

**PORTUGUESE VS INTERNATIONAL MILLENNIALS: HOW DO
THEIR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES DIFFER**

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Dissertation submitted as partial requirement for the conferral of
Master in International Management

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September 2018

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Acknowledgements

A thank you,

To those who enriched this study: the people who answered the online survey and to Professor Pedro, for the support and learning throughout this journey.

To my parents, my brother, my sister-in-law, and to Carolina.

To all my friends.

To Luís, the latter are always the first! Consider us even!

Resumo

O objetivo desta dissertação é analisar quais as diferenças entre os *Millennials* Portugueses e os Internacionais em relação à utilização de diferentes estilos de gestão de conflitos. A principal questão a que se pretende dar resposta é como é que estes estilos diferem entre pessoas da mesma geração, mas de diferentes nacionalidades.

Partindo-se do princípio de que os estilos de gestão de conflitos se podem alterar devido à nacionalidade e cultura diferentes, esta dissertação terá como finalidade perceber o quão diferentes estes podem ser. De forma a retirarem-se conclusões, estas hipóteses foram testadas numa amostra de 158 portugueses de idades compreendidas entre os 21 e os 35 anos através de um questionário online.

Os resultados obtidos, analisados através do instrumento *The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling*, demonstram que os *Millennials* Portugueses preferem estilos que demonstram preocupação tanto por eles próprios como pelos outros indivíduos. A ordem pela qual os estilos são preferidos pelos *Millennials* Portugueses é a seguinte: *Problem-Solving*, *Compromising*, *Yielding*, *Avoiding*, e por último, *Forcing*.

Estes resultados foram analisados juntamente com os resultados de outros países e tendo em conta a Teoria das Dimensões Culturais de Hofstede.

Keywords: *Millennials*; Gestão de Conflitos; Estilos de Gestão de Conflitos.

Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation is to analyse the main differences between Portuguese and International Millennials in a context of different styles of conflict management. The main question that is being addressed is how these styles differ between people of the same generation, but from different nationalities.

Assuming the principle that styles of conflict management can be changed due to different nationality and culture, this dissertation will have as main goal to realize how different these can be. To draw conclusions, the hypotheses were tested on a sample of 158 Portuguese aged between 21 and 35 years old, through an online survey.

The results obtained, analysed through the instrument The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling, demonstrate that the Portuguese Millennials prefer styles that show concern both for themselves and for other individuals. The order in which styles are preferred by the Portuguese Millennials is the following: Problem-Solving, Compromising, Yielding, Avoiding, and Forcing.

These results were analysed together with the results of other countries and considering Hofstede's Theory of Cultural Dimensions.

Keywords: Millennials; Conflict Management; Styles of Conflict Management.

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1. Introduction

In a world where the Generation Y – The Millennials – has increasingly been a focus of study given the importance of those who are part of this generation have in society, it is interesting and important to further analyse aspects of it. Like other generations, they have unique characteristics that define them. These may be social, political, professional, religious, economic, ideological or even others, and they may differ from the ones that are typically associated with other generations. Given the representability that Millennials have in the workforce today, it is important to study their principles, values, and behaviours, that will have effect in the rest of population.

Like any other of the previous generations, it is difficult to find and decide which years to start and end the time span that define this new generation. For this matter, and according to some other covenants, may then be considered that this generation includes people who were born between 1981 and 1997, both included (Clements, 2016).

There are few people who do not have something to say about this generation, not only for all the studies that have already been done – no mistake should be understood, other generations have also been largely analysed, but also for the role that this generation already represents, and for the impact it has and will expectedly continue to have on society. Among all the characteristics that can define this generation, there are some that are the most outstanding, and which will be mentioned below.

Millennials are ambitious, they want to quickly achieve their goals, and, for this, they seek constant feedback. They are considered the most optimistic generation and the one with the highest degree of studies. Their confidence is another point that is constantly mentioned to characterize them, given their close relationship with their parents. This seems to be because they have always been supported by them and they have always been told that they would achieve everything they wanted to achieve.

In terms of work, they are considered team oriented and are not expected to seek an organization to work in the long run. Quite the opposite: what is expected is that Millennials always look for the best place to be and, for that, they are willing to change jobs often. In fact, they tend not to

be the people who have the same job, at the same place, for all their life, like it might happened in their parents' generation.

The way Millennials look to conflict management may also differ from other generations, but these differences may not only occur between people from Generation Y and Generation X, but between people within the same generation. The way people react to conflict, and the styles they use, or prefer, to manage the conflicts, can differ not only because of generation gaps, but also because of different personalities and personal characteristics people have.

With respect to conflict management styles, and when conflict is defined as a phenomenon associated with competitive intentions, can be considered the following: Avoiding, Yielding, Compromising, Forcing, and Problem-Solving. These are defined by the position each person takes when confronted by a situation in which he/she has to assess his position in satisfying his/her concerns and those of other parts involved.

Given the results of the little research already done on the Millennials' preferred conflict management styles, which also show that they can change very easily, what is intended in this dissertation is to perceive, within the sample collected if there is a type of style that stands out in relation to the rest, and if it changes between Portuguese and other nationalities. This issue is considered relevant because at the moment it is one of the major topics discussed by Human Resources professionals, managers, and business owners.

Following up on the themes discussed above, and already studied by several authors, it becomes interesting to follow up the combination of these two main themes: understand what the preferred conflict management styles of Portuguese Millennials are and if, and how, they differ from foreign Millennials. This study is divided into several objectives:

- to identify the preferred styles of Portuguese Millennials concerning conflict management;
- to see if the styles are in accordance with the characteristics that often tend to define this generation;
- to identify the preferred styles of conflict management of International Millennials;
- to analyse if the styles most chosen by each of these groups are the same, if they differ, and why.

The aim of this dissertation is to give an answer to the question: “Are the styles of conflict management different between Portuguese and International Millennials?”.

Given the research, the expected type of style does not differ between Millennials, if their cultures are similar, but should differ if their cultures are very different (Clements, 2016).

- Hypothesis 1: Same styles of conflict management if similar culture;
- Hypothesis 2: Different styles of conflict management if different cultures.

The study will first be initiated with a theoretical analysis to studies developed about Millennials generation and conflict management. The basis of work will be studies already made in Portugal and abroad.

The methodology used will be presented explaining the study that was done, which variables were studied, and which instruments were chosen to analyse the results of the online survey.

The results of the survey will be the following step in this dissertation, already showing some of the main ideas that can be drawn from the analysis to the study done.

The discussion of the results comparing them, with others already existing will be one of the last topics, also mentioning the limitations that exist in the thesis.

To conclude, there will be an overview of the most important points to retain from all that was approached.

2. Literature Review

The previous chapter has started with what this dissertation is intended to be: a study in which the focus generation is the Millennial Generation. Regarding them, the intention is demystifying some stereotypes and to better study the relationship they have with conflict: how they act in situations of conflict and whether these actions vary in the face of greater proximity to different cultures or not.

The type of literature used to better initiate this analysis is quite varied, looking at the perspectives of many authors. It ends up being based on articles that are often not very recent, which leads us to conclude that there is a lack of more articles on this topic.

One of the first points that we can address is that there is a lot of information about this generation, but a large part of it lacks scientific support, sometimes rendering it unreliable.

It is intended that this literary review address all the topics that are relevant to this study, especially topics on Millennials and types of conflict management:

- What are the main characteristics of this generation?
- What kind of studies / analyses have already been done to understand how people from this generation act when facing conflict?
- Do Millennials from different countries act differently regarding the conflict management styles they prefer?
- Which kind of conflict management styles really exist? How are they different from each other?

These are the kind of questions that are asked to answer, not only in this chapter of literary review, but also in the study that will be analysed in the next chapters.

When starting this research, it is possible to realize that there is still a great lack of studies to perceive this generation, that is in the "mouth of the world".

2.1. The Millennial Generation

The Millennial Generation, as any other is not easy to define, not just concerning its major details and characteristics, but also the range of years that define it.

Different authors defend and consider different age limits to be part of this generation, because it is always hard to say why a person born in 1980 belongs to a generation different from someone who was born in 1981.

For example, Howe and Strauss (2007) define that the years range is for people born between 1982 and 2005, while for the Pew Research Center (2010) is 1981-1997 and in the Portuguese Study “All about Geração Millennium: o Maior Estudo jamais feito em Portugal” is from 1980-2000.

Since there is no way to define an accurate time and with which all agree, and according to some covenants, for this thesis will be considered Millennials all those who were born between the years of 1981 and 1997 (both included), to agree with the range chosen by Alyssa Clements in her thesis and so that the results of both theses can be better compared (Clements, 2016; McGrath, n.d.).

Also known as Generation Y, the Net Generation, and the Nexus Generation, the Millennial Generation is the first to reach adult status in the new millennium, that being a major contribute to its denomination. Some authors also consider it The Generation Next, this being related to the need of anticipating, preparing and embracing what comes ahead, what will come next. (Clements, 2016).

Characterized by its “can-do attitude”, Millennials are known as optimistic, ambitious, team-oriented, and confident about their future (Howe & Strauss, 2007). This confidence tends to relate to great ambitions, often seen in this generation. But, sometimes, Millennials have the ambitions but few or non-realistic means to achieve them. For example, according to Sarah Keeling (2003), 20-50% of students of this generation do not really know what a degree of education they want to have or in which job they see themselves.

Born at a time of many changes, this generation is characterized by its exposure to varied cultures and rapid technological changes, or, in fact, rapid changes across multiple areas thus

being known by their kind of dependence on technologies, by their connections all over the world, much faster and efficiently than the previous generation, and by the dominance of the internet and its contents. (Howe & Strauss, 2007; Ng, Schweitzer & Lyons, 2010; McGrath, n.d.; Keeling, 2003).

In an increasingly intercultural world people are expected to have more similar reactions, at least within similar cultures, because, in fairness, we cannot compare reactions between completely different cultures (Clements, 2016). And this is just one of the results the study presented in this thesis aspire to achieve: to see if the fact that Millennials are a more intercultural generation, with access to more information, makes them, or not, people with a more similar look at certain situations, especially situations of conflict.

In terms of the work-related life, their profile as workers is defined by some main traits: they are, regularly, good people to work with, known for their strong desire for professional growth and for their impatience to succeed. This often leads them to be a more active member of a team, always searching for new projects, mainly team-oriented. Although this can benefit organizations where they work, by creating and developing much more work and innovative ideas, this also forces companies and organizations to adapt to this type of workers (Clements, 2016; Howe & Strauss, 2007; Ng, Schweitzer & Lyons, 2010; Keeling, 2003; Kandell, 2015; Doyoe & Fox, n.d.).

Maybe because of their higher formation/education, they are much more ambitious, when compared to previous generations, and they tend to set high goals, working for them, but expecting something in exchange, whether it is a promotion, a pay raise or more benefits in the work place, as recognition for their hard work. This is inevitably linked with their constant look for feedback. As they tend to be organized, hard-workers and ambitious, they want recognition and, preferably, in a hierarchy well established, that they can respect and look up to. So, although they were born and passed through a financial crisis, thus being vulnerable, they are very optimistic and just seek for a clear line of supervision (Clements, 2016; Howe & Strauss, 2007; Ng, Schweitzer & Lyons, 2010; Keeling, 2003; Kandell, 2015).

Although most of these characteristics are seen as good, they can create some imbalances within the work-place: their tendency to phone-text, instead of talking, their seek of constant learn and

approval may create some generational conflicts (Johnstone, 2001; Pew Research Center, 2010; Doyoe & Fox, n.d.).

Since they tend to grow up as protected children and close to their parents, one of the priorities of this generation is to be a good parent. They also seek for a successful marriage. Thanks to their multitasking power and their flexibility in terms of schedule, they want to have a work-life balanced work place, that allows them to succeed on the most variables possible of their life (Pew Research Center, 2010).

