Connecting Communities Empowering Transitions

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Module 3

Promoting social integration

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What to expect

Module three aims to

- Define and describe social integration
- Analyse the barriers faced by young people when integrating into new communities and new cultures.
- Support you to create a poster illustrating Hofstede's Cultural Insights.

What is social integration?

What is social integration?

Social integration is the degree to which individuals participate in a wide range of social roles and relationships (Brissette, Cohen and Seeman, 2000).

"The process by which separate groups are combined into a unified society, especially when this is pursued as a deliberate policy. It implies a coming together based on individual acceptance of the members of other groups" (American Psychological Association, 2024).

The roots of social integration

- Social integration was first discussed in 1897 by Emile Durkheim

- His early research found that elevated levels of suicide rates for single individuals compared to married individuals and less frequent when an individual was closed integrated into a society.

- Emile Durkheim found that that individuals who lacked a strong social identification would be more susceptible to suicide (Peyre, 2024).

Olga, a 19-year-old refugee from Ukraine, moved to Ireland last year. Despite the language barrier, she joined a local sports club and started volunteering at a community center. With support from local mentors and regular language classes, Olga not only improved her language skills but also made lifelong friends and became an active volunteer, helping others in the migrant community.

Example of social integration - What factors have helped Olga to integrate?

Why is it important to support the social integration of migrants?

Supporting the social integration of migrants can:

- **Foster more understanding and empathetic communities:** Storytelling and sharing experiences can break down barriers that migrants face.

- **Improve our economies**: Migrants bring new knowledge and skills to our community

- **Enrich our society**: Migrants and natives can teach each other their local traditions and cultural values.

Some of the barriers that young people face when integrating into a new community include
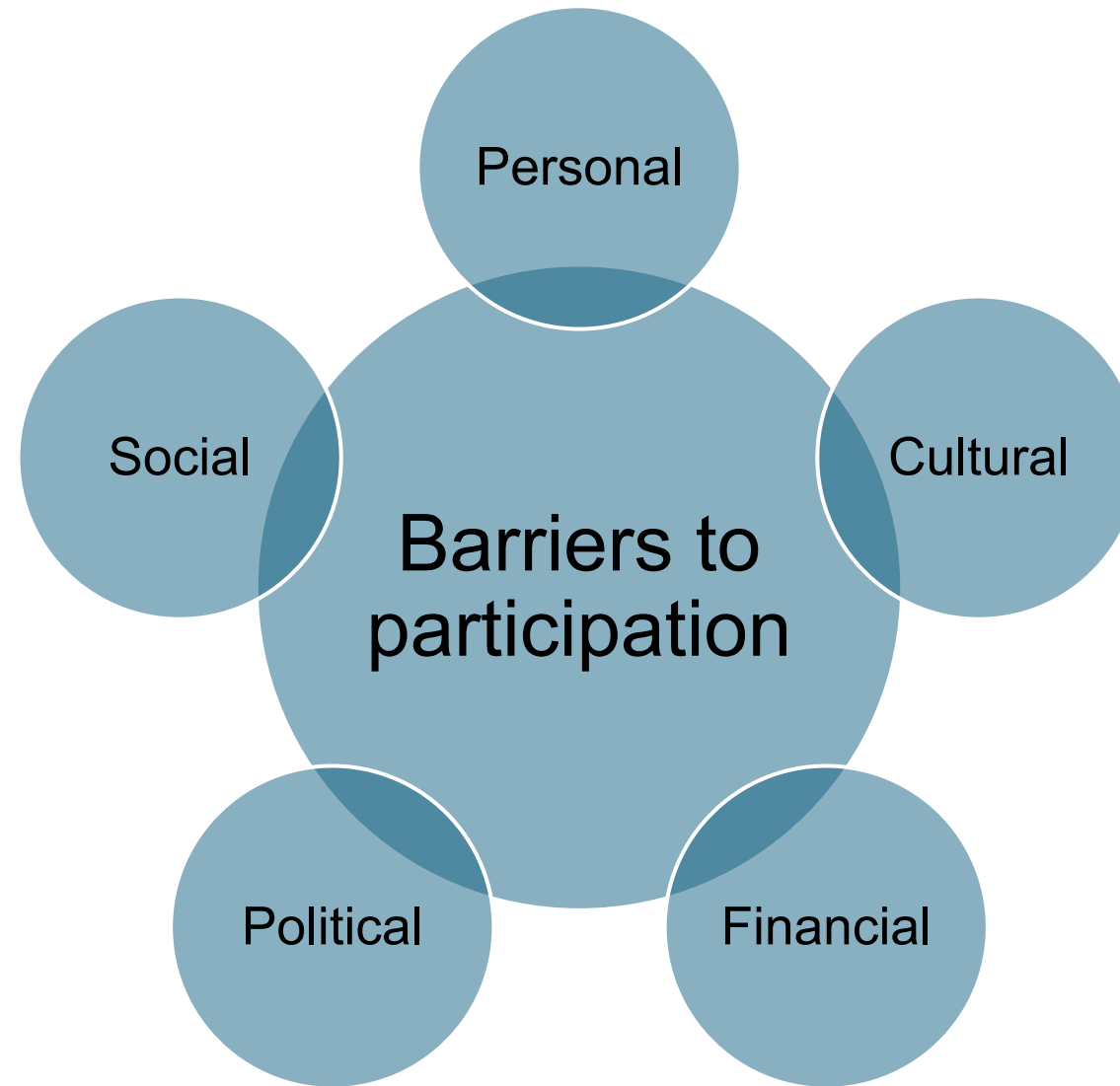
Source: Migration Yorkshire (2024)

