

## Cultural Archetypes As Part Of The Cultural Invariance In The Eu Countries And Their Impact On The Socio-Economic Regional Development

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### ABSTRACT

The article reveals the cultural archetype problem as a component of socio-cultural invariance as a factor influencing the economic and social development of the countries of the European Union. The purpose of the study is to identify those archetypes that have the most significant impact on the socio-economic development of the regions of the European Union. The article presents the results of an empirical study of cultural archetypes characteristic of societies in different European countries.

The materials of the study were expert assessments obtained as a result of a survey conducted on the social network Twitter among the expert community of leading European universities. The research methodology is based on an integrated interdisciplinary approach. Based on the results of the empirical study, the following results were obtained: as the main archetypes in the countries of Southern Europe, experts identified the archetype «life is a dream»; in the countries of Western Europe – «life is work»; for the countries of Eastern Europe, the most characteristic, according to experts, is the archetype «life is a struggle». All of these archetypes are decisive for the socio-economic development of the countries of the respective European regions.

**Keywords:** cultural studies, cultural values, cultural invariance, socio-cultural archetypes, European countries, socio-economic development, economic regions

### INTRODUCTION:

The research topic relevance is determined by the fact that culture as the basis of the life of society is inextricably linked with the evolution of the regional economy in the context of global transformations and the deepening of the intra-European integration process. In this context, studies of the features of the cultural archetypes of various European countries as a social basis for the development of the regional economy of the EU countries are of particular relevance. The culturological approach to economic processes in general, and the regional economy of the European Union in particular, is quite popular among modern interdisciplinary studies (Bréchon, 2021, p. 14).

However, proponents of this approach mainly study European values from the point of view of their use in marketing, advertising and labor market policy. The first such study of European values was initiated by the Group for the Study of European Value Systems (EVSSG) in the late 1970s (EVS, 2020). Now such research is carried out by the European Values Study (EVS) Foundation. The research of the EVS Foundation focuses on the moral and social values that underpin European social and political institutions, as well as the values that govern behavior (EVS, 2020).

Within the framework of this area of research, pan-European values, cultural invariants of behavior in different regions of the EU, and confessional values are studied. That is, within the framework of value research, scientists mainly search for a cultural basis for the unity

of the EU countries. Differences in mentality, value orientations, cultural invariant behavioral patterns, as a rule, do not properly become the object of attention of researchers.

However, as early as the 1970s, a system for measuring different national cultures was proposed: the «Hofstede's six dimensions model». In 1968, psychologist Dr. G. Hofstede published his model of cultural measurements (Hofstede, 2011, p. 47). This model is today an internationally recognized standard for measuring national cultural differences. The model includes 6 indices of cultural differences:

Power distance index (high or low);

Individualism vs. Collectivism;

Masculinity vs. Femininity;

Uncertainty avoidance index (high or low);

A pragmatic approach versus a normative one;

Indulgence vs. restraint.

Each dimension in this model allows you to evaluate EU countries on a scale from 0 to 100 for each of the parameters (Hofstede, 2011, p. 48). This model is used to study cultural differences almost everywhere. However, the analysis scheme proposed by G. Hofstede seems to be the most relevant for assessing the influence of culture on political processes, while the connection with economic development is difficult to establish using this model. In the modern research community, many new concepts are proposed that improve and adapt the Hofstede model for various research purposes. In particular, from a

methodological point of view, the works of P. Akaliyski and Ch. Welzel (2021, 2022) deserve attention, in which a deeper criterion of analysis is proposed to identify the relationship between the culture of society and regional economic development: the cultural archetype. It should be noted that the very concept of "cultural archetype" has several meanings, depending on the field of scientific application of the term.

In particular, in literature, an archetype is understood as such a «literary hero whose image is understandable either to the local or global cultural community» (Nusse, 2020, p. 170). In linguistics, an archetype is usually understood as «a stable semantic construction, the meaning of which remains unchanged regardless of the context of use» (Nusse, 2020, p. 171).

