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COVID-19 ACROSS CULTURES

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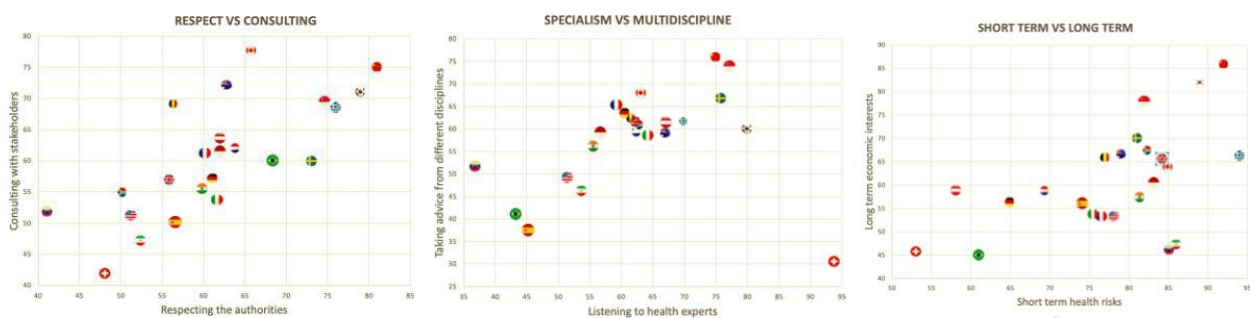
Abstract

This research article is aimed at describing how individuals in certain nationalities behaviorally cope with Covid-19 in 2021. In this article we are trying to show that the dilemmas caused by Covid-19 are shared amongst all but that the reconciliation approaches are culturally defined. The key trend discovered is that reconciliation, rather than choosing between two desired states, leads to more sustainable results in fighting this virus. Through our data gathered in 23 nations, we give evidence to the fact that reconciliation is accompanied by lower death rates. Moreover, Asians seem to be better at doing so, which is reflected in their mortality rate. Russia is not doing so well according to their own participants.

We argue that cross-cultural awareness and learning have been key to handling of the Covid-19 crisis well. Countries who refused to do so, are harming their citizens. One of the challenges of this pandemic has been that we hardly seem to learn from alternative approaches abroad, and on top of that there is a lack of effective leadership..

Our research methodology was based on asking one's individual perception on how the society in which they live copes with specific issues; ranging from compliance to flexibility, from individual accountability to group solidarity, etc. The nomothetic questions were formulated in order to investigate opposing approaches to certain dilemmas. The results are statistically significant and give interesting insights for dealing more effectively with future pandemics.

Keywords: dilemmas; culture; cultural dimensions; Covid- 19; pandemic;



Seven Covid-19 Dilemmas

Dilemma Reconciliation Model Applied To Covid-19

Our research was based on asking one's individual perception on how the society in which one lives, copes with specific issues ranging from health to economy, compliance to flexibility, from individual accountability to group solidarity. The survey questions were formulated in order to investigate opposing approaches to certain dilemmas.

In this research we have used excess mortality numbers (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2021) whilst realizing that the measurements are difficult because of the different

stages countries were in when dealing with the pandemic. Moreover, we are aware of the different measurement criteria countries have applied. By using excess mortality numbers most of the difficulties have been overcome. But our interpretations need to be carefully used and is no holy grail.

The dilemmas of a pandemic.

This was the first time in decades for most of the world that governments, businesses, and citizens have to address an immediate, large scale healthcare threat (for health, economy, and all the system we have been grounding our lives in the last century). No single country was immune to the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemics.

The crisis rapidly became an economic, social, and political crisis as well. We must start to think now about what will come next and how to survive the next pandemic. We must start to think now how to build the “New Normal”.

The Covid-19 pandemic presented and is still presenting human society with a series of dilemmas. These dilemmas caused by the outbreak are shared among all the world’s citizens. It is our strong conviction that the dilemmas caused by Covid-19 are shared amongst all human beings but that the reconciliation approaches are culturally defined. Also, we believe that reconciliations rather choosing between two desired states or compromising in a lose-lose solution lead to more sustainable results in fighting this evil virus.

Shared Dilemmas, different approaches.

The word “Dilemma” in Greek is defined as “two propositions in conflict”. We talk about a dilemma when we seem to come across a difficult choice which has to be made between 2 opposing options, both having interesting advantages. Our extensive research conducted globally has found that it is possible to deal with seemingly opposing options successfully. The key is reconciliation, the art of combining opposites.

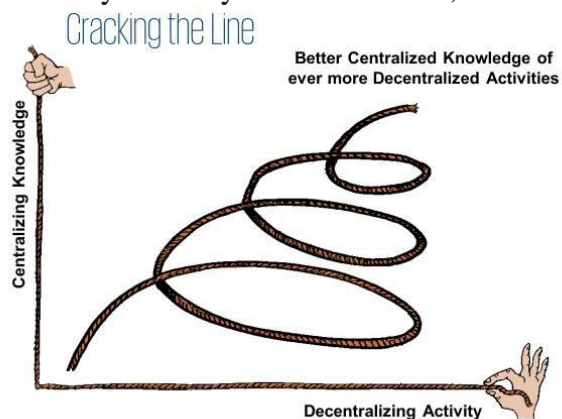


Figure 1: Cracking the line policies are those that also boost the economy; the most effective regulations are those that allow for individual liberty and experimentation.

We do this by “cracking the line” and asking the spiraling question: “How can we get more of Value X by using the opposing value Y and vice-versa?”. Yet, the approaches to reconciling turn out to be highly culturally defined. The start of the process of reconciling often starts with the preference of the culture involved, which often can’t exempt itself into projecting a sort of prejudice towards one of the two extremes

For the Western cultures it may look counter-intuitive, however the responses that serve society best are those that reconcile two desired states, rather than favoring one state at the expense of the other. So, the best health

While the news on the virus was presented in black and white; the solutions are not drawn in shades of grey. The challenge is to look for new colors. Sustainable successes will emerge from harmonization not polarization or exclusion of options.

In this article, we would like to take you on a short journey which will help you to successfully deal with dilemmas in surviving the Covid19 pandemic.

When looking at Chinese policies today, it seems that the only factually supported conclusion is that if you practice a strict lockdown before the fire starts, you will have fewer casualties in the short term. However, we can also conclude that individuals and organizations that bring opposites together are more successful than those with a polarizing culture. The future will show whether this also applies to the way in which pandemics are combated. However, the evidence collected so far through our “Covid-19 Resilience Test”¹, (Covid-19 resilience test, n.d.) seems to confirm our insights. It concerns a standardized questionnaire measuring the degree of individual and perceived agreement on a collective level, on a scale ranging from strong agreement to strong disagreement.

To verify the attitudes in our survey we asked people to answer 14 statements regarding the 7 dilemmas of this article. They were asked to express the observed behaviors during this pandemic adopted by the various cultures.

The tool provides a personalized assessment of one's Covid-19 resilience and allows us to collect data to validate the hypothesis that the cultures that reconcile the pandemic dilemmas are also the most effective in defeating it. The effectiveness is measured by parameterizing high scores in the reconciliation with the incremental number of deaths occurred during the pandemics compared to 2019. This is in our opinion the most valid measure for assessing the real numbers of deaths due to Covid-19.

In July 2021, 3,200 people responded to our test, the sample of which was growing daily thanks to the people participating.

Seven key dilemmas

We will refer to Trompenaars Hampden-Turner¹'s model which distinguish seven cultural dimensions, as follows. We will be utilizing our world renowned, tried and tested seven-dimensional culture model to illustrate how different cultures approach similar dilemmas differently. We expect that this will provide new insights to adopting a reconciliation mindset when dealing with complex dilemmas.

All seven are critical continua on which to plot the global Covid-19 response.

1 Universalism vs Particularism	What is more important, rules or exceptions?
2 Individualism vs Communitarianism	Do we function as individuals or in teams?
3 Neutral vs Affective	Do we express our emotions or not?
4 Specific vs Diffuse	Do we separate different life spaces like work and private or not?
5 Achievement vs Ascription	Is status derived from what we do or who we are?
6 Short Term vs Long Term	Do we focus on immediate results or larger visions?
7 Internal Control vs External Control	Do we control our environment or is the environment controlling us?

Table 1: The seven dimensions of THT model

¹ Trompenaars Hampden Turner will be shortened from now on with the acronym THT

Examining the 7 dimensions of model presented in Covid-19 perspective

1. It is clear that this unknown virus is less scientifically rulebound and more exceptional.
2. It is less an individual phenomenon than one that afflicts whole communities.
3. It is less spread by neutral people and more by affective ones.