Barriers to social integration for migrants include

- Lack of access to education
- Lack of access to health care
- Unemployment
- Mental health challenges
- Gender-based violence

Source: Hatua Network (2023)

How can we support young people to integrate into our communities?

Do you agree with this statement?

Problem Statement:

Cultural adjustment is complicated for refugees. Adjusting to a new culture can be a difficult challenge for refugees to accept. If they do accept this new culture and begin to re-establish and find an identity, it become challenging to keep everyone in both cultures happy. Yet, a lack of cultural adjustment limits communication, acceptance, and inclusion.

Discussion:

On the next slide, you will see a series of challenges that migrants typically face in their social integration.

What solutions would you propose to a migrant facing the following challenges?

Challenges

1. Feelings of isolation, pressure, depression and intimidation in the new culture

1. A fear / lack of desire to participate in school, activities or in the community

1. Potential discrimination or bullying from peers

1. Deculturation or trading their native culture for the new culture

1. A loss of identity leading to insecurity or unstable behaviours.

Activity adapted from Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Some solutions may include:

- Promote bi-culturalism in youth-led activities
- Offer peer-to-peer cultural exchanges or activities
- Facilitate orientation for migrants in the new community to reduce culture shock
- Assist with inter-generational challenges that may occur from adjusting to or assimilating into a new culture
- Promote opportunities for migrants to get involved in community events
- Organise and host inter-faith celebrations or cultural festivals.

Geert Hofstede

- Geert Hofstede was a Dutch social psychologist (1928 – 2020)

- During the 1960's, Hofstede worked with IBM International

- He analyzed internal data which resulted in the development of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions.

Cultural Dimensions

- The Cultural Dimensions Theory is used to understand the differences that exist in culture across countries.

- There are seven key dimensions which make up the Cultural Dimensions Theory.

- The framework helps to describe the effects that culture has on the values of individuals and how these values relate to the behaviour of people who live within a culture

The Dimensions

Power Distance

Uncertainty avoidance

Individualism-collectivism

Masculinity-femininity

Short vs. long term orientation

Restraint vs. indulgence

Hofstede's Dimension

Individualism and Collectivism

Power Distance

- The Power Distance Index (PDI) measures how people accept the unequal power distribution that exists in a society.

Power Distance

- Countries with a high PDI tend to have:
  - Centralised authorities
  - Clear hierarchical structures in place
  - Subordinates expect to be told what they have to do.

