scale. With a result of 43 for Serbia and 40 for Croatia they are both slightly more feminine than masculine. The laws for women are the same in both countries, meaning that they have the same right for education, voting, maternity leave, etc. But even though women are not systematically oppressed in either of the countries, they have to face certain difficulties by society because of their views on a women's role and place within the group. The disadvantages are more or less present depending on each culture. The traditional expectation for a woman is for her to be gentle, nurturing and caring. Because usually men are taller and stronger than women, they are supposed to be the protectors and providers. The *MAS* scale in relation to gender roles is supposed to show how much certain cultures conform to these traditional gender roles.

Serbia and Croatia for example are feminine countries, which means that they should not orient themselves heavily after that *old-fashioned* view of men and women. Yet when the literature and research by Geert Hofstede is compared to the experiences from the experts on Serbian and Croatian culture, the information does not match entirely. What can be confirmed by both, is that the emancipation of women in feminine countries means that a man and a woman would equally take care of the household and finances. In comparison to that, Austrian women would feel liberated once they were able to occupy job position in fields which were formerly dominated by men.

However, the suggestion that citizens of feminine countries follow non-traditional gender roles is not supported by the experts. Most Serbian and Croatian marriages for example are rather imbalanced. Because the role of a woman in the Balkans is to be the homemaker, they mostly do not build a successful career in order to take care of their husband, children and house. Having little to no work experience, because Balkan women usually get married at a young age, the woman is entirely dependent on her husband to provide for her and the children. The husband is usually the one to build a career for himself and bring home majority of the money. "Pa prvo da kažem kod nas je pravilo da žena pripada mužu, da je ona njegova svojina. I uglavnom po tom principu ide. Znači kako muž kaže da se radi, tako se radi." (Interview, Anhang S. 52)¹⁰

That makes disagreements and defying the husband for the wife difficult because without him she is left without financial support. Giving up working or only working part time reduces a woman's chances of sustaining herself and her children on her own in the case of a divorce. That is another reason why the divorce rate for Serbs and Croats is smaller than in Austria. But those expectations are not only set up by the men but also by other women in the society. Children grow up expecting their mothers to work, cook, clean and take care of them, while their father is only concerned with earning money for the family. Those expectations for women leave little time for them to take care of themselves and their needs. A wife or mother usually always puts herself and her wishes last. Although again, nothing else would be accepted by those surrounding her. Men however, are free to find time for themselves, meet friends and partake in hobbies, because outside of work they have no real obligations and chores to complete.

More expectation are placed on women regarding having children and a husband by society. If a woman were to decide not to marry or have children in order to focus on herself and her career, others would look down on her and assume that she cannot find a husband because there is a problem with her. While men are also expected to marry and start a family, because Serbia and Croatia are traditional countries, they are not

¹⁰ „First, I'll say that the rule here is that the wife belongs to the husband, that she is his property. It usually goes by that principle. So, if the husband says how something is going to go, it's going that way.”

expected to start as young as women are. Focusing on the career and delaying marriage is accepted for men, they would even be seen as diligent and hard-working.

In comparison to that, Austria as a society is masculine and competitive. Austrian women are held to the same standards as men. They are free to choose whether they want to devote themselves to a family, a career or something else entirely. But even if they do dedicate themselves to raising children and taking care of their home, they are not left without opportunities or chances for a career. Austrian women may wait until they have established a career and secured themselves to start a family just like men. That makes it easier for her to defend her own opinion and if needed separate from her husband. Austria has a higher divorce rate than Serbia and Croatia because Austrian women have more opportunities and support as divorcees. Austrian men are also more likely to share the parenting responsibilities with their wife, along with chores around the house. Women in Austria are not expected to work and simultaneously take care of the entire household on their own. Because of the division of duties at home, Austrian women can take time for themselves. Not only are they capable of dedicating their time to a hobby or passion because they are supported by their husbands, but society also sees nothing wrong with an Austrian wife or mother taking a break and putting herself and her wishes first. "A njihove majke, smatram, da rade onoliko koliko žele. Znači one znaju da kažu – *Ne. Ja osećam da ovo mi je previše. Sad sam dosta uradila.*" (Interview, Anhang S. 51)¹¹

5.5.2 Gender in Sexual Behaviour

Just the same as in gender roles the opinions of the experts do not correlate with Hofstede's classification of Croatia and Serbia regarding the topic of sexual behaviour. There is only an alignment when the parents' influence on young people is discussed. Feminine societies value the opinions of their parents more and orientate their future decisions on them quite frequently. Comparing to a masculine society, the opinions of peers prevail and adolescents are more influenced by equals than their parents. Austrian teenagers are more independent than Croatian and Serbian ones which is likely due to the high *MAS* score Austrians present. As feminine countries, Croatia and Serbia should provide the same standards for women and men concerning chastity, but this is not exactly the case. There is still the social norm that woman need to be *pure* and save themselves for marriage whereas men are excluded from this norm. Also, the woman plays a more passive role in the sexual construct and is inferior to the man,

¹¹ „Their mothers, I observed, do just what they want to do. So, they know when to say – *No. This is too much for me. I did enough already.*“

a typical trait of a country with a high *MAS*. Career success plays a great role as well in the dating life in Balkan countries. As explained in the chapter above, the man is considered to be the provider of the family so it is rather unattractive and repelling when a man is unsuccessful in his line of work. The increased success of a man's career proportionally increases a woman's awareness of the man and possibly her attraction to him. The prospect of a good and stable life, which comes with a successful husband is appealing for Serbian and Croatian women. This is rather untypical for men and women in a feminine nation because in such, the career does not play a major role in the selection of a partner. As previously mentioned in the chapter *Hierarchy in Family*, the parents' approval of their child's life partner is also dependent on their career. It is known that sexual harassment usually is quite rare in feminine countries, for instance in Sweden among other Scandinavian cultures. In this case the definition of a feminine country does not apply to Croatia and Serbia, where sexual harassment is common. This has a connection to the traditional gender roles, which are still extremely dominant in Croatia and Serbia, as described in the chapter above.

Laut einem Bericht der Organisation für Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa aus dem Jahr 2019 haben in ausgewählten Ländern Südosteuropas 70 Prozent der Frauen über 15 Jahre Gewalterfahrungen gemacht. Fast jede zweite war sexueller Belästigung ausgesetzt. Gleichzeitig stellt das Thema ein großes Tabu dar. (www.nzz.ch, 11 March 2023)

Women are oftentimes afraid of standing up for their rights regarding this subject because it is seen as shameful in these societies.

6 Values based on Trompenaars Dimensions

Trompenaars' Dimensions of Culture are a tool used to compare different nations around the world, just as *Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions*. They were established and examined by Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner in the book *Riding the Waves of Culture* during the late 1990s. Four of the dimensions will be explained in this chapter and analysed specific to the countries Austria, Croatia and Serbia.