There have been describe the main characteristics that make the Millennials "unique": the use and dominance of technologies, the culture - music and pop culture -, the liberal thinking and tolerance, the way they dress, the clearer thoughts about religion, politics and society and an overall thought that they are smarter, maybe because of fast-learning and higher education (Pew Research Center, 2010).

The tolerance, for example regarding immigrants, races and ethnicities, is definitely a major tag that Millennials have (Pew Research Center, 2010).

Regarding all this, one can say that most of the generation's people share the same characteristics. As in any other, there are some disagreements regarding lifestyle, opinion and work overview. But, contributing to the idea of union amongst Millennials, these disparities are not radical, but rather modest, when compared to other generations (Pew Research Center, 2010).

2.2.The Portuguese Millennial Generation

Since this study intends to focus on the Portuguese Millennials, it is important to understand if this group is known for the same characteristics as the Millennial Generation in general.

For a better understanding of the Portuguese Millennial Generation, the "All About Generation Millennium" study conducted by the Consultants MultiDados and CH Business Consulting in 2017 served as a base. This study is based on the comparison of Millennials responses from Portugal, with Millennials from Spain, France, England and the United States of America (U.S.A.).

It is important to note that in this study all individuals born between 1980 and 2000 were considered part of the Millennial Generation. In this way, the generation of the new millennium already represents about 19.2% of the total Portuguese population.

Following Howe and Strauss's line of thinking (2007), which says that to understand a generation it is necessary to understand what events have marked them while growing up, it becomes of major importance to mention the main events that occurred in Portugal during the growth of this generation:

- Expo 98
- Fast urbanization of Portugal (Polis Program)
- Football Eurocup 2004
- Troika in Portugal after a request for foreign aid
- Witness a great wave of emigration of the own generation

To serve as an example when questioned about the possibility of working remotely, 2 out of 3 demonstrate preference in this situation. This result supports the fact that this generation is considered a native technology.

To realize if this group of individuals is as confident as studies about this generation say, Portuguese Millennials were asked questions such as "Do you think you will achieve greater professional success than your father / mother?" (Yes=79%), "Do you think you will live until you are older than your parents?" (Yes=71,6%), "Do you think that in social terms it is possible to have less inequality?" (Yes=77,3%) and "Do you think that the World will find an

understanding for the great conflicts (e.g. terrorism, war, extremism, etc.)?" (Yes=66,8%). The "yes" answer prevailed on all issues, demonstrating that Portuguese Millennials can be considered individuals with high levels of confidence, not only in individual terms but also in collective as well.

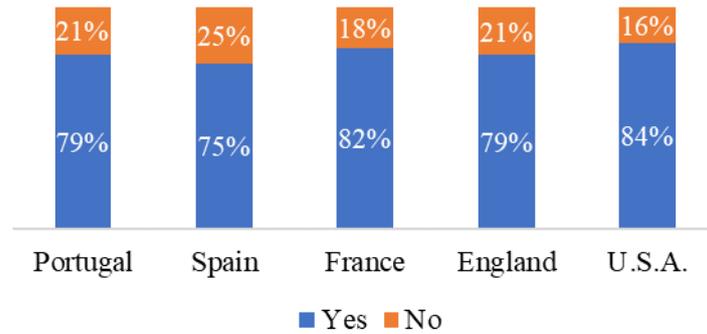


Figure 1: Do you think you will achieve greater professional success than your father / mother?

From a financial perspective, the scenario is as follows: about 90% of the Portuguese sample says they usually save money. The answers to the question "Do you expect to increase your income (salary) significantly in the next 5 years?" demonstrates the optimism that is present in this generation, with 83.4% of Portuguese Millennials saying yes.

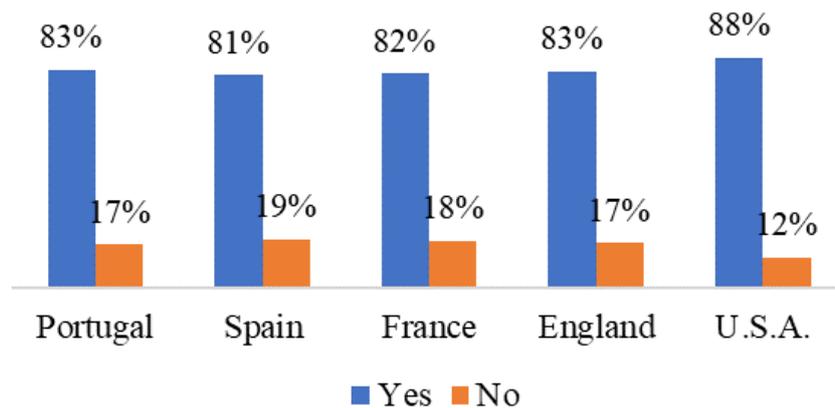


Figure 2: Do you expect to increase your income (salary) significantly in the next 5 years?

Something also interesting, and that would be of interest to study soon, is the position of Millennials in relation to bank loans. 55.5% of Portuguese respondents stated that they did not intend to establish responsibilities on the form of bank loans.

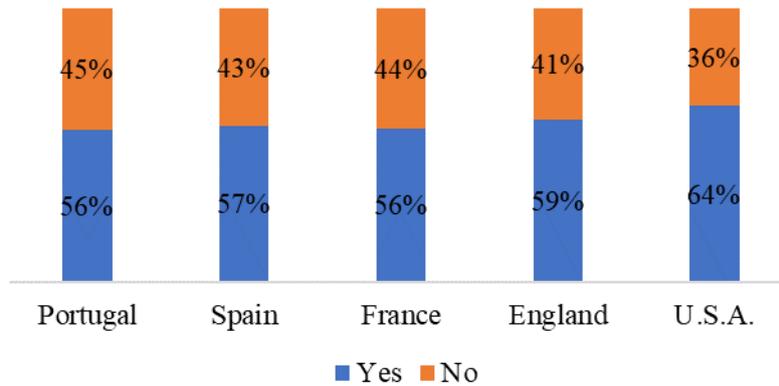


Figure 3: Do you consider applying for a bank loan?

Regarding lifestyle, Portuguese Millennials are the ones that most want to own a home (41%), having a car continues to be important for this generation, following the path of previous generations. In line with the responses of the remaining Millennials from the other countries that were part of this study, over 60% intend to get married and more than 80% stated that they want to have children. The answer to the question "Would you be willing to give up your working life for a family reason?", reveals that family is an important concept for this generation - about 77% of the Portuguese said yes, which, in addition to demonstrating that they want to take care of their families, shows that even at an age when larger issues related to work may arise, the family weighs heavily.

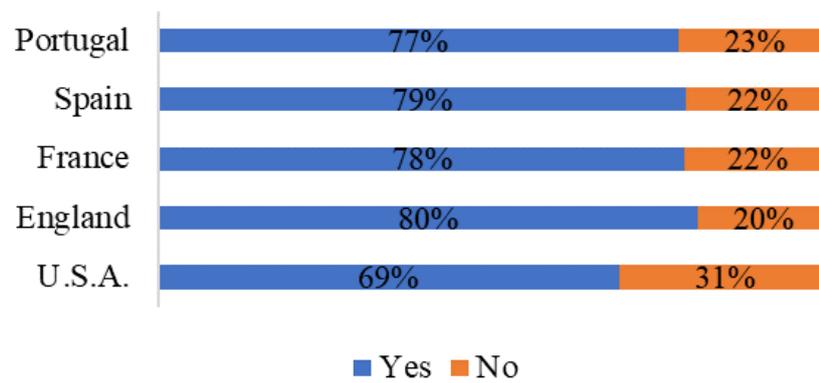


Figure 4: Would you be willing to give up your working life for a family reason?

In the annexes, the rest of the results for each question mentioned above can be found in figures 11 to 17.

2.3. Conflict Management Styles

The major aim of this thesis is to study if there are any differences between the conflict management styles preferred by Portuguese and International Millennials. And this happens because we live in an era of globalization, where multiculturalism is almost always present, and attention must be paid to the conflicts that may arise.

Before approaching the various types / styles of conflict management it is important to explain some concepts that are inherent to this topic. So, for this, it becomes necessary to answer: what is conflict?

- **Conflict:** although there is no accurate definition of conflict, due to its many forms, there can be an organized idea of conflict, so it will be easier to understand, analyse and solve. Therefore, conflict can be defined by the elements it includes: it is a rather important disagreement, opposition or incompatibility of ideas and forms of being, that often places the antagonistic parties front-to-front, in a competitive way. Although most of the time being addressed by its negative side, the conflict can also have a positive side. There are four types of conflict: **interpersonal** (which is between two people), **intrapersonal** (within a person – it is considered as a psychological conflict since it happens in the individuals' mind), **intragroup** (which occurs between people that are part of the same team) and **intergroup** (that occurs between different teams in the same organization).¹

And, in the other hand, it is necessary to understand and clarify: what is conflict management?

- **Conflict management:** is defined by how people involved in conflict situations act, and how people choose to manage conflict varies from people to people and can often depend on the environment in which they are inserted, their education, their sensitivity, their generation, among many other factors.

Since conflict presupposes two parties, Pruitt and Rubin (1986) developed the Dual Concern Theory, which measures the style of conflict management chosen through two dimensions: the

¹ Source: <http://www.typesofconflict.org/>

concern for self, and the concern for others. These two dimensions are measure from low to high.

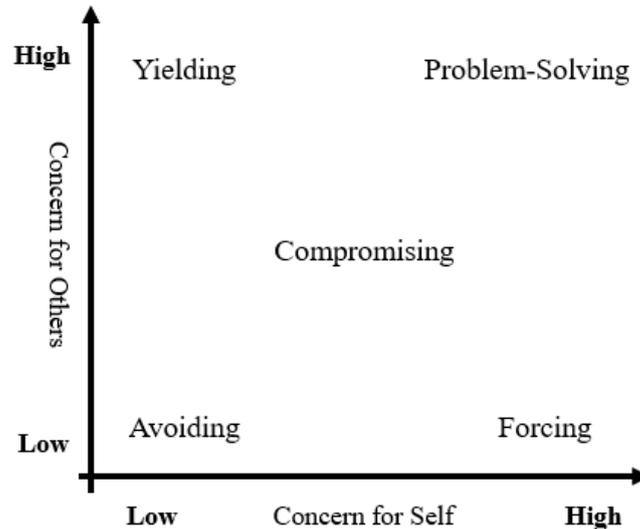


Figure 5: Conflict Management Styles as Functions of Dual Concern Theory

As the figure above shows, depending on the degree of concern for self and for others, there are five styles of conflict management:

- **Forcing:** characterized by high concern for self and low for others. People who use this style want to focus on their own side, without considering the other party. This style should be used when speed is needed to reach a decision or if the other party wins has negative harm to the person concerned. And it should not be used in cases when the topic is complicated or is not important to the party.
- **Avoiding:** low concern for self and for others. Just as the word itself indicates, people who use it do not want to face or solve the conflict, thinking that best way is to ignore it. Situations in which it should be used: the topic is not important or when it is necessary to reflect on the subject. It should no be used if it important to the person concern or / and if immediate response is required.
- **Compromising:** it is the middle-term. People want to reach an end that is acceptable for both sides, without one side abdicating more than the other. This style is well accepted

is situations where the objective of one party is mutually exclusive from the one of the other party or if other styles where the high concern for self cannot be reached. It is not well accepted in situations where the subject is important and there is the need of a problem-solving approach.

- **Yielding:** the opposite of forcing, low concern for self and high concern for others. In these cases, one's opinion / position is set aside for the sake of the other party. This style should be used when the subject is more significant for the other party or when you want to keep a good relationship with the other party.
- **Problem-Solving:** high concern for self and for others. Those who use this type of style intend to reach for a solution that considers both their own and the other's best interests, achieving the best result for each side. This style should be used when an important subject is being addressed or when is the need of the two parties. Problem-Solving should not be used in cases when there is a rush to get to a result.