- Countries include:
  - Malaysia: High acceptance of hierarchical order without much questioning.
  - Mexico: Clear distinctions between levels of power and status.
  - Russia: Centralized power with less consultation from lower levels

- Countries with a low PDI tend to have:
  - Decentralised decision-making
  - Equality and accessible leaders
  - Subordinates who are consulted

- Countries include:
  - Denmark: Egalitarian approach, with flat organisational structures.
  - Sweden: Emphasis on equality and participative decision-making.
  - New Zealand: Low acceptance of inequality and hierarchical differences.

Uncertainty Avoidance

- Uncertainty Avoidance measures a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity.

Uncertainty Avoidance

- Countries with a high uncertainty avoidance tend to have:
    - A preference for formal rules and regulations
    - Low tolerance for risk-taking
    - Emphasis on job security.

- Countries include:
    - Greece: Preference for clear rules and stability.
    - Portugal: Low tolerance for uncertainty and high need for formal regulations.
    - Japan: High need for predictability and structured conditions.

- Countries with a low uncertainty avoidance tend to have:
    - More relaxed attitudes towards uncertainty
    - Acceptance of risk and change
    - Flexible working environments.

- Countries include:
    - Singapore: Open to innovation and less constrained by rules.
    - Denmark: Comfortable with ambiguity and flexible in planning.
    - Jamaica: Relaxed attitude towards uncertainty and risk-taking.

Individualism vs. Collectivism

- The individualism vs. collectivism measure reflects the degree of interdependence amongst members in a given society.

Individualism vs. Collectivism

- Countries with a high individualism measure tend to support:
  - An overarching emphasis on personal achievements
  - The rights and and privacy measures for individuals are of utmost importance
  - Loose ties between individuals within the society

- Countries include:
  - United States: Strong emphasis on individual rights and personal achievement.
  - Australia: High value placed on individual freedom and self-reliance.
  - United Kingdom: Importance of personal goals and individual decisions.

- Countries with a high collectivism measure tend to support:
  - Strong group cohesion in society
  - Loyalty within society and group obligations
  - An emphasis on the family and on community.

- Countries include:
  - China: Strong emphasis on group loyalty and collective well-being.
  - Indonesia: Family and community are prioritized over individual goals.
  - South Korea: High value on harmonious group relationships and consensus.

Short vs. Long Term Orientation

- The short term vs. long term orientation reflects the attitude of the society towards time and considers their time horizon (where they look to).

Short vs. Long Term Orientation

- Countries with a short-term orientation tend to:
  - Focus on the past and present
  - Respect tradition
  - Place emphasis on quick results and social obligations.

- Countries include:
  - United States: Emphasis on quick results and present achievements.
  - Mexico: Focus on traditions and fulfilling social obligations.
  - Philippines: Strong respect for historical continuity and short-term goals.

- Countries with a long-term orientation tend to support:
  - Focus on future rewards
  - Persist and thrift to succeed into the future
  - Adapt their behaviours and take pragmatic approaches.