	<i>Universalism v. Particularism</i>	<i>Neutral v. Affective</i>	<i>Specific v. Diffuse</i>	<i>Achievement v. Ascription</i>
Austria	73	59	64	76
Croatia	42	43	38	10
Serbia	30	48	38	58

Table 3: Trompenaars' Dimensions of Culture

6.1 Universalism v. Particularism

Universalism versus Particularism is the first dimension and describes

the extent that a culture is more prone to apply rules and laws as a way of ensuring fairness, in contrast to a culture that looks at the specifics of context and looks at who is involved, to ensure fairness. The former puts the task first; the latter puts the relationship first. (www.pressbooks.bccampus.ca, 5 March 2023)

This dimension is also often called *Rules v. Relationship* as it depicts which one out of the two is more important in a society. With a mark of 79 Austria scores high on the scale of *Universalism*, whereas Croatia and Serbia display the lower numbers 42 and 30, belong to the *Particularism* end. In universalist countries one obliges the standards and rules that are set, the so-called *Golden Rules*. They believe that everyone should be treated equally and that personal relationships should not be taken into account when making decisions. In comparison to that, particularistic countries feel bound to the people they nurture close relationships with. Personal links are immensely important and breaking the law to save dear ones is completely accepted by society. "I must therefore sustain, protect or discount this person no matter what the rules say" (Trompenaars; Hampden-Turner 1997, p. 31) In Croatia and Serbia it is more common to support people rather than to stick to laws and regulations. Relationships, even not so personal ones, are almost always valued more than anything else. Because of that, corruption is immensely anchored within the society. One will get through life easier by putting relationships over rules. It does not matter in which sector of life, in minor or major situations, with the right connection one can achieve anything, even if it is against the law. For instance, municipalities and administrative bodies allow who is ready to pay a bribe. "Wie zum Beispiel irgendwelche Genehmigungen oder so, und wenn man niemand hat, dann wird oft Schmiergeld erwartet und dann geht auch plötzlich alles." (Interview, Anhang S. 58) In Austria this so-called *Freunderlwirtschaft*, that was

previously already mentioned, is also present but in a much lesser extent. Maybe one has some luck during a hiring process to get the job because of a friend or relative that is already working at the company, but there is not going to be much more than that. Especially major matters like building permits are not influenced by relationships but stick to the criteria of the law, whereas one can not say the same thing for Croatia and Serbia. „Es ist hier nicht so ausgeprägt. Eventuell kommt man schneller zu einem Termin, wenn man jemand kennt, aber das war es dann auch schon.“ (Interview, Anhang S. 58) It is often quite hard to make business between two countries from the opposite pole because they could not trust each other and judgement would be present from both sides. Universalists will feel that their business partners are corrupt, while particularists see their partners as traitors. One might hear Croats and Serbs making fun of Austrians because of their precision and missing spontaneity and declaring them as boring due to their respect for rules. A broader approach to *Particularism* is more present in predominantly Catholic countries where God is seen as compassionate and willing to forgive if one commits a sin. *Universalism* is more practiced in Protestant countries “where the congregation relates to God by obedience to His written laws.” (Trompenaars; Hampden-Turner 1997, p. 35) In terms of business, universalist nations attach great importance to contracts, which often happens to offend countries on the *Particularism* scale. Societies driven by *Universalism* feel safe when their agreement is written down and signed by both parties, it is how they protect themselves. In Serbia and Croatia, personal relationships and loyalty is enough for them to feel ensured that agreements and promises will be kept. Business is in most cases made through oral agreements and it is not even necessary to know the person you are going to make a deal with. It often happens that a friend or relative suggests someone they know for a task one needs to accomplish and, in most cases, one automatically agrees upon that. The people in those cultures have great trust in each other, so it is no problem sealing a deal without proper settlements.

6.2 Neutral v. Affective

This dimension describes whether people from a certain culture avoid expressing their emotions or openly display them. According to the numbers on the table above, Austria falls under the category of *Neutral* countries, contrasting Croatia and Serbia who are considered to be *Affective* countries. Austria and other *Neutral* nations keep their feelings discreet, whereas Croats and Serbs express their feelings through words, physical gestures and facial expressions. Someone from an *Affective* country will most likely give a direct response to a business partner than someone who is a part of a

Neutral culture, where it is more common to give an indirect answer. A too strong display of emotions, whether it be anger, sadness or happiness, is considered unprofessional in *Neutral* societies like Austria. One has to be careful with using humour in such cultures, especially during work-related gatherings. Usually, the use of humour and jokes in professional settings is not well-received. In contrast to Austrians, Croatians and Serbians openly display their emotions, both in business and private life. An outbreak of feelings, even for less important situations is totally normal and accepted. “Das Volk allgemein ist temperamentvoll und laut. “ (Interview, Anhang S. 57) One will often catch people freak out because of traffic, but in an extent that would seem completely disrespectful and inappropriate to Austrians. In Croatia and Serbia, the people are generally more prone to using curse words. Even in business settings it happens that some cuss words slide out and the people are not automatically declared as bad mannered like it would happen in Austria. Letting emotions take over is nothing to be ashamed of for Balkan societies. Also, happiness is publicly exposed, especially during festivities or celebrations. As extremely sociable people, Croats and Serbs love going out and meeting up with friends or relatives and when this happens there are no boundaries regarding curfews or volume limits for music for example. It is extremely rare hearing that someone called the police because of a curfew that was exceeded or a sound limit, which, in contrast, happens on a daily basis in Austria. Regulations that exist in Austrian apartment buildings, for instance a ban on noise after 10 p.m., are non-existent in Croatia and Serbia. The South-eastern countries are also a lot more casual when it comes to handling business and accept jokes and humour, it would even be very helpful and endorsed to strengthen the relationship between the work partners.

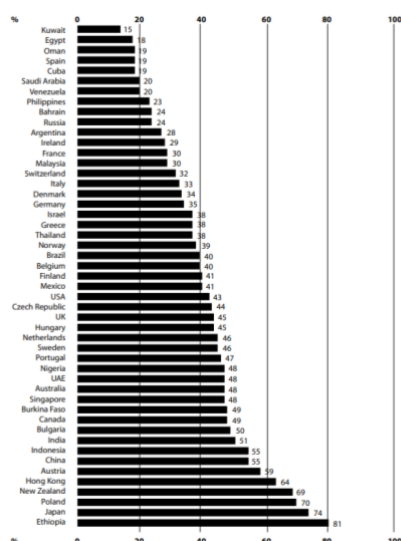


Figure 3: Neutral v. Affective Chart

In order to depict these viewpoints, a case study was conducted in which *The Missouri Computational Company (MCC)*, a bogus company, was established to help students with the understanding of Trompenaars Dimensions in practice. The participants were asked how they would react if something had upset them at work or more specifically, whether they would openly express their concerns. As one can see in the graph above, Austria scores a 59 on this scale, which in comparison to other countries included, is rather high.