Global Challenges, Local Answers

The pandemic revealed that global crises push humans towards local and national responses. The parochialism manifests even within nations. In Spain, for example, representatives of provinces such as Andalusia, Galicia and Catalonia have been keen to attack Madrid. Most cases are concentrated in the Spanish capital, yet regional governments publicly accuse it of using its political heft to commandeer most of the test and equipment resources. “Spain has until now handled this crisis with a certain level of complacency — and certainly not energetically enough,” Dr Ángela Hernández Puente, deputy secretary general of a Spanish health sector labour union, told the New York Times. “Instead of letting professionals lead the work, politicians have got in the way. I’ve seen more of a blame game between them than coordination.”

Similar phenomena happened in Italy as well, with the Southern regions against the most affected Northern ones. "Better that tourists from the north don't come," said the Governor of Sicily Musumeci. Even on social networks many users have explicitly asked people from Lombardy to stay at home, with much harsher tones than the "Come back to Lombardy, we don't want you" that we report here.

Even universalistic America shows different approaches between its states. They seem to share only a failed healthcare system where the poor will suffer the most.

On the other hand, this diversity could turn out to be valuable. After all, there is no one proven formula for tackling the pandemic.

One thing is certain, this navel-gazing is ineffective. Global crises are not solved on one’s own doorstep. Einstein noted that the best way to approach a problem is to go a level above that where the problem originated. If you have a European financial crisis you need the IMF to help solve it. Thus, if the Italians have a serious Covid-19 crisis they need Europe to help them find a remedy. The universal is required to solve the particular.

So what dilemma is represented by the preceding argument that is shared amongst humanity:

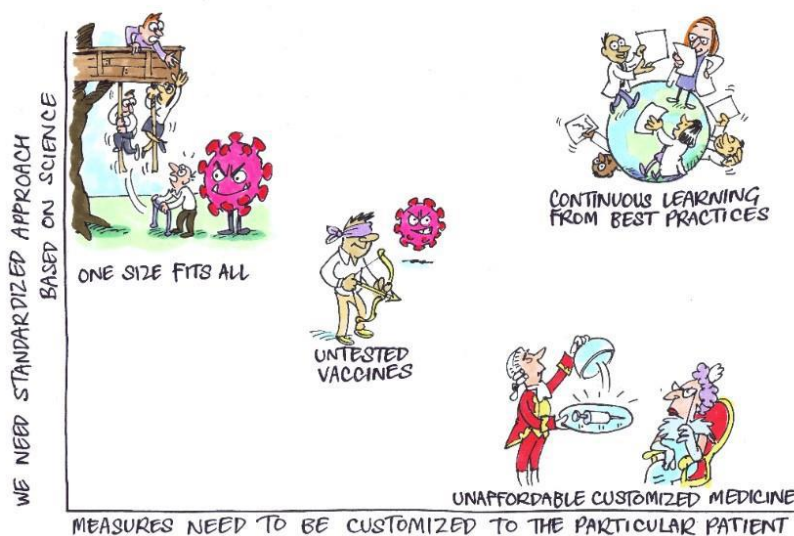


Figure 2: Standardisation versus Customisation

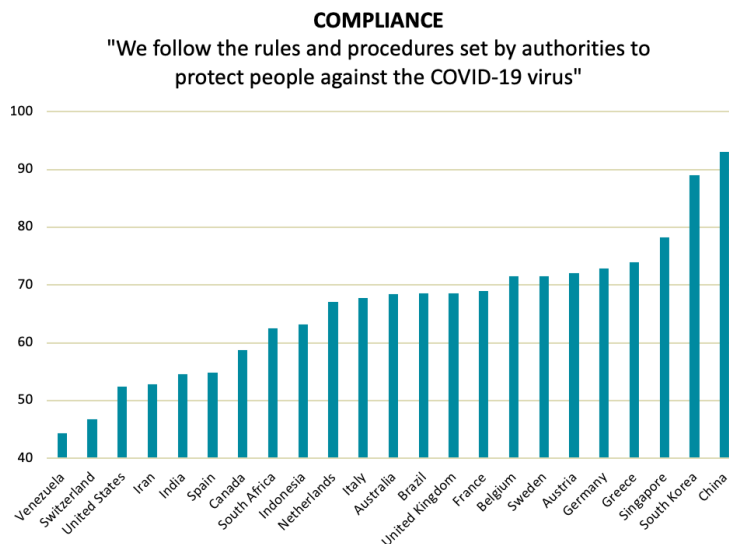
We all want to reap the benefits from the efficiencies of one standardized approach. At the same time, we want to gain from the flexibility of customized approaches. The reconciliation is to set up a process of continuous learning from the best local practices. However, this assumes respect for the local communities. This is not always clearly shown in how we have treated European countries in the South. However, this implies a desire to listen to and respect local communities that has not yet emerged, either at the supranational level or at the state level.

This first applied example summarizes the contrast between one's opinion about, on the one hand, diligence towards following rules, and, on the other hand, the need for flexibility. The dilemmas seem to be shared amongst all participants, however the way the dilemmas are approached seem to be culturally defined.

For both statements, that are mentioned in the graphs, we can see significant differences between the 23 participating countries.

DUTCH HALF VICAR – HALF TRADESMEN

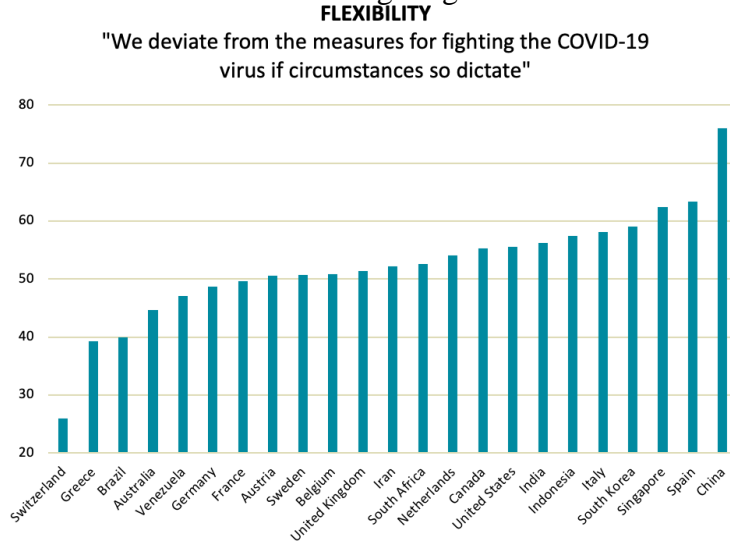
“We follow the rules and procedures set by authorities to protect people against the COVID-19 virus”



The second example of a universal vs particular dilemma is whether societies would rather have a tendency to comply to regulations by responsible institutions or would rather keep flexibility whilst ignoring rules. This graph shows counter-intuitive results. We see that the scores of universalistic cultures, like the US and Switzerland, show a reluctance to follow the rules set by authorities. This is in great contrast with traditionally particularistic cultures, like South-East Asian ones, showing much more respect towards the rules that have been created in order to fight the crisis.