2.4. Conflict Management Styles in Millennials

It is of great importance if there is a favourite style to manage conflict. So, to be able to see if there is a style of conflict management preferred by the Millennials, and if there is, if it differs between Portuguese and foreign, some studies that tried to understand this issue have been part of this literature review.

The results of the research done by Alyssa Clements (2016) show that the U.S.A. Millennials prefer styles that reflect concern for self. The conflict management style with higher score was Forcing, followed by Avoiding. The style with lower score was Problem-Solving.

The results for the International Millennials considered in this study were similar, with Forcing and Avoiding being the preferred and Compromising being the one with lower score. The method used to score was the DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling.

The study Mukundan, Dhanya, and Saraswathamma (2013) used the Conflict Resolution Inventory (CRI) that measures the following five dimensions: Confrontation (Forcing in Dual Concern Theory), Compromise (Compromising in Dual Concern Theory), Negotiation (Problem-Solving in Dual Concern Theory), Withdrawal (Avoiding in Dual Concern Theory) and Resignation (Yielding in Dual Concern Theory). Both Resignation and Withdrawal are styles related with avoidance mode, while the other three styles are related to approach mode. The Millennials considered in this study were from the city of Cochin, India. The styles with higher score were Negotiation and Compromise and the one with lower score was Confrontation.

Gupta, Bhattacharya, Neelam, and Kunte (2016) studied the preferred conflict management styles in the three generations of the Indian workforce: Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennials. There were five dimensions considered in this study: Confrontation, Compromise, Negotiation, Withdrawal, and Resignation. The results showed that there were differences between the three generations. For Millennials, the most and less preferred styles were Withdrawing and Confrontation, respectively.

Analysing the results of the three studies, two regarding population of India and the other population in the U.S.A., it can be concluded that although there are some points in common-ground, there is not a style of conflict management clearly preferred by Generation Y.

Even when comparing the two studies concerning the Indian population, although they have some results in common, it cannot be concluded that the preferred styles are the same within the same generation. Thus, it will be interesting to study the styles preferred by part of some Portuguese Millennials, the population in study of this thesis, so that it can be used as a comparison for future studies.

Since we are analysing conflict management in Generation Y, we can refer to Lori Sakira Jackson's (2014) study - *Age Is More Than Just a Number: Generational Identities and the Conflict Dynamic Profile*, whose main objective was to understand the conflict triggers for each of the following generations: Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials. For this the author used the tool Conflict Dynamic Profile (CDP).

- **Conflict Dynamic Profile:** is a multidimensional tool that within the nine considered hot buttons (which are actions / behaviours) identifies which are more likely to trigger conflicts. The nine hot buttons are the following: Unappreciative, Self-Centered, Unreliable, Hostile, Aloof, Micro-Managing, Abrasive, Over-Analytical and Untrustworthy.

The result that came out of this study was that the top three for Millennial Generation (and that was the same for the remaining generations) is: Unreliable, Untrustworthy and Hostile. These three hot buttons are described as: “Unreliable – those who are unreliable, miss deadlines, and cannot be counted on; Untrustworthy – those who exploit others, take undeserved credit, or cannot be trusted; Hostile – those who lose their tempers, become angry, or yell at others” (Jackson, 2014).

2.5.Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

In the introduction, it was mentioned as a hypothesis that culture may have an impact on the answer to the main question in this dissertation: “Are the styles of conflict management different between Portuguese Millennials and International Millennials?”.

The hypothesis mentioned indicated that the answer would be “No” - in the case of comparing countries with similar cultures, and it would be “Yes” - if the comparison were between countries with cultures with many differences.

Due to the hypothesis mentioned above, a research was done on the Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions Theory, which is a framework that allows the comparison of the culture between countries.

This model uses six dimensions to characterize/differentiate the cultures of the countries:

- **Power Distance Index:** this dimension represents the level of inequality in the societies, it is defined from Small Power Distance (SPD) to Large Power Distance (LPD). Countries that are most likely to be SPD: Germanic and English-speaking Western countries; East Europe, Latin countries, Asia and Africa are more related to LPD.
- **Individualism vs. Collectivism:** in this case, societies are characterized as being Individualistic (people look for themselves and their closest family) or Collectivistic (people are integrated since ever in groups). Individualism is more related to Western countries, and collectivism in less developed and eastern countries.
- **Masculinity vs. Femininity:** this dimension analyses whether a culture values is more characterized as Masculine or Feminine. Masculinity is more likely to be identified in countries such as German-speaking countries, Japan and some Latin countries, while Femininity is more likely to be associated with the following countries: Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway.
- **Uncertainty Avoidance Index:** this index is defined by the tolerance that people have in uncertain situations. It classifies in Weak or Strong, depending on whether societies deal well with ambiguous situations.

China, English-speaking and Nordic countries tend to have a weak uncertainty avoidance index, while in countries of East and Central Europe, Latin countries and Japan the tendency is to have high uncertainty avoidance index.

- **Long-term Orientation vs. Short-term Orientation:** this dimension was not defined by Hofstede, but he accepted and added to his model. Hofstede Model was initially only composed by four dimensions.

The Long-term vs Short-term Orientation dimension aim is to demonstrate how connected societies are to the past (Short-term Orientation) or to the future (Long-term Orientation). Long-term Orientation – countries like East Asian, Eastern and Central Europe; Short-term Orientation – Australia, U.S.A., Africa and Muslim countries.

- **Indulgence vs. Restraint:** the last dimension added to the model. This dimension is a measure of happiness, where Indulgence represents the part of society that gives high importance to leisure and Restraint represents the other part, for which leisure has little relevance.

Examples of indulgent countries: American countries (except Central), Western Europe;
Restraint cultures: Asia, Eastern Europe and Muslim countries.

In the annexes, tables 1 to 6, from Hofstede (2011) explain better how each dimension is characterized.

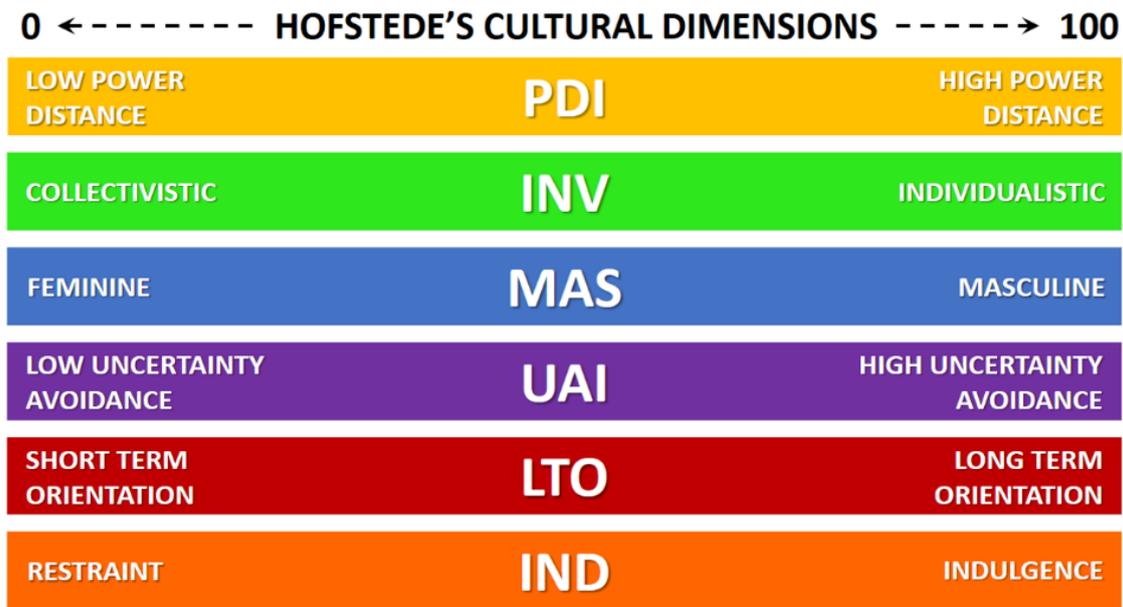


Figure 6: Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Framework²

² Source: <https://www.business-to-you.com/hofstedes-cultural-dimensions/>

2.6. Relationship between Cultural Dimensions and Conflict Management Styles

“The Role of Culture and Personality in Choice of Conflict Management Styles” by Ritu Kaushal and Catherine T. Kwantes (2006) is a research that was made in order to know if culture may impact on the preferred conflict management styles.

Previous studies (Blake and Mouton, 1964 and Rahim, 1992) already showed that the relationship between culture and styles of conflict management can be real. The cultures dimensions that can be linked to the choice of conflict management styles are Individualism vs. Collectivism and Power Distance Index. But it is not only the cultural dimensions that can be related to the choice of how to deal with conflict, the personality of each individual can also be. (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006).

From past studies (Rahim, 1992), it is known that if the goal of an individual is personal, it is most likely that in situations of conflict use styles such as Forcing (High Concern for Self and Low Concern for Others) or Yielding (Low Concern for Self and High Concern for Others). If the person's goal is in a group vision, styles such as Problem-Solving (High Concern for Self and for Others) and Avoiding (Low Concern for Self and for Others) are the most likely to be chosen by the individual.

These conclusions are not so linear since there are countries / cultures that are not just simply individualists or collectivists given the existence in parallel with the Power Distance dimension. There are cultures that can be:

- Vertical Collectivism – is a collective society that has members with different status;
- Horizontal Collectivism – is a collective society but that believes in the independence of each of the individuals that compose it;
- Vertical Individualism – is a society aligned in the individual but that accepts that there are inequalities between people;
- Horizontal Individualism - individualist society in which all members have the same conditions / status.

In any case, it must bear in mind that “The relationship between conflict and power distance is not as clear, although research has demonstrate that collectivistic cultures tend to emphasize

hierarchy (high power distance) more so than individualistic cultures, which tend to place less of an emphasis on hierarchy.” (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006).

The hypotheses tested by Kaushal & Kwantes (2006) were also made in the sense of perceiving which styles of conflict management are most likely to be associated with each of these new dimensions:

- H1A: Vertical Collectivism more likely to be associated with styles as Forcing and Avoiding;
- H1D: Horizontal Collectivism related to styles as Avoiding and Yielding;
- H1B: Vertical Individualism more likely to be associated to styles as Forcing and Avoiding;
- H1C: Horizontal Individualism related to styles as Problem-Solving and Yielding.

And the results of the study were the following:

- Forcing had a positive correlation with vertical dimensions (both of them) – the hypotheses were correct;
- Avoiding was also positively correlated to both vertical dimensions – meaning that is not positively correlated with Horizontal Collectivism and Horizontal Individualism;
- Yielding had a positive correlation with Vertical Collectivism.

They concluded with the following statement:

“Overall, it seems that the concern for self-concern for others dimension overlaps with the individualism-collectivism dimension, and that the power dimension that is introduced through the vertical and horizontal dimensions are interacting with the IC distinction in determining a person’s choice of conflict resolution strategy.” (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006)

3. Method

The literature review serves as a basis for the study that is intended to be done, but also as a point of comparison for the results that came out of the online survey that was carried out.

Through the various articles and studies read, it was possible to perceive the results to which other authors have arrived. Among many other points concerning the generation that matters most to study at this time, due to the importance that it already has and will have in the next years, it was possible to understand what the preferred styles of U.S.A. Millennials' and foreigners are, and what is expected to be the Millennials' attitude, in view of their characteristics.

The online survey was elaborated through the google forms platform and was shared through various social networks, to reach the target audience. The purpose of this survey was to answer one of the key questions of this thesis “What are the preferred conflict management styles of the Portuguese Millennials?”. To answer this question, validated questions were asked to the participants, using the DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling was used to obtain results from the sample analysed.

In the annexes, figures 18 to 26 show the online survey.

3.1.Participants

The survey began accepting responses on July 11th, 2018 until August 6th, 2018. There was a total of 173 answers, but the final valid sample was of 158 people (n=158), because there were answers which did not correspond to the age range required (people born between 1981 and 1997) and/or were not Portuguese.