6.3 Specific v. Diffuse

Specific v. Diffuse cultures differentiate between “the extent that a culture prioritizes a head-down, task-focused approach to doing work, versus an inclusive, overlapping relationship between life and work.” (www.pressbooks.bccampus.ca, 5 March 2023) *Specific* cultures approach work in no other sphere than the business one. They separate business from private matters and avoid speaking about their work in areas that are unrelated to it. Whereas *Diffuse* societies tend to address their superior with their title, even in private settings. With a number of 68, Austria lays on the *Specific* side of the spectrum whereas Croatia and Serbia, reaching a lower 38, are more on the *Diffuse* side. Due to Croatia’s and Serbia’s respect for relationships a fusion between work life and private life is noticeable. It is quite common to communicate and spend time with colleagues and bosses, even outside of work. One will always call his boss by their title, but that will not stop one from maintaining a friendship with them. In contrast to that, Austrians try to avoid contact with superiors in their private life. A distinction between work and leisure time is important to keep a good work-life balance.

Another way of referring to *Specific* and *Diffuse* cultures is *U-type* culture or *G-type* culture. *U-type* countries are inspired by the American approach, the *U* stands for United States of America, whereas the *G-type* models after the German culture. *G-type* societies have a considerably bigger core, which they keep to themselves in contrast to *U-type* societies, which have no problem with sharing more private information with people who they are not necessarily close to. Usually there are different friends for every sector of one’s life for people of *U-type* cultures, whereas persons from the opposite culture tend to have fewer but deeper friendships which are present in every life sector.

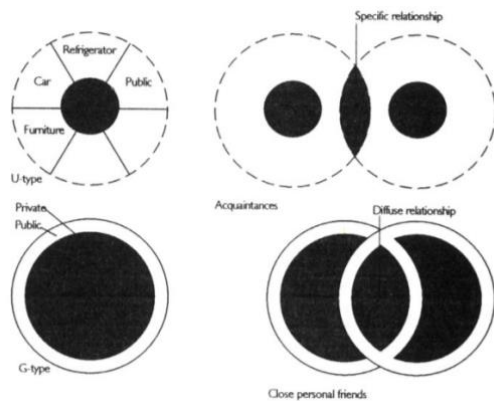


Figure 4: G-type and U-type

When doing business between such different countries one can notice how important personal input is for nations on the *Diffuse* side. “Your business partner may wish to know where you went to school, who your friends are, what you think of life, politics, art, literature and music.” (Trompenaars; Hampden-Turner 1997, p. 87) Oftentimes this appears annoying or irrelevant for people belonging to the other side, but this is simply how these countries act in a business setting.

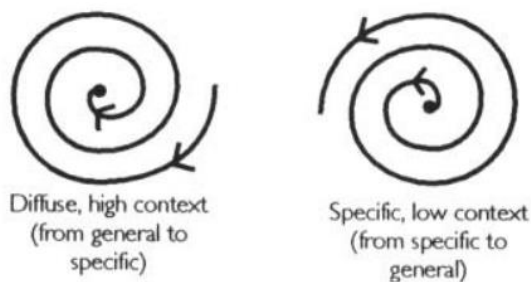


Figure 5: Specific v. Diffuse

This figure displays how each society operates based on their alignment on this scale. Members of *Diffuse* cultures start from general and work their way up to the specifics. This means one first talks about hobbies, family and friends and works outward until the real work related topic comes up in the conversation. *Specific* cultures’ conversations are headed in the opposite direction. They start with the discussion about the initial business topic and afterwards, if the situation allows, slowly open up and talk about private matters. As before mentioned Croats and Serbs like communicating and interacting with other people, so it is quite clear that before handling business topics, some talk about one’s private life is necessary to establish a good relationship with the business partner. Whereas Austrian businessmen would feel rather offended if one immediately asked them about personal matters before even mentioning the reason for the meeting.

6.4 Achievement v. Ascription

In every country there are people who are considered to be more important than others. In this dimension Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner explain which factors this importance is based on in different cultures. Some base the significance of someone's achievements and others ascribe it to them. "While achieved status refers to doing, ascribed status refers to being" (Trompenaars; Hampden-Turner 1997, p. 102) Considering Austria's quite high 78 on the scale, the definition of a society focused on achievement coincides. On the other hand, Croatia scores an extremely low 10, which makes them a society who relies on ascription in a vast extent. According to Trompenaars and the score of 58 which is presented for Serbia, the Serbian society should appreciate the achievements of others more. However, the description of an achievement oriented culture does not correlate with values that Serbs follow. Because of that and the input provided by the expert on Serbian culture in the interview, Serbia will be ranked as an *Ascription* culture in this chapter despite its classification in Trompenaars' research. „A ovako se često desi da koliko god se ti trudiš i crkneš radeći, svejedno ništa od uspeha jer se više cene ovi što imaju eto taj status valjda.” (Interview, Anhang S. 53)¹² In an Austrian company one's status will be determined by one's achievements and the performance on the given task. In comparison other factors. In ascribing cultures, status is attributed to those who "naturally evoke admiration from others, that is, older people, males, highly qualified persons and/or persons skilled in a technology or project deemed to be of national importance." (Trompenaars; Hampden-Turner 1997, p.113) Superiors enjoy immense admiration from lower ranked employees simply because of the fact that they have been with the company for a long time and have gathered more experience. A problem oftentimes occurring between the different approaches of such societies is when companies send their managers to take care of business abroad. Countries based on achievement like Austria tend to send young but educated, innovative and successful employees abroad without knowing what impression this leaves on their counterpart. *Ascription* cultures oftentimes feel offended by such an action because they share the belief that in order to conclude a business transaction successfully, one has to be experienced. Beyond that, young women are appreciated even less because the gender also impacts the opinion of *Ascription* societies. In combination with the gender roles described earlier, one will notice how in business settings Croatian and Serbian women are rather unwanted compared to women in an Austrian work environment.

¹² „So, this is how it often happens, that no matter how hard you try and how hard you work, nothing comes of that success because those who have that status are valued more, I guess.”