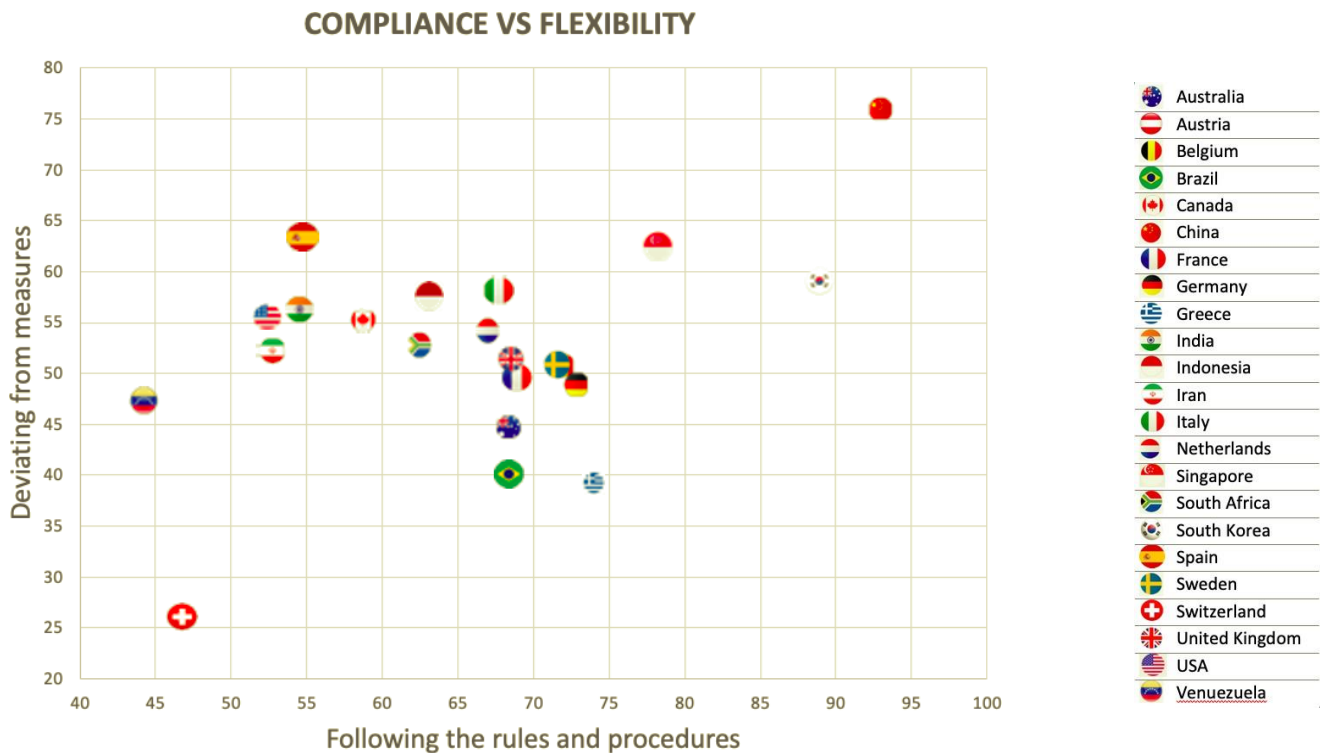
Russia scores as expected with a low score on following the rules and procedures.

“We deviate from the measures for fighting the COVID-19 virus if circumstances so dictate”



With the flexibility results we see the opposite happening, except for Switzerland but well replaced by Brazil. It might explain that some cultures deviate from their traditional routines in cases of crisis.

It is interesting to see that the countries in the top-right corner of the graph below, seem to be fighting the virus more successfully than those in the lower quadrants. Reconciling rules with flexibility seems to increase the resilience of a society. Some of the scores are affected by the different reactions on crisis management. In normal circumstances, China scores lower in following standard rules. But in times of crisis it adheres strictly to them.



South Korea outperform other continents by far. According to the researchers, this discrepancy might be one of the main contributions to the low level of victims of the pandemic in those countries.

It is in great contrast with the low scores of the US, Spain, India and Brazil; where the high degree of flexibility was not complemented by a high degree of compliance.

Surprising scores are represented by Switzerland that scores low on both propositions of this dilemma, whilst many European countries are compromising rules with flexibility. The Dutch, so proud of their Vicar vs Tradesman culture seem not to be able to go beyond the compromise. Also interesting to note, is that the Italians, Greeks and French, though compromising as well, have a significantly higher score on complying than on their opinion about being flexible.

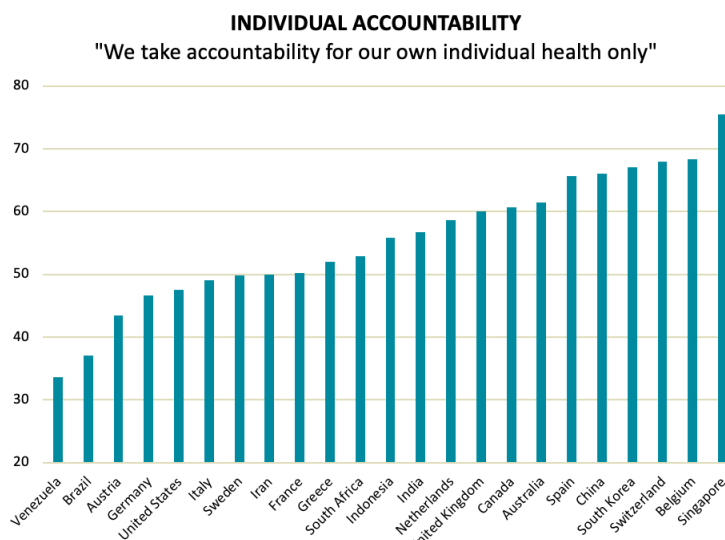
Our research have found a low, yet significant correlation (0,17*) between the initial success of dealing with the dilemmas in an effective way and the number of countable deaths so far.

SINGAPORE INTEGRATES INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND GROUP SOLIDARITY BETTER THAN SWEDEN

The second of seven COVID-19 initiated challenges in our cross-cultural research about how different nationalities behaviorally cope with dilemmas created by the COVID-19 pandemic shows surprising scores.

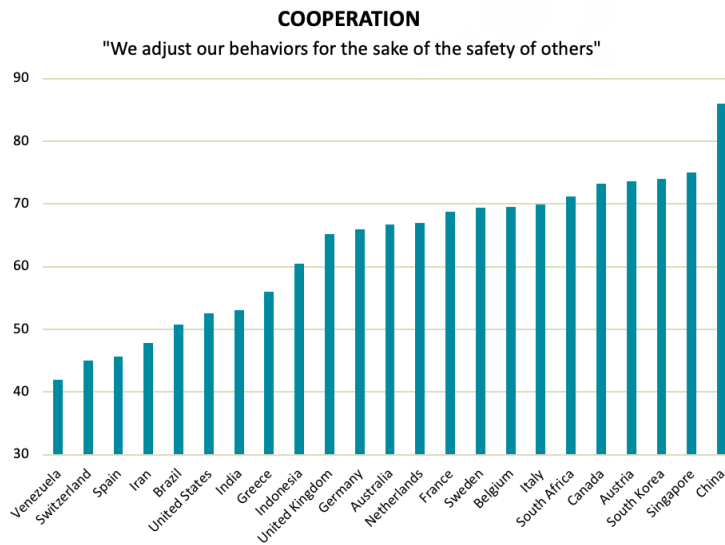
This update summarizes the contrast between one's opinion about how much one believes individuals are accountable for their own health and on the other hand the belief in the importance of looking after others. The dilemmas seem to be shared amongst all participants but the way the dilemmas are approached seem to be culturally defined. The first statement to which the degree of agreement was tested is:

“We take accountability for our own individual health only”



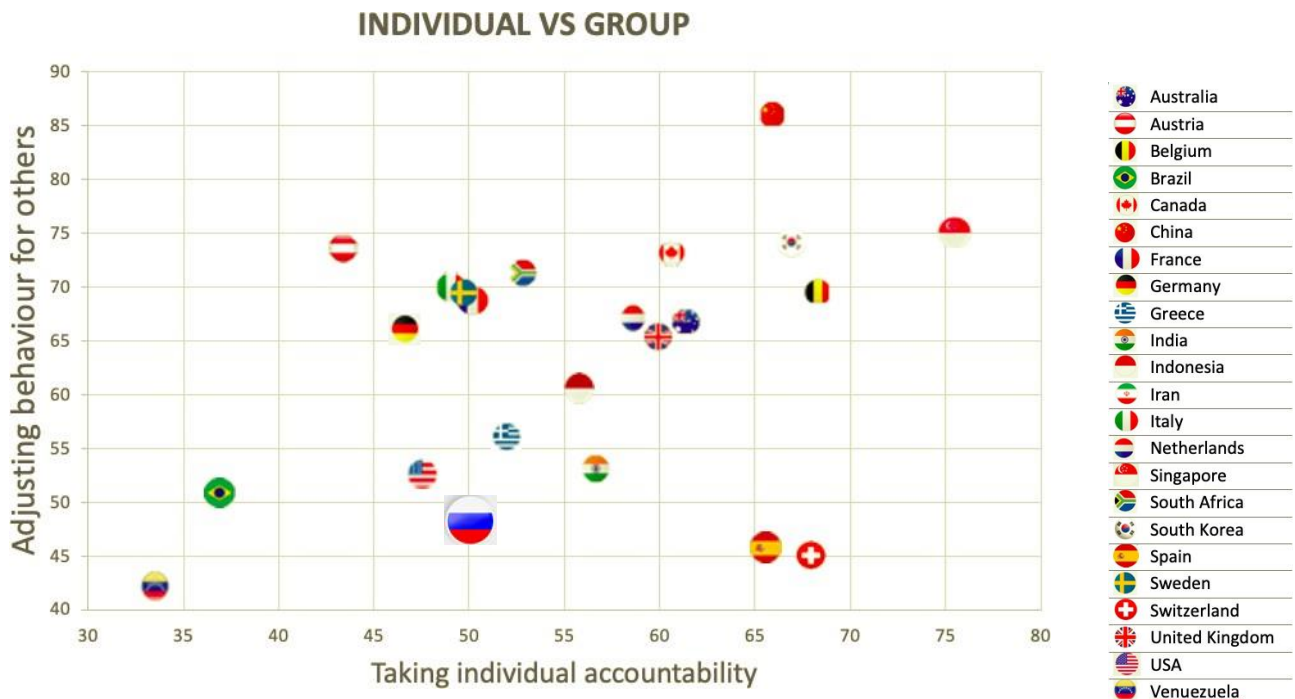
We are not surprised that Switzerland, Australia and Canada, as predominant individualistic cultures, score in the top 30% of this scale. Surprising scores are Singapore, South Korea and China. In combination with the high degree of adjustment for the sake of others' safety might explain their success. The low score of the USA on this scale is at least as surprising. Not surprising that Russia scores low on this scale if we observe the attitude towards getting vaccinated.