Given that the survey was not segmented and was shared through social networks, there was an age segment with higher representation (78% of the respondents were between the ages of 23 and 28 years). The overall average age was 26 years old (Figure 7).

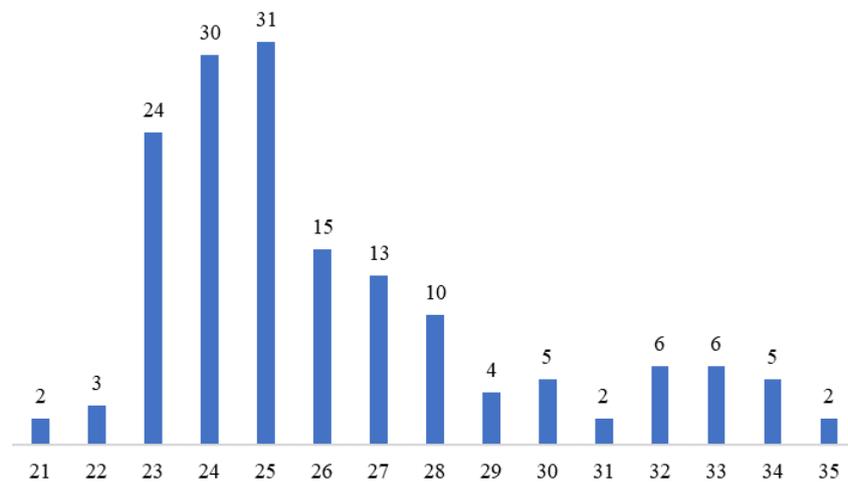


Figure 7: What is your age?

65% of the sample has a master’s degree, 25% has a bachelor, 9% is graduated from high school, 1 person has a doctoral program and the remain 2 people answered “Other” (Figure 8).

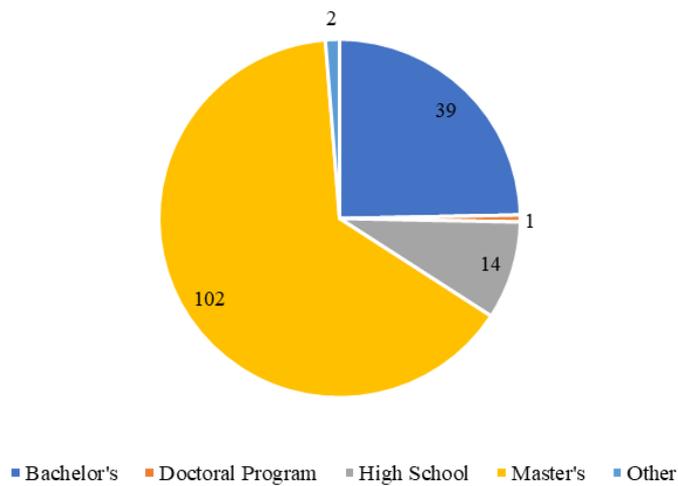


Figure 8: What degree of Education do you have?

85% of the sample are workers, 1% unemployed, and 15% students (Figure 27).

Among the 158 people considered as valid, 148 (94%) answered yes to the question "Do you work/study or have worked/studied with people from other nationalities?" (Figure 9).

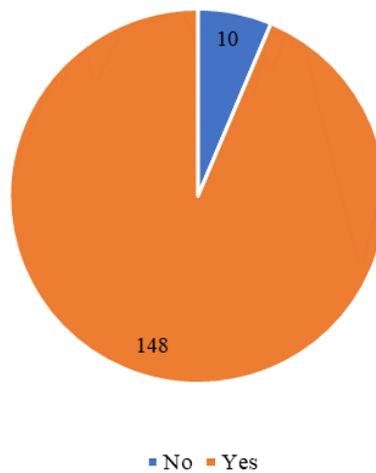


Figure 9: Do you work/study or have worked/studied with people from other nationalities?

Also, of the entire sample 83 people (53%) do not live or lived outside of Portugal (Figure 28).

3.2. Procedures

As previously mentioned, the hypotheses were tested through an online survey. This survey was done on the google forms platform and was released by the researcher via the most used social by the generation under study (Facebook and Instagram). The number of responses were 173, but only 158 were validated at the end.

Through publications, the researcher asked to virtual friends and followers who were part of the age range considered (people born between 1981 and 1997) to respond to the rapid survey that is part of a study for a thesis on the Millennials and styles of conflict management.

All questions were mandatory, all of which were open-ended, except for the questions regarding the DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling, which were answered in a 5-point Likert scale.

3.3. Measures

The survey was made up of six different demographic variables: age, nationality, education, professional occupation, if already studied/worked with foreign people and if they already lived outside Portugal.

The first two variables were to select whether people were, or not, part of the sample that was intended. The remained were chosen because it is believed that in one way or another, they are variables that can influence the way people act, and in this case how they act in the face of conflicts.

3.3.1. The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling

As previously mentioned, to measure the styles of conflict management, the instrument used was the DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling. This instrument measures which are the preferred styles of conflict management (among the five possible – yielding, forcing, Problem-Solving, compromising, and avoiding) of each person, by scoring each one of them. The score is obtained by answering 20 questions, stating in each which answer best reflects the participant’s position. (1- not at all, 2- seldom, 3-sometimes, 4-often, 5 almost always).

The calculation of the results was made using the following score:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|---|---------------------|---|----------------------|---|----------------------|---|-------|
| Yielding | score of question 1 | + | score of question 6 | + | score of question 11 | + | score of question 16 | = | _____ |
| | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| Compromising | score of question 2 | + | score of question 7 | + | score of question 12 | + | score of question 17 | = | _____ |
| | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| Forcing | score of question 3 | + | score of question 8 | + | score of question 13 | + | score of question 18 | = | _____ |
| | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| Problem-Solving | score of question 4 | + | score of question 7 | + | score of question 14 | + | score of question 19 | = | _____ |
| | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| Avoiding | score of question 5 | + | score of question 8 | + | score of question 15 | + | score of question 20 | = | _____ |
| | | | | | | | | | 4 |

Figure 10: Calculations to get the score for each style

3.4. Data Analysis

The objective of this survey is to interpret which are the preferred and less preferred styles of conflict management of each person, and then compare with the other results from other studies regarding other countries, and, therefore, other populations.

Since there were some qualitative data collected as age, education and professional occupation, the interpretation of the results will also focus, if they are different, in which are the most predominant styles within each group selected.

In the next section, all the data from the survey will be analysed in order to be possible to give response to the questions already mentioned as being the main goals of the study and of this dissertation.

4. Results

The main goal of this thesis, as mentioned before is to give answer to the question “Portuguese vs International Millennials: How do their Conflict Management Styles Differ?”. The form chosen by the author to analyse whether differences really stand out, was through the spreading of an online survey to perceive what and how the conflict management styles of the Portuguese are distributed. The results of this survey will be confronted with the results of the thesis’ author Alyssa Clements (2016), who analysed, through the same instrument (the DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling), the preferred styles of students and some foreigners.

The analysis was done for the whole sample, without any distinctions and for subgroups that were considered important by the researcher. This division does not allow comparing the results with those of Alyssa's thesis, but will be a good starting point for other studies done taking Millennials into account.

The results presented were calculated using the mean and also the standard deviation, calculated as follows:

- Mean: $\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x_i}{n}$
- Standard Deviation: $\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x-\bar{x})}{n-1}}$

4.1. Results of The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling

Analysing all the sample, Problem-Solving (1st) and Compromising (2nd) appeared as the two conflict styles with highest mean score, while Yielding (3rd), Avoiding (4th) and Forcing (5th) were the ones with lowest mean score, as can be showed in the table below.

| All responses (N=158) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|-----------------------|----------|--------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | 3,1 | 3,8 | 2,9 | 4,0 | 2,9 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,5 | 0,6 | 0,7 | 0,6 | 0,8 |

Table 7: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling for the All Sample

4.1.1. Students vs. Workers

Beginning to enter subgroup analyses, the first is to separate students and workers to see if this difference also changes their favourite conflict management styles. Although the students' sample is relatively small the answers show that this change from student to worker is not relevant. Problem-Solving and Compromising continue as the preferred styles - with an increase in the mean score of Problem-Solving for workers (the score of Compromising stays the same for both groups). Another changes that can be noticed is the score of Forcing getting higher for the workers, when compared to students; the scores of Yielding and Avoiding are lower for workers.

| Students (N=23) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|--------------------|----------|--------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | 3,2 | 3,8 | 2,7 | 3,9 | 3,0 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,6 | 0,7 | 0,8 | 0,6 | 0,8 |

| Workers (N=134) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|--------------------|----------|--------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | 3,1 | 3,8 | 2,9 | 4,1 | 2,9 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,5 | 0,6 | 0,7 | 0,6 | 0,8 |

Table 8: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling for Students and Workers

4.1.2. People who have studied / lived with foreign people vs. people who did not

One of the other important comparisons to make is whether the fact that they have already worked/studied with people of other nationalities impacts their actions in conflict management.

| Did study/live with foreign people (N=148) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Mean | 3,1 | 3,8 | 2,9 | 4,0 | 2,9 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,5 | 0,6 | 0,7 | 0,6 | 0,7 |

| Did not study/live with foreign people (N=10) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Mean | 3,0 | 3,7 | 2,9 | 4,2 | 3,4 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,7 | 0,7 | 0,9 | 0,6 | 0,7 |

Table 9: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling for People who (not) study/live with foreign people

It is important to emphasize that the sample that responded that had never worked/studied (table 5) with people of other nationalities is very small and it is not statistically correct to take their conclusions from their answers.

Despite this, the results are very similar between the two subgroups when analysing which the preferred styles are: Problem-Solving (with a lower average score for those who did not study / lived with foreign people comparing with the others) and Compromising (higher score for those who study /lived with foreign people).

The differences appear in the remaining styles: while for people who did study/live with foreign people the styles with lowest mean score are Yielding, Avoiding, and Forcing (by this order), for people that did not had this experience, the order is in fact a bit different: Avoiding, Yielding, and Forcing.

4.1.3. People who live / have lived outside of Portugal vs. people who did not

Whether or not they lived in other countries than Portugal is also one of the issues that seems relevant when analysing the survey, to understand if the impact of dealing with other cultures changes the way people look at conflict management.

| Live/had live outside in foreign country (N=75) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|---|----------|--------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | 3,1 | 3,8 | 3,0 | 4,0 | 2,9 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,5 | 0,5 | 0,7 | 0,5 | 0,8 |

| Did not Live/had not live outside in foreign country (N=83) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|---|----------|--------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | 3,1 | 3,8 | 2,8 | 4,0 | 3,0 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,6 | 0,6 | 0,8 | 0,6 | 0,8 |

Table 10: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling for People who (not) live/lived outside in foreign country

As demonstrated in the tables above, the only difference is between the two least score styles, that in the case of people that have lived abroad Portugal are Forcing (4th) and Avoiding (5th) and in the case of people that did not live outside Portugal are Avoiding (4th) and Forcing (5th). Even the scores, in the comparison of these two groups, only change in these last styles.