7 Resumée

- To sum up the findings of this thesis, immigrants from Serbia and Croatia in Austria face various struggles not only in their private, but also social and work life every day. In order to navigate themselves through Austrian rules and traditions, it is important to understand how their culture functions and what separates them from the Serbian and Croatian culture.
- The fundamental difference is who and what is prioritised in each culture. These distinctions are best made with the Hofstede and Trompenaars Dimensions, which were used for majority of this paper. Serbs and Croats place more value to those closest to them than to themselves. This is not only visible in family life but also with friends and in the workplace. The satisfaction of others and one's image outranks one's personal welfare.
- Austrians on the other hand prioritise themselves before anyone else and only tend to others if they have taken care of themselves first. They care less about angering or disappointing family members and colleagues if they are satisfied with themselves. Austrians also believe that their interests need to be tended to before they can help somebody else, while Serbs and Croats are willing to sacrifice their time in order to do somebody else a favour.
- Understanding these differences is essential not only for Serbs and Croats but for Austrians who come in contact with them as well. Knowing how each culture thinks and acts on a daily basis is the foundation for accepting and adapting to each others' lifestyles.
- However, the navigation through a foreign culture and adjustment to it should only go to a certain extent. Losing one's own culture in order to fit in with another should not be the result of attempts at integration. Some Serbian and Croatian migrants in Austria may struggle with certain aspects regarding preserving traditions for future generations. First generation immigrants typically do not struggle with staying in touch with their roots but sometimes face problems when trying to do the same with their children while simultaneously trying to integrate them into the culture of the country they are living in. Because of their parents' difficulties, some second or third generation immigrants have a hard time feeling a connection to their parents' culture. Being taught one culture's customs and language at home but learning and experiencing entirely different traditions everywhere else, they might find themselves unsure of which culture they truly belong to.
- Most Serbs and Croats in Austria tend to build a community with other Balkan immigrants and surround themselves and their children with them as much as

possible in order to prevent the loss of culture and language. These communities help immigrants stay connected to their heritage, practise rituals and speak their native language outside of their homes with people not necessarily belonging to their family. Knowing that there are others in the same situation as well eases the feeling of isolation.

8 Anhänge

8.1 Interview SRB

Date: 26 October 2022

Place: 1130, Vienna

Interviewer: Tatjana Petrović, Marija Martinović

Interviewee: Mirjana Petrović – Expert on Serbian culture

Tatjana: Hvala što si sela sa nama da radimo intervju zajedno. Ti si rođena i odrasla u Srbiji ali sad živiš već 10 godina u Austriji, tako da si upoznata sa obim kulturama. Mi bih danas rado da ti postavimo par pitanja u vezi njih i njihovim razlikama. Prvo hajde da pričamo o veri i tradicijama.

Marija: Evo prvo pitanje. Pošto ti si pravoslavna a u Austriji su najviše ili većina ljudi katolici, jel misliš da ti je bilo teže prilagoditi se ovde zbog te razlike?

Mirjana: Pa nije mi bilo baš teško ali sigurno mi je bilo teže. Ako ne po tome kako ljudi drugačije razmišljaju jer su drugačije ispovesti onda je zbog tih njihovih praznika i pravila kojih kod nas ili nema ili ih ima ali na drugačije načine. Treba vremena da se prilagodiš na taj stil života.

Tatjana: Da teško je živeti negde gde nemaš te iste uslove da živiš po svojoj veri.

Mirjana: Ja se nisam odrekla svoje vere kad sam došla ovde, i što bih, ali svejedno moraš da imaš u vidu i da se razumeš u te neke njihove tradicije ako sam okružena njima svakim dan.

Marija: Dobro to jeste. Šta misliš u kojoj državi, sada u Austriji ili u Srbiji, vera u svakodnevnom životu ima veći deo i gde se više ceni i gde je bitnija i kako ljudi više žive?

Mirjana: Jao kako bih to sad odgovorila? Da odgovaram jel me snimaš?

Tatjana: Da

Mirjana: Pa mislim dole. Dole su ljudi više zaneseni verom nego ovde. Ne kažem da se ovde ne poštuje ali je dole, kako da kažem, mnogo se na to daje.

Marija: Da. Dole je sve možda malo staromodnije.

Mirjana: Da tražim reč da kažem, htela sam da kažem kod nas je više to, da ne kažem praistorijski ali da. Mnogo staromodnije, zatucanije.

Marija: Dobro pa jeste.

Mirjana: I do nekih sitnica i detalja i nekih gluposti, nebuloza što i vera nije, dole narod više veruje u takve neke. I što je vera i što su sujeverja.

Tatjana: Da.

Marija: Tako je moja mama isto rekla.

Mirjana: Pa da. Ne perem veš...

Tatjana: ...nedeljom.

Mirjana: Da. Da ne radim ovo i takve neke stvari koje i ja smatram da nemaju veze sa verom ali sam tako odgajena da kad bi nešto i uradila ja mislim sad će da me strefi nešto odozgo znaš.

Tatjana: Ajde sad da pređemo na privatni i porodični život.

Marija: Poznaješ isto neke austrijske ljude koji su u braku i isto imaju decu. Ili znaš kako Austrijanci tako se sa decom podnose. Koje razlike misliš da tu ima u odgajanju dece?

Mirjana: I to mislim da ima velike razlike. Mislim da smo mi više posesivniji. Sa jedne strane to nam daje zapravo, nama kao roditeljima da mislimo da smo mi brižniji. Mi mislimo da smo mi upućeniji, da treba da budemo upućeniji, da sve treba da znamo. I po tome možda mislimo da smo mi brižniji roditelji.

Mirjana: Možda i treba pre pustiti ili ga pustiti da pogreši. Ne da pogreši ali mislim da mi više trčimo za decom nego oni kao roditelji. Da se poturamo – Nemoj ti, nemoj ti. Samim tim što oni decu puštaju od 18 godina da žive sami. Mi i kad imamo tih mogućnosti – A gde ćeš? Što bi? Kako ćeš?

Marija: Puštaju ih pre da budu samostalni.

Mirjana: Tako je. I mi mislimo da to znaš nije dobro, a to u stvari sa jedne strane to je dobro. Ali isto tako onda i mi kasnije od te naše dece tražimo više za uzvrat. Što isto nije fer prema deci u neku ruku. Znači mi i kasnije kad ta deca odrastu, ili naši roditelji od nas traže veću pažnju i veće poštovanje. Stalno pričamo – A mi smo za tebe ovo. Mi smo za tebe ono – Što u stvari je naša obaveza i naša dužnost.

Mirjana: I onda znaš – E on je otišao na more nije gledao na to što sam ja bolesna – Kod njih je to normalno. Ako je dete tad buhovalo da ide na odmor...

Tatjana: Buhovalo.

Mirjana: Da sad malo mešam. Da vam olakšam malo posao da ne morate toliko da prevodite. Ne moraš da prevodiš jednu celu reč.

Mirjana: Da uglavnom ako je ono tad trebalo da ide ono će da ide. A kod nas bi to bilo katastrofa. – Ne misliš na oca ili majku – Eto to je to.

Marija: Ajmo sledeće pitanje da obavimo. Sad zamisli neku srpsku i austrijsku majku i ženu. Kakve razlike imaju tu u obitelji, u familiji u vezi sa svojim obavezama i svoj prinos

familiji? I koja je razlika žene sad u austrijskoj familiji i našoj? Šta rade ili ne rade? Znaš? Razumeš?

Tatjana: Kužiš?

Mirjana: Da. U suštini mislim da, e sad. Možda i grešim ali opet ispada da smo mi veće žrtve nego njihove majke.

Marija: Pa jeste.

Tatjana: Pa sad.

Mirjana: Po onome što ja znam. Možda postoji drugačije.

Marija: Svaka žena isto govori naša.

