

RĒZEKNES TEHNOLOĢIJU AKADEMIJA  
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Starptautiskās zinātniskās konferences materiāli  
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PĒTĪJUMI EKONOMIKAS UN VADĪBAS JOMĀ  
ILGTSPĒJĪGAI IZGLĪTĪBAI**

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**IETEKME UZ  
DEMOGRĀFISKAJĀM  
PĀRMAINĀM: SABIEDRĪBA,  
KULTŪRA, IZGLĪTĪBA**  
*Implications for Demographic Change:  
Society, Culture, Education*





## **FUTURE MIGRATION DECISIONS: AN EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH**

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**Abstract.** *The volatile political and institutional scene in Europe implies that future migration-related decision making can be re-assessed. Implications that migrants face might lead to a remarkable shift in migration trajectories and the need to adopt various future geographic mobility decisions. Therefore, this paper demonstrates to what extent the experimental approach can illustrate future migration-related decision making. This study explores the geographic selectivity of migration intentions of international students under four hypothetical scenarios. The data was collected in 2019 from a sample of international students in Latvia, accounting for 500 experimental participants.*

*The findings suggest that majority of international students studying in Latvia would prefer relocation. Besides, it is indicative that institutional barriers such as the need for a visa are much less critical than economic conditions, wage level and overall quality of life. Such indicative factors as wage level increase in Latvia would substantially boost the possibility to stay in Latvia; however, changes related to family or personal reasons are essential triggers for the students to return to their home countries.*

**Keywords:** *experimental methods, future scenarios, international students, migration decision, migration studies.*

### **Introduction**

The concept of 'migration industry' (Garapich, 2008) examines the fluid nature of migration processes, geography-specific economy, national state and people involved. Major actors channelling students to the favourable countries of education export are studied using education-migration industry nexus (Lui-Farrer and Tran, 2019). Due to globalisation processes, national state policy initiatives, global marketisation (Findlay et al., 2016) of educational export, new migration stakeholder appear. Previous studies show different aspects of this process: recruiting of international students as skilled migrants (Ziguras and Law, 2006), the role of institutions for study migration (Basford and Riemsdijk, 2017), brokerage industry (Tuxen and Robertson, 2018) highlighting competition of

'world-class universities' (Prazeres et al., 2017) for the "best and brightest" (Findlay et al., 2012) in order to improve their job prospects (Heaviside et al., 2018). Many Western countries are competing to attract a global talent pool.

As a country of emigration in the past decade, Latvia experiences an increase in immigrants' numbers; respectively, international students are choosing Latvia as their study destination country. Latvia is due to its geography - Eastern border of the EU, history - post-soviet heritage, social – number of Russian speaking minority and economic - low costs of living, low university fees and also low integration into the labour market as a drawback is an appealing choice and steps into the competition.

There are numerous studies on international student mobility worldwide covering geographies and complexities: place distinctiveness (Findlay et al., 2016), temporality (King and Raghuram, 2013), tacit skills and knowledge transfer (Baláž et al., 2004). International students are a source of culturally rich skilled labour and seen as attractive, skilled migrants providing injection into the economy at the regional and national level (Ziguras and Law, 2006), but they often are unaware of employment opportunities. Study in developed countries shows that individual support efforts from universities, businesses, public service providers and other local role-players can help international students (Morris-Lange and Brands, 2015). For many international studies allow gaining better employment opportunities after graduation (Baláž et al., 2004), for some, it increases the social and cultural capital (Holloway et al., 2012) and often a drawback of part-time employment during studies (Arkoudis et al., 2019).

The methodological framework for this study is based on the migration-related scenario generation. This topic is also essential at the EU political (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge, 2018) and scientific level as several EU funded projects have been granted to explore and quantify migration scenarios. For example, project 'QuantMig' though seeing migration as an uncertain and complex problem to advance knowledge on quantifiable migration scenarios for a more transparent migration future (Boissonneault et al., 2020). Also, project 'Ymobility' by investigating young adults in the EU at different life stages and future aspirations, employed experimental methods to reveal potential destination countries' choices and responses to the future migration scenarios (Baláž and Williams, 2018). Besides (McKenzie, 2015) emphasises the need to conduct experiments to learn more about migration. He discusses policy experiments and research-designed experiments for possible patterns of population mobility.

Implications that migrants face might lead to remarkable shifts in migration trajectories and the need to adopt various plans. Therefore, this paper demonstrates to what extent the experimental approach can illustrate future migration-related decision making. This study explores hypothetical scenarios and analyses indicative aspects of possible decision-making strategies.

The study is based on a survey experiment providing four hypothetical scenario descriptions to Latvia's international students. Hypothetical scenarios relate to the economic, institutional (Petzold and Moog, 2017) and private aspects.

Research questions explored in this study relate to the following aspects:

**RQ1** What are potential migration preferences among international students in Latvia?

**RQ2** What factors are the most crucial in future migration-decision?

**RQ 3** To what extent external factors affect future migration decision.

### **Literature Review**

With the rise of a knowledge based economy, demand for higher education has expanded substantially. The trend is visible in the rising number of student enrolments in higher education institutions. As a result of the massification of higher education and public policies to foster the advantages of states, the regions and cities worldwide have experienced an influx of young people from different countries looking for education opportunities (Zasina, 2020). Globalisation and internationalisation of higher education worldwide promoted the rapid growth of international students, which has approximately doubled every 20 years since 1975 (Adnett, 2010). Following countries, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Australia, France, Germany, and the Russian Federation constitute over half of the international students studying in these six countries. The global sending countries of international students include China, India, Germany, South Korea, Nigeria, France, Saudi Arabia and several Central Asian countries (UNESCO, 2019).

It is widely agreed that many international students do not return to their home countries after completion of their degrees. It benefits the country where they graduated to increase the potential of human capital. However, the studies on the return migration of international graduates are limited, especially on migrant intention, motivation, and actual migration outcomes. Baker and Finn (2003) provides one study that does quote actual stay rates in the US, calculated from data provided by the tax authorities. He found differences in stay rates by discipline (with stay rates being highest for science and engineering students and lowest among economics and social science students) and nationality (with the highest rates among Chinese and Indian students. Other studies show that students' mental expectations or initial intentions to move predicts later mobility and remaining in the host country (Hazen & Alberts, 2006). Yan and colleagues (2014) suggested that initial intentions to stay, as expressed in the survey, had predictive value for stay rates 1-year post-graduation. Gu and Schweisfurth (2015) took an essential step in exploring international graduate returnees' transnational identities after studying abroad.

According to previous studies, students' migration intentions are an imperfect measure of the number of students who stay (Baker and Finn, 2003). They are a helpful indicator of future migration decisions. An experimental approach or hypothetically set conditions helps to foresee behaviour patterns of various population groups. It also advances knowledge on migration intentions and migration decision-making at the individual level.

Scholars previously have questioned how to explore an individual's responses to hypothetical future scenarios (Baláž and Williams, 2017). The scenario approach is used in previous studies concerning development potential in Latvia regions by increasing youth employability (Grinevica et al., 2016).

## **Methodology**

The experimental research method helps to understand and, to some extent, project possible behaviour under specific experimental conditions. This can narrow the gap and provide reasonable explanations for the theoretical advancement, political recommendations, and participants' engagement in the know-how strategic planning.

The decline in local student numbers relates to two critical factors - the low fertility rate around 2000, resulting in a low youth population in Latvia today, as well as the high emigration rate, which also includes young people emigrating for study and work-related reasons. According to Apsite - Berina et al. (2020), since 2007, the number of enrolled students decreases in Latvia. However, since 2010 there is a steady increase of international students in Latvia. In 2018, India, Uzbekistan, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine, Finland, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka and Pakistan were the countries with the most significant number of students. Students from 95 different countries worldwide are studying in Latvia (Ministry of Education and Science, 2019). The most common study directions for international students are social science and business management, followed by medicine and health care. There are different geographical trends in the choice of study paths: students from the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) and Georgia tend to prefer social science and business management, while European students tend to opt for medical and health care programs.

The methodological framework involved adopting the experimental method and migration scenarios from the study conducted by Balaz and Williams (Baláž and Williams, 2018) and based around hypothetical scenarios. The process of data gathering was conventional. The data was collected in the 2019 spring and autumn semester from a sample of international students in Latvia, accounting for 521 experimental participants or international students representing the foremost higher education institutions in Latvia (for example, University of Latvia, Riga Stradins University, Riga Technical University etc.) and six main geographic

profiles: 1) member countries in the European Union before the accession of ten candidate countries on 1 May 2004 – EU 15 area (n=167), 2) new member countries in the European Union after 1 May 2004 – EU 13 countries (n=11), 3) EFTA countries (n=13); 4) CIS countries (n=105), 5) South Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka) (n=191), 6) other countries (Canada, the USA etc.) (n=31).