4.1.4. Different age ranges

The last subgroups that were analysed were age-related. The total millennial sample was divided by the following three subgroups: born between 1981 and 1987, between 1988 and 1992, and between 1993 and 1997. This division aimed to understand if there are variations between people born in the earlier years of the considered for this generation in this dissertation and the ones born in the following years, also having in mind that their experiences and surrounding events were distinct.

| Born between 1981-1987 (N=21) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|-------------------------------|----------|--------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | 2,9 | 3,6 | 3,2 | 3,9 | 2,9 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,6 | 0,7 | 0,8 | 0,7 | 0,7 |

| Born between 1988-1992 (N=47) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|-------------------------------|----------|--------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | 3,1 | 3,8 | 2,9 | 4,0 | 3,0 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,5 | 0,5 | 0,7 | 0,5 | 0,8 |

| Born between 1993-1997 (N=90) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|-------------------------------|----------|--------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | 3,1 | 3,9 | 2,8 | 4,1 | 3,0 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,5 | 0,6 | 0,7 | 0,6 | 0,7 |

Table 11: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling for different age ranges

Although some samples are relatively small, we can conclude that for people born between 1981 and 1987 the results of the DUTCH Test were: Problem-Solving ($M = 3.9$, $SD = 0.7$) in first, followed by Compromising ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.7$), Forcing ($M = 3.2$, $SD = 0.8$), Yielding ($M = 2.9$, $SD = 0.6$), and Avoiding ($M = 2.9$, $SD = 0.7$). For the other two subgroups, the preferred is Problem-Solving, also followed by Compromising, but the rest of the ranking varies, appearing Yielding as the third most scored, followed by Avoiding and Forcing.

To sum up, the main difference seen here is that while for people born in the first years of the Millennials Generation, Forcing appears in third place, for the others is the least scored.

5. Discussion

The objectives defined by the researcher were the following:

- Identify the preferred styles of conflict management of the Portuguese Millennials;
- See if they are in accordance with the main characteristics that are aimed at this generation;
- Compare the results of the Portuguese Millennials with the ones of International Millennials;
- Analyse those results.

5.1. Analyse of the preferred styles of Portuguese Millennials

| All responses (N=158) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|-----------------------|----------|--------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | 3,1 | 3,8 | 2,9 | 4,0 | 2,9 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,5 | 0,6 | 0,7 | 0,6 | 0,8 |

Table 12: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling - Portuguese Millennials for the All Sample

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the results of the DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling showed that the most preferred styles of conflict management of Portuguese Millennials are Problem-Solving ($M = 4.0$, $SD = 0.6$) and Compromising ($M = 3.8$, $SD = 0.6$). The least preferred are Yielding ($M = 3.1$, $SD = 0.5$), Avoiding ($M = 2.9$, $SD = 0.7$), with Forcing ($M = 2.9$, $SD = 0.8$) being the one with lower score.

There are many characteristics imputed to the Millennial generation, among them the fact that they are ambitious people, and impatient to succeed. It is believed that one of the Millennials' favourite styles is one that demonstrates medium/high concern for self, meaning that the result should be Problem-Solving (high concern for self and high concern for others), Forcing (high concern for self and low concern for others) or Compromising (medium concern for self and for others).

Since the styles with higher scores are Problem-Solving and Compromising, the results show that although the Portuguese Millennials have high/medium concern for themselves, they also care about the others. This level of high/medium concern leads us to believe that, contrary to what many authors point out, Millennials (in this case the Portuguese ones) are not selfish. On the other hand, the results coincide with other characteristics that are also often pointed to the Millennials that are being good people to work with, and team-oriented.

5.2. Comparison between the preferred styles of Portuguese Millennials vs. the U.S.A. and International Millennials

The results that will be used to compare with those of the online survey, will be the results obtained by the author of the thesis “Generation Me: Millennial Intercultural Sensitivity and Conflict Management Style in the Group Setting” (Alyssa Clements). This researcher aim was not only to understand what the chosen styles of conflict management were, but to study if there was a relation between Intercultural Sensitivity and Conflict Management Styles. The sample considered was of 221 people, of which 203 people from the U.S.A and 18 Internationals (the nationality of these people was not revealed in the text). The results obtained can be observed below, in the tables 10 and 11:

| U.S.A. Millennials (N=203) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Mean | 2,6 | 2,1 | 3,1 | 2,0 | 2,7 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,6 | 0,7 | 0,9 | 0,7 | 0,9 |

| International Millennials (N=18) | Yielding | Compromising | Forcing | Problem Solving | Avoiding |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Mean | 2,5 | 2,1 | 3,3 | 2,1 | 2,8 |
| Standard Deviation | 0,7 | 0,7 | 0,8 | 0,6 | 0,7 |

Table 13: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of The DUTCH Test for Conflict Handling for U.S.A. and International Millennials

The most preferred style in both cases was Forcing (U.S.: M = 3.1, SD = 0.9 and International: M = 3.3, SD = 0.8), although the sample for International Millennials was small. These results show that both groups have a high concern for self, but low concern for others (unlike what happens in the case of Portuguese Millennials). In the second place, both for U.S. and International Millennials, is Avoiding (U.S.: M = 2.7, SD = 0.9 and International: M = 2.8, SD = 0.7) – low concern for self and others. The characteristics of this style reflects people that do not want to hurt anyone’s feeling, some authors refer to this style as something that in some situations is seen as a weak attitude, given that people are not pursuing their own goals.

5.3. The Country Comparison Tool

As mentioned before, the Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions Theory, was studied in order to be used to measure how different can societies be. In this case, and given the results of the countries cited before, the comparisons will be made between Portugal, U.S.A. and India. This comparison was made using the Country Comparison Tool, which is an online tool that can be find on: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison>. The graphic below shows the results of each country for each dimension of the Hofstede Model of Cultural Dimensions.

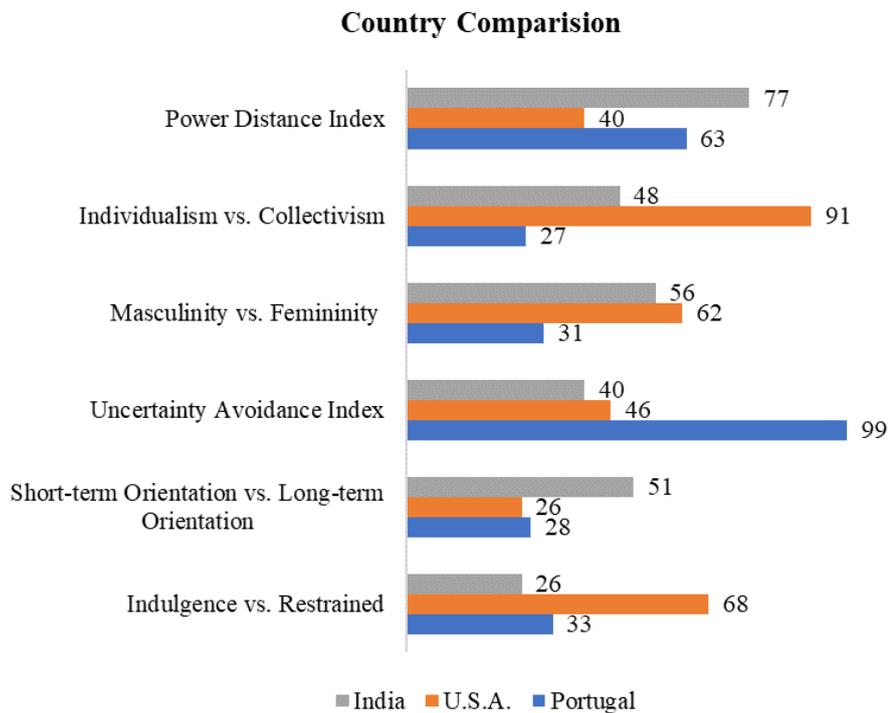


Table 14: Country Comparison Tool

5.3.1. Portugal’s Analysis

From the above results, it can be seen that Portugal is characterized as follows:

- **Power Distance Index:** 63 – Portugal is a country with High Power Distance. This means that hierarchical distance is accepted, leading to the acceptance that people in better positions have privileges. In a work environment, employees expect information to be required, but that the bosses control them.

- **Individualism vs. Collectivism:** 27 – Portugal is a collectivistic country. This characteristic means that this type of society is more associated to the personal pronoun “we” than to the “I”. It is a society with a strong focus on the group and not just on close relatives. The fact that they are collectivists leads to loyalty being a very important characteristic for the culture/country concerned.
- **Masculinity vs. Femininity:** 31 – Feminine country. This dimension turns out to be a complement to the fact that Portugal is a collectivist country since being feminine shows a preference for cooperation, equality and consensus. In female societies, heads are expected to be supportive and decisions are reached through the involvement of all parties.
- **Uncertainty Avoidance Index:** 99 – Probably the dimension that best defines Portugal, given its high score. This result means that the Portuguese are ruled by well-defined codes of behaviour and belief and that they avoid unexpected situations.
- **Short-term Orientation vs. Long-term Orientation:** 28 - This low result, which means that Portuguese society is short-term oriented, is closely connected with the fact that they are a society with a high level of uncertainty avoidance.
- **Indulgence vs. Restraint:** 33 – Portugal has a restraint culture. This dimension characterizes Portuguese society as one that does not give importance to leisure time. The result of this dimension also ends up being linked to the fourth dimension (Uncertainty Avoidance Index) described, since what leads society to be restraint is the fact that they feel that their actions are restrained by social codes.

5.3.2. U.S.A.’s Analysis

One of the countries that has also been compared was the U.S.A., a more detailed study of this society follows:

- **Power Distance Index:** 40 – U.S.A. have a Low Power Distance Index. Contrary to what happens in the case of a society such as the Portuguese, hierarchical distance is not well accepted. In countries where the index of Power Distance is Low, people seek for a fair distribution of equality, and when this is not so, pursue justifications for why this does not happen.

- **Individualism vs. Collectivism:** 91 – The high score in the dimension demonstrates that the U.S.A. is one of the most individualistic societies. In this type of culture, individuals are expected to care about themselves and their closest family.
- **Masculinity vs. Femininity:** 62 – Masculine country. One of the aspects that best describes a masculine society is that work prevails over family. This type of society is looking for achievements and success, which makes them very competitive – “the winner takes it all” reflects the behaviour of individuals.
- **Uncertainty Avoidance Index:** 46 – Weak Uncertainty Avoidance. Societies that achieve this result are societies in which individuals are relaxed about the scenarios than the future can bring – they are more open-minded.
- **Short-term Orientation vs. Long-term Orientation:** 26 – U.S.A. are Short-term Oriented. Although they are a society with a Weak Uncertainty Avoidance Index, there are at the same time subjects in which their opinions do not change very easily and for which they only have two positions: either it is “good” or it is “bad”.
- **Indulgence vs. Restrained:** 68 – U.S.A. has an indulgent culture, which means that among many things that give great importance to leisure. This result turns out to be somewhat contradictory with the result obtained in the dimensions Masculinity vs. Femininity, since they are a Masculine society in which work is often put ahead of everything.

5.3.3. India’s Analysis

The last country to be analysed in detail according to the Hofstede Model of Cultural Dimensions was India:

- **Power Distance Index:** 77 – India have a High Power Distance Index. This means that this type of society accepts well hierarchies and the differences that ultimately come from this organization in hierarchies.
- **Individualism vs. Collectivism:** 48 – this result shows that Indian culture is not simply individualistic or collective. It has so much traits of a collective society (the preference to belong to the “group”, instead of being the only “I”), as of an individualistic society (in this case more related to religious/philosophical beliefs – Hinduism). One of the

beliefs of Hinduism is the cycle of death and rebirth, with each rebirth dependent on how the individual lived in the previous life.

- **Masculinity vs. Femininity:** 56 – Masculine country. As in the case of the U.S.A., mentioned above, work prevails over family and they are looking for achievements and success.
- **Uncertainty Avoidance Index:** 40 – India has a Medium/Low Uncertainty Avoidance Index. This means that they are open to new experiences and that they are a people that adapts.
- **Short-term Orientation vs. Long-term Orientation:** 51 – Like in the case of the Individualism vs. Collectivism, we cannot say if the Indian culture is short or long-term oriented. For this society, time does not have the importance that it ends up having in the Western societies.
- **Indulgence vs. Restraint:** 26 – Restraint Culture. As mentioned in the case of Portugal, this characteristic shows that Indian people do not give importance to leisure time and they feel restrained by social codes.