In psychology, the archetype is given in the classical interpretation by C. Jung: «a person's subconscious idea of the ideal images of a man (animus) and a woman (anima). It is passed down through generations and influences our actions, choices, and judgments» (Jung, 1969, p. 103). In cultural studies, researchers propose the following definition of a cultural archetype as «a historically formed representative cultural symbolic form» (Korneeva, 2016, p. 87).

The search for a meaningful definition of culture leads, therefore, to an understanding of the generic way of being of man in the world, namely, to human activity as the true substance of human history. The unity of the subjective and the objective realized in activity makes it possible to understand culture as «a system outside of biologically developed mechanisms, thanks to which the activity of people in society is stimulated, programmed and realized» (Evans, 2020, p. 114). In other words, culture appears as a «mode of activity» (Gorelova and Nekrasova, 2021, p. 87), «technological context of activity» (Ishchenko, 2019, p. 127), which gives human activity an internal integrity and a special kind of orientation, and as a way of regulating, preserving, reproducing and developing all social life.

Another research paradigm is focused on a value-based, axiological approach to culture, which considers culture as a «complex hierarchy of ideals and meanings» (Korneeva, 2016). The axiological interpretation of culture consists in calculating the sphere of human being, which can be called the world of values. It is to value attitudes, from the point of view of supporters of this concept, that the concept of culture is applicable. It appears as a majestic result of previous human activity, which is a complex hierarchy of spiritual and material formations significant for a particular social organism. Proponents of the activity concept see in such an interpretation of the concept of culture a certain limitation (Mukobe, 2019, p. 88). In their opinion, axiological interpretation closes cultural phenomena in a relatively narrow sphere, while «culture dialectically realized process in the unity of its objective and subjective moments, prerequisites and results» (Nusse, 2020, p. 170).

Within the activity approach framework, we can talk about cultural archetype influence in the minds of different societies on regional economic development as the influence of the cultural invariant basis of activity on

the development in economic spheres: production, services, labor market, etc. For example, in Eastern Europe, people are more focused on making quick profits, while Western Europe is more characterized by long-term venture projects, and in Southern Europe there is a strong instability in the labor market (Ride, 2022, p. 37).

At the same time, despite efforts at economic integration into the EU, the regions of Europe still show different rates and volumes of economic growth. Thus, according to the Pew Research Center (2018), value differences lead to stagnation in the economies of the countries of Southern Europe compared to the economies of the countries of Western Europe. According to the National Geographic Society (2022), there is currently an income gap between residents of Western, Eastern and Southern Europe, with the main manufacturing and financial institutions concentrated in Western European countries. At the same time, studies of business activity in different European regions prove that there is a relationship between national cultures and the level of economic development (Simkus, 2016).

The historiography of the topic is quite extensive. However, it is mainly focused on the problem of psychological attitudes of consumers based on certain cultural archetypes. Nevertheless, among the general theoretical works devoted to cultural archetypes in various spheres of public life, one can note the studies of such authors as H. Verwayen (2023), A.Yu. Korneeva (2016), V.V. Lytkin, Yu.A. Geghamyan (2020), etc.

Theoretical attempts to adapt the Hofstede model for a comparative analysis of regional economies from the point of view of the cultural dimension are presented in the studies of G. Nusse (2020), Yu.M. Perevozkina, S.B. Perevozkin, N.V. Dmitrieva (2020), R. Maxwell (2016), M. Micheleni (2021), J. Mukobe (2019), etc.

Empirical studies include the works of such authors as H. Seung, K. Sangmook (2023), A. Simkus (2018), S.K. Bashieva et al., (2022), P. Bréchon (2021), etc. Cultural archetypes in the framework of studies of the mentality of the inhabitants of Western and Eastern Europe are considered in the works of such authors as A. Garifullina, N. Shakirova (2020), M.S. Gobel, V. Benet-Martinez, B. Mesquita, A.K. Uskul (2018), I.N. Gorelova, N.A. Nekrasova (2021), etc. Cultural values and invariants in the minds of citizens of different regions of the European Union are considered in the works of M. Ride (2022), H. Seung, K. Sangmook (2023), A. Simkus (2018), etc.