“We adjust our behaviors for the sake of the safety of others”



Here China, Singapore and South Korea are aligned with their communitarian culture. It comes natural. It is also not surprising to see the low UK and US scores either as they are individualistic from the outset. Surprising low scores by communitarian Brazil and India.

Russia scores on the low side of the scale measuring the degree of adjustment necessary to guarantee the safety of others.



According to the results, Asians again outperform the Europeans and (Latin) Americans on the reconciliation of the individual-community dilemma. On both questions China, Singapore and South Korea outperform other continents by far, with the exception of Canada and Germany. According to our research, it might again be one of the main contributions to the low level of victims of the pandemic. Be aware that the Asian population tends to start with adaptation for the sake of the larger community within which self-

orientation is allowed.

The Germans and Canadians would start with individual accountability to create group solidarity and they seem to do it better than the highly acclaimed Swedes. It is in great contrast with the low score of the US, Venezuela, India and Brazil where they scored low on both propositions.

Surprising scores are represented by Sweden and Greece that on this dilemma score average on both propositions together with many European countries who are compromising individual focus with group solidarity. There was so much hope, also in Sweden that the individual accountability could be reconciled with group solidarity. The latest results are disappointing in that respect. Also the Greeks seem not to be able to go beyond the compromise. However their results have been amazingly positive.

Russia score quite low on both scales and is neither favoring individual accountability nor group solidarity.

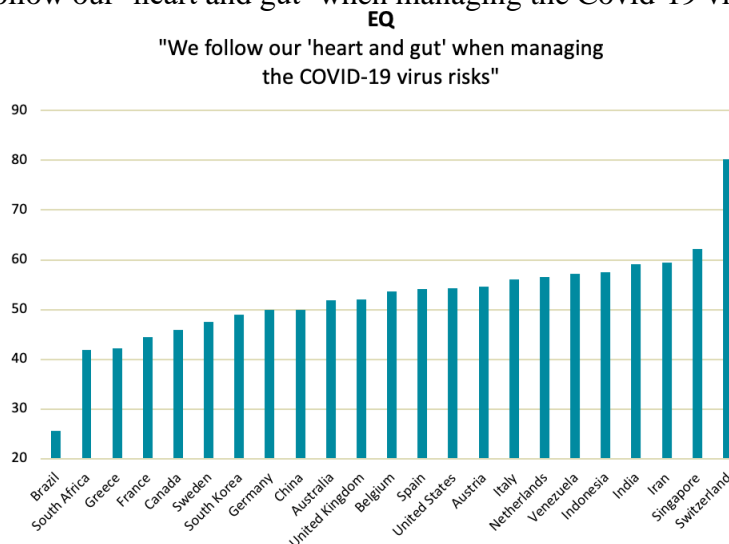
The THT researchers have found a low correlation (0,13) between the initial success of dealing with the dilemmas in an effective way and the number of countable deaths so far

SWITZERLAND CHECKS WHAT THEIR HEART COMMUNICATES

The third of seven COVID-19 initiated challenges is again approached in significantly different ways by nationalities when it concerns brain versus heart type of issues. We have coined it the dilemma between IQ and EQ.

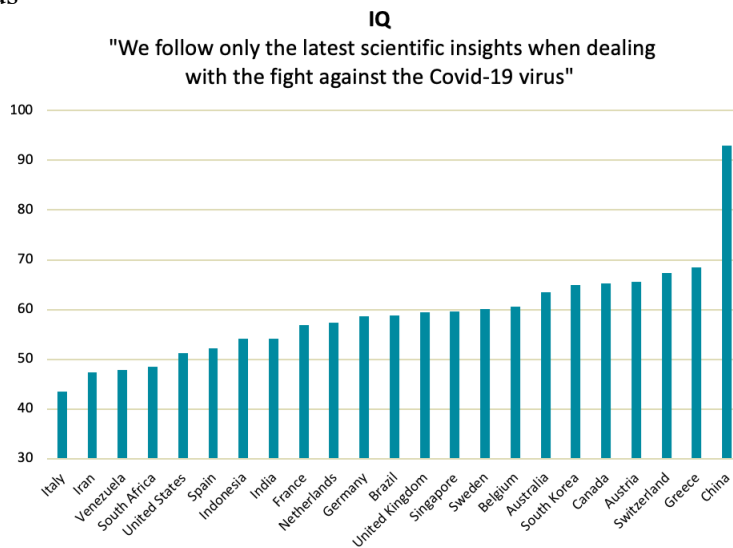
This update summarizes the contrast between one's opinion about how much one follows one's 'heart and gut' and on the other hand the rational solutions coming from scientific insights. The dilemmas seem to be shared amongst all participants but the way the dilemmas are approached seems to be culturally defined. The first statement to which the degree of agreement was tested is:

“We follow our ‘heart and gut’ when managing the Covid-19 virus risks.”

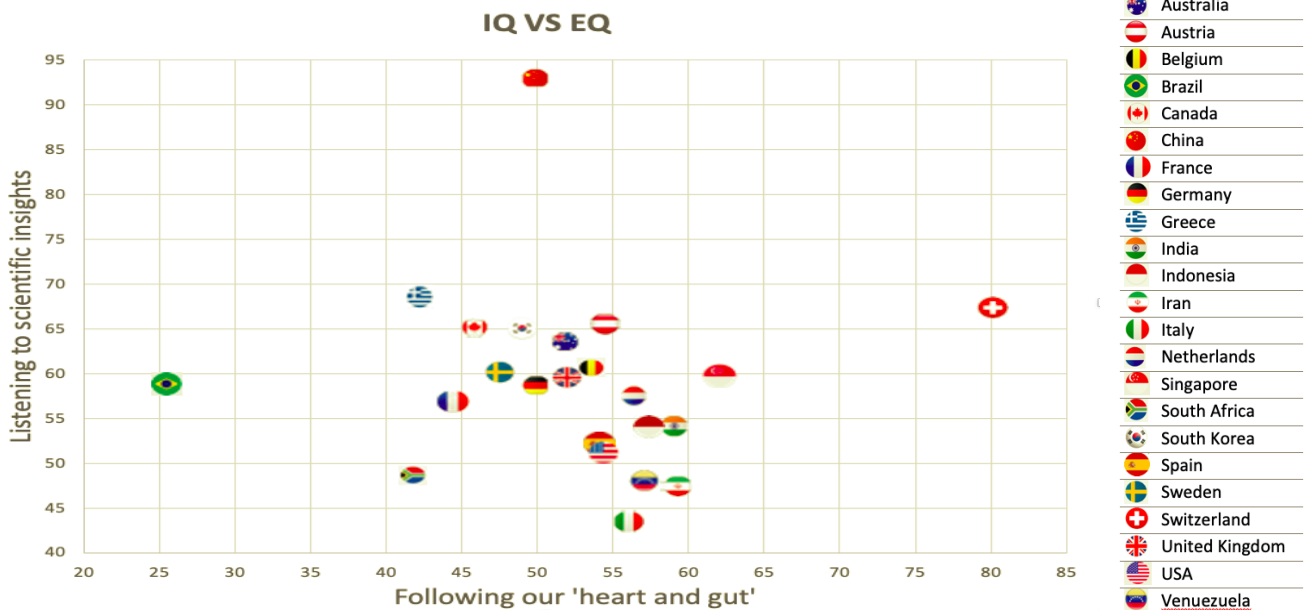


We are not surprised that affective Iran, Venezuela and India, as predominant emotional cultures, score in the top 30% of this scale. Surprising scores are Switzerland and respectively Brazil and France contradicting their neutral and affective cultures respectively. In combination with the high degree of adjustment for the sake of others' safety might explain their success.