5.4. Analysis of preferred conflict management styles considering the Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

From the analysis made to the results of the Country Comparison Tool, it is possible to better understand the results of the Portuguese Millennials, in which the two favourites are Problem-Solving and Compromising:

- Portugal has a collective society, that is to say that it is a society more accustomed to living with the opinions of others. One of the main characteristics of collectivism is that people seek to have strong relationships with others, which makes them more flexible in conflict management.
- Portugal is considered a feminist country: one of the words that best defines this dimension is "consensus". At work, people value, among other things, quality - as mentioned in the Tool used "Conflicts are resolved by compromise and negotiation".
- In dimension "Uncertainty Avoidance Index", Portugal is classified as Strong: this means that it is a society that avoids unexpected situations. This characteristic also ends up being linked to the results obtained in the survey: as they avoid unexpected situations, they try to reach consensus through choices that are not bad for both sides and do not differ much from their initial ideas.

From the U.S.A. analysis it is also possible to relate them to the results obtained in the survey conducted by Alyssa Clements:

- The U.S.A. is an individualistic society, and this turns out to be related to Alyssa's results due to the fact that the conflict management styles preferred by the American sample were: Forcing and Avoiding. These are styles characterized by their more individualistic approach since they show low concern for the others. An important quote made in the Country Comparison Tool and which is also linked with the choice of American Millennials is "Americans are not shy about approaching their prospective counterparts in order to obtain or seek information."
- The fact that they are a society considered Masculine also ends up helping to understand the choice of Forcing as one of the favourite styles – as they are people who are driven by the competition, they end up wanting to win and that for them means not giving up anything of their position.

- The Low result in dimension “Uncertainty Avoidance Index” ends up explaining why the Avoidance style appears as the second most favourite. A Weak Uncertainty Avoidance society accepts uncertainty as something inherent in life, is tolerant and accepts each day as is it – this people may therefore have low concern for themselves and for others (Avoiding).

India was also analysed in the Countries Comparison Tools, and the analysis made will be compared with the results from the study Mukundan, Dhanya, and Saraswathamma (2013). The results that emerged from this study showed that the Indian’s (sample of the city of Cochin) favourite styles of conflict management are: Negotiation (Problem-Solving in Dual Concern Theory) and Compromise (Compromising in Dual Concern Theory).

- Despite having characteristics of an Individualistic society, due to religious belief (Hinduism), India is also considered a Collectivist society. This latter characteristic is closely related to the fact that they want to belong to a large group. And it is the side of Collectivism that is most mirrored in the choice of conflict management styles: Problem-Solving (High concern for self and for others) and Compromising (Medium concern for self and for others).
- In the dimension Masculinity vs. Femininity, the Indian people is regarded as a Masculine society. This definition is already more in line with the choice of Problem-Solving as the most preferred style of conflict management.
- Concerning the “Uncertainty Avoidance Index”, India index is rated Low/Medium. This feature may be linked to the fact that Compromising is the second most scored style of conflict management. Since a weak/medium score in this dimension characterizes this people as being more tolerant: and in this way we pass from high concern for self and for others to medium concern for self and for others.

Next, follows a table that summarizes the main characteristics mentioned above:

| Country | Preferred Styles | Power Distance Index | Individualism vs. Collectivism | Masculinity vs. Femininity | Uncertainty Avoidance Index | Restraint vs. Indulgence |
|----------|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Portugal | Problem-Solving Compromising | High | Collectivism | Femininity | Strong | Restraint |
| U.S:A. | Forcing Avoiding | Low | Individualism | Masculinity | Low | Indulgence |
| India | Problem-Solving Compromising | High | Collectivism & Individualism | Masculinity | Medium/Low | Restraint |

Table 15: Portugal, U.S.A and India main characteristics regarding Conflict Management Styles and Hofstede's 6 Dimensions

If, on the one hand, we can say that the Styles of Conflict Management preferred by the Portuguese are similar to those of the Indians, on the other we cannot say that they are similar cultures. Although both are considered restraint, they have features of collective societies (even if in the case of India, it is 50% - 50%) and have a power distance high, there are characteristics in which they are different: one is feminine, the other masculine and while one has an index of uncertainty avoidance high, the other has medium / low. And the differences in these dimensions can have great impacts on the societies, being able to be considered very different and not similar.

The analyses described above demonstrate that the characterization of each culture may end up having an impact on the preferred conflict management styles. As mentioned in the literature review, the study “The Role of Culture and Personality in Choice of Conflict Management Styles” by Ritu Kaushal and Catherine T. Kwantes (2006) says that this relationship can be real.

The study mentions that an Individualistic culture tends to use conflict management styles as Forcing or Yielding and in the case of a Collectivistic the preferred styles are Problem-Solving or Avoiding. This information is in accordance with the results presented for Portugal – a Collectivistic society in which the style that appears as the most scored is Problem-Solving – and also for the U.S.A. – an Individualistic culture where Forcing comes first.

In the case of India, as it is a society with both sides (Individualist and Collectivist), it is more difficult to arrive at a conclusion as linear as above. The style of conflict management that scored highest was Problem-Solving, which leads us to conclude, given the results of Kaushal and Kwantes (2006) is that the city of Cochin probably has a horizontal individualistic culture.

6. Conclusions

The Millennial generation is daily studied by several areas, in which arise questions such as:

- What are their values and beliefs?
- How will this generation behave as workers? How will they deal with their colleagues?
- What will be their consumption habits?
- How do Millennials differ from previous generations?

This dissertation aims to answer one more of the many questions that are posed about this generation – Portuguese vs. International Millennials: How do their Conflict Management Styles Differ? But it also intends to analyse if the characteristics that are imputed to the Millennial Generation are the same that are pointed out to this generation in the study done to the Portuguese Millennials – what has happened in this case was that they are not totally concordant, some characteristics are different.

One of the characteristics that is so often associated to this generation it is egocentrism, many even call it the “Me Generation”, but surprisingly or not, 77% of the Portuguese Millennial Generation inquired answered that they would be willing to give up of their working life for a family reason.

The online survey conducted to realize the preferences of Portuguese Millennials were as follows: 1st Problem-Solving, 2nd Compromising, 3rd Yielding, 4th Avoiding and 5th Forcing.

The study conducted by Alyssa Clements (2016) showed no major differences between the U.S.A. vs. the International Millennials, but when comparing her results with the results of a study conducted in the city of Cochin, in India (Mukundan, Dhanya & Saraswathamma, 2013) there are already differences. It goes from preferred conflict management styles such as Forcing and Avoiding (both with low concern for others), to styles as Problem-Solving and Compromising (in which results are sought with concern for both parties).

What about Portuguese Millennials? Do they behave like the U.S.A. Millennials or do they have their own preferred conflict management styles? The conclusion reached is that they differ from the International Millennials, in this case, from the Internationals (U.S.A. Millennials

included) studied by Alyssa, but they are similar to the ones obtained by Mukundan, Dhanya & Saraswathyamma (2013).

In the introduction, the mentioned hypotheses of response were: they would be different if the cultures were different and would be similar if the cultures were also similar.

Given the characteristics pointed out to each country by the Country Comparison Tool which used the model of The Six Dimensions of National Culture of Hofstede, the correct answer is that Millennials preferences may change depending on their culture. It is not certain that they are necessarily different if the Millennials are inserted in different cultures, nor that they are similar if they are of comparable cultures.

The Millennials Generation has more and more representability in the world, and in Portugal, being therefore important to study it. The question of this dissertation and its result is just one example of the great path that still has to be taken to better understand this generation.

The relationship of Portuguese Millennials in this matter is important not only to understand how they behave in the face of conflict, but is also central in the labour market, given the representation they already have and will continue to have. These are interesting results to be analysed by Human Resources workers.

6.1. Future Research

As mentioned before, this subject can be deeply analysed by people in the field of Human Resources, in order to better know how will their employees react to conflict. This future research is important to anticipate conflicts that may arise between people of different generations and/or different cultures.

Another future research may try to understand if the Millennials' preferences of styles of conflict management are equal between Portuguese men and women. It can also be seen if the preferences change taking into account the place from where they are/live, since in Portugal there are also several cultures, depending on the geographical area.

It could also be relevant to understand if the Millennials' preferences of styles of conflict management vary with the personality types.

Finally, it would also be relevant to make a study of the preferred conflict management styles of the other generations currently present in the labour market (Baby-boomers and Generation X) and to compare them with the preferences of the Millennial Generation.

6.2. Limitations

This study has a few limitations, like many researches done.

The first, as in most cases, is the representativeness of the sample: given its lack, the result can not be generalized. They can not be generalized given the sample size and the way they were chosen: randomly but within a group of friends that uses social media. As the sample was not selected, that is, it was only people within the author's circle of friends and friends of friends, who participated, and so there is the possibility of participant bias.

Another of the limitations, which has already been mentioned above, is the percentage of people between the ages of 23 and 28 - 78%. This number shows that the Portuguese Millennial generation, which in this study considers people between 21 and 37 years old, is not fully represented.

As already mentioned during the dissertation, although there are many published opinions and texts about the Millennial generation, one of the difficulties was the lack of studies in the way they deal with the conflict. As the purpose of this study is the comparison between several countries, the fact that there are few articles / studies on the relationship between Millennial generation and conflict management in several countries, ends up making the results obtained less representative.

It is therefore recommended for future studies more comparisons between Millennials from different countries and their relationship with conflict management, given the internationalization we see every day.

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8. Annexes

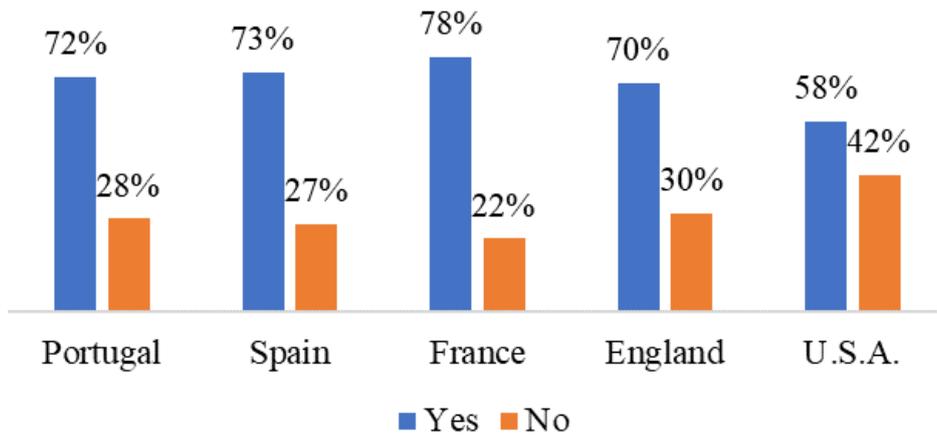


Figure 11: Do you think you will live until you are older than your parents?

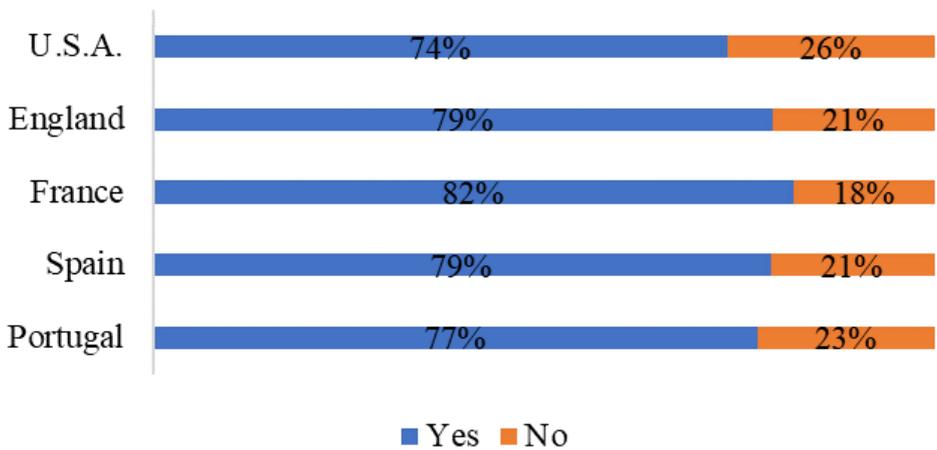


Figure 12: Do you think that in social terms it is possible to have less inequalities?