Nevertheless, despite the rather extensive historiography, the cultural component of economic processes is considered mainly from the point of marketing strategies, consumer values or from the perspective of the labor market. Therefore, it can be assumed that a more detailed study of cultural archetypes impact on socio-economic development will allow to more clearly trace the relationship between the cultural characteristics of European societies and the EU economy.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The materials of the study were expert assessments obtained as a result of a survey conducted on the social

network Twitter among the expert community of leading European universities in Germany, France (Western Europe), Italy and Spain (Southern Europe), Poland and Hungary (Eastern Europe). The general population of respondents was 600 people. Of these, a representative sample of 60 experts was formed by the method of mechanical sampling according to the principle of every tenth, divided into three groups of 20 people on a regional basis.

**Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to the criteria of European regions and academic institutions.**

University and region	Respondents' number
<b>Western Europe</b>	<b>1 expert group</b>
Faculty of Humanities at the University of Duisburg-Essen (Germany)	12
Faculty of Humanities University of Strasbourg (France)	8
<b>South Europe</b>	<b>2 expert group</b>
University of Kent, Rome postgraduate center (Italy)	9
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain)	11
<b>Eastern Europe</b>	<b>3 expert group</b>
State Eastern European University in Przemysl (Poland)	7
Central European University of Budapest (Hungary)	13

Experts assessed the problem of cultural archetypes that are characteristic of different EU countries, thanks to which it was possible to identify specific archetypes in the countries of Western, Southern and Eastern Europe and convert them into three criteria for the convenience of processing survey data. The experts identified three key archetypes for the respective regions of the European Union:

- 1) Western Europe: "life is work";
- 2) Southern Europe: the archetype "life is a dream";
- 3) Eastern Europe: the archetype "life is a struggle".

All three archetypes, according to experts, have an impact on five areas of economic development of the regions:

1. Sectoral structure of GDP
2. Production of main types of products per capita
3. The level and quality of life of the population
4. Indicators of economic efficiency
5. Indicators of comparative competitiveness.

The research methodology is based on an integrated interdisciplinary approach and includes the methods of the general scientific group (analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction), as well as a number of special methods: historiographic analysis of scientific literature on the research topic, methods of macroeconomic analysis, the method of comparative analysis, the method of sociological survey (expert assessments), statistical analysis, quantitative and qualitative research methods.

**Table 2. Research methods by groups and research objectives.**

Method group	Research objectives
General scientific methods	Scientific synthesis of the information received Research of scientific literature on the research topic
Special methods	Sociological research, Statistical analysis survey results Quantitative and qualitative methods

The analysis of 60 questionnaires with expert answers was carried out using a special program Neural Designer, which is a tool for advanced, predictive and prescriptive analytics.

All qualitative data (respondents' responses) were translated into a quantitative format for statistical analysis and identification of the relationship between the indicators.

**Table 3. Research criteria in relation to areas of analysis.**

Criterion	Framing expert review
The archetype influence on sectoral structure of GDP	Expert assessment of correlation between the cultural archetype and sectoral structure of GDP

The archetype impact on production of main products per capita	Expert assessment of correlation between the cultural archetype and production of main products per capita
The archetype impact on level and quality of life	Expert assessment of correlation between the cultural archetype and level and quality of life
The archetype impact on economic efficiency indicators	Expert assessment of correlation between the cultural archetype and economic efficiency indicators
The archetype impact on comparative competitiveness indicators	Expert assessment of correlation between the cultural archetype and comparative competitiveness indicators

The experts analyzed the relationship between culture in the frame of cultural archetype and economic development indicators in three regions of the European Union. Three groups of respondents gave their assessments according to the following criteria, reflecting the relationship between the economy and culture (Table 4).

**Table 4. Methodology for assessing the correlation between cultural archetype and regional development.**

Criterion	Rating scale
Sectoral structure of GDP	1-3 low level 4-6 average level 7-10 high level
Production of main products per capita	
Level and quality of life of the population	
Indicators of economic efficiency	
Indicators of comparative competitiveness	

All three criteria were evaluated by experts on a 10-point scale, according to the increasing influence of the archetype on a specific indicator of economic development: 1-3 low level, 4-6 medium level, 7-10 high level of influence of the criterion.