The questionnaire included 40 questions, divided into thematic blocks – overall student characteristics, previous schooling experiences, motivations to study abroad, the choice to study abroad, satisfaction with the current life and strategies on future carrier plans. The last thematic block included four questions on future scenarios where respondents have to show their intentions to return to their home country, stay in Latvia or move to another country if:

In this study, we analysed future migration decisions according to four hypothetical scenarios:

**Scenario 1:** Rapid wage level and living standard increase in Latvia in the next year.

**Scenario 2:** Worsening of living conditions and an increase in unemployment in the home country.

**Scenario 3:** Institutional restriction (residence permit, work visa) in Latvia.

**Scenario 4:** Unexpected shifts in family and private life.

The primary purpose of the analysis and future scenarios block was to reveal views on the decision-making process for international study move to Latvia and future intentions of current full-time international students in Latvia.

The software of IBM SPSS Statistics 26 for survey data array analysis was used in this study. Pearson chi-square test was used to determine the statistical differences among groups of international students in Latvia.

## Research Results

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between international students' country of residence and their migration intentions if wages and living standards in Latvia increase in the next year.

The relation between the variables was significant,  $X^2(10, N = 521) = 107,8$ ,  $p = 0,000$ . Table 1 shows that students from the EU – 15 area and EFTA countries are more inclined to return to their home country regardless if wages and living standards in Latvia increase in the future. Simultaneously, students from the EU – 13 countries (for example, Estonia, Lithuania, etc.), CIS and South and Middle East Asia countries are more likely to stay in Latvia if living conditions in Latvia improve.

**Table 1 Intentions of International Students if Wages and Living Standards for All Workers in Latvia Increase Rapidly in the Next Year (%)**

Country of residence	Intentions		
	Return to home country	Stay in Latvia	Move to another country
EU – 15 area	66,5	24,6	9,9
EU – 13 countries	45,5	54,5	0,0
EFTA countries	91,7	8,3	0,0
CIS countries	12,0	68,0	20,0
South and Middle East	29,8	55,1	15,2
Asia			
Other	27,6	65,5	6,9

*Source (authors' calculations based on student survey)*

**Table 2 Intentions of International Students if a High Rise in Unemployment and Worsening of Living Conditions Occur in a Home Country in the Next Year (%)**

Country of residence	Intentions		
	Return to home country	Stay in Latvia	Move to another country
EU – 15 area	36,8	12,9	50,3
EU – 13 countries	40,0	20,0	40,0
EFTA countries	90,0	0,0	10,0
CIS countries	9,3	52,6	38,1
South and Middle East	30,5	36,7	32,8
Asia			
Other	13,8	34,5	51,7

*Source (authors' calculations based on student survey)*

The relation between international students' country of residence and migration intentions if work and living conditions in their home country worsen (Table 2) was significant,  $X^2(10, N = 521) = 79,9, p = 0,000$ . Students from EFTA countries are more likely to return to their home country than students from other groups. Students' from the EU countries are unlikely to stay in Latvia if work and living conditions in the home country worsen. Only students from CIS and South and Middle East Asia countries are more likely to stay in Latvia.

Evidence from scenario where various restriction for stay in Latvia are implemented show that a chi-square test of independence between variables was significant  $X^2(10, N = 521) = 61,2, p = 0,000$ . Students from the EU – 15 areas, EFTA and South and Middle East Asia, are more likely to return to their home country if restrictions for a stay in Latvia are implemented. Only students from CIS and EU – 13 countries are more likely than students from other groups stay

in Latvia. However, according to this scenario, students from CIS countries are ready to move to another country.

**Table 3 Intentions of International Students if Residence Permit, Work Visa, and Other Various Restrictions for a Stay in Latvia Would Be Implemented (%)**

Country of residence	Intentions		
	Return to home country	Stay in Latvia	Move to another country
EU – 15 area	65,4	15,4	19,1
EU – 13 countries	36,4	36,4	27,3
EFTA countries	83,3	8,3	8,3
CIS countries	20,2	37,4	42,4
South and Middle East	46,0	29,3	24,7
Asia			
Other	58,6	13,8	27,6

Source (authors' calculations based on student survey)

Evidence from scenario where various restriction for stay in Latvia are implemented show that a chi-square test of independence between variables was significant  $X^2(10, N = 521) = 61,2, p = 0,000$ . Students from the EU – 15 areas, EFTA and South and Middle East Asia, are more likely to return to their home country if restrictions for a stay in Latvia are implemented. Only students from CIS and EU – 13 countries are more likely than students from other groups stay in Latvia. However, according to this scenario, students from CIS countries are ready to move to another country.

**Table 4 Intentions of International Students if a Rapid Change in Family/Private Life Will Happen (%)**

Country of residence	Intentions		
	Return to home country	Stay in Latvia	Move to another country
EU – 15 area	78,8	11,3	10,0
EU – 13 countries	80,0	20,0	0,0
EFTA countries	90,9	0,0	9,1
CIS countries	48,4	31,6	20,0
South and Middle East	66,9	20,6	12,6
Asia			
Other	72,4	24,1	3,4

Source (authors' calculations based on student survey)

A chi-square test of independence shows that the relation between students' country of residence and migration intentions if rapid change in family/private life happen was significant,  $X^2(10, N = 521) = 33,0, p = 0,000$ . In this scenario, students from all country groups are more likely to return to their home country. Moreover, students from CIS countries more likely than students from other groups consider staying in Latvia or moving to another country.

Students' possible intentions from CIS countries to stay in Latvia in most scenarios can be explained by features of the social milieu in Latvia, including options to work in jobs where Russian knowledge is an advantage and more democratic society than in the eastern part of the former Soviet Union. The last point partly is confirmed by the third scenario's results, revealing that students from CIS countries unlikely will move back to their home country if some restrictions are implemented in Latvia.

Students from South and Middle East Asia see Latvia as a well-recognised study destination on average in two out of four scenarios. These intentions can be explained by the attractiveness of Latvia as an EU country where students from South and Middle East Asia countries can get a university degree for a relatively low study fee, get a higher salary compared to their home country and become a part of the Asian student community of which is spreading in larger cities of Latvia.

Simultaneously, students from the EU-15 area and EFTA countries are more likely to move elsewhere because Latvia in the first place was their second choice (Apsite-Berina et al., 2020). For example, students from Germany, France, Switzerland, Norway and other Western Europe countries choose Latvia to be admitted in a desired educational programmes (mostly medicine studies), which is limited in their home countries. We assume that this explains students' intentions from the EU-15 area and EFTA countries to move back to home countries in most scenarios.

## **Conclusions**

This paper and its innovative analytical approach enhance our understanding of international student migration intentions and under what conditions they might stay in Latvia or move to another country. For this purpose, an experimental approach was employed. In this study, we developed and tested four scenarios.

**Scenario 1:** rapid wage level and living standard increase in Latvia in the next year.

**Scenario 2:** worsening of living conditions and an increase in unemployment in the home country.

**Scenario 3:** institutional restriction (residence permit, work visa) in Latvia.

**Scenario 4:** unexpected shifts in family and private life.



All four scenarios showed that our approach is fine-grained to address the intentions of international students and migrants in general and provide some critical starting points for modelling migrants' future decision making and behaviour.

The findings suggest that majority of international students studying in Latvia would prefer relocation. Besides, it is indicative that institutional barriers such as the need for a visa are much less critical than economic conditions, wage level and overall quality of life. Such indicative factors as wage level increase in Latvia would substantially boost the possibility to stay in Latvia; however, changes related to family or personal reasons are essential triggers for the students to return to their home countries.

Moreover, findings show that students from the EU 15 area and EFTA countries are unlikely to stay in Latvia in any of four hypothetical scenarios. Besides, even if they will not be intended to return to their home country, they most probably will move to another country. Simultaneously, students from CIS and South and Middle Asian countries are more likely to choose to stay in Latvia in the case of four proposed future scenarios. Notably, it is evident if wages and living standards in Latvia for workers increase. The intentions of students from EU 13 countries depend on the scenario. More likely, they prefer staying in Latvia if wages and living conditions increase or various restrictions are enforced. At the same time, they choose to move to their home country or another country if working and living conditions worsen or rapid changes in family/private life will happen.

This paper builds a more robust theory around multiple factors important in international student migration and offers ideas about what conditions matter most in students' decision to move or stay.