Mirjana: Mi kad dođemo sa posla, to je obavezno da moraš da nešto da čistiš. To je obavezno da moraš nešto da spremiš. To je obavezno da moraš da ne znam više.

Tatjana: To je nešto opet praistorijsko.

Mirjana: Pa da ali donekle i vi to očekujete tako od nas.

Tatjana: Pa zato što nas tako gajite.

Mirjana: Mislim da mi kao žene i majke, u glavnom u većini, u glavnom na zadnje mesto stavljamo sebe i svoje potrebe. Znači da za nas, ajde od ponedeljka do petka radiš ovo ono, mi čak ni vikendom nemamo svoje slobodno vreme. Retko koja da se izbori ili da sad kaže – E sad hoću da nešto promenim. Da za sebe nađem vreme da idem na jogu.

Tatjana: To naše.

Mirjana: Pa naše, naše. Da mi malo cenimo sebe u tom smislu i da to isto ne doprinosi mnogo, doprinosi pomoć na neku drugu stvar a sa jedne strane mi smo više depresivne, nezadovoljne. Zato što ti se svodi dan na eto od ponedeljka do petka kuća posao, vikend opet isto u nedelju.

Marija: Kuća posao, posao kuća.

Mirjana: Da ubaci to Ekrema Jevrića.

Tatjana: A njihove sad? Nemoj samo naše.

Mirjana: A njihove majke, smatram, da rade onoliko koliko žele. Znači one znaju da kažu – Ne. Ja osećam da ovo mi je previše. Sad sam dosta uradila. – Znaš? – Uradiću to i to. E sad je dosta. Ja ću sad da legnem i šta me briga – Nije baš tako nego isto one žele možda da udovolje toj deci, ali znaju da kažu kad je dosta. A mi idemo do kraja, dok ne padnem, dok ne crknem, znači ne stajem. A one kažu – Ne. Sad neću više. Ja osećam da sam nezadovoljna. E sad ću da odem sa drugaricama da izađem da popijem punč. - Nebitno šta, ali kod nas to nema. Eto. I kad rešim kad hoću, srpska majka ona kad reši kad hoće, ona kad dođe do toga onda – A ipak neću bolje mi je da ostanem da nešto drugo uradim ili eto ne znam ni ja. Da spremim pitu, da spremim sarmu, da spremim – Eto tako.

Marija: Dobro, ajmo sledeće pitanje. Idemo još depresivnije.

Mirjana: Da. Našle ste me u krivom trenutku.

Marija: Pošto znaš sigurno malo viđaš kako su austrijski odnosi sada između muža i žene, ono romantični sada. Koje su tu razlike između svađa, konflikta, tako to, kako se rešava?

Mirjana: E tu ste me baš našli.

Tatjana: Ko šta radi, koliko?

Mirjana: Pa prvo da kažem kod nas je pravilo da žena pripada mužu, da je ona njegova svojina. I uglavnom po tom principu ide. Znači kako muž kaže da se radi, tako se radi. Koliko god da se ti boriš nešto drugačije na kraju se svede da bude onako kako je on rekao. Što se tiče svađa, ona koja sme da se svađa ne prođe dobro, a uglavnom ne sme da se svađa. E samo ona koja je malo više emancipovanija, ne baš emancipovanija nego hrabrija ona se suprotstavlja ali to se uglavnom ne završi dobro.

Marija: Možda i više one koje imaju mogućnosti. Ako ima svoje nešto, pare.

Mirjana: Da, da. To je da. U 90% slučajeva je i to. Ona žena koja ima mogućnosti da se ovde sama izdržava i to, čak i ako je Srbin i Srпкиnja, prekidaju taj brak. Ali uglavnom si ti zavisna jer zato što kod nas žene su posvećene i rade na smanjeno radno vreme, a to što neko mora da brine o toj deci, a to uglavnom bude žena. A muž je taj koji zarađuje, koji ostvaruje sebi penziju, a ti čekaš tu da kreneš sa 40 godina kada deca porastu. I onda sad dali ćeš ti stići tu penziju da zarađiš, koga to briga. Pogotovo mi koje smo došle kasnije, koje nisu žene ovde rođene, one koje su rođene to je druga priča.

Marija: Dobro ajmo još isto slično na tu temu. Kako misliš da se vremenski periodi jedne veze razlikuju ovde i dole? Ono sada što se tiče, ne znam, živeti zajedno, brak, deca. Po kom redosledu se sve razlikuje?.

Tatjana: I koliko vremena prolazi između tih delova?

Mirjana: Mislim da u Srbiji veze kraće traju. Da se mladi ne zabavljaju dugo i pre stupaju u brak. Maksimalno do tri godine ako se neko zabavlja, to je uglavnom godina do dve. A ovde mislim da zabavljanje, taj period traje duže. I kod nas posle te dve tri godine u suštini mnogi se uzimaju iz toga, iz navike, i neke osude okoline. Zavisi ako je okolina neka seoska, koja je zatucanija, dok ovde to nije merilo. Ovde se živi mesec, dva, tri, pet u stanu čak i onda se razilazi. A kod nas bi bilo kao da si se udavao ako si sa nekim u stanu živeo. Znači bez obzira što to nije oficijelno brak, kod nas je to tako. Ako već sa nekim živiš, ti si se već udao i oženio.

Marija: A sada kada si u Srbiji sa nekim u vezi, koliko se tu okolina nekako meša? Sada familija i tako to na primer. I sa kakvim nekim očekivanjima sada gledaju na to?

Mirjana: Mnogo se mešaju svi. Znači čak i komšije a kamo li uža porodica. Znači veoma je teško i u 90% se završavaju i veze i brakovi tamo gde porodica nije saglasna sa tome. Jer koliko god da je jaka ljubav i koliko sve opet svako, ipak porodica mu je bitnija.

Marija: Kakve razlike misliš da ima u Austriji i Srbiji što se tiče tako, familije i rodbine, uže i dalje, gde se više poštuje to? Druženja i sve to?

Mirjana: Dole je to kao jedna čoporativna zajednica. Znači što dalje i više se poznaješ i što više familije imaš, to si nekako snažniji i jači. A u suštini kad malo bolje pogledaš i nije tako skladno. Ali sa jedne strane je lepo da poznaješ svoju familiju i bližu i dalju. A isto tako koliko to donosi lepote i donosi i problema. Baš zato što smo mi takvi, da se svako u sve meša. A ovde je i po primer ovih vaših drugarica koje su iz Austrije, oni su svi iznenađeni kad vide koliko mi imamo neke familije i koliko poznajemo ta kolena, koja su a očeve i sa majčine strane. Po mom iskustvu, ovde se poznaju samo bliži.

Marija: Dobro. Sada šta misliš u kojoj kulturi bi neko pre prekršio neka pravila i neke zakone da bi pomogao familiji ili drugu?

