

The *survival versus self-expression* dimension

Self-Expression values describe a syndrome of **tolerance, trust, emphasis on subjective well-being, civic activism, and self-expression** that emerges in postindustrial societies with high levels of existential security and individual autonomy. When survival begins to be taken for granted, **ethnic and cultural diversity become increasingly acceptable** - indeed, beyond a certain point, diversity is not only tolerated but becomes positively valued because it is interesting and stimulating. In postindustrial societies, people seek out **foreign restaurants to taste new kinds of cuisine**; they pay large sums of money and travel long distances to experience exotic cultures. **Changing gender roles and sexual norms no longer seem threatening**. Overall, self-expression values reflect an emancipative and humanistic ethos, emphasizing human autonomy and choice. During the past thirty years, these values have become increasingly widespread in almost all postindustrial societies.

At the opposite pole, people in **societies shaped by existential insecurity and rigid intellectual and social constraints on human autonomy** tend to emphasize economic and physical security above all; **they feel threatened by foreigners, ethnic diversity, and cultural change** - which leads to **intolerance of gays and other outgroups, insistence on traditional gender roles**, and an authoritarian political outlook. When survival is uncertain, cultural diversity seems threatening. When there isn't enough to go around, foreigners are perceived as dangerous outsiders who may take away one's sustenance. People cling to traditional gender roles and sexual norms, **emphasizing absolute rules and old familiar norms, in an attempt to maximize predictability in an uncertain world**. Societies that emphasize survival values have relatively low levels of subjective well-being, report relatively poor health, and are low on interpersonal trust, relatively intolerant of outgroups, and low on support for gender equality. They emphasize materialist values, have relatively high levels of faith in science and technology, and are relatively low on environmental activism and **relatively favorable to authoritarian government**. [Source: Chapter 2 from Inglehart, R & C. Welzel. 2005. *Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*. New York: Cambridge University Press].

- Where would you place Costa Rica on this scale?
- What evidence can you provide to support your claim?
- If you had to place the Costa Rica of your parents' generation on the scale, would the results be different?