- Countries include:
  - China: Focus on future rewards and perseverance.
  - Japan: Value placed on long-term planning and sustained efforts.
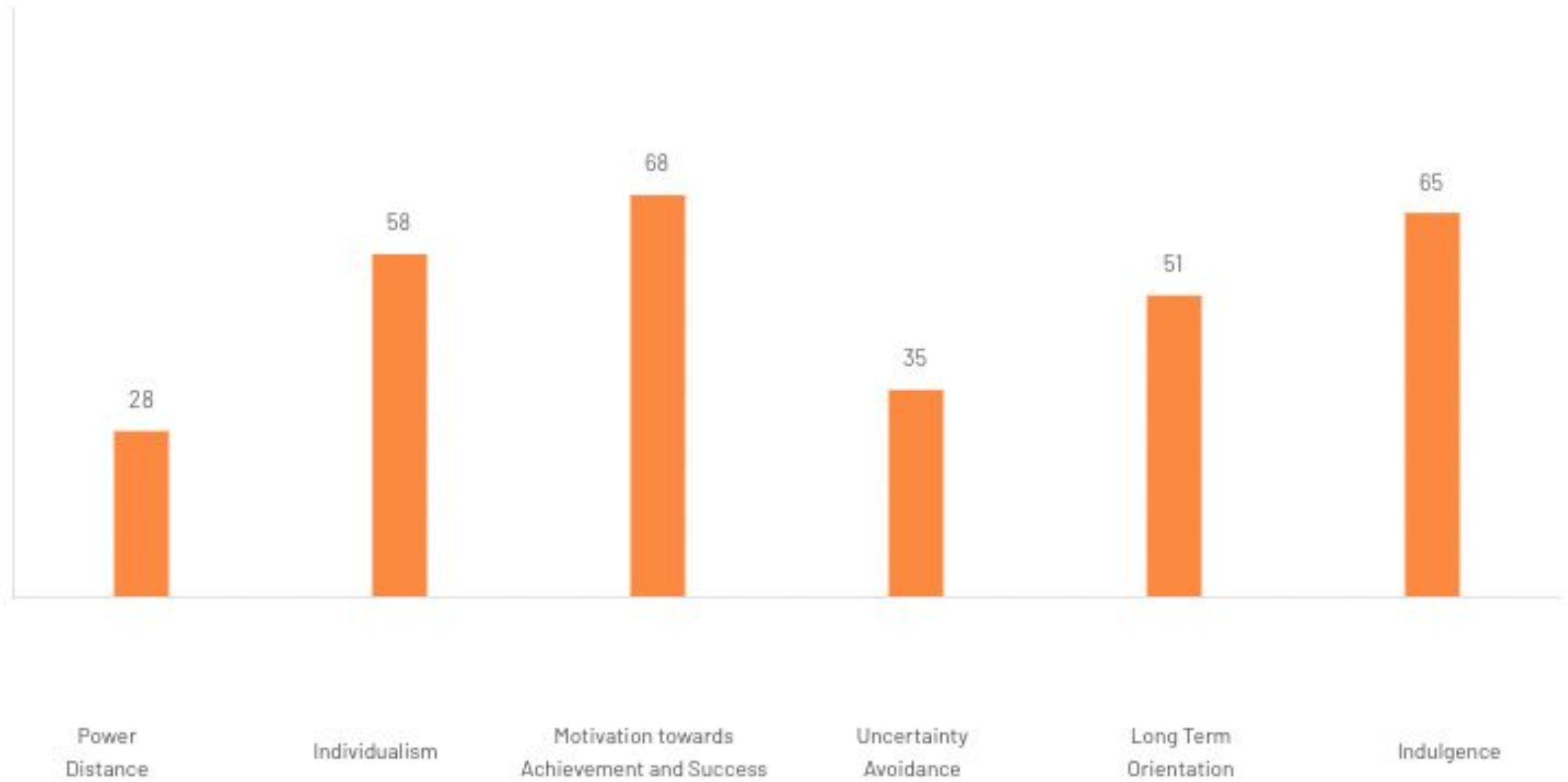 - South Korea: Emphasis on thrift and long-term success.