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# EVALUATION OF (SELF-)DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURALITY EXPERIENCES IN INFORMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

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**Abstract.** *Political, economic, social and cultural changes of the country influence the change of the educational content. Striving to develop dynamic modern Lithuanian's and person's modern nationality, the educational content should relate to "pupils' experiences and sociocultural needs. The article presents that the development of interculturality of pupils is one of the approaches when striving to understand cultural diversity of the present-day world. The results of previous research (Bilbokaitė, 2017, 2016) have revealed the lack of programmes, clear guidelines for intercultural education in the context of the different learning environments. The article describes importance of informal education, that arises from the learner's involvement in activities that are not undertaken with a learning purpose in mind. The research aim is to reveal pupil's (of the 10th-12th Forms) opinion about the (self-)development of interculturality in informal learning environments. Quantitative research was used (sample of 727 Lithuanian comprehensive school pupils) to investigate practical application of development of interculturality in educational environment from pupil's perspective. The research results analysed employing content analysis reveal the importance of learning from the experience as a fundamental and natural means in different environments - home, social networks, school, city, streets. Safe personal environment creates the opportunity to be self, to learn about values, variety of cultures, tolerance, acceptance of others. Pupils' opinions concerning the lack of possibilities for development of interculturality in school (during formal education) are presented.*

**Keywords:** *(self-)development of interculturality, experiences, informal learning environments, Lithuania, pupils, content analysis.*

## Introduction

The crossing of both culture and globalisation process is dealt with in studies of many scientists who underline importance of a dialogue (Chumakov, 2013), the culture turning global (Cowen, 2004; Laszlo, 2012; Pieterse, 2003), changes in the lifestyles of society members and their values (Giddens, 2003; Klimova, 2011; Mozaffari, 2002; Tutchener, 2013; Huntington, Harrison, 2000), manifestation of diversity (Johnston & Hiwasari 2012; Robertson, 1995). The

rapid pace of technologies, changes in the cultural and social relationships are emphasised by contemporary researchers (Longhurst, 2007; Husted, 2003; Giddens, 2000) who highlight inevitable cultural changes caused by these processes as the reality of present-day social life, manifesting through interaction with other cultures, groups of individuals, while accepting new ideas, different experiences, forming values and beliefs.

Education-related legal acts of the European Union and the United Nations, strategic documents (Europe 2020: A Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth, UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001, the programme of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development: 2005 - 2014, etc.) regulate the striving for the fostering of cultural diversity as a guarantee ensuring survival of the humankind, emphasising the fostering of culture as “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001).

The development of interculturality of pupils is one of the approaches when striving to understand cultural diversity of the present-day world, changing personal identity and values, to accept cultural changes, enhancing the principles of equality, acceptance of differentness as well as manifestation of respect and tolerance. Also, pupils’ abilities of interaction and communication with members of their group and surrounding environment are being developed (Bhawuk & Brislin, 2000).

Informal education, as well as the Non-formal and formal one, “prepares young people for the challenges and responsibilities that they will undertake in the adult life” (Lafraya, 2011). Today’s education, whose goal is to educate an independent, active, creative, open to innovations and change personality, gives an opportunity to learn in various contexts and participate in processes of change. “The importance of assessing and recognizing the achievements of informal learning has, therefore, been increased” (Petnuchova, 2012) in this context. According to S. L. Tudor (2013) “informal learning is a very effective method of learning and probably the most common among adults”. Analysis of scientific literature revealed complexity of successful informal learning that encourage development of a dialogue, intercultural relation based on critical thinking, while focusing special attention on interpersonal relationships, developing abilities to interpret cultural phenomena, promoting respect, tolerance, acceptance of the Other/ different.

Scientific relevance is indicated by the Lithuanian scholars who emphasises the lack of research studies dealing with tolerance, social exclusion, cultural

change and practical design of intercultural learning (Bakonis et al., 2004; Dailidienė, Lukošūnienė, 2003).

The research aim is to reveal pupil's (of the 10th-12th forms) opinion about the (self-)development of interculturality in informal learning environments.

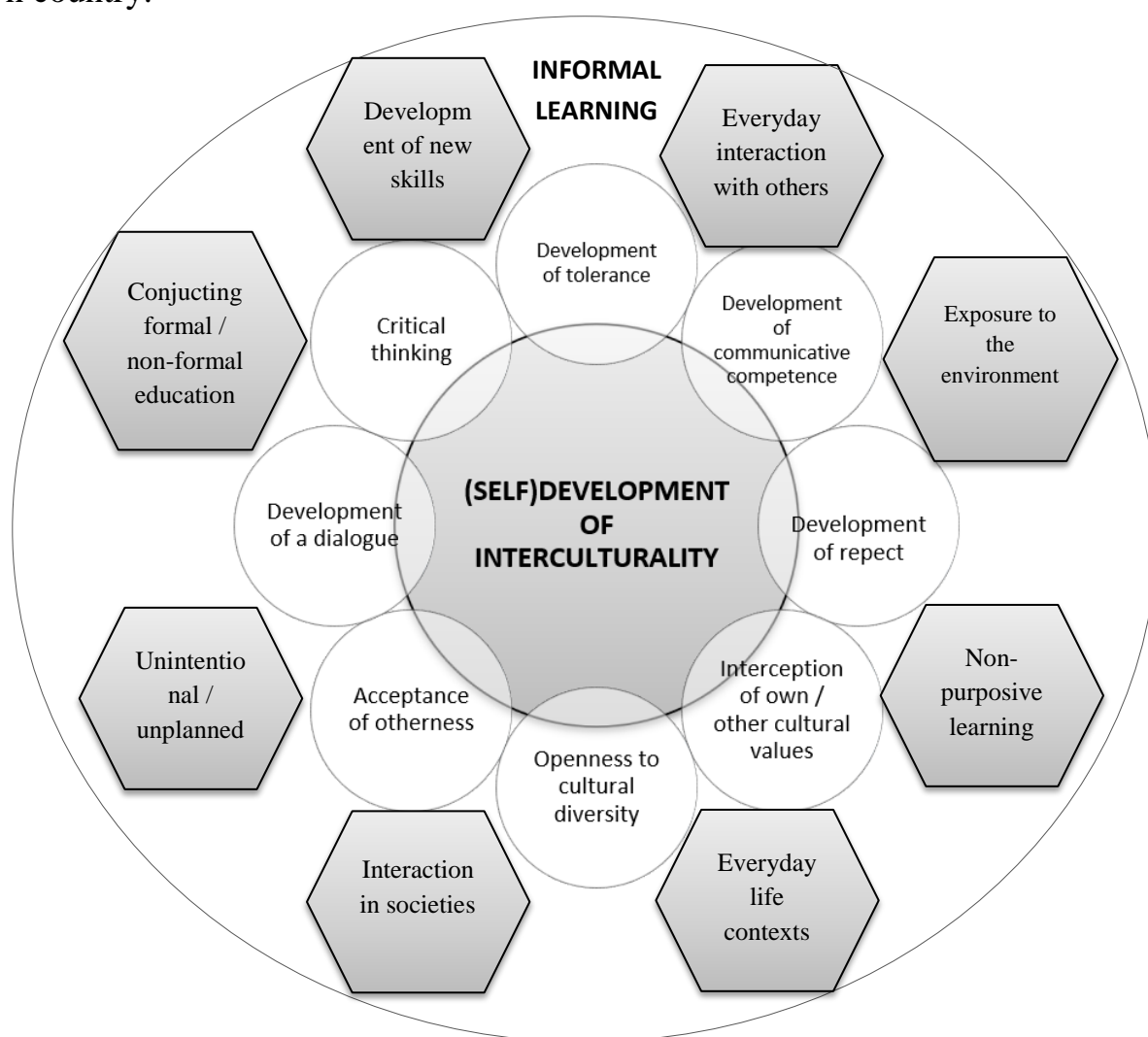
The problem of the research. Striving to meet the challenges set by globalisation, while building the foundations of a modern state open to the contemporary world, the strategy of Lithuanian progress focuses on several directions: openness, dialogue-based commonality with the otherness, cultures are promoted through re-consideration of own national identity vs fostering national identity, traditions and heritage, remaining the tradition-based society. In compliance with the challenges set for education, orientation of the educational content towards awareness of intercultural meanings is promoted; this may be achieved through updating curricula open for creativity, searching and perfection, initiating teacher training, designing informational resources, teaching aids, applying up-to-date educational technologies. However, such preconditions require a broader evaluation which supposes the *problem question* - what informal learning environments do influence (self-) development of interculturality of pupils?

### **Theoretical Basis of the Study**

With regard to expectations of the changing society, it is aimed to implement the changes in education oriented to the changes caused by the technologies of globalisation, economics, policy, accepting social-cultural factors. This stimulates the focusing on education based on inter-disciplinarity, integrity, values (de Leo, 2010; Osuna, 2013; Seyfried, 2014). The National Strategy of Education for 2013 – 2022 emphasises that education institutions aiming to implement their purpose, i. e. to assist pupils in becoming full-fledged members of democratic society, while adjusting to the changing culture, ground on the following value principles: “humanity, democracy and equal opportunities, civic spirit, implementation of freedom and ethics, tolerance and dialogue; national identity, continuity of the tradition and openness to cultural diversity”. This way, traditional (ethnic, folk) culture as the fostering of historically established ethical concepts, cultural values taken from past generations, through which national identity is revealed, is being highlighted, meeting the needs of the changing society becoming more modern.

