

CULTURE

ONION

SYMBOLS

HEROES

RITUALS

VALUES

Jonathan Swift
(Gulliver's Travels)

Oscar Wilde

Irish slang

Christianity

Not stressed

Family orientated

More spontaneous

Not always
punctual

are uncomfortable with loud,
aggressive, and arrogant behavior

Dress modestly and
conservatively

Knackered=tired

Jo Maxi= Taxi

Daniel O'Connell

U2

An over shoulder boulder holder=
a bra

Michael Collins

Pub

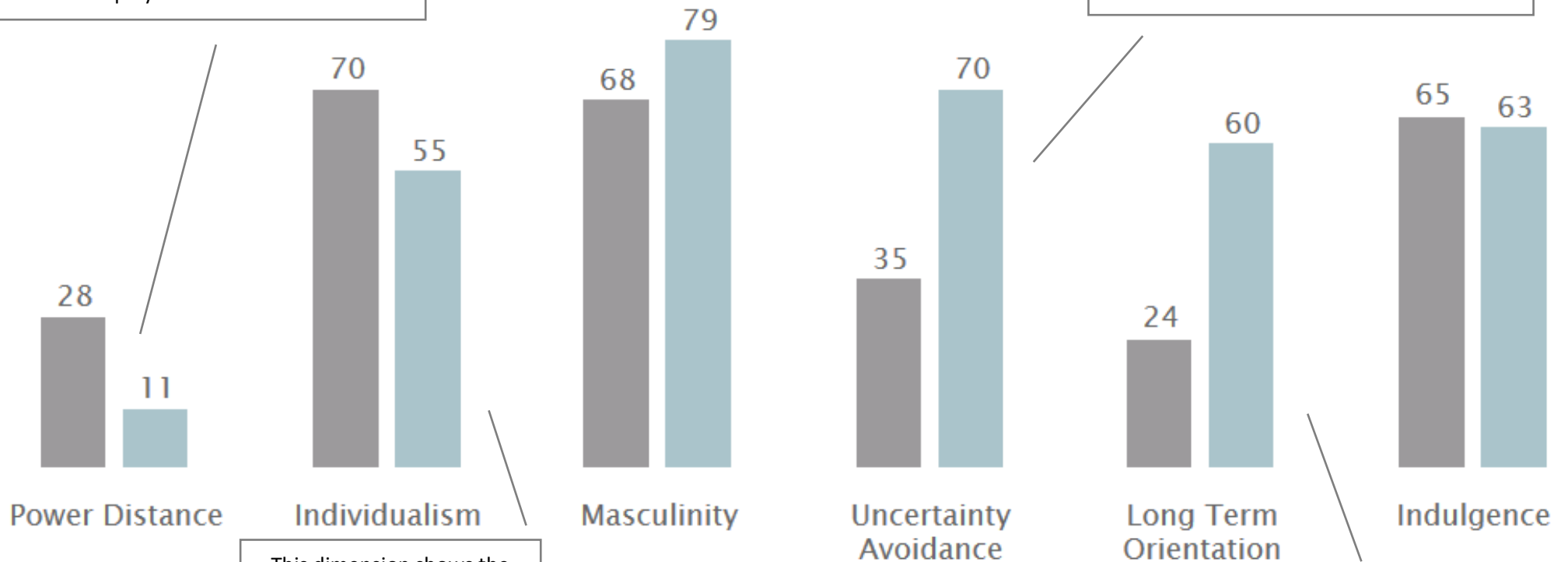
Riverdance



This dimension deals with the fact that all individuals in societies are not equal. With a score of 28, Ireland is quite low so it is a society that believes that inequalities amongst people should be minimized. Within Irish organisations, hierarchy is established for convenience, but managers are always available and rely on the knowledge of employees and teams.

Ireland in comparison with Austria

The dimension of uncertainty avoidance describes the way that a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known. A good practical example is that Austrians rely much more on the weather forecast than the Irish do because they can deal with the uncertainty of how the weather will be like!