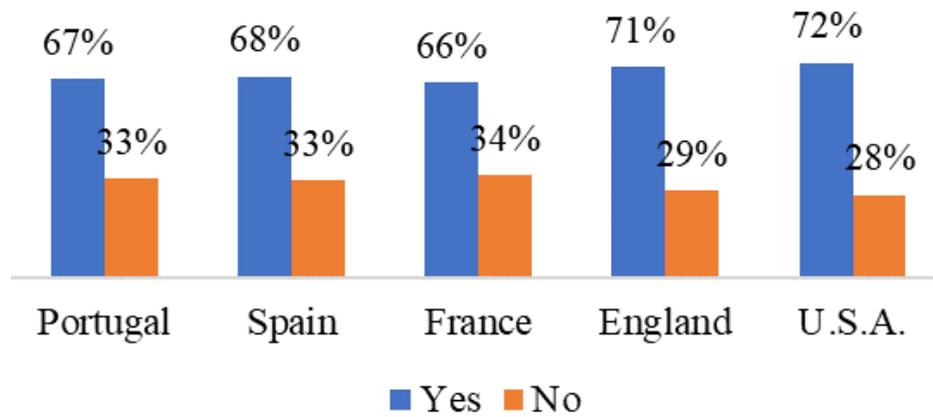


Figure 13: Do you think that the World will end an understanding for the great conflicts (e.g. terrorism, war, extremism, etc.)?

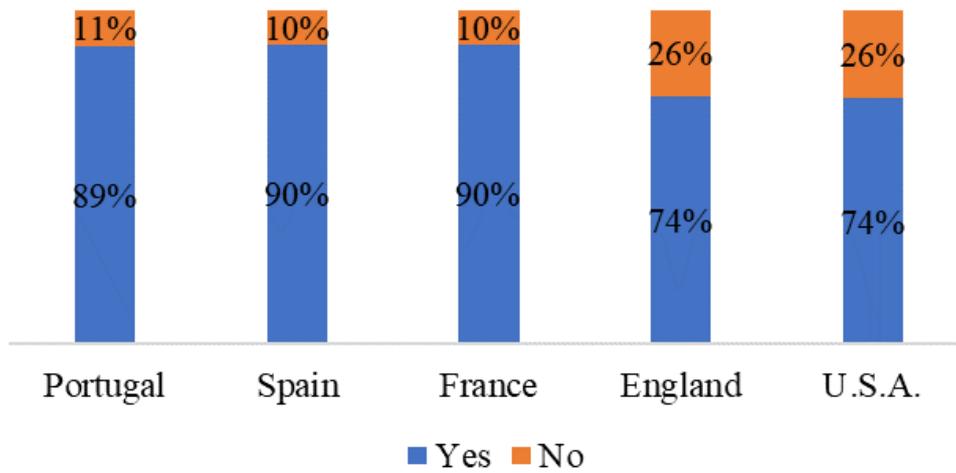


Figure 14: Do you think it is important to have a car of your own?

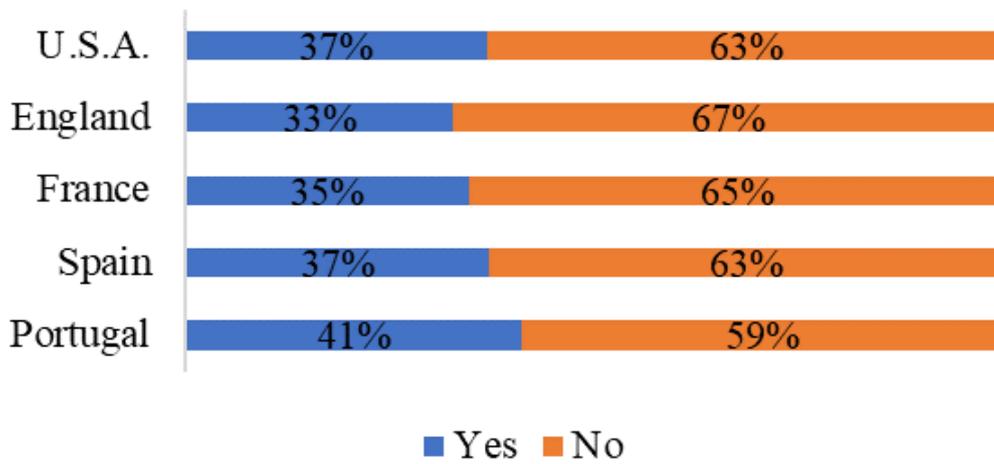


Figure 15: Are you planning to buy a house in the next 5 years?

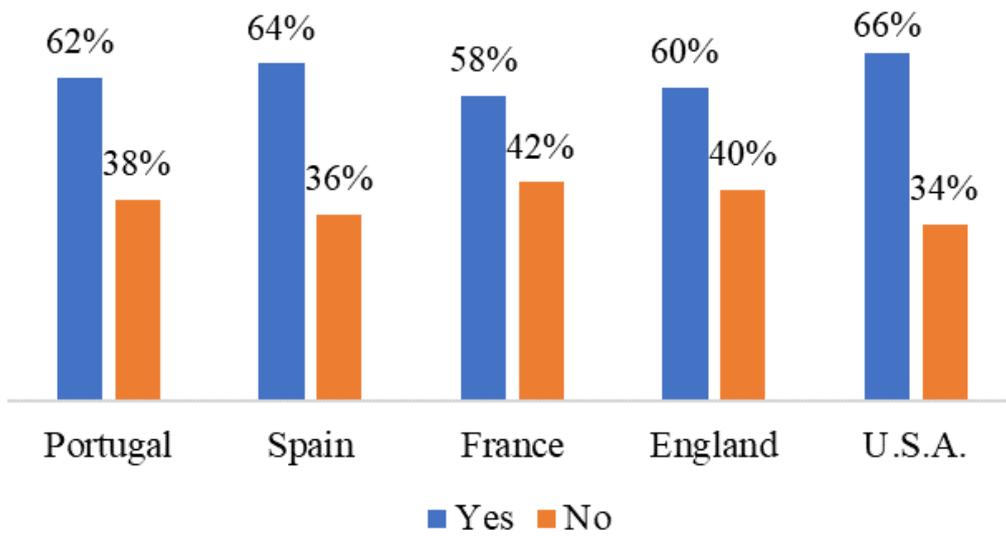


Figure 16: Do you want to get married?

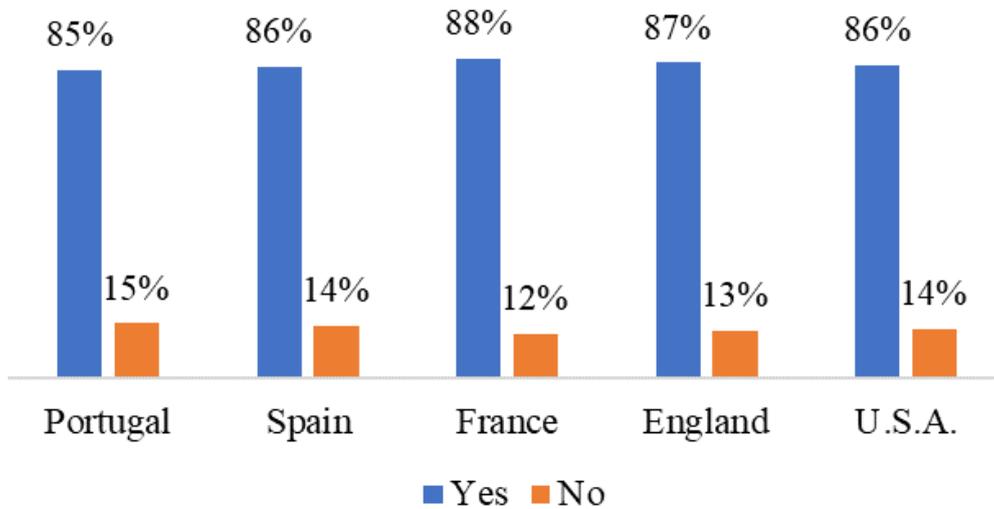


Figure 17: Do you consider having children?

| Power Distance Index | |
|---|--|
| Small Power Distance | Large Power Distance |
| Use of power should be legitimate and is subject to criteria of good and evil | Power is a basic fact of society antedating good or evil: its legitimacy is relevant |
| Parents treat children as equals | Parents teach children obedience |
| Older people are neither respected nor feared | Older people are both respected and feared |
| Student-centered education | Teacher-centered education |
| Hierarchy means inequality of roles, established for convenience | Hierarchy means existential inequality |
| Subordinates expect to be consulted | Subordinates expect to be told what to do |
| Pluralist governments based on majority vote and changed peacefully | Autocratic governments based on co-optation and changed by revolution |
| Corruption rare; scandals end political careers | Corruption frequent; scandals are covered up |
| Income distribution in society rather even | Income distribution in society very uneven |
| Religions stressing equality of believers | Religions with a hierarchy of priests |

Table 1: Differences between Small and Large Power Distance Index

| Uncertainty Avoidance | |
|--|---|
| Weak Uncertainty Avoidance | Strong Uncertainty Avoidance |
| The uncertainty inherent in life is accepted and each day is taken as it comes | The uncertainty inherent in life is felt as a continuous threat that must be fought |
| Ease, lower stress, self-control, low anxiety | Higher stress, emotionality, anxiety, neuroticism |
| Higher scores on subjective health and well-being | Lower scores on subjective health and well-being |
| Tolerance of deviant persons and ideas: what is different is curious | Intolerance of deviant persons and ideas: what is different is dangerous |
| Comfortable with ambiguity and chaos | Need for clarity and structure |
| Teachers may say 'I don't know' | Teachers supposed to have all the answers |
| Changing jobs no problem | Staying in jobs even if disliked |
| Dislike of rules - written or unwritten | Emotional need for rules – even if not obeyed |
| In politics, citizens feel and are seen as competent towards authorities | In politics, citizens feel and are seen as incompetent towards authorities |
| In religion, philosophy and science: relativism and empiricism | In religion, philosophy and science: belief in ultimate truths and grand theories |

Table 2: Differences between Weak and Strong Uncertainty Avoidance

| Collectivism vs. Individualism | |
|--|---|
| Collectivism | Individualism |
| People are born into extended families or clans which protect them in exchange for loyalty | Everyone is supposed to take care of him- or herself and his or her immediate family only |
| "We" - consciousness | I - consciousness |
| Stress on belonging | Right of privacy |
| Harmony should always be maintained | Speaking one's mind is healthy |
| Others classified as in-group or out-group | Others classified as individuals |
| Opinions and votes predetermined by in-group | Personal opinion expected: one person one vote |
| Transgression of norms leads to shame feelings | Transgression of norms leads to guilt feelings |
| Languages in which the word "I" is avoided | Languages in which the word "I" is indispensable |
| Purpose of education is learning how to do | Purpose of education is learning how to learn |
| Relationship prevails over task | Task prevails over relationship |

Table 3: Differences between Collectivistic and Individualistic Societies

Portuguese vs International Millennials: How Do Their Conflict Management Styles Differ

| Femininity vs. Masculinity | |
|---|---|
| Femininity | Masculinity |
| Minimum emotional and social role differentiation between the genders | Maximum emotional and social role differentiation between the genders |
| Men and women should be modest and caring | Men should be and women may be assertive and ambitious |
| Balance between family and work | Work prevails over family |
| Sympathy for the weak | Admiration for the strong |
| Both fathers and mothers deal with facts and feelings | Fathers deal with facts, mothers with feelings |
| Both boys and girls may cry but neither should fight | Girls cry, boys don't; boys should fight back, girls shouldn't fight |
| Mothers decide on number of children | Fathers decide on family size |
| Many women in elected political positions | Few women in elected political positions |
| Religion focuses on fellow human beings | Religion focuses on God or gods |
| Matter-of-fact attitudes about sexuality; sex is a way of relating | Moralistic attitudes about sexuality; sex is a way of performing |