The research consisted of three stages:

- 1) preliminary stage;
- 2) the main stage;
- 3) analysis of the results (Table 5).

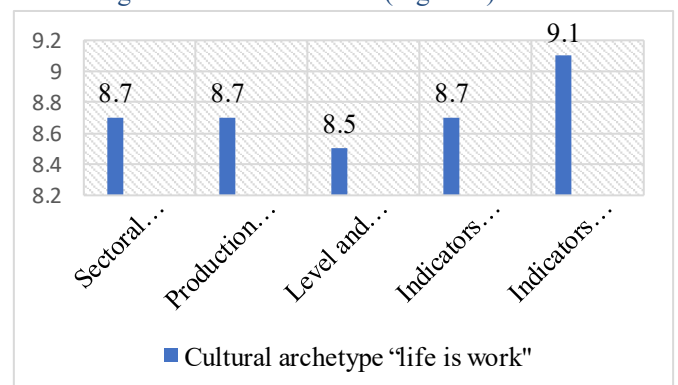
**Table 5. Timing and content of the empirical research stages.**

Research stage	Stage content	Timing
Preliminary stage	Negotiations with potential respondents regarding participation in the study.  Formation of a representative sample and formulation of the questionnaire.	June 25 - July 1, 2023
Main stage	Conducting a survey on the social network Twitter, collecting expert answers.	July 2 - July 15, 2023
Analysis of results	Analyzing results using a statistical Neural Design program	July 17 - August 10, 2023

The empirical study was conducted from June 25 to August 10, 2023.

## Results

According to the survey results from the first respondents' group (experts from universities in Western Europe), the following results were obtained (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Assessment by experts from the 1st group of the influence level of the cultural archetype on economic growth in Western Europe (compiled by the author using the Neural Designer program)**



As can be seen from the data presented in Figure 1, the experts assessed the degree of archetype influence on economic development at a high level, with the archetype «life is work» having a particularly strong influence on economic competitiveness indicators (in terms of the competitiveness in Western European countries in comparison with other EU regions).

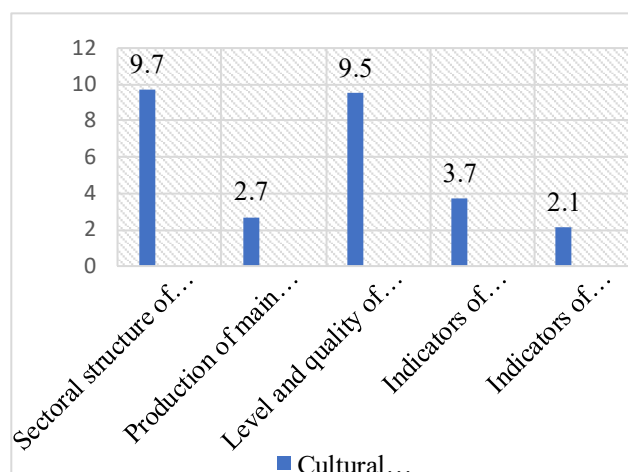
Experts see the biggest problem in the fact that the archetype «life is work» has a negative impact on the social sphere, namely, there are problems of late marriages and the creation of families with one child. The French and Germans are so passionate about their careers that they are in no hurry to start a family. Also, experts from Western Europe noted the problem of inflated economic expectations, which leads to structural unemployment and a long period of job search.

Experts from Germany also noted that the cultural archetype «life is work» in the minds of the German nation also negatively affects the choice of field of activity: Germans do not seek to occupy vacancies related to low-skilled labor. This, in turn, leads to the replacement of vacancies by migrants and causes the problem of regulating labor migration in Germany. Thus, the cultural archetype «life is work» has a positive impact on the economic sphere, but negatively affects the social sphere.

The experts also identified another important trend in the development of the southern European countries: the growing conflict in relations with the EU authorities. It seems that Brussels will have to compromise with the southern European capitals, but it is still difficult to predict the scale of the concessions.

The third trend that has been observed in recent years and, in our opinion, will continue in the foreseeable future is the further erosion of existing party-political systems. In Spain, the two-party system has given way to a multi-party system; it can be assumed that the current socialist government is the last one-party government to be followed by coalition cabinets. In Italy, the system of large center-right and center-left coalitions that replaced each other at the helm of the country is a thing of the past: the likelihood of the formation of the current yellow-green cabinet a year ago was unimaginable.