Mirjana: U Srbiji. To definitivno mislim baš zato što je veza tamo tako prisnija. Dole bi ljudi pre za drugo nešto učinili. Smatram da ovde ljudi poštuju sebe i svoje vreme. Nije da oni to ne bi, nego jednostavno cene sebe i svoje vreme. A isto tako taj neko ko hoće pomoć, on ceni tuđe vreme da bi on i sačekao i drugačije. Kod nas to ko i traži pomoć bilo kakvu očekuje odmah da ti ostaviš sve. A u suštini i mi smo takvi. Ostavljamo sve i ideš, a ovde opet mislim da se u tom smislu poštuje. Ne možeš da dođeš kod nekog u kuću ne najavljen ovde. Možeš ali to je strašno i za domaćina i za onog ko dolazi. A kod nas možeš da dođeš i ujutru i uveče, kad god. Tako da mislim da ovde ljudi više poštuju sebe i svoje vreme.

Marija: Ali i ta neka pravila društvena. Ima neki svoj red sve.

Mirjana: Jeste. Tako da mislim da mi bi pre učinili i izašli u susret. A kod njih je sasvim Okej da se kaže ne. I nas bi pojela griža savest da nismo to učinili i razmišljali bi – Dali se naljuti?

Tatjana: I bi se naljutili.

Mirjana: I bi se naljutili tako je. I takvi smo da. I onaj što ja kažem što traži pomoć očekuje je odmah. A kod njih je to sasvim normalno da se ne učini.

Marija: Onda bi se samo ogovaralo – A ja sam njoj pre tri godine ovo uradila, ona meni sad neće.

Mirjana: Da. Zato su oni opušteniji.

Marija: A dali bih rekla da je lakše u Srbiji ako si neko i nešto znači ako imaš taj neki visi status? Da li se lakše tako prolazi kroz život ili ipak više vrede ta sopstvena dostignuća koje si sam zaradio?

Mirjana: Pa sigurno taj status koji ili imamo ili nemamo kako ko. Znači ako si rođen u nekoj dobroj familiji, poznatoj ili bogatoj sve si već uspeo. A ovako se često desi da koliko god se ti trudiš i crkneš radeći, svejedno ništa od uspeha jer se više cene ovi što imaju eto taj status valjda.

Marija: Dobro važi. Evo još jedno pitanje.

Tatjana: Evo nas sad zadnje da pričamo o životu i ponašanju na poslu.

Petrović Tatjana, Martinović Marija

Marija: Šta misliš koje su razlike i dali ima razlike neke između Austrijanaca i naših na poslu sada, po ne znam na primer po vremenskoj tačnosti, ili kako precizno ili neprecizno radi? Ili kakve su im veze sa kolegama i šefom?

Mirjana: Mislim da se mi kao narod više plašimo i da smo mi ovde tačniji nego u našoj zemlji zato što se borimo za to radno mesto, za koje smo i došli ovde. Znači u tom smatram da smo mi donekle i odgovorniji zato što smo svesni da mnogi i ne znamo jezik i da nam je taj posao možda jedini. I onda ispada da smo mi odgovorniji i tačniji i ako smo malo bolesniji da ćemo ići na posao nego na bolovanje. Iz mog iskustva i mojih bližnjih mi više pazimo na to i tako se ponašamo na poslu, baš iz tog razloga što više strahujemo da ostanemo bez tog posla.

8.2 Interview CRO

Date: 28 October 2022

Place: 2435, Ebergassing

Interviewer: Tatjana Petrović, Marija Martinović

Interviewee: Dijana Martinović – Expert on Croatian culture

Tatjana: Danke für das Interview. Wir stellen dir jetzt Fragen bezüglich der kulturellen Unterschiede von Kroatien und Österreich da du ja in Kroatien aufgewachsen bist aber schon seit 35 Jahren hier in Österreich lebst. Denk an die Zeit zurück als du erst seit kurzem in Österreich warst. Was ist dir im Schulleben besonders aufgefallen, dass sich sehr von deinem Heimatland unterschieden hat?

Dijana: Einfach alles. Es gab eine Heizung in der Schule. Das gabs in meiner kleinen Schule im Dorf nicht. Da gabs einen Kohleofen. Es gab keine Unmengen an Kreide. Die musste man immer mit Erlaubnis vom Lehrer vom Schulwart holen und der hat sie dann wieder mitgenommen damit die Kinder nicht damit spielen. In Österreich war es normal, dass überall Kreide herum liegt, dass es schön warm ist, dass überall Unmengen an Büchern sind. Unten gab es keine Bibliothek, keine großen Geodreiecke und solche Dinge.

Tatjana: Und Unterschiede die das Persönliche betreffen? Also Beziehungen in der Klasse und Ähnliches?

Dijana: Mir kam es schon so vor, dass es strenger war in Kroatien. Wir durften dort wirklich nichts dazwischenreden oder sagen außer wenn man aufzeigt. Es war in Österreich nicht so streng, wenn man mal was in der Klasse macht oder jemanden dazwischenredet.

Tatjana: Kroatien und Österreich sind beides Länder, in denen die römisch-katholische Religion überwiegt. Hat dir diese gemeinsame Religion geholfen sich leichter zu integrieren und ein Gemeinschaftsgefühl zu verspüren und wie?

Dijana: Hm. Naja, ich glaub schon. Die Feiertage, die Bräuche waren sehr ähnlich. Ich bin dann hier immer in die Kirche gegangen und hab andere Leute und Familien aus dem Ort kennengelernt. Es war schon leichter dadurch. Es ist dann einfach alles schon bekannt. Man gehört dann schon mehr zusammen. Für mich persönlich war es glaub ich einfacher dadurch.

Tatjana: In welchem Land, Kroatien oder Österreich, spielt die Religion im Alltag eine größere Rolle? Hast du vielleicht ein bestimmtes Beispiel, wodurch dir das aufgefallen ist?

Dijana: Naja da gibt's zwei Ansichtsweisen. Einerseits glaub ich schon, dass in Kroatien die Religion eine größere Rolle spielt. Andererseits werden die katholischen Feiertage in Österreich mehr geehrt und es wird da nicht gearbeitet. Zum Beispiel an großen katholischen Feiertagen haben in Kroatien die Geschäfte alle offen. Von den Menschen in Kroatien wird schon mehr darauf geachtet. Aber von der Politik und der Wirtschaft eher nicht. Aber die Menschen kommen mir gläubiger vor. Viel mehr Leute sind in der Kirche, besonders Junge. Die Religion spielt auch irgendwie nicht nur in der Kirche eine Rolle, sondern auch viel außerhalb. Es herrscht irgendwie noch ein bisschen ein gewisser Aberglaube. Man macht Gott für fast alles verantwortlich. Es ist den Leuten einfach wichtig zusammen zu sein und auch außerhalb von Weihnachten und Ostern auch sich der Religion und dem Beten zu widmen. In Österreich habe ich das Gefühl, dass mit der Zeit man Weihnachten nur feiert weil es eben so ist. Bei uns gedenkt man da wirklich noch an die Geschehnisse aus der Bibel und erklärt den Kindern beim Weihnachtsessen wie das alles angeblich passiert ist. Wir mögen es auch einfach mit anderen Leuten oder Nachbarn zusammen zu sein und das ist man eben in der Kirche.