This dimension shows the degree of independence of a culture and the self-image is defined in terms of "I" or "We". So you can see the countries are quite similar though the Irish think a bit more in "I" than we do.

Normative societies, which score low on this dimension, prefer for example to maintain time-honoured traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion.

You can tell that Ireland is a way more traditional country with slower changes.

Cultural Assimilator

On the first day, we were just in time to catch our bus. We were standing at the bus stop and were super happy when the bus finally came because it was a pretty cold morning. We were very surprised when the bus just drove past us without stopping! We couldn't believe it!

Why do you think the bus didn't stop?

1. The bus driver didn't like us.
2. The bus is only meant for Irish people who have to get to work on time.
3. The bus driver thought we were waiting for a different bus because we didn't raise our hands.
4. The bus was already late so it had to skip a stop.



Answers:

1. Wrong. Irish people are open minded.
2. Wrong. Everyone can access the bus and use the public transport.
3. Right. The bus stop is for different bus lines so if you want your bus to stop you have to give the driver a sign.
4. Wrong. The bus driver can't just skip a stop – duh...

Critical Incident

As we arrived at the host parents' house we had a really nice chat with our host father. We had various conversation topics. One of them was crucifixes and religion. So, we discussed what religion we believed in. Two out of the three of us are Catholics. Anna is evangelical church and referred to herself as protestant. The host father looked her surprised and joked: "Well, I think you're on the wrong side of the country! Mind the crosses!" Anna was confused after that and didn't know what to say.

Anna kept thinking about the incident and after a day or two she figured out that the host father thought she was Anglican. The Irishman associated protestant with the Anglican church.

By the way: the cross to the left is a Brigid cross, typical of Ireland.



Statements:

Anna: I thought I said something wrong and I was embarrassed.

Lisa: I didn't really notice the incident. I thought it was a joke.

Nina: In the beginning, I didn't understand what was going on. Later I realised that, unlike in Austria, the Catholics and Protestants sometimes have a hard time with each other; it is kind of prejudice induced by the history of Eire and Norther Ireland.

Stereotypes on the example of Dublin and Austria

- Irish men have red hair and wear a big orange beard.

At first I have to mention that our English teacher (who lives IN Dublin) looks exactly the opposite of what this stereotype says. He has brown short hair and does not have a beard. In fact there are only about 4% of the Irish population that have this kind of hair colour.



- Irish streets are filled with kilts and lasses

In my opinion this is one of the most false stereotypes that Ireland has. During the whole week I didn't see a single kilt or lass. Most of the pupils wear a school uniform like we know it from Great Britain. (Don't ever think of mentioning Great Britain in Ireland!) Students on Trinity college for example wear hoodies and Jeans like we do – even though it was unbelievable cold. But there is one thing that surprised me. More than 90% of the grown ups wear a suit respectively women a pantsuit.

- The Irish population can't get enough of potatoes.

This is totally true. In Dublin I saw potato dishes that I've never heard before. The Irish gastronomy has such a wide bandwidth which relates to potato dishes. In principle you always get potatoe chips with different flavours into your lunchbag. For lunch you eat an omelet only made out of potatoes salt and vinegar. Now brace yourselves, my friends and I got pizza for dinner topped with, you already know, potatoes slices. So that's about the Irish cuisine or should I say chipsine.

- Irish drinking manners are very pronounced even for the Austrian standard.

So in a nutshell. Irish men and women take a second Guinness with pleasure. The day we met our classmates in the evening I saw a bar at the harbour. I loved the decoration they made out of beer glasses, until I found out that those were just empty glasses from customers. Massive!

- Obsession with the weather.

Well, that's likely to be true because every time we had small talk with an Irish they immediately mentioned how lucky we have to be in weather like this. We always had sunshine. What I also realised is that when the temperatur rises to more than 14 degrees they principally wear bermudas and a tanktop, respectivly women a bikini.