Other results were obtained in a survey of the respondents' second group from universities in Southern Europe (Figure 2).

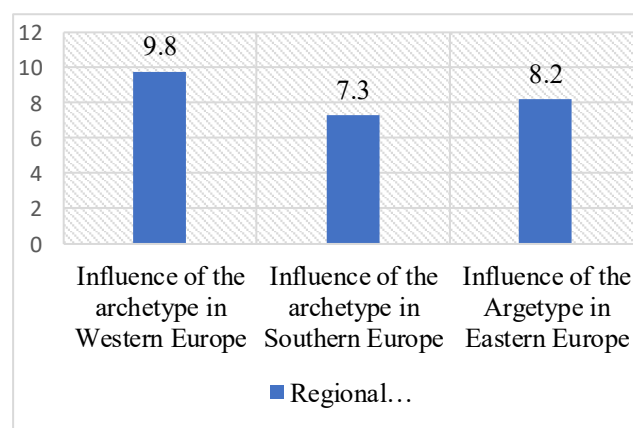


**Figure 2. Assessment by experts from the 2nd group of the influence level of the cultural Neural Designer program) archetype on economic growth in Southern Europe**

As can be seen from the data in Figure 2, experts assessed at a high level the influence of the archetype «life is a dream» on two indicators of economic development: the GDP sectoral structure and the quality of population life. At the same time, experts noted that, for example, Spanish people prefer to work in the service sector and tourism, which affects the regional economy structure. The idea of life as a temporary phenomenon and, to a greater extent, unrealistic, leads to the fact that the population in Southern Europe do not associate their economic activity with career growth. On the contrary, Spaniards can survive on unemployment benefits for a long time, which also leads to structural unemployment and a high level of employee turnover in the region.

Respondents from the second group also noted that for the Southern European consciousness, the archetype «life is a dream» is dominant, which leads to such negative consequences as an inadequate understanding of one's role in the economy, inertia in the labor market and the desire for an entertaining lifestyle.

Different results were obtained in the third respondents' group from Eastern Europe (Figure 3).



**Figure 3. Assessment by experts from the 3rd group of influence level for the cultural**

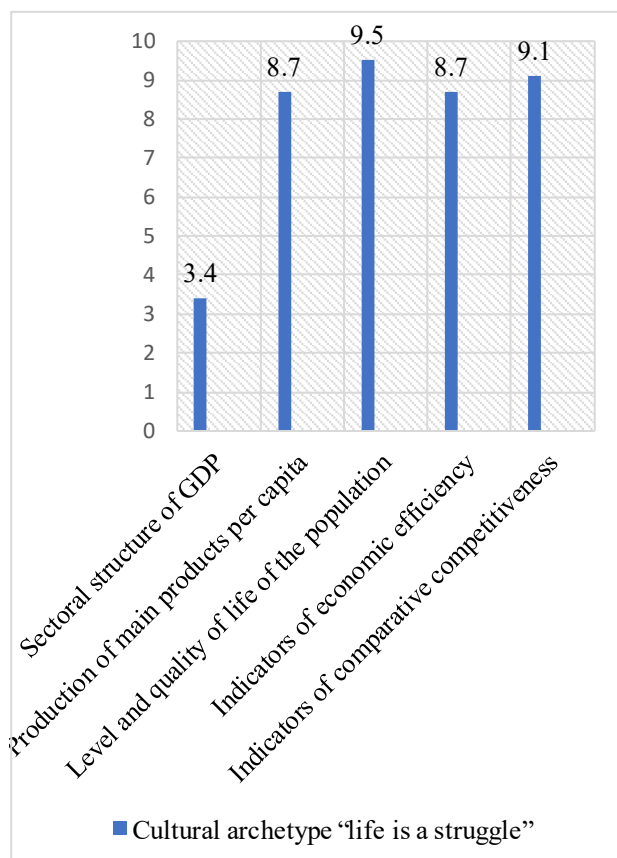
### Neural Designer program)

According to the data received from the respondents' 3rd group, it can be stated that the archetype «life is a struggle» has the strongest impact on per capita production, life quality level, economic efficiency and competitiveness. All these indicators are related to the competitive behavior strategy among, for example, Poles and Hungarians. However, this archetype does not have a significant impact on the sectoral structure of GDP.