Indulgence vs. Restraint

- The indulgence vs. restraint measure considers the degree of freedom that society allows when supporting individuals to gratify their human desires.
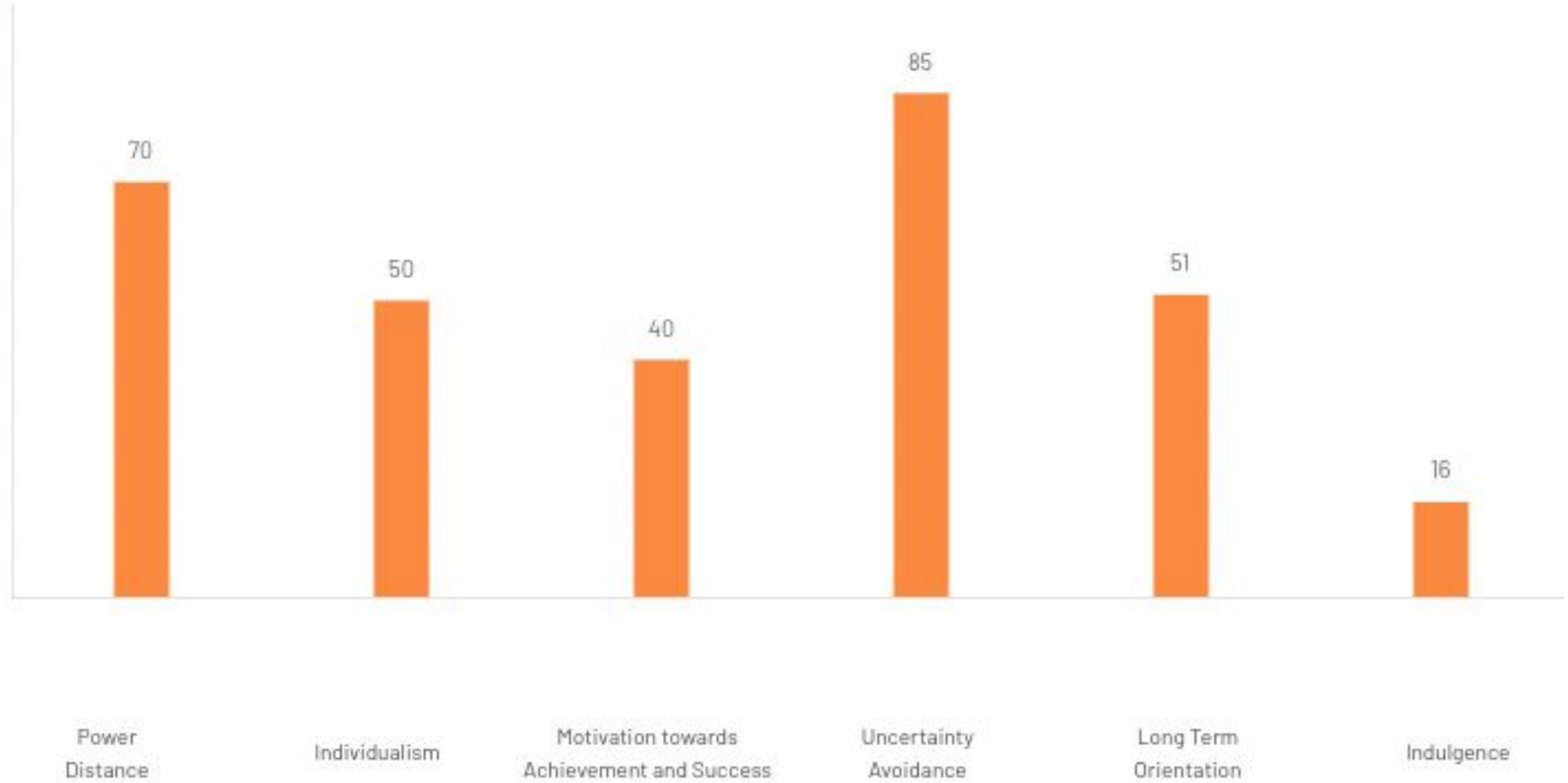
Indulgence vs. Restraint

- Countries which are more indulgent tend to promote:
  - Free gratification of basic and natural human drives
  - Enjoyment of life and having fun
  - A positive attitude and optimism.

- Countries include:
  - Mexico: Enjoyment of life and importance of leisure time.
  - Sweden: High value on freedom of expression and personal happiness.
  - Australia: Positive attitude towards life and indulgence in leisure.

- Countries which are more restraining tend to promote:
  - A suppression and regulation of gratification
  - Strict social norms
  - Pessimism and cynicism