“We follow only the latest scientific insights when dealing with the fight against the COVID-19 virus”



Here China, Austria, Greece and Switzerland are following their academic specialists, partly explaining the success in fighting the pandemic. And we're surprised by the low US score since they are known for their deep specialist knowledge, similar to Spain. Perhaps the



distrust in the political system is causing a very low score supported by the manipulation by the governments and lack of transparency.

According to the results, Switzerland outperforms many other Europeans and (Latin) Americans on the reconciliation of the IQ-EQ dilemma. On both questions, Greece and South Korea outperform other countries by far. According to our research, it might again be one of the main contributions to the low level of victims of the pandemic in those countries. These countries have nicely balanced the need for intellectual superiority with an appeal to the emotional side of the causes of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is in great contrast with the low score of the US, Venezuela, South-Africa and Brazil where they scored low on both propositions.

Interesting to see that Russia combines a VERY high score on following the heart and gut of things in pandemic times, whilst they score lowest on trusting the scientific insight.

Remarkable, because Russian scientist are renowned for their insights in developing vaccines that work. Not surprising because research shows that Russia has a predominant affective culture where often EQ overrides IQ.

Again, the THT researchers have found a high correlation (0,26**) between the initial success of dealing with the dilemmas in an effective way and the success so far of how the pandemic was fought.

SWEDEN THRIVES ON INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH WHILST NOT GIVING UP THE DEPTH OF KNOWLEDGE OF VIROLOGIST

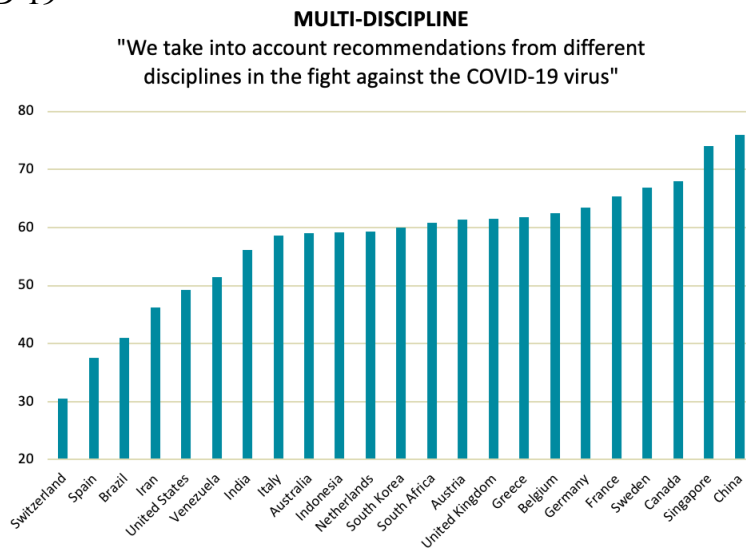
The fourth of seven COVID-19 initiated challenges are again approached in significantly different ways by nationalities when in it concerns specialist knowledge versus interdisciplinary approach. Do we have a preference for specific depth or diffuse breadth? This update summarizes the contrast between one's opinion about how much one believes primarily in the power of in-depth knowledge, in particular by virologists and immunologists, or rather in the insights gained by disciplines in dialogue as a learning ecosystem. This dilemma seem to be shared amongst all participants but the way the dilemmas are approached seems to be culturally defined. The first statement to which the degree of agreement was tested is:

“We listen only to recommendations of health experts when dealing with the Covid-19 risks.”

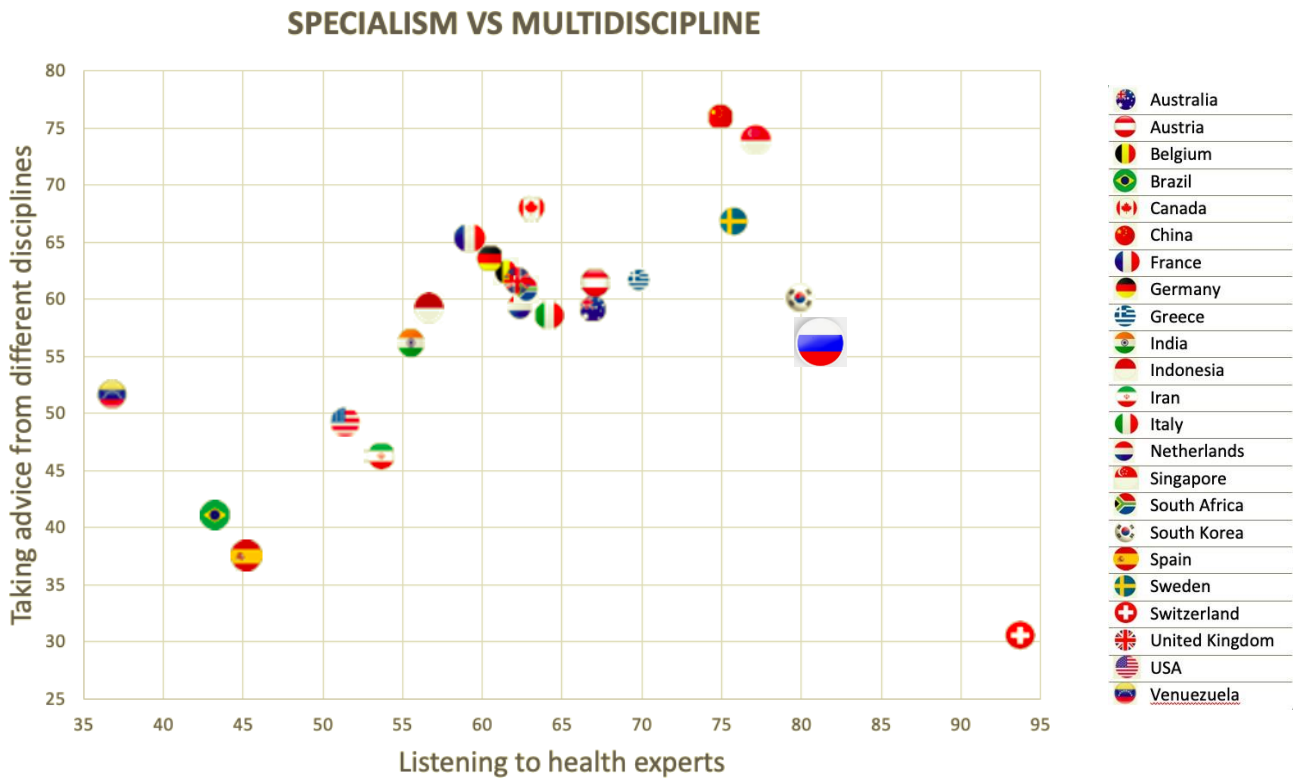


We are not surprised that specific-oriented countries like Switzerland and Sweden are in the top scoring cultures list and that diffuse Venezuela, Spain and Brazil score low. Very surprising scores come from the United States and South Korea, contradicting their specific and diffuse DNAs respectively. In combination with the high degree of adjustment for the sake of others' safety might explain their success.

“We take into account recommendations from different disciplines in the fight against the COVID-19 “



Here the US and Switzerland are following their academic specialists, rather than seeing value in dialogue between disciplines. Moreover, we are surprised by the low Brazilian and Venezuelan scores since they are known for their diffuse orientations.



Perhaps the distrust in the political system is causing a very low score supported by the distrust in the politicians and the manipulation and lack of transparent information from them. According to the results Switzerland outperforms many other Europeans and (Latin) Americans on the specialist side but does that at the cost of the interdisciplinary dialogue.

Sweden, Indonesia and South Korea have found a way to combine the dilemmas in the eyes of their citizens. They seem to believe in a fruitful discussion between the disciplines

without losing the depth of the dialogue between them. According to our research, it might again be one of the main contributions to the low level of victims of the pandemic in those countries, with perhaps the exception of Sweden where the result is still yet to be seen. These countries have nicely balanced the need for depth and breadth side of the causes of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is in great contrast with the low score of the US, Venezuela, Spain and Brazil where they scored low on both propositions.