The process of globalisation makes impact on cultural changes (Ladhari et al., 2015) when in the context of interaction of nations foreign values are being integrated, the youth forget their culture, are not interested in customs and traditions, when old rituals are substituted by new ones being promoted by the mass culture of consumerism or economic market. Because of complexity of the

constructs and applicability of the meanings rendered to them when constructing identities grounding on political, social and economic processes, the multi-dimensional perception of culture undergoing transformation is changing, when it is difficult to concretise the transformations of the values of society members, models of living and social activities, behaviour stereotypes, norms, ideals. On the ground of scientific insights of foreign scholars (Osovsky, 1997; Cucos, 2000; Delors, 2013; Chiriac & Panciuc, 2014), it can be summarized that intercultural education in school aims at stimulating human rights by developing self-confidence in class, striving to help the youth find themselves as members of both national and global community, this way forming the mentality and character of own country.



*Figure 1 Theoretical Model of Informal Learning Coherence to (Self)Development of Interculturality (designed by the authors, according to Seyfried, 2014; Chiriac & Panciuc, 2014; Tudor, 2013; Lafraya, 2011; Bilbokaitė, 2016; Jeffs & Smith, 2005, etc.)*

In order to achieve aim of research it's important to understand and define theoretical conception of informal education and its interfaces with self-development of interculturality of pupils (Figure 1). As Farahani et al. (2014) classified "gaining the necessary skills in the changing global world shows that learning in the especial places of learning and in specific periods is not enough". That reveals the importance of informal learning - a process where learning from experience and various activities, that help people to learn new skills, takes place, wherever people have the need, motivation, and opportunity for learning.

The definition of informal learning is not fully supported, although "it is clearer than the idea of non-formal learning" (Tudor, 2013). It is difficult to make a clear distinction between informal and non-formal learning because it can maintain a close relationship with both. According to J. Petnuchova (2012), "informal learning is an element of non-formal learning".

According to McGivney (1999) "some informal learning takes place in formal educational environments (such as schools) while some formal learning takes place in an informal local setting (such as church or village halls). As Coombs & Ahmed (1974) states informal education is "the lifelong process by which every individual acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences and exposure to the environment". Lafraya (2011) and Chisholm (2005) ideas about formal, non-formal and informal education help to establish the characteristics of informal education: it takes place on an unintentional and unplanned basis in the individual's everyday interaction with others; from the learner's standpoint, this is non-purposive learning which takes place in everyday life contexts in the family, at school, during leisure and in the community.

McGivney (1999) states that informal learning can be "unplanned, incidental, unintentional and surplus" to any explicit aims. It is very important to outline that it occurs "through dialogue" and explains how such learning might be utilised for interaction with others. According to S. Lafraya (2011) informal education describes socialisation, it is "non-organised and incidental learning that goes on in daily life". Every day experience creates opportunities for learning, e. g. through reading a book, watching television, communicating on social networks. Pupils are also involved in learning with others – at school (lectures in institutions, visiting museums), at home (scientific or didactic games, manipulation of kits, experiments, reading sessions) and in the various social to which they belong (Jeffs & Smith, 2005). C.Z. Dib (1988) emphasises the following activities that informal education comprises: "visits to museums, listening to radio, watching TV (on educational or scientific themes), reading texts on sciences, education, technology, participating in scientific contests, attending lectures and conferences". It should be noted that informal education does have outcomes, but these are "seldom recorded, virtually never certified and are



typically neither immediately visible for the learner nor do they count in themselves for education, training, or employment purposes” (Chisholm, 2005).

### **Research Methodology**

In 2019, quantitative research method – a *online questionnaire-based survey* of Lithuanian comprehensive school pupils (10th-12th forms) was used. The research involved 727 respondents (Table 1). The researchers designed the research instrument grounding on defined and specified diagnostic areas and characteristics of the research. The research instrument is the questionnaire with the following sections: the conception of interculturality, the activities held at school and stimulating interculturality, the shortage/ limitations of interculturality, reasons for the lack of interculturality, key aspects of interculturality, conditions for development of them at school. Authors are using the data that are obtained from open-end type questions in this study, aiming to investigate experiences in informal learning environments and what was their meaning in the process of development of interculturality.

*Table 1 Sample Characteristics of Participants of the Research*

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Place of residence</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Female	56,8	15 years	0,7	Lithuanian	93,9	City	49,0
Male	43,2	16 years	28,1	Polish	2,6	Village	51,0
		17 years	32,0	Russian	1,5		
		18 years	31,9	Belarusian	0,4		
		19 years	7,3	Ukrainian	0,4		
				Other	1,1		

Research ethics. Before conducting the research, the purpose of the research, the methodology and the conditions of publishing the results were explained to the respondents. Ethical principles of research were followed in the survey. The ethics of the research is based on a respectful attitude towards the participants.

The article presents data of the analysis of informal environments for (self-)development of interculturality, supplementing theoretical insights. To carry out data analysis, the method of *content analysis* was employed. The content of the text has been analyzed consistently, by dividing the pending content into analytical segments, i. e. categories, subcategories. They are coded (e.g. [1] and similar) according to the order of questionnaire, submitted by research participants, in order to ensure their anonymity. In their answers, the pupils

recorded their opinions and attitudes. The research results may be *the ground for further broader investigations*.

### **Research Results: Analysis of Informal Learning Environments in Intercultural Education**

Learning environments are understood as the areas of people's lives and activities that have an educational value, enabling an individual's personal development, which is realized through learning efforts (Jucevičienė, 2001). The research participants singled out home, social network, and school environments (Figure 2) in which, if they recognize intercultural situations, they learn from. The analysis of the research data revealed that students spend most of their time in the HOME ENVIRONMENT. In it, by interacting with diverse people and experiencing various situations, the latter gain the most experience, which develops interculturality. The possibility of being yourself is emphasized, because "only there you can relax and not worry about what those around you will say, you can accept others, their differences. At home, you behave as you wish" [1, 678]. This view is echoed that "if not family, I would hardly be able to be myself and accept others, no matter how different they are" [649]. This is encouraged by communication with family and friends. According to the participants of the study, "you can be yourself at home and nobody will bully or humiliate you" [671], so they feel safe in this environment.

Learning from parents becomes an important factor when the principles of values and equality, empathy, and respect for otherness are developed. This is "the best place to learn from family members" [99]. First of all, it is noted that „in the home environment <...> family cultivates the values of each person" [305]. At the same time, it is taught to accept others as they are [123, 483], to tolerate everyone [545], to "behave politely, treat others with respect" [509]. The following example illustrates this: „*my parents have a friend whose son has Down syndrome. My parents taught me tolerance from an early age, not to make fun of, to play together*" [494]. Parents teach that „all are equal" [708]. It is also emphasized "when cultivating interculturalism you are developing yourself, your perception, your understanding in respect of others" [516], because parents develop personality "by helping them to get acquainted with everything" [666] and by passing on their experiences. The understanding of other countries is emphasised [7, 711, 74], when the opportunities are provided at home to "take an interest in different nations and countries" [640], the discussions take place about "the cultures of other countries" [243]. As the pupils' state, "there are questions I ask every person close to me. When I get answers, I get to know other nations, their culture" [353]. It is emphasized that "tolerance for foreigners is taught at home" [7, 64], "respect for others is introduced" [28]. At home it is spoken why

“we have to accept people as they are, regardless the nationality and so on” [505], “respect other people, people of other nations, not to make fun of them” [209], “respect everybody” [349], “behave ourselves” [660].

Home is a personal environment where students spend most of their time and feel safe, “do not feel any pressure, communicate easily, freely” [665]. At home children may “think everything over in a calm way” [111, 515], “focus on and concentrate” [337]. By watching movies, listening to foreign music [125], surfing the Internet [275], pupils learn to “not condemn others and understand them” [665]. An example is given where *“the perception of interculturalism was most introduced by <...> an aunt, an experienced traveller. I especially admire her stories about different cultures, customs, and tolerance to others. It encourages me to break down stereotypes, barriers and integrate into the wider world”* [217].

The importance of communication with foreigners is emphasized, when at home there are excellent conditions for communicating with them and “it encouraged the acceptance of people of other nations” [681].

The following example of such communication is provided when “I had to help the child at home, who came to Lithuania from abroad, communicate with other children” [261]. It is noted that communication is taking place with family members living abroad. Also, with friends they communicate openly with [565, 566]. Interculturalism is developed at home “via the Internet” [67, 154, 587], “equality” is learned [585] namely in this space, “one can find material about everything” [687], “read many articles and do not see bullying” [633]. One can get to know other nations by watching TV [696, 333, 285].