Table 4: Differences between Feminine and Masculine Societies

| Short-Term Orientation vs. Long-Term Orientation | |
|--|--|
| Short-Term Orientation | Long-Term Orientation |
| Most important events in life occurred in the past or take place now | Most important events in life will occur in the future |
| Immediate need gratification expected | Need gratification deferred until later |
| There are universal guidelines about what is good and evil | What is good and evil depends upon the circumstances |
| Traditions are sacrosanct | Traditions are adaptable to changed circumstances |
| Family life guided by imperatives | Family life guided by shared tasks |
| What one thinks and says should be true | What one does should be virtuous |
| Children should learn tolerance and respect | Children should learn to be thrifty |
| Social spending and consumption | Saving, investing |
| Unstructured problem solving | Structured, mathematical problem solving |
| In business, stress on short-term profits | In business, stress on future market position |

Table 5: Differences between Short and Long-Term Orientation

| Indulgence vs. Restrained | |
|---|--|
| Indulgence | Restrained |
| Higher percentage of people declaring themselves very happy | Fewer very happy people |
| A perception of personal life control | A perception of helplessness: what happens to me is not my own doing |
| Freedom of speech seen as important | Freedom of speech is not a primary concern |
| Higher importance of leisure | Lower importance of leisure |
| More likely to remember positive emotions | Less likely to remember positive emotions |
| In countries with educated populations, higher birthrates | In countries with educated populations, lower birthrates |
| More people actively involved in sports | Fewer people actively involved in sports |
| In countries with enough food, higher percentages of obese people | In countries with enough food, fewer obese people |
| In wealthy countries, lenient sexual norms | In wealthy countries, stricter sexual norms |
| Maintaining order in the nation is not given a high priority | Higher number of police officers per 100,000 population |

Table 6: Differences between Indulgent and Restraint societies

Conflict Management Styles

This survey is part of a study to better understand how do Millennials react to conflict. It should take no longer than 5 minutes. Many thanks for your collaboration !

*Obrigatório

Age (years) *

A sua resposta

Nationality *

A sua resposta

Education *

- High School
- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Doctoral Program
- Other

Figure 18: Survey Online - Page 1

Professional Occupation (role and sector - e.g. analyst, telecom sector) *

A sua resposta

Do you work/study or have worked/studied with people from other nationalities? *

- Yes
- No

Do you live or have lived outside Portugal? Where and for how long? *

A sua resposta

SEGUINTE Página 1 de 2

Nunca envie palavras-passe através dos Formulários do Google.

Este formulário foi criado dentro de ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa. Denunciar abuso - Termos de Utilização - Termos adicionais

Google Formulários

Figure 19: Survey Online - Page 2

The image shows a screenshot of an online survey titled "Conflict Management Styles". The survey is presented in a clean, modern layout with a white background and dark blue accents. At the top, the title "Conflict Management Styles" is displayed in a large, bold, dark blue font. Below the title, there is a red asterisk followed by the word "Obrigatório" (Mandatory). The main question is "In a scale from 1 to 5, when you have a conflict at work/school, what do you do:", which is highlighted in a dark blue box. Below the question, a legend defines the scale: "1- not at all 2- seldom 3- sometimes 4-often 5-almost always". There are two survey items, each with a radio button and a scale from 1 to 5. The first item is "I give in to the wishes of the other party *" and the second is "I try to realize a middle-of-the-road solution. *".

Conflict Management Styles

*Obrigatório

In a scale from 1 to 5, when you have a conflict at work/school, what do you do:

1- not at all 2- seldom 3- sometimes 4-often 5-almost always

I give in to the wishes of the other party *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I try to realize a middle-of-the-road solution. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

Figure 20: Survey Online - Page 3

I push my own point of view. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I examine issues until I find a solution that really satisfies me and the other party. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I avoid confrontation about our differences. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

Figure 21: Survey Online - Page 4

I concur with the other party. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I emphasize that we have to find a compromise solution. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I search for gains. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

Figure 22: Survey Online - Page 5

I stand for my own and other's goals and interests. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I avoid differences of opinion as much as possible. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I try to accommodate the other party. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

Figure 23: Survey Online - Page 6

I insist that we both give in a little. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I fight for a good outcome for myself. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I examine ideas from both sides to find a mutually optimal solution. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

Figure 24: Survey Online - Page 7

I try to make differences seem less severe. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I adapt to the parties' goals and interests. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I strive whenever possible toward a 50-50 compromise. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

Figure 25: Survey Online - Page 8

I do everything to win. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I work out a solution that serves my own and the other's interests as well as possible. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

I try to avoid a confrontation with the other. *

1 - not at all

2 - seldom

3 - sometimes

4 - often

5 - almost always

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Nunca envíe palabras-pase através dos Formulários do Google.

Figure 26: Survey Online - Page 9

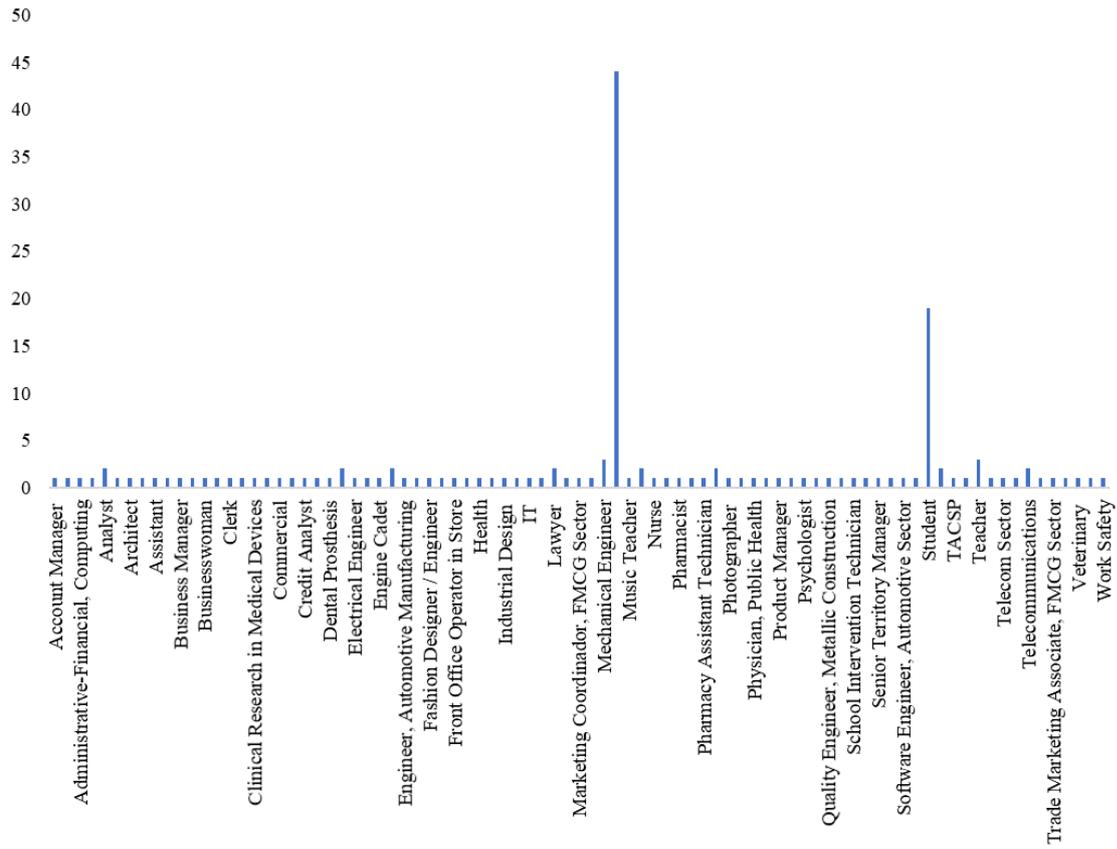


Figure 27: Professional Occupation per Person

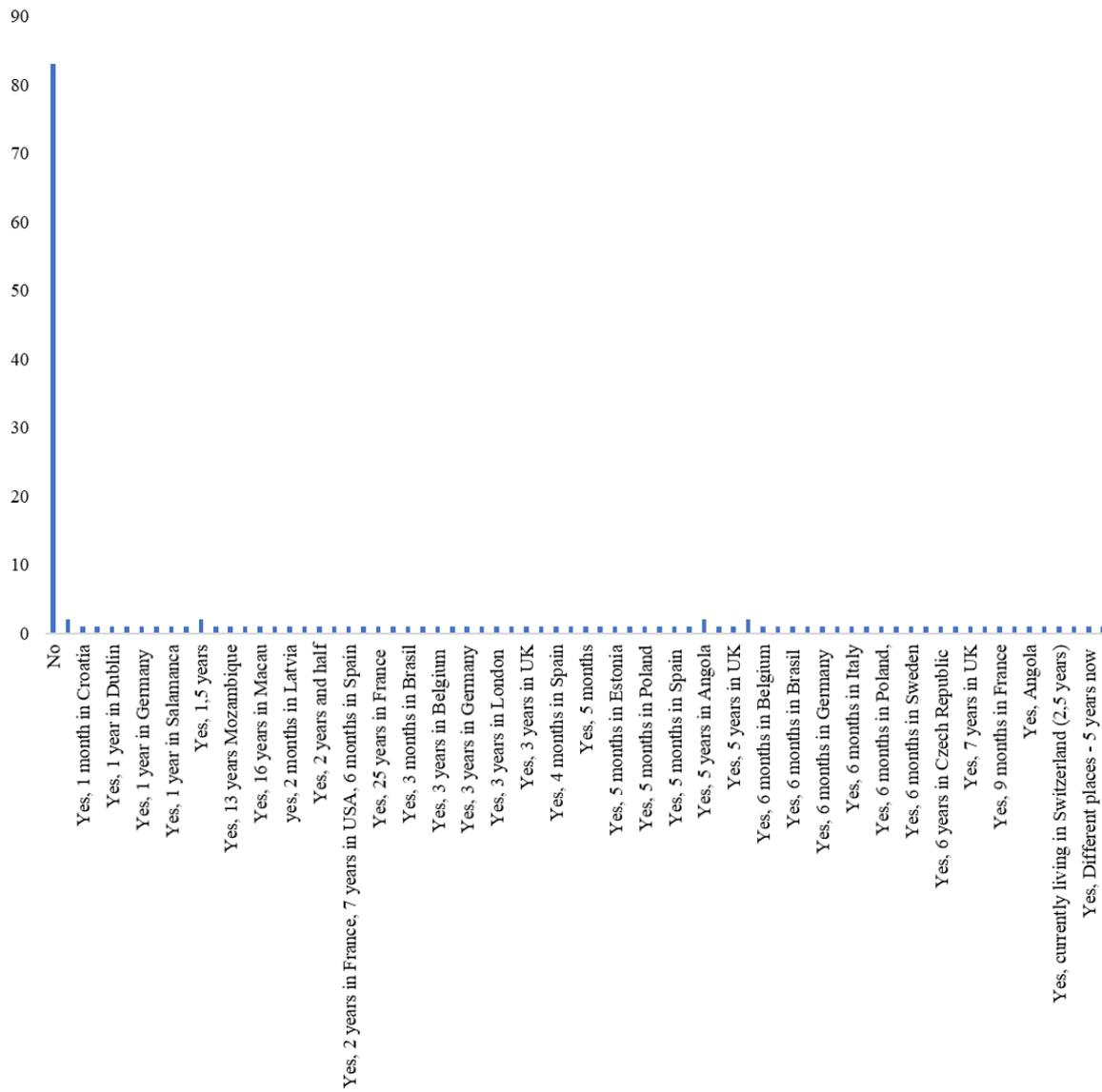


Figure 28: Do you live or have lived outside Portugal? Where and for how long?