- Countries include
  - Russia: Controlled gratification and strict social norms.
  - China: Regulation of personal desires and restricted indulgence.
  - Egypt: Emphasis on social norms and suppression of immediate gratification.
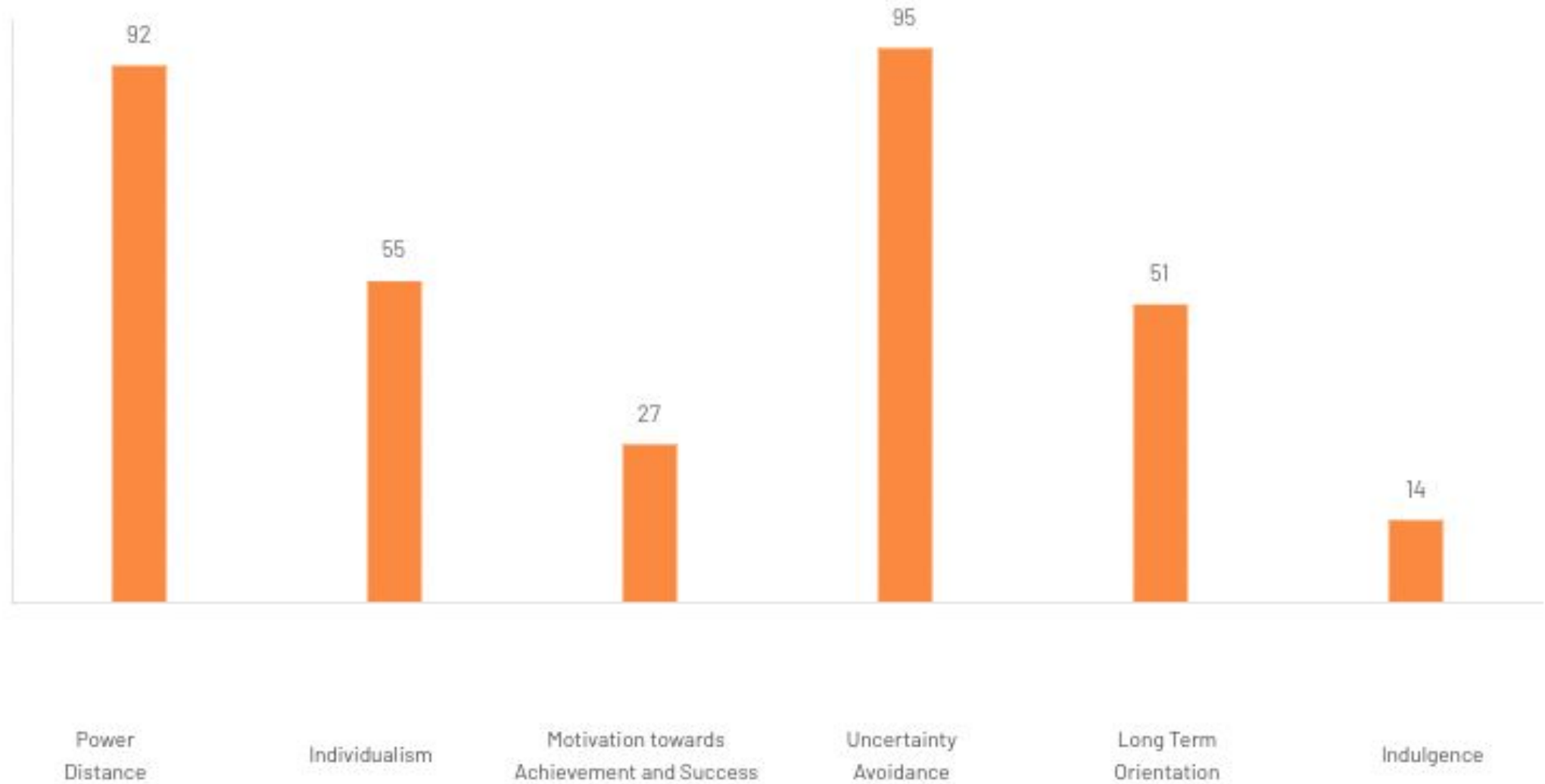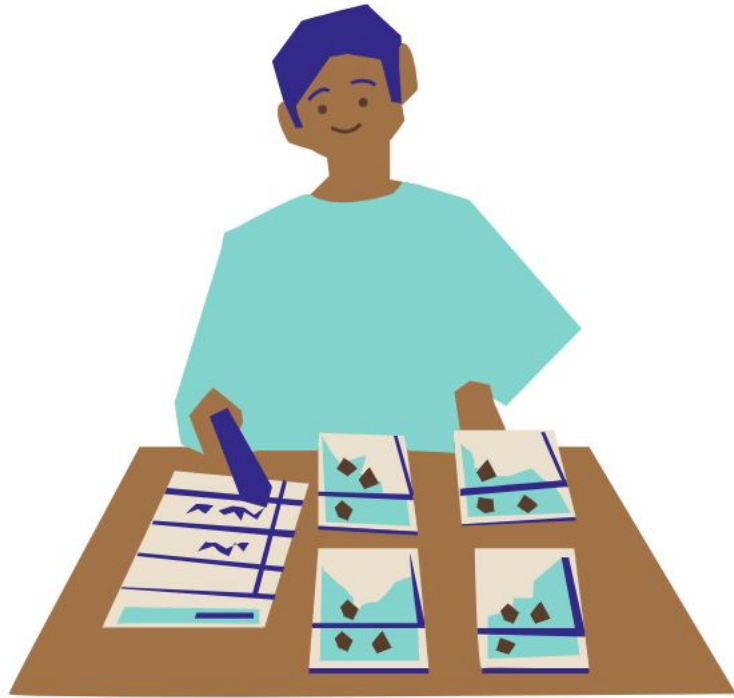
Ireland