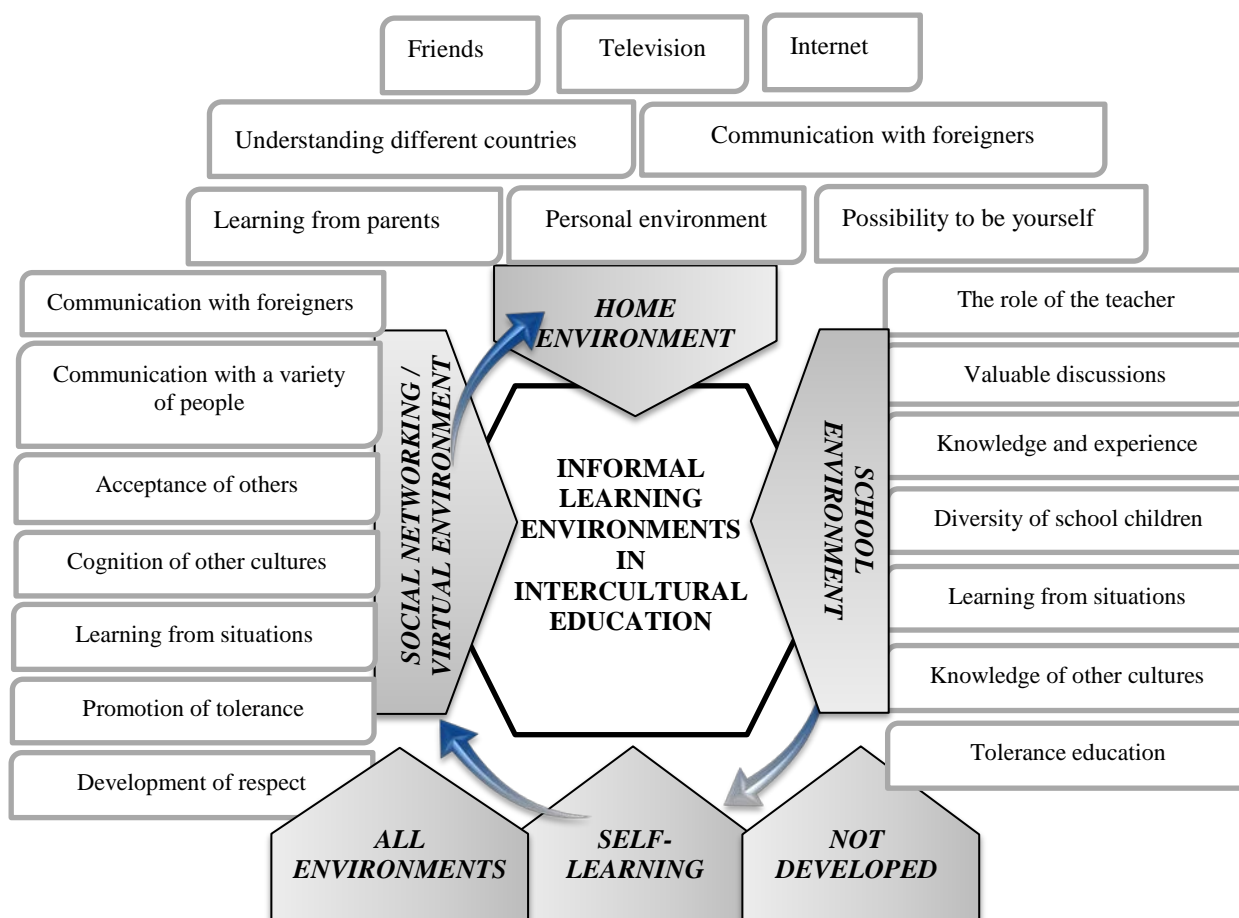
**SOCIAL NETWORKING / VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT.** On the Internet and social networks pupils are given the opportunity to be themselves, to communicate with foreigners, various people, to develop tolerance, respect, to learn from situations, to accept others, to get to know different cultures. In the public online space, information is easily accessible [201, 191] both on various social networks and on news portals, computer games. The virtual environment “connects people of different cultures” [595], “it is possible to learn more and more about everything, perhaps even learn first-hand” [319], to get acquainted with various opinions [696], “to learn a lot of valuable information” [635, 478, 348]. It is emphasized that pupils feel safe namely in this environment and, on the contrary, at school they are afraid to express their views due to possible criticism and bullying (“it is difficult at school because it is scary to be criticized, it is scary you will be bullied” [562]). This choice of communication method is also influenced by the fact that pupils have limited opportunities to travel and communicate with various personalities. Pupils learn and receive information from “videos, photos, virtual museums” [511], “comments, specific situations” [692].

The opinion is that *“when it comes to the Internet, social networks - I see, read and hear a lot here. I tend to notice that the Lithuanian audience is becoming more tolerant, understanding the representatives of another race or nationality. Nevertheless, the youth of the Lithuanian province still use uncensored vocabulary, brutality and insult others. There are now more and more social actions for equality, peaceful cooperation between countries around the world and I am pleased to see that. It’s nice when we become cosmopolitan, but the current political and geographical situation is forcing some nations to look at it from a different angle. After various terrorist attacks, almost all Muslims are being condemned. I feel sorry for innocent women, children and men who sincerely believe in Allah and want peace and quiet in the world. This is hampered by the stereotype about all Muslims that they are all terrorists, as many claim”* [572].

The most pronounced category is Communication with foreigners, emphasizing the possibility to communicate *“live, easily”* with *“citizens of a different way of life or thinking”* [697] and get to know them [27, 486, 342 56], *“to share their thoughts, ideas and life experiences ”* [366]. This experience helps pupils *“in communication with new people and making new friends. By communicating with foreigners our knowledge enriches, we learn a lot more about other people, and maybe even about ourselves”* [57]. Communication in the public space allows us to assume that foreigners *“are not valued or insulted in any way. Lithuanians avoid them and are sceptical”* [644]. It is noted that *“there is no such possibility at school”* [554]. An example is given when *“I had to talk to an American using Skype while playing one online game. He told me in detail about his hobbies, housework, his future plans, the cultural buildings and places of attraction in his city. It was a great experience not only to learn about the hobbies of a foreigner, but also to speak in a more acceptable language – English to him* [573]. An open mutual communication reveals that all people are equal, similar, regardless of their beliefs, religion, and nationality [238].

Emphasis is also placed on communication with a variety of people who express different views [450, 290, 249, 612, 607, 479]. This allows students to communicate with more freedom [527], to understand and get to know people, their culture, which is perceived as a *“continuous path of human development”* [194]. The category of acceptance of others is distinguished, when by communicating on social networks and analysing material on the Internet, pupils can *“be themselves and accept others, no matter how different they are”* [56]. Human differences, their otherness are taken for granted, recognizing that diversity is an integral part of today’s world and *“irrelevant to race, gender, or social status”* [234]. Pupils are *“just happy to communicate, the opinion of others is interesting. In the virtual space everyone in different corners of the world can*

share their experiences, impressions” [235], “communicate with each other politely, tolerate others” [523].



*Figure 2 Schematization of Informal Learning Environments in Intercultural Education (designed by the authors of the research)*

Emphasis is placed on cognition of other cultures, when “such communication teaches to know other countries, their cultures, languages” [225], “traditions and customs” [501], “religions, cultures, holidays” [518]. At the same time experiences are shared, “a common conversation field is created” [48], when the access to moments in people’s lives such as following interesting people on Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, etc. is given” [141]. Communication with emigrants and analysis of their experience, how “their attitude has changed, how they identify themselves, what group they belong to, because they have already become “the Lithuanians of the world” takes place [221]. Communication on social networks gives experience, “you see, learn something new, and thus you develop, educate yourself” [460]. There is also a contradiction, stating that “social networks are also good for this purpose, but nowhere else will they learn interculturalism as in real life, by actually communicating, seeing and living”

[460]. Pupils note the importance of communication (language) skills, such as “I listen to K-POP Korean pop, I like it because of its music, and I find the lyrics translated to understand what they are singing about” [236]. It is said that there is an interest in “Indian culture, their customs, specifically their painting on the body, which has many meanings in their culture” [358].

It is noted that learning from situations that “help to choose” is very important [232], because “many different and diverse people are involved” [95]. Learning from situations is assessed as the “best lessons” [232]. Learning does not only take place on social networks, where a lot of time is wasted, but also “in the street” [95]. Namely, social networks “provide many good examples and are best explained, <...> there are all the conditions for communication, people and their experiences” [507]. It is noted that “*by interacting online where there is a wealth of information about other cultures, I become more familiar with other people’s ways of life and become more tolerant. In today’s world, where people of different religions, cultures, nations mix, it is difficult to be intolerant towards other cultures*” [253].

It is emphasized that “there are many different images and recordings in the social space that promote tolerance” [725], in which “you get to know too many different personalities, which helps you to unfold, become more tolerant” [354]. It is emphasized that there is also bullying in social networks, intolerance of foreigners, people of other faiths or races, but pupils “feel responsible and understand that everyone is different and therefore accept others tolerantly” [564]. An example how to develop tolerance is given: “I like Facebook the most because you can see different types of people there. But everyone there tries to be tolerant, friendly. There was a situation when everyone in Facebook friends started making fun of one girl and the others defended her. Since then, I have realized that it is always better to be a tolerant person than to insult another” [524].

Emphasis is also placed on the development of respect, which states that when communicating on social networks people “should respect the other” [660], promote various agitation for the rights of others [367]. An example is given where “people on a social network <...> gather from all over the world to create their blogs. <...> A lot is written about feminism, sexism, the situation of refugees from Syria, Belarus, <...> about social problems. From there, I formed my attitude that one cannot judge others and must respect everyone, no matter how different they may be” [75].