The pride of Russia for developing good vaccines (like Sputnik) is perhaps the result of the combination of in-depth health specialist and multi-disciplinary approaches that makes Russian science so renowned in certain areas.

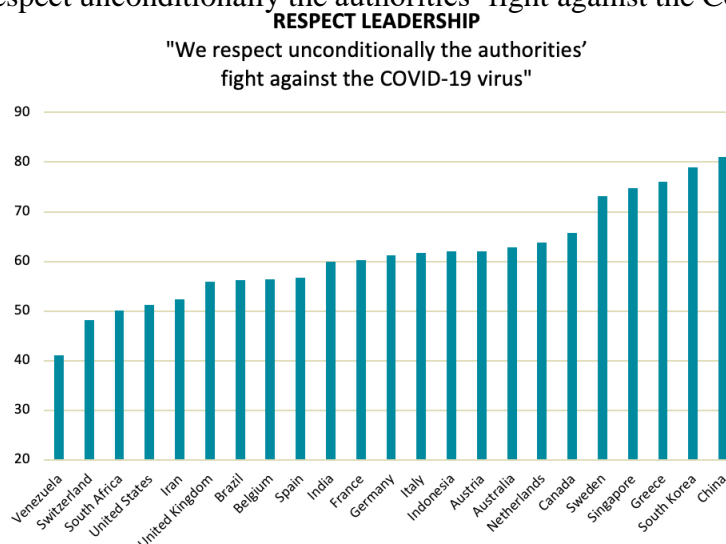
Again, the THT researchers have found a high correlation (0,28**) between the initial success of dealing with the dilemmas in an effective way and the success so far of how the pandemic was fought.

IN THIS CRISIS THE GREEKS AND SWEDISH ARE THE BEST SELF-ACCLAIMED SERVANT LEADERS OF EUROPE

In the crisis initiated by COVID-19, certain types of leadership seem to be more effective than others. The fifth of the seven dilemmas is again approached in significantly different ways by nationalities when it concerns top-down versus bottom-up approaches. We have coined the reconciliation of this dilemma ‘servant leadership’. It seems the most effective type of leadership in a pandemic.

This update summarizes the contrast between one’s opinion about how much one follows the leader with unconditional respect, or if one sees rather the results of a consulting type of leader. This dilemma seems to be shared amongst all participants but the way the dilemma is approached seems to be culturally defined. Some cultures go top-down and worry about consulting their people. Other cultures first listen and then expect people to follow. The first statement to which the degree of agreement was tested is:

“We respect unconditionally the authorities’ fight against the Covid-19 virus.”

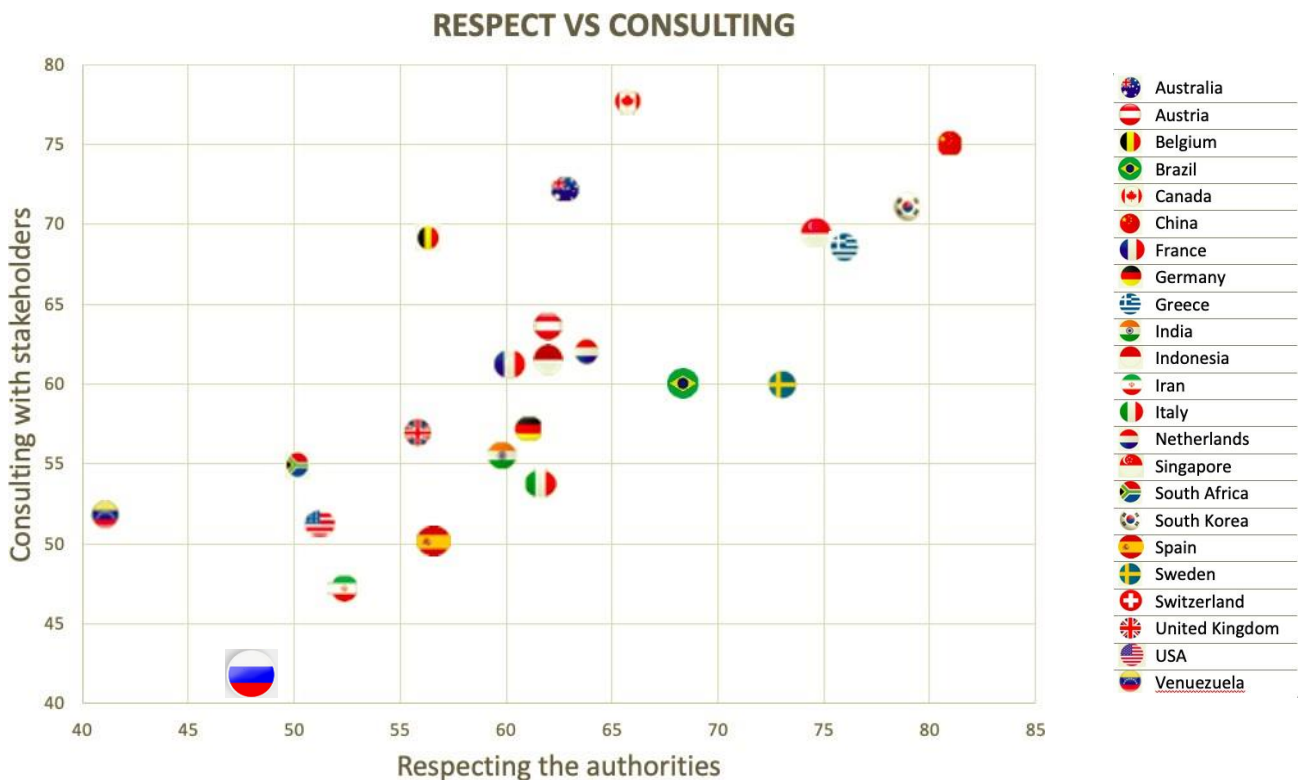


We are not surprised that ascriptive Asian and Southern European cultures, like Greece, as predominant top-down cultures score in the top 30% of this scale. Surprising scores are Switzerland and Venezuela, contradicting their ascriptive cultures. Sweden, as we will see hereunder, scores surprisingly respectful but in combination with the high degree of adjustment for consulting oriented, bottom-up approaches might explain their success.

“We take decisions after consulting with stakeholders when managing the COVID-19 virus risk”



Here China, South Korea and Singapore are the surprises because they have similar scores as Australia and Canada that are following their natural consulting attitude, partly explaining the success in fighting the pandemic. And we're surprised by the low US and Swiss score since they are known for their democratic orientation. Perhaps the crisis made them contradict their basic cultural attitudes.



According to the results, China, Greece, Sweden and Canada outperform many other Europeans and (Latin) Americans on the reconciliation of top-down – bottom-up dilemma. On both questions, they outperform other countries by far. According to our research, it might again be one of the main contributions to the low level of victims of the pandemic in those

countries. ‘Servant leadership’ seems to be the most effective approach in dealing with the crisis. These countries have nicely balanced the need for consultation with an appeal to the directional side of fighting the causes of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is in great contrast with the low score of the US, Venezuela, South-Africa and Brazil where they scored low on both propositions.

Russia scored lowest on this set of perspectives. There seems to be very little respect for authorities and consulting with stakeholders is just not done in their eyes.

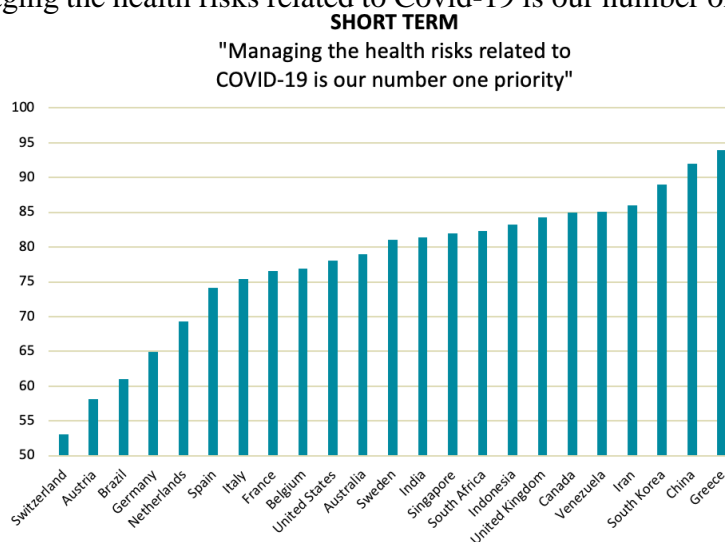
Again, the THT researchers have found one of the highest correlations of all dilemmas (0,35**) between the initial success of dealing with the dilemmas in an effective way and the success so far of how the pandemic was fought. Leadership seems to be crucial in the fight against the Pandemic and needs all attention.