Power Distance	Individualism	Motivation towards Achievement and Success	Uncertainty Avoidance	Long Term Orientation	Indulgence
28	58	68	35	51	65

Bulgaria

Ukraine

Power Distance	Individualism	Motivation towards Achievement and Success	Uncertainty Avoidance	Long Term Orientation	Indulgence
92	55	27	95	51	14

Cultural Role-Playing Scenarios

Scenario 1 - Power Distance

You are a youth worker trying to get a migrant from a high power distance culture (such as Bulgaria) to express their opinions in a youth meeting. They seem hesitant to disagree with you or authority figures. You want to encourage more active participation and open discussion.

How do you handle the situation to make the young person feel more comfortable?

Scenario 2 - Individualism vs. Collectivism

You are organising a community project where young migrants and local youth will work together. One of the young migrants is from a collectivist culture (e.g., Ukraine) and prefers working in groups, while another participant from an individualistic culture (e.g., Ireland) prefers working independently. Both are struggling to agree on how to approach the project.

How can you support them in working together effectively?

Scenario 3 - Masculinity vs. Femininity

You are facilitating a discussion about career aspirations with a group of young migrants. A young woman from a more feminine culture (e.g., Sweden) expresses interest in pursuing a career in social work or healthcare, while a young man from a masculine culture (e.g., Ukraine) feels pressured to pursue a career in engineering or business, even though he is interested in the arts.

How do you facilitate a discussion that respects their cultural backgrounds while encouraging each person to pursue their passions?

Scenario 4 - Uncertainty Avoidance

You are planning a youth trip where young migrants will engage in outdoor activities like hiking and camping. One of the young people from a high uncertainty avoidance culture (e.g., Greece) is very anxious about the lack of structure and the unpredictability of the trip. They ask you for a detailed schedule and express concern about the risks involved. How do you ease their concerns and help them feel more comfortable with the trip?

Scenario 5 - Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation

A young migrant from a long-term oriented culture (e.g., China) is very focused on future goals and seems uninterested in short-term activities, such as volunteering or community events, which they see as distractions from their long-term education and career plans. However, you are trying to encourage them to engage in these activities to build their social connections and integrate into the local community. How do you convince them that these short-term activities have value?

Scenario 6 - Indulgence vs. Restraint

You are organising a community event for young migrants and locals that involves games, food, and entertainment. A young migrant from a restraint-oriented culture (e.g., Bulgaria) seems reluctant to join in the fun and expresses discomfort with the idea of "wasting time" on leisure activities. Meanwhile, other participants from indulgent cultures (e.g., Ireland) are fully embracing the event and encouraging everyone to participate. How do you encourage the young person to engage in a way that respects their cultural perspective but helps them integrate socially?

Debriefing Questions:

How did the cultural dimension influence the young person's behavior?

What strategies did you use to address the situation?

How can understanding this dimension help us support young people more effectively in real-life situations?

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