Self-presence becomes important when it is stated that on social networks, people’s behavior encourages, “stimulates being yourself, etc.”[203], as learning develops “from what you see or hear” [254]. It is noted that on the Internet “communication is open, free” [510], “there is no pressure” [665], one feels “having more freedom to speak, to express their opinion” [258]. It is this space

that teaches to accept others, no matter how different they are, “learns not to condemn and to understand others” [665].

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT develops interculturality through situations, communication with various children, by promoting knowledge of other cultures, development of tolerance, respect for others, self-development as a personality, cooperation, participation in project activities, exchange programs, clubs. The role of the teacher in conveying information to students is emphasized, when the analysis of various topics, discussions and sharing of experience in the classroom promotes intercultural knowledge. Pupils recognize examples of intercultural education differently. It is noted that “I learn interculturality every day [658]”, but the opinion is expressed in opposition - it is “occasionally” [184] “mentioned” [109] at school. In the school environment pupils have the opportunity to communicate (“we talk about it all there” [186]), “everyone teaches something in it” [525], and during the lessons “it is spoken about interculturalism” [345] and this gives opportunity to “learn a lot” [478].

The role of the teacher in “helping to understand” [708], developing interculturalism is emphasized. The experience and knowledge conveyed by teachers become an example for students (“teachers help to take note of various examples given of how others standing out are protected, for example, bullying towards Romanians” [688], “I see a good example” [325]). Teachers **discuss** various topics with their pupils. The school becomes a space where students “meet all kinds of different people and can discuss interculturalism” [124, 339], “its features, tolerance, cooperation” [697], gain knowledge and experience when “learn better qualities while being with others [2]. “There are people who teach in this environment and who share their experiences” [626]. Pupils are provided with access to the necessary information [635], which stimulates their interest.

Emphasis is placed on learning from the diversity of school children when interacting with children from “different families, orphanages, etc.” [248], “other countries” [490], “different nationalities and religions” [260], “with different personal characteristics” [5]. By communicating, spending free time or participating in extracurricular activities, pupils learn together “the customs and differences of an innovative culture, different stories” [260]. Also, communication with people of “different attitudes” and “different perspectives” [479, 482] requires the ability to “adapt, no matter how difficult it is” [547]. Pupils achieve this by “respecting everyone, even if they don’t really want to, or do not really like them” [248], by trying to “understand their classmates and teachers, understand their psychology and learn to communicate with them, accept them as they are, without resorting to conflict, etc.” [97]. Various knowledge emerges during discussions with like-minded people or, conversely, among those “with differing opinions”. An important aspect is that at school students feel comfortable when interacting with both students and teachers, and this gives them

the opportunity to “accept them as they are” [448]. Communication with “students of other nationalities, ages, different schools, attitudes to life, beliefs, height and weight,” [360, 342] promotes respect of pupils, noting the relevance of accepting differences (“we must respect them, they are not guilty that they come from poor countries or smaller than our cultures, their skin color differs, because we are all human, the same” [490]).

Pupils emphasize the importance of learning from situations, when “cultures are introduced through various situations, respect for the representatives of the other countries is taught” [215], “various situations with tolerance happen” [139]. Pupils’ experiences are influenced by the time they spend at school [578, 340] and the environment in which they have access to all the necessary information from the people around them (“there are questions I ask every person close to me. When I get answers, I get to know other nations, their culture” [353]).

The category of knowledge of other cultures is especially distinguished, the name of which indicates that in the school environment pupils get acquainted with various cultures [6, 7], learn about other people during Lithuanian lessons [252]. In this environment, pupils mainly talk about “cultures of other countries” [243, 362], “their customs and rights” [549], get acquainted with traditions of other countries [543], religions [335], intercultural non-verbal differences (“I learned that Bulgarians shake their head negatively, which means “yes” [608]), learn to accept “one’s own culture and other cultures” [678]. Teachers pass on their knowledge to pupils (“there are many good teachers at school who teach about cultures and beyond” [112], “teachers talk about different cultures” [542]). This information develops respect and tolerance for the differences of nations / individuals (“I realized that they need to be respected, tolerated” [361]). Emphasis is placed on the category of tolerance education, when students must follow appropriate rules in the school environment, for example, “be tolerant towards each person” [660], “tolerate others because of their appearance and behaviour” [660].

It is noted that interculturalism is fostered in ALL ENVIRONMENTS, whether “on the street, at home, at school, on social networks” [650], “at school, in the city, in extracurricular activities, by watching movies, reading books, attending events, concerts, exhibitions, etc. wherever people are present” [698]. Pupils note the need to accept people as they are, no matter what the situation is. The most important thing is communication, which allows you to get to know people. It is noted that “teachers must teach interculturalism at school” [498].

Emphasis is placed on children’s SELF-LEARNING, where environments such as the Internet [75] or homes, youth organizations, encourage them to learn and provide new ideas. Mostly learning from life situations takes place. It is stated that “no one encouraged it during the lessons, I have my own head” [64], “I have my own beliefs” [274], “I encouraged myself” [175]. It is stated that “I have learned everything online and by interacting with people from different cultures /



subcultures / social groups” [75], “everyone has to assess interculturality according to their own perception, because values will not be instilled in a person if he does not want to” [356].

Some students expressed their view that interculturalism is NOT DEVELOPED in a general education schools, emphasizing that “the school does not try to promote it” [22], “such subjects are not addressed” [141], “the school does not pay much attention to this issue, so it is difficult to comment”. [200], “there is no motivation” [144]. It is noted that “the school does not pay attention to interculturalism and each personality develops it independently” [146], “in no lesson interculturality is promoted, I just understood it myself” [201]. Various preventive events, such as Bullying Prevention Week, are seen as an insufficient period to “learn something about tolerance or interculturalism” [75]. It is emphasized that “no intercultural education is observed in any of the lessons” [110, 555, 343, 547, 548]. Here are some examples to illustrate the latter opinion of students:

*“Well, first of all, it’s a rare occasion for you to hear about interculturalism, tolerance at school. We talk mainly about the development of Lithuania, what Lithuanians are like, and foreigners are condemned. Because of this kind of Soviet teacher thinking, I think it’s time at school to change old teachers into recently graduated, liberal-minded youth. I realized that our school still has room for improvement, and we learn about tolerance and interculturalism ourselves” [665]; “Indeed, it is difficult to name a lesson that is about tolerance towards other nations. Yes, other cultures are mentioned during English lessons, but they are only introduced superficially. Mostly communication with foreigners develops the sense of respect. Unfortunately, I have few such opportunities in my environment” [27]; “The school does not have much influence in terms of intercultural education. History lessons provide some information about the history and culture of other countries, but that’s certainly not enough. Tolerance for someone else is innate, natural, I started to be interested in interculturalism on my own. Sadly, the people around are often full of prejudices and stereotypes, which is detrimental not only to other cultures but to all people. It is unacceptable to me that the school seems to divide people into certain categories, “boxes”, encourages people not to open up, but only to close even more” [194] “In lessons that take place in the Lithuanian language, I am set against these things because education in Lithuania is “rotten” [233].*

The lack of lessons is emphasized (“unfortunately, there are not many such lessons at our school” [26]). It is noted that there is a lack of opportunities to communicate with foreigners at school, which would “develop a sense of respect” [27]. It is stated that “most of the time there is only talk at school and no action. I believe that everyone, first of all, forms their interculturality from the living environment” [142]. Pupils **do not have experience in interculturalism**

**education** [348, 392], by emphasizing that “I did not encounter that and did not consider that” [656, 349, 114].

### **Conclusions**

The essential environments for self-development of interculturality are the following: home, social networks, school, where situations of interculturality are recognised, learnt from. A possibility to be self, the learning from parents, when value principles, comprehension, principles of equality, respect to differentness, opportunity to get acquainted with other cultures, self-development of tolerance, communication with foreign-born people, acceptance of others/ the different are being developed, are important. Safe personal environment becomes highly important. Self-development of interculturality is both recognised in all environments, i. e. on the street, at home, in school, social networks, city, while watching films, reading books, taking part in events, concerts, exhibitions etc., and the lack of development of interculturality in schools is emphasized when pupils lack motivation and experience.

The research results revealed that everyday learning from the environment takes very important part in the process of pupils (self-)development of interculturality. This reveals the need for further research, investigating informal education characteristics and its adaptation into today's education. The authors discover the need of non-formal / informal programmes which would help to enhance the principles of volunteering, cognition of the Other, integration into the cultural life of a city / country, by enhancing communication among community members, also by developing pupils' self-expression and creativity, active involvement in cultural, artistic, cognitive, scientific activities.

