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The Transatlantic Value Divide: Myths and Realities

Individual vs. State

- individual responsibility
- acceptable level of state interference
- social security and welfare state
- fiscal pressure

Attitudes Towards Criminality and Individual Violence:

- arms control
- number of prisoners
- death penalty

Religiousness

- belief in God
- puritanism
- family values
- homosexuality

Foreign Policy

- militarism
- use of force
- unilateralism
- role of the United Nations
- development assistance

Others aspects include values referring to patriotism, racism, immigration policy.

Traditional Values

- religion is very important
- children must be raised in obedience to authority
- strong national pride sentiment
- divorce is never justified
- abortion is never justified
- strong respect for authority

Threat Perception in the US and the EU

Threat	Consider to be important in the US (%)	Consider to be important in the EU (%)
International Terrorism	76	71
Islamic Fundamentalism	51	52
Global spread of infectious	51	52

desease, like AIDS		
Global Slowdown of the World Economy	41	43
Terrorist Attack with Weapons of Mass Destruction	75	56 (oscillating between 31 in Netherlands and 77 in Spain)

In which cases would you approve the use of force

You would approve the use of force	US (%)	EU (%)
To prevent the terrorist attack	92	83
To help the victims of war	81	92
To protect the oil supplies	44 (50 disagree)	42 (51 disagree)
To overthrow the government which violates human rights	57	50
To prevent the proliferation of the WMD	80	70
To protect the NATO ally, when attacked	87	75

Attitudes towards the use of force

- The overwhelming majority of Americans (82%) believes that in some cases war may be necessary in order to achieve justice. Only 57% of Europeans share this opinion. France, Germany and Spain are the most pacifist (between 8 and 9% share this opinion), while the UK – the least.
- 69% of Europeans reject the idea that the best means to ensure the peace is through military action. 54% of Americans agree with this idea, and 44% disagree.
- 84% of Europeans believe that economic power is more important than the military power. 64% of Americans agree.
- 63% of Americans believe that military tools are best suited to fight the terror, while only 47% of Europeans think so, but 49% disagree.

Participation in military operations

You would accept your country to participate in a military operation in other country, when:	US	EU
authorized by the United Nations	78	70
supported by NATO	78	65
supported by key European allies	86	65

Conclusion

The transatlantic values divide is a myth

- US and EU still share basic common values
- The EU is moving faster towards liberal, secular values, while the US is slowing down
- The real divide is between rich and poor countries, not US and EU
- In foreign policy, the US and EU share basic world outlook and perceptions of threats
- As a result of their different historic experiences Americans are much more favourable towards use of force, while Europeans are much more hesitant