Tatjana: Du hast viele österreichische Freunde und Bekannte die ebenfalls Kinder haben. Welche Unterschiede sind dir besonders bei der Kindererziehung aufgefallen?

Dijana: Da gibt's sehr viel zu erzählen. Naja, die österreichischen Kinder gehen ganz brav um 20 Uhr schlafen, was bei den anderen meistens nicht der Fall ist. Unsere Kinder sind immer lange auf und man ist immer irgendwo unterwegs oder zu Besuch auch spontan. Es ist auch nicht schlimm, wenn die Kinder im Auto dann, oder irgendwo bei Freunden auf einem Sofa oder einer Bank oder wo auch immer einschlafen. Bei Hochzeiten zum Beispiel im Saal wo die Feier stattfindet, werden einfach Sessel zusammengeschoben und das Kind schläft da während die Eltern noch feiern. Es ist das Miteinander wichtiger als gewisse Routine oder Regeln einzuhalten; man ist sehr gern in Gesellschaft und dann nimmt man das in Kauf, dass das Kind unterwegs einschläft, z.B. Vor allem das Zusammensein mit Familienmitgliedern ist wichtig und wird gepflegt. Im Jugendalter

werden dann auch die Kroaten strenger als die Österreicher, vor allem beim ersten Kind, da ist man extrem streng und dann beim Zweiten ist man schon etwas lockerer. Aber vor allem bei jungen Mädchen ist es wichtig nicht zu jung einen Freund zu haben. Bei Österreichern ist das viel lockerer und auch das Kennenlernen des Freundes mit der Familie ist bei uns nicht so bald. Nicht zu früh fortgehen und wir wollen immer wissen mit wem, und wenn man die Leute und deren Eltern kennt, mit denen das Kind weggeht, dann ist es eher erlaubt und dann darf man eventuell länger fortbleiben.

Tatjana: Du hast deine Jugend zwar in Österreich verbracht, aber deine Eltern haben dich nach den kroatischen Regeln erzogen. Was waren die Dinge, die deine Schulkollegen schon längst durften und du nicht oder umgekehrt?

Dijana: Zum Beispiel durfte ich nicht bei jemandem übernachten, auch bei keiner Freundin. Das war für meine Mutter schlimm und noch ärger war Gewand ausborgen, das durfte ich gar nicht; mit Freundin Gewand tauschen, war nicht üblich und ganz schlimm. Was ich jetzt zwar nicht verstehe aber bitte. Durfte auch keinen Freund haben (nicht zu früh) und auch nicht nach Hause bringen, bevor man 17 ist. Also vorher auf keinen Fall. Sich zu freizügig anziehen, das war auch extrem schlimm. Wobei mit freizügig Miniröcke gemeint waren, zu enge Sachen und auch bauchfrei. Das habe ich mir immer eingepackt und dann draußen bei einer Freundin mich umgezogen. Mit den Eltern durfte ich bis zum Schluss bleiben, also bei Festen oder zu Besuch bei jemand. Ich hatte immer das Gefühl, dass die Österreicher alles dürfen im Vergleich zu mir. Umgekehrt war das nie der Fall.

Tatjana: Stelle dir eine kroatische und österreichische Frau und Mutter vor, welche Unterschiede gäbe es in Bezug auf die Rolle und Aufgaben in der Familie?

Dijana: Das brauche ich mir nicht lange vorstellen. Die kroatische Frau und Mutter macht einfach alles. Und die österreichische ist gescheit und lässt sich von ihrem Mann helfen. Ja, das ist leider so, die Erziehung ist so, ich wurde auch eher so erzogen, dass die Frau sich ums Kochen, Kindererziehung, Putzen... alles kümmern muss und ganz nebenher noch in der Firma arbeiten und das ist ganz schlecht und falsch. Es ist aber ganz schwer aus diesem ganzen auszubrechen und das anders machen. Die österreichischen Männer helfen einfach mehr mit, ob das an der Erziehung oder Genetik liegt, weiß ich nicht. Zumindest noch meine Generation und kurz danach ist es sicher so, ich hoffe, dass sich das danach geändert hat, zum Besseren, so wie es hier zu Lande üblich ist. Weil es fairer ist, weil inzwischen jede Frau arbeiten geht, oder ich, ich nehme mich als Beispiel, ich arbeite in der Firma, gehe Einkaufen, koche, putze, kümmere mich um die Kinder und das geht auf Dauer nicht gut, man ist überfordert, gestresst. Das ist der größte Unterschied glaube ich.

Tatjana: Da du schon viele Jahre hier in Österreich wohnst, kennst du viele österreichische Paare und Familien. Sind dir Unterschiede bei Beziehungen zwischen

österreichischen und kroatischen Paaren aufgefallen, wie z.B. die Umgangsweisen und Konflikte und -lösungen und Rollen?

Dijana: Ja, schon etwas. Die Österreicher diskutieren auf einer anderen Ebene. Bei uns brennt das Temperament durch und zuerst einmal laut und etwas schimpfen und erst danach redet man ruhiger. Ich weiß nicht, ob es immer so ist aber meistens, soweit ich das von Freunden und Bekannten weiß. Das Volk allgemein ist temperamentvoll und laut. Dann sagt man auch oft was, was man nicht unbedingt so meint. Bei den Österreichern kommt es mir ruhiger vor, gescheiter, diskutieren sachlicher...

Tatjana: Du bist mit einigen österreichischen Paaren befreundet. Wie unterscheiden sich die Abschnitte einer Beziehung zeitlich in den verschiedenen Ländern, das Zusammenleben, wann und wann Heiraten und Kinder bekommen.

Dijana: Zu meiner Zeit wurde schon früher geheiratet bei uns als die Österreicher. Unsere Frauen vor allem haben weniger der Karriere nachgeeifert, sondern eher war das Ziel zu heiraten und Kinder zu bekommen. In Österreich ist es auch weniger üblich bald zu heiraten was bei uns schon der Fall ist, wenn man einen fixen Freund hat, ist es schon das Ziel und wird erwartet von der Familie. Irgendwie ist es „Schande“, wenn man z.B.: 5 Jahre mit jemandem zusammen ist und dann bricht diese Beziehung. Es ist eher unüblich eine lange Partnerschaft ohne Heirat zu haben.

Marija: Wie sieht es mit dem Zusammenleben unverheiratet?

Dijana: Das wird nicht so gern gesehen und ist nicht üblich. Und wenn dann ist es erwünscht bald zu heiraten.

Tatjana: Wenn man in Kroatien eine romantische Beziehung eingeht, wird man vom Umfeld mit ziemlich vielen Erwartungen bezüglich dieser konfrontiert. Welche sind das und findest du, dass das in Österreich auch so ist?