According to the results of the research pupils are developing interculturality not only at school environment, but also at home, in social networks and other environments, it is necessary to ensure effective collaboration between pedagogues and parents. It would allow to insure safe personal environment of pupils, to supplement intercultural situations occurring in school with those of the home environment or created by virtual environment, e. g. an opportunity to be oneself, to get acquainted with other cultures, communication with various people/ foreign-born people, assurance of equal opportunities. This can be implemented through participation in various activities such as projects, also involving both pupils and their parents, creating modern environments at school enabling learning from situations, providing experiences and motivation, new ideas to pupils; developing pedagogues' qualification, level of digital literacy, intercultural competences, stimulating design and implementation of modern educational scenarios in educational practice, by individualising the educational content, changing pupils' understanding of self-assessment, learning approaches.

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# THE VOICE OF THE CHILD: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM IN LITHUANIAN FAMILY SOCIAL WORK

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**Abstract.** *This paper explains the current practices of the child welfare system in the context of Lithuania. In Europe, research on child welfare has a long history; however, the child welfare situation in Lithuania has not been systematically studied, nor has it been provided with the research-based knowledge necessary for the development of the system. Based on qualitative research results, the paper sheds light on how the voice of the child is heard in Lithuanian child and family social work practice. The research participants in the present study were children and family social workers. The research results indicate that adult-centered family social work practices are dominant and the voice of the child is misleading in the intervention process.*

**Keywords:** *child protection, child and family social work, the voice of the child.*

## Introduction

In Lithuania, child protection units are separated from social work services in child and family welfare (Nygren et al., 2018; Gilbert, 2012). As observed by Anghel et al. (2013), the gap between policy and practice has become extremely visible, whilst the child has become invisible or has been named as a group of “children left behind.” The present paper is a part of a larger research project called “Designing the Systemic Model of Child Welfare Moving from Child Protection to Development of Psychosocial Support for Families” (Agreement No. S-MIP-19-17, funded by the Research Council of Lithuania). This paper provides a description and analysis of the voice of children and family social workers. A systematic approach based on ecological systems perspective was used in terms of the child’s well-being, which was researched as the interaction between the child’s development and the social environment.

In Europe, research on child welfare has a long history; however, the child welfare situation in Lithuania has not been systematically studied, nor has it been

provided with the research-based knowledge necessary for the development of the system. This leads to the fragmentation of real practice, the division of society, and the insecurity of the child and the family. Social services have evoked multidimensional phenomena, where different participants play different roles. There is a need to look simultaneously at actions and contextual structures within the actions that occur. Social workers experience a lot of pressure in their daily work, especially in child welfare (Koskinen, 2014). In practical cases, family social workers very often focus on parental issues; therefore, the child is no longer the focus of intervention.

According to Bastian (2020), a child-centered perspective is a dominant orientation in child protection practice, with the focus on children's needs, wishes, and rights in professional decision making. Odinkova and Rusakova (2019) state that children's participation in decision making is articulated as the child's right, which has constructive significance for society and the child. Horwath and Tarr (2015) suggest that child-centered practice means not only giving children a voice in situations where they need protection but also requiring that professionals maintain the focus on children and their needs throughout the assessment and subsequent intervention.

The paper aims to disclose the voices of children and family social workers through the analysis of their personal and professional experiences in the context of family social work practice in Lithuania. The paper raises the following research question: How is the voice of the child heard in Lithuanian child and family social work practice? Qualitative research served as the methodological framework for this study. In order to answer to the research question, semi-structured interviews with children and family social workers were carried out. All the processes of data gathering and data analysis are presented in the methodological part of this paper. This research provides knowledge about the concept of "an adult child" and children's voices on their well-being. The following part of the paper briefly discusses family social workers' constructions of children who receive social services. After that, the research methodology and findings are discussed. The final part of the paper provides conclusions.

### **The Role of the Child in the Child Welfare System**

Recently, the topic of the welfare of the child and the protection of his or her rights has become a central issue in every democratic country. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations in 1989 and ratified in Lithuania in 1992. Pursuant to Article 3 of the Law on Social Services of the Republic of Lithuania (2006), social services are the services aimed at providing assistance to a person (a family) who, by reason of his or her age, disability, social problems, partially or completely lacks, has not acquired or has lost the abilities

and possibilities to independently care for his or her private (family) life and to participate in society. The ratification implies that a State Party undertakes to respect, protect, and fulfill all the rights of the child enshrined in the above-mentioned Convention. In order to establish and develop child welfare systems, the states should establish child welfare legislation, services, and institutions. The concept of the welfare of the child defines the implementation of the four basic principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989. These principles include ensuring the protection of the child against all forms of discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to live and develop, and the right of freedom of expression of his or her own opinion. The well-being of the child includes areas such as material situation, housing, health, subjective well-being of the child and the family, education, interpersonal relationships, civic participation, and safety. Skinner et al. (2007) state that outcomes of the well-being of the child are the interaction between resources and risk factors affecting the child's personal life, his or her family, school, or the wider society.

States have come a long way in designing and developing child welfare systems. Kahn (2010) and Ben-Arieh (2010) define this development as a path moving from the pursuit of saving the child's life to the pursuit of ensuring the child's development. The authors explain that at the beginning of the development of child welfare systems, the well-being of the child was determined by the following indicators: the survival of the child and attention to negative things (parental dysfunctional behavior), highlighting the development of child welfare with the focus on future actions. In this stage, only adults' perspective was taken into consideration. Meanwhile, the contemporary concept of child well-being includes indicators such as child well-being now, with a focus on positive changes in the child's life. Thus, specialists are obliged to involve the perspective of the child. The States undertake to protect children from violence and neglect and to provide all necessary assistance to families and other institutions in order to support children (Kelly et al., 2011). Children and families with needs face a variety of problems and barriers to the child's healthy development. The States must therefore develop service systems to provide services that are easily accessible, affordable, and able to meet a variety of needs, with early intervention options, and services for families facing difficult situations to address long-standing conflicts, abuse, or neglect. In Lithuania, family and child welfare specialists are dealing with such difficulties as accessibility to needed services and the diversity of the offered service network.

Jensen et al. (2020) identified the following constructions of children and childhood: (a) "children in light of parents," (b) "the generalized child," (c) "the participating child," and (d) "the child in need of protection." Their study revealed common features, which are also recognizable in the context of Lithuanian family

social work practice. Children are considered as objects but not subjects of intervention. In the construction of “children in light of parents,” the focus is on parents’ intervention, where the child becomes invisible. Family social workers concentrate on parents, believing that changes in parents’ behavior have a direct influence on the well-being of the child. Jensen et al. (2020) also constructed the theme “the generalized child.” This discourse refers to the construction of the child without focusing on such topics as children’s feelings, their wishes, and a sense of self. One more relevant topic highlighted by the researchers is “the participating child.” This opens the gap between practitioners and children in such areas as decision making and involvement in assessment procedures. Jensen et al. (2020) elaborate the theme of “the child in need of protection,” where children are usually constructed as a problem. Ng (2005) observes that social work with children tends to focus on providing services to meet children’s basic developmental needs more than their rights. The researcher emphasizes the difference between needs-based and rights-based approaches, which lies in the fact that action based on needs can lead to charity and a rights-based approach can be viewed as justice.

In Lithuania, family social workers practically apply features of psychological service discourses rather than the alternative ones which promote the rights of the child and family in social work practice. Family social workers build up their clients’ profile by highlighting their weaknesses, such as a lack of social or parenting skills, especially in cases of alcoholic parents or ex-convict parents. Thus, a child-focused intervention is misleading as the focus is actually on parents’ behavior (Motiečienė, 2020). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (1989) states that, first of all, children must be seen as active participants in their everyday life firstly.

## **Research Methodology**

In order to attain a greater understanding of how the voice of the child is heard within Lithuanian child and family social work practice, a grounded theory methodology approach was applied. As a means to answer the research question, semi-structured interviews with 19 children (in the research coded CH 1–19) and 18 family social workers were carried out. The study was conducted in two communities in Lithuania. In total, 11 social workers from the urban area (in the text coded as USW 1–11) and 7 from the rural area (in the text coded as RSW 1–7) participated in the research. The interviews were conducted from March to December 2020. The data analysis was based on the method of thematic analysis. At the first stage of the research, the interviews were audio-recorded. The interviews were transcribed immediately. At the second stage, a careful reading of the transcripts was implemented, and then they were used for coding the



material. The length of the interviews varied from 1 to 2.5 hours. Qualitative research requires a data analysis method, which clearly explains arguments and places emphasis on understanding complexity, details, and context (Mason, 2007). In the present research, thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was applied. The first step involved reading and re-reading the transcribed texts in order to identify common themes which appeared in the categorizations of the text fragments. The thematic analysis was conducted in order to reveal research material systematically and produce an informed description of the research phenomenon. As soon as the interview transcripts were prepared, meaning units were joined into codes. Meaning units consisted of features that were mainly related to the interests of the study, which were implemented when an inductive analysis was carried out. The study complied with general research ethics guidelines and ethical research principles (Peled & Leichtentritt, 2002; Bryman, 2008). Every research participant was respected with his or her right to autonomy when accepting the decision to participate in the research or not. The principle of confidentiality was also applied. As Israel and Hay (2006) state, the principle of confidentiality is crucial; thus, the names of the research participants and their geographical location were coded. In addition, written submissions to interview the children were obtained from the parents.