SINGAPORE UNDERSTANDS THAT THE SHORT TERM RESULTS ARE BEST MADE IN A LONG TERM CONTEXT

There is almost a natural response to any crisis; the drive to go for quick wins. In the sixth dilemma, again, nationalities approach issues in a significantly different way when it concerns short-term versus long-term orientations. All human beings are faced with this dilemma, but it is obvious that some cultures prefer quarterly reports, while others like to explore 25 year plans.

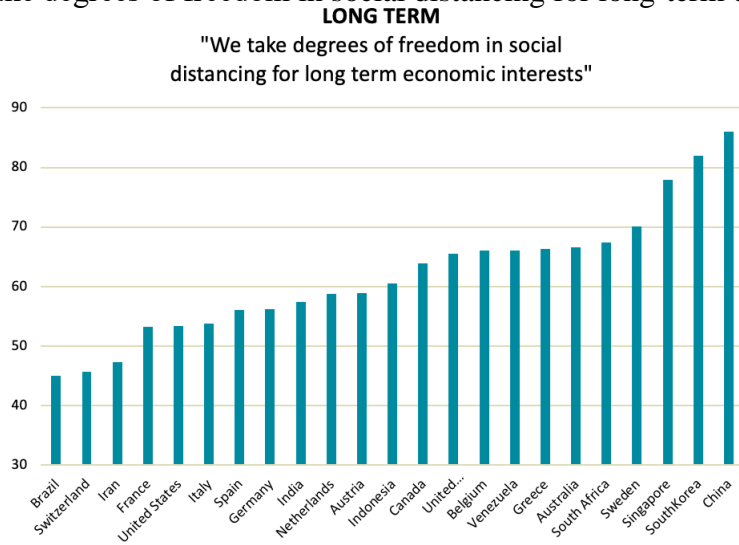
In this update, we look at the latest results of how cultures have a preference for short-term results in fighting health risks, or for long-term economic results. This dilemma seems to be shared amongst all participants but the way the dilemmas are approached seems to be culturally defined. The first statement concerning this dominant time-orientation was formulated as:

“Managing the health risks related to Covid-19 is our number one priority”



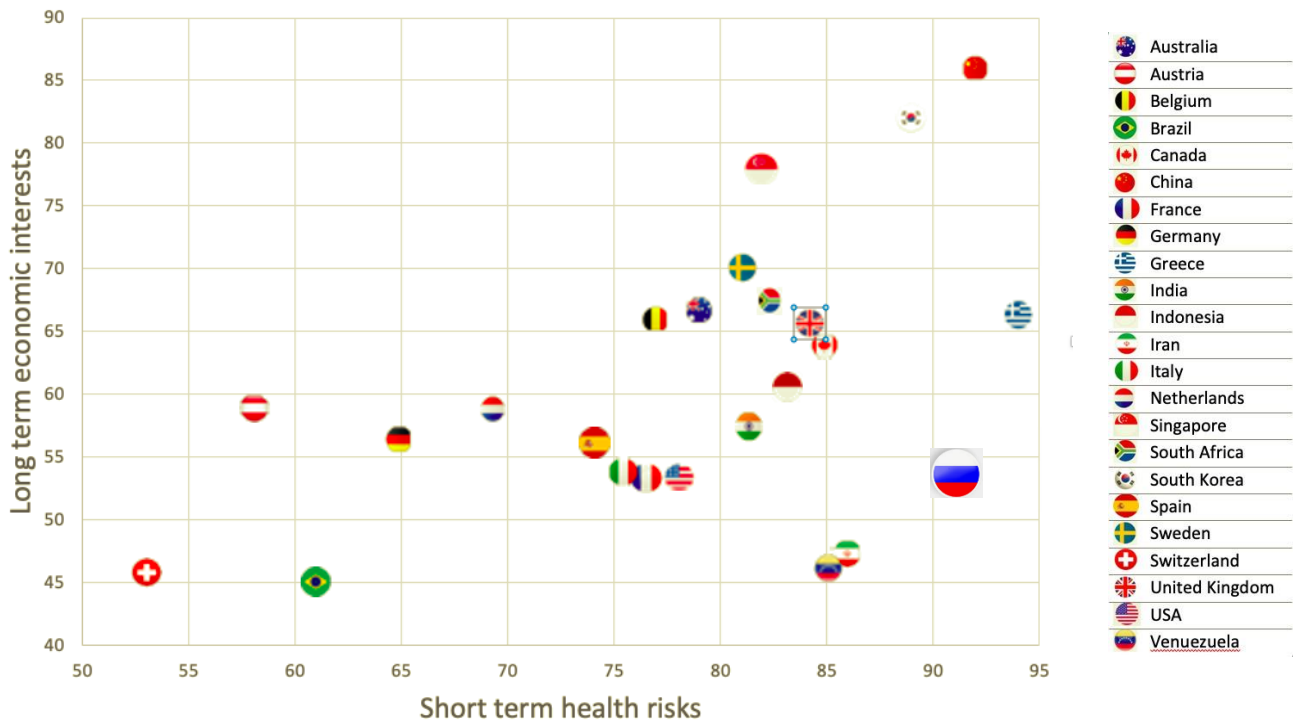
We observe that Greece is the winner in putting their stakes on health first, closely followed by China, South-Korea and Iran. Quite surprising is that Switzerland and Austria don't seem to think going for health has a priority. We expect that, looking at its results, Brazilian citizens have been inspired by their President.

“We take degrees of freedom in social distancing for long-term economic interests”



Here China, South Korea and Singapore do not surprise us, because as Asians they have long term perspectives, partly explaining the success in fighting the pandemic. And nor are we surprised by the low US and Brazilian scores, since they are known for their short-term perspectives. In this case the crisis has not made them contradict their basic cultural attitudes.

SHORT TERM VS LONG TERM



According to the results, Singapore and Greece outperform many other Europeans and (Latin) Americans on the reconciliation of the short-term results versus long-term economic dilemma. On both questions, they outperform other countries. According to our research, it

might again be one of the main contributions to the low level of victims of the pandemic in those countries. Never forget that the long-term consists of many short-terms. The opposite doesn't hold true. Singapore and Greece seem to have nicely balanced the need for long term perspective within which short-term results have been booked. A great cocktail for fighting the causes of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is in great contrast with the low score of the US, Venezuela, Switzerland and Brazil where they scored relatively low on both propositions.

In Russia the short-term thinking dominates over the long-term economic interests. It is typically Russian to be agile enough to go for short-term results rather than risking long-term benefits.

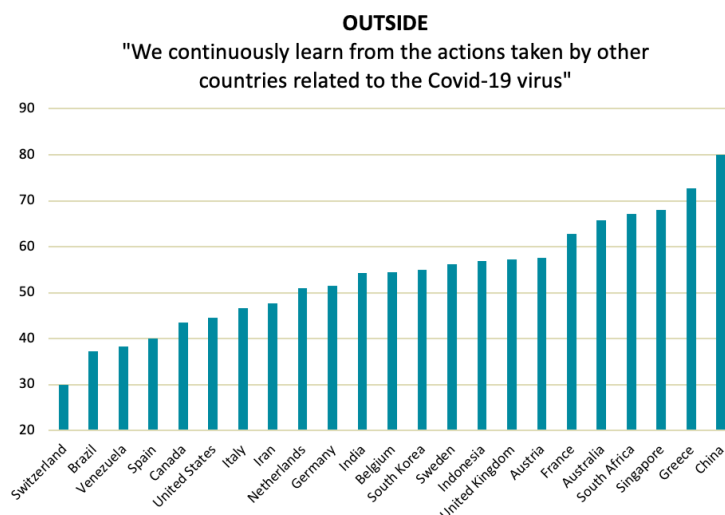
Again, the THT researchers have again found a high correlation (0,28**) between the initial success of dealing with the dilemmas in an effective way and the success so far of how the pandemic was fought.