Dijana: Unsere kroatischen Familien wären gerne viel mehr involviert in die Beziehungen als man sie dann lässt. Durch den großen Respekt gegenüber Älteren, welcher durch die Erziehung manifestiert ist, mischen sich dann manchmal schon Familien ein. Und aus Respekt sagt man dann nichts darauf, man diskutiert nicht, aber oft denkt man sich seinen Teil. Man will es nicht haben, aber man tut nichts dagegen. Die Familie versucht schon alles zu wissen und etwas einzulenken bei Sachen wie z.B.: dass die Frau zum Mann ins Haus zieht – das ist normal; das wird erwartet und man wird nicht gefragt um die eigene Meinung oder Ziel. Wenn man dann doch in eine eigene Wohnung ziehen will oder zieht, ist das nicht gern gesehen und wird immer gesagt – Warum? Wieso? Bei uns hättet ihr das und das.... – In Österreich ist das anders, es wird nicht so viel versucht einzulenken bei den jungen Leuten, es erwartet niemand, dass man ins Haus des Mannes zieht. Es ist alles so wie sich das das Paar ausmacht.

Tatjana: Welche Unterschiede gibt es bei den beiden Kulturen angesichts des familiären Zusammenlebens? In welcher spielt die erweiterte Verwandtschaft eine Rolle zum Beispiel?

Dijana: Naja auf jeden Fall in Kroatien, spielt die erweiterte Familie eine große Rolle. Zum Beispiel auf Hochzeiten, in Österreich werden nur Onkeln und Tanten also der erste Grad der Familie eingeladen und bei uns ist es eine Pflicht alle Onkel, Tanten, Großtanten und -onkel, deren Kinder und Enkel. Dadurch, dass alle sehr familiär verbunden sind, ist diese Spontanität gegeben, man kommt einfach vorbei zu einem Kaffee, und es sind die Tanten und Onkel in das tägliche Leben eingebunden. Es ist laufender Kontakt mit der ganzen Familie und somit sind sie alle auch bei jeder Feier dabei, ob Firmung, Taufe, Erstkommunion. Das ist normal und selbstverständlich.

Tatjana: In welcher Kultur kroatischen oder österreichischen würde man eher Regeln oder Gesetze verletzen, um Familie oder Freunden zu helfen? Hast du vielleicht einige Erfahrungen diesbezüglich?

Dijana: Definitiv in der kroatischen würde man Gesetze brechen, um zu helfen. Erfahrungen habe ich keine damit. Das Einzige was mir einfällt ist, dass es in Kroatien bei diversen Ämtern viel leichter ist wenn man jemanden kennt. Diese typische Freunderlwirtschaft, damit man schneller drankommt, oder damit etwas schneller erledigt wird. Das gibt's aber auch in Österreich, doch in Kroatien ist es sehr verbreitet und funktioniert fast alles nur so. Wie zum Beispiel irgendwelche Genehmigungen oder so, und wenn man niemand hat, dann wird oft „Schmiergeld“ erwartet und dann geht auch plötzlich alles. Doch es ist im Umbruch, diese Korruption wird schon weniger mit der Zeit. Leider ist es im Gesundheitswesen auch so, das habe ich selber in einem Krankenhaus erlebt, als ich meinen Opa begleitet habe. Wir waren stundenlang im Warteraum, vorher die Karte abgegeben also angemeldet und dann kommt jemand, klopft nur an, die Schwester schaut raus und sagt, ach Sie sind das und derjenige kommt vor uns dran, nur weil er ein Freund des Arztes ist. Und das ist traurig, weil Patienten stundenlang warten, egal wie schwere Schmerzen sie haben und andere kommen gleich dran. So etwas ist mir hier in Österreich noch nie passiert. Es ist hier nicht so ausgeprägt. Eventuell kommt man schneller zu einem Termin, wenn man jemand kennt, aber das war es dann auch schon. Und das ist gut so, vor allem im Gesundheitswesen.

Tatjana: Worin unterscheiden sich Kroaten und Österreicher in der Arbeitshaltung, deiner Meinung nach?

Dijana: Pünktlichkeit ist in Österreich viel besser und mehr gegeben als in Kroatien. In Kroatien sind die Menschen einfach geselliger, in der Arbeit wie in der Familie. Kann sein, dass man etwas öfters vielleicht einen Kaffee trinkt oder länger als hier, könnte ich es mir vorstellen. Vor allem weil mir das schon mal passiert bei einem Amt in Kroatien, wo die Pausenzeiten auf der Tür angeschrieben waren, Pause vorbei war aber der

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Mitarbeiter war einfach nicht da. Man hält sich anscheinend nicht so genau daran. Alles ist etwas lockerer scheint mir. Was die Präzision bei der Arbeit angeht, würde ich sagen, dass es vom Mensch abhängt und nicht von der Kultur, wo er herkommt. Ich denke, dass ist jemandes Persönlichkeit. Man kann auch als jemand der gesellig ist und länger Kaffee trinkt, seine Arbeit auch oder trotzdem präzise erledigen, das eine hat nicht unbedingt was mit dem anderen zu tun.

9 Zusammenfassung

Das Hauptziel dieser Arbeit ist es, die Unterschiede zwischen der österreichischen Kultur und der serbischen und kroatischen Kultur zu untersuchen. Als Quellen für die serbische und kroatische Kultur werden hauptsächlich Serben und Kroaten herangezogen, die nach Österreich eingewandert sind. Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es zu zeigen, mit welchen Herausforderungen die Einwanderer konfrontiert sind, wenn sie einer völlig anderen Kultur als ihrer eigenen gegenübergestellt werden. Ein weiteres Ziel ist es, die Werte und Traditionen jeder Kultur hervorzuheben, um Kultur A zu helfen, Rituale und Bräuche zu verstehen und zu akzeptieren, wenn sie mit Personen aus Kultur B interagieren oder arbeiten und umgekehrt. Da Serbien und Kroatien beide auf dem Balkan liegen und beide Teil Jugoslawiens waren, sind sich ihre Kulturen ziemlich ähnlich. Die wenigen Aspekte, die die serbische und die kroatische Kultur voneinander unterscheiden, sowie ihre gemeinsame Geschichte werden in diesem Beitrag ebenfalls untersucht und erwähnt. In diesem Beitrag werden die kulturellen Unterschiede zwischen Österreich, Serbien und Kroatien anhand verschiedener Methoden erläutert. Die beiden verwendeten Methoden sind die Analyse des sozialen Umfelds auf der Grundlage der Hofstede-Dimensionen und die Analyse der Werte auf der Grundlage der Trompenaars-Dimensionen. *Hierarchy, Identity, Gender, Truth, Virtue* und *Well-Being* sind die Hofstede-Dimensionen und *Universalism v. Particularism, Neutral v. Affective, Specific v. Diffuse* und *Achievement v. Ascription* sind die Trompenaars-Dimensionen, die in dieser Untersuchung verwendet werden.

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