Experts also noted that the archetype «life is a struggle», being dominant for the countries of Eastern Europe, also has a negative impact on «the desire to win at any cost», which leads to frequent cases of violation of business ethics, corruption in government and low ability to teamwork. According to experts, overcoming such a rigid archetype is almost impossible, since it is a culturally invariant phenomenon for Eastern Europe.

In general, as a result of experts' survey from three regions in the European Union, results were obtained to compare the influence level of archetypes on economic development indicators.

For a more visual presentation of the results, we have compiled a summary diagram on the general profile of the influence of cultural archetypes on the socio-economic development of the EU countries (Figure 4).



**Figure 4. General profile of the level of influence of the cultural archetype, identified by experts from universities in Western, Southern and Eastern Europe (compiled by the author using the Neural Designer program)**

Thus, our study proved the thesis that cultural archetypes can indeed influence the indicators of socio-economic development from the point of view of a qualitative study of the relationship between culture and economics.

Moreover, our study revealed the following fact: despite the heterogeneity of the archetypes themselves, the level of their influence on the quality of life and competitiveness of countries in different regions of Europe is almost the same. The cultural archetype of Southern Europe has the least impact on economic development, and the maximum influence is observed in the economies of Western Europe.

### DISCUSSION

The results of our study are partially confirmed in the works by such authors as H. Verwayen (2023), Yingwei Liu, Tao Wang, Ling Zhou, Chunyan Nie (2020), M. Ride (2022), H. Seung, K. Sangmook (2023), A. Simkus (2018). In particular, the thesis about the need of a methodological framework development for assessing qualitative data with their translation into quantitative indicators in relation to culture is confirmed in the works by Yu.M. Perevozkina, S.B. Perevozkin, N.V. Dmitrieva (2020), R. Maxwell (2016), M. Michelini (2021), J. Mukobe (2019), G. Nusse (2020).

The results of our study on the positive and negative impact of the cultural archetype on economic development indicators are also confirmed in the works by N.S. Ishchenko (2020a, 2019b), D. Kołodziejczyk (2022), A.Yu. Korneeva (2016), V.V. Lytkin, Yu.A. Geghamyan (2020).

The problem of correlation between cultural archetypes and economic behavior models is considered in the works by A.M. Evans (2020), A. Garifullina, N. Shakirova (2020), M.S. Gobel, V. Benet-Martinez, B. Mesquita, A.K. Uskul (2018), I.N. Gorelova, N.A. Nekrasova (2021), S. Hinkel (2023). S. Holmes, I. Krastev (2019), etc.

Nevertheless, despite the rather wide coverage of the topic in the scientific literature, the problem of the criteria evaluation for the cultural archetype influence on the regional socio-economic development of the EU countries requires further empirical research.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the results of our empirical study, we formulate the following conclusions:

1. Using the method of expert assessments, the conducted empirical research allowed us to identify three basic archetypes for Western, Southern and Eastern Europe. The assessment of influence the degree for each revealed archetype was carried out on a regional basis, which made it possible to establish an important scientific fact: with a difference in the essence of the archetypes, they have an almost equally strong influence on the socio-economic development of the countries in the European Union.
2. In the course of the study, the following main problems were also identified, which experts associate with the negative impact of cultural archetypes on socio-economic

development: 1) staff turnover in the labor market in Southern Europe; 2) the priority of work instead of creating a family in Western Europe; 3) excessive desire for competition in the countries of Eastern Europe. The negative consequences of any archetype influence must be studied separately, which, undoubtedly, creates a new field for studying the relationship between culture and the economy.

3. As a research result, it was found that the majority of the interviewed experts consider it necessary to more actively promote interdisciplinary research in order to obtain more concrete evidence of the influence of cultural archetypes on the socio-economic development of various regions of the European Union..

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