RUSSIA DOESN'T TRUST EITHER INSIDE OR OUTSIDE LEARNINGS FROM THE VIRUS. SWITZERLAND RELIES FULLY ON OWN INSIGHTS AND IGNORES WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES ARE LEARNING

One of the main learning points of this crisis is that we need to learn from each other to find the best remedies against the COVID-19 attacks. And what for disappointments we are having in this respect. Many countries turned to themselves and ignored the learnings of others. Some countries were more internally focused than others.

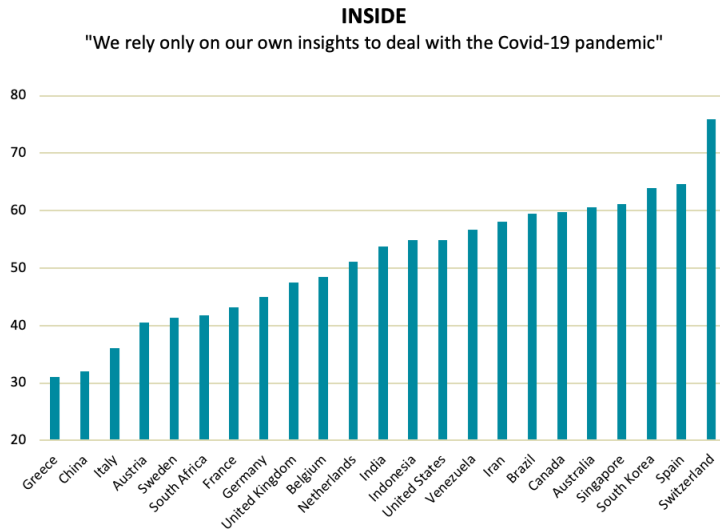
In this update we look at the latest results of how cultures have a preference for internal versus external orientations. Again, this dilemma seem to be shared amongst all participants but the way the dilemmas are approached seem to be culturally defined. The first statement concerning this dominant locus of control was formulated as:

“We continuously learn from the actions taken by other countries related to the COVID-19 virus”

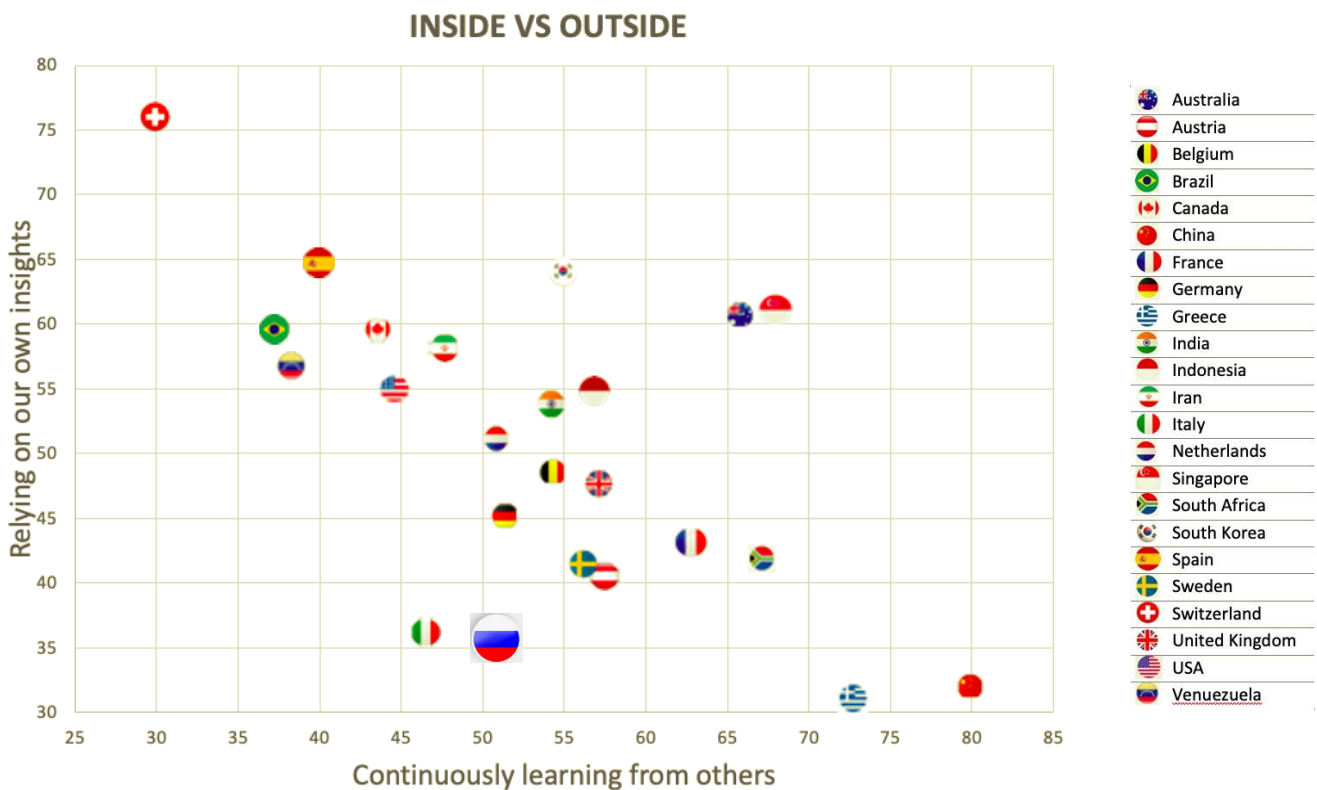


We observe that Greece, Singapore and China are the most outer-directed of all countries in this research. Not surprising is that Switzerland, Venezuela and Brazil don't seem to think they can learn from external developments.

“We rely on our own insights to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic”



The results look like the mirror image for Greece and China. In other words, they try to learn from others and seem to perceive little value in only relying on internal insights. The opposite holds true for Switzerland and Spain who seem to rely on internal insights at the cost of external ones



According to the results this dilemma is lacking reconciliation of the inner versus outer directed perspectives by most countries. It seems that some countries have a preference for either one or the other side. In this respect, it is the worst situation for fighting the causes of the COVID-19 pandemic. A relative exception, though not ideal, are the approaches of Australia and Singapore. The internal vs external control dilemma has been least reconciled as the graph shows. This is somewhat alarming because this dilemma has the greatest impact on success.

In short, one of the biggest learnings is that it would be very helpful for all countries to share best internal practices amongst each other. We have not seen that much in the recent pandemic.

Again the Russians seem to think that there is a little more to learn from the external world than internally but marginally. They score low on both accounts and all in all that might be reflecting the low confidence in the internal offerings.

The THT researchers have found the highest correlation of all (0,44**) between the initial success of dealing with the dilemmas in an effective way and the success so far of how the pandemic was fought.

Conclusions

This research was focused on giving evidence to the premise that societies that reconcile dilemmas are more successful than those who make choices on one or the other side constituting the dilemma. We have distinguished 7 major dilemmas:

1. Following Rules vs Flexibility
2. Individual Responsibility vs Group Solidarity
3. IQ vs EQ
4. Specialism vs Interdisciplinary Approach
5. Top-down vs Bottom-Up
6. Short Term Health vs Long- Term Economic Results
7. Inside vs Outside

We found the following concluding evidence:

- In all cases countries that are better in reconciling the above opposites have significantly fewer deaths per capita.
- Asians outperform the Europeans and Americans in reconciling of practically all dilemmas.
- Asians seem to be better able to combine competing demands, like top-down and bottom-up leadership, individual accountability and group solidarity.
- Connecting the learning from other countries with our own insights seems to be the most effective factor in fighting the pandemic, closely followed by leaders combining top-down and bottom-up.
- The crisis has revealed counter-cultural behaviors. Traditional behaviors have been broken such as Italians following rules strictly and Dutch respecting national authorities.
- Few cultures seem to be well equipped to reconcile the opposite logics created by COVID-19.
- Statistical analysis shows that all seven dilemmas have a significant negative correlation between national Covid-19 resilience and the excess mortality rate per country, ranging from 0.13 to 0.44.

Finally, we need to end with some caution. The results were gathered during the heat of the pandemic in 2021 and the results would have perhaps changed by progressive new insights today. We notice for example, that Chinese government has found reactions on the diversion of the reconciliation track between compliance and flexibility. We have found a converse flow in the US where by only looking at US driven solutions only reconciliations were achieved by being increasingly inspired by foreign solutions. And finally the Dutch have found that pure mono-disciplinary from medical viewpoints needed to be replaced by inter-disciplinary approaches in the main governmental advisory institution.

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