## **Research Results**

**Definition and visibility of the child: perspectives of family social workers.** Jensen et al. (2020) note that social workers dealing with family issues tend to focus on parent's needs more than on children's needs, concerns, views, and problems, which makes children less visible as the acknowledged family members. Farmer and Owen (1998), Eidukevičiūtė (2013), Laird et al. (2017), and Motiečienė (2020) also point out that agencies usually reach mothers as preferable carers of children. To refer to such focus on the mother as a preferable referee in family social work, Jensen et al. (2020) use the term "mother-centeredness."

When analyzing the perspective of the family social worker, Toros (2017) observes that research participants tend to focus more on problems, failures, and deficits of clients and parental incompetence. The researcher also note that the relationship with service users is represented in an authoritative manner—searching for the guilty party in the assessment rather than providing assistance and support for the child and the family. The situation of the child is constructed in a similar way in which the issues of adult family members are constructed. Children are distinguished by gender, and it can be observed that boys, as stated by social workers who participated in the research, are more often described as demonstrating problematic behavior than girls, and children from the same family

are divided into good children and problematic ones. The structure of this division can also be observed in the provision of assistance to adult family members.

*The child, the teenager, did not communicate fully with that mother, and the mother got along very well with the girl, and that sister had a very good relationship with that brother. Throughout that process, all services are directed only towards the mother. (RSW, 1)*

Horwath and Tarr (2015) highlight that when trying to find solutions to improve the child's situation, social workers tend to focus more on the change of parental behavior rather than on child-focused outcomes. Farmer and Lutman (2010) emphasize that in case of child neglect, parents are given too many chances to change while children cannot afford to wait. This brings about the lack of attention to the identity of children and the differing needs of siblings. According to social workers who participated in this research, distant or maltreating parenting affects the child's behavior, self-presentation, self-awareness, and vulnerability. This construction of the maltreated child leads to "the child in need of protection." In the child protection context, social workers see children as human beings in need of protection.

*Probably these are very sensitive children, probably emotionally hurt and affected; however, at the same time, they are very defensive. They are relatively reserved, and it is very difficult to establish a true emotional relationship with them. Children who feel well often require physical contact: they want to be hugged, to be in contact, and to be taken care of. However, children who have emotional and behavioral disorders and/or delinquent behaviors very often tend to belittle themselves. They tend to underestimate their achievements, their self-esteem. Well, they seem to be in trouble (RSW, 2).*

It could be noted that children tend to be constructed as a problem. Horwath and Tarr (2014) reveal different understanding of how the well-being of the child depends on parental relationship and care, without blaming the child for change in behavior as a personal and conscious choice. Fern (2014) maintains that in their professional practice, social workers observed dichotomized childhood: children were competent or incompetent, depending on attitudinal positions between the child as the subject of rights and the object of rescue. These polarized views were considered problematic because of the fixed attitudes, which made it difficult for practitioners to respond in a way that would have individualized children's preferences. The social workers who participated in the present research also noted this polarization, when children using or abusing legal discourse lose their innocence, which could be attributed to "the child in need of protection." What is more, innocence and vulnerability are seen by the research participants as features attributable to "the child in need for protection" but only in the case of younger children.

*Children know their rights now; they know what they can. They know that if parents treat them in a harsh way, this can be considered psychological violence. If you touch them, and they say they have been beaten, it will also be in the best interests of the children, not the parents, and procedures will start, and it will take time to prove it was otherwise, and so on (USW, 4).*

The research data revealed that the child and his or her family are described as dysfunctional, when the child is maltreated and in need of protection. The child is involved in the assessment stage, observing his or her behavior as a consequence of maltreating parenthood, without the focus on behavioral and emotional development. The visibility of the child ends in the assessment stage of the intervention process.

**Subjective well-being of the child: the voice of the child.** While conceptualizing the well-being of the child's, this concept highlights the interactions between resources and risk factors that affect the child and his or her parents' lives in such spheres as the child's personal life, his or her family, school, or the wider society. The data obtained during the study reveals that when children talk about what is important to them in their personal lives, they mention the importance of the family, permanent home, and positive relationships in the family and in the surrounding environment. The research participants-the children-who participated in this research were asked to express their thoughts about what were the most important things in their life. The answers to this question revealed the main issue: the importance of a nuclear family. The data analysis showed that the children highlighted the role of the mother and the sister/brother, and in several cases, the father was also mentioned.

The research participants-the children-focused on environmental factors related to community resources. This included universal services such as day care services for meaningful leisure activities and the participation in school activities. One of the children stated that the participation in the school activities was the most important thing for him. This revealed the meaning of school in children's lives.

*It is important for me to be involved everywhere and in everything at school (CH, 18).*

All the children who participated in this research are the participants of the social service system. This means that they are receiving specialized social services, with the family social worker being the main provider of these services. Some of the children are living in a family crisis center; others, in their own homes. Probably this determined the emergence of the second topic, which was revealed while analyzing the interviews with the children. The researchers asked children about when they felt happy in their lives. The children's answers revealed sensitive topics. Some of them provided the following answers:

*When I get along with my mom (CH, 2).*

*When my family is happy ... (CH, 4).*

In the study, the children expressed their voice by talking about a microsystem that includes the child's personal characteristics, interactions with his or her family, friends, neighbors, school, and others. The children who participated in this study reaffirmed the hypothesis that a properly functioning microsystem has the greatest impact on the personal well-being of the child.

It should be emphasized that children dream of their full acceptance, emphasizing their right to err, to be heard, and to be accepted. Children, as the most vulnerable group of society, have the right to express their own views of their personal lives, they have the right to have their best interests safeguarded and, at the same time, the right to live and develop without discrimination. When talking about the sense of happiness, one of the children, aged 6, stated:

*When you respect me, when you love me, when you play with me, when you draw with me, when you talk to me, and when you can help me when I am sad and when you can forgive me (CH, 19).*

The researchers tried to reveal what the children were dreaming of. The dreams and wishes of some of the children centered around material things, but others admitted that their greatest wish was to meet their father or grandmother. This shed light on the topic of basic needs. The most important thing for little children is to have their own private sphere for living independently from institutional care. In the assessment framework, this refers to family and environmental factors, when the need for housing must be evaluated by specialists.

*I am dreaming of leaving the institution and going to my home as soon as possible (CH, 12).*

White (2003) states that children's voices create stories which open opportunities to shed light on the lived reality of the family. This helps to hear the voice of the child and not to apply adult-centered family social work practices. The children who participated in this research revealed that they could express their feelings and emotions while receiving social services. The researchers were trying to go deeper and understand what worried the children most. The children told that they felt sense of concern about the relationship between their family members. They wished to have positive relationships in their lived reality, especially in their family environment. Because of conflicts between the parents, the children felt fear. One of the children, aged 5, who participated in the research said:

*I'm afraid of the police because when my dad gets angry, they come (CH, 17).*

Ferguson (2017) described the concept of "the invisible child." The author researched the reasons why children so often become invisible in social work. It was revealed that the reason for this is the fact that family social workers are too much parent-focused, and therefore they fail to get in contact with the child. Ferguson (2017) argues that when children in families become invisible, detachment from children occurs. This point is very important especially nowadays when, due to COVID-19, the world is living in the pandemic context. Under such circumstances, during the lockdown, social work practice with children and families means that domestic violence and child abuse may be unrevealed (Caron et al., 2020). For this reason, family social workers and other specialists should focus more on children, especially on their feelings and

emotions, rather than on results, especially in the teaching process. Humphreys et al. (2020) also highlight the fact that the risks of family violence will persist for some time. In this research, the children also expressed their concern about the COVID-19 situation; however, one of the children revealed how he was coping with this feeling. One of the research participants, aged 10, explained:

*During the quarantine, we have lessons and have to learn. Sometimes, when a failure or technical problems occur, I get nervous and face difficulty, and I don't trust myself that I can solve these technical problems by myself. ... the school doesn't help at all (CH, 18).*

The research data indicate that children can construct guidelines for their future. The analysis of this topic revealed the dominant discourse, in which a happy life of children is associated with parents' positive behavior. In this research, the children focused most on their emotional well-being. This fact should receive due attention from parents, family social workers, teachers, and other persons who are part of children's lives. It is child-centered family social work practice that is particularly needed in today's circumstances in order for children's voices to be heard.

## Conclusions

1. In Lithuania, the situation of the protection of the rights of the child is constructed in a discourse where the problem to be solved through special interventions is addressed by focusing mainly on the protection of children from dysfunctional parenting. The state provides that the family has the right to its own privacy, yet the relationship is not voluntary, but coercive. The child's perspective and voice are minimally taken into consideration because it is parents' voice that is dominant in intervention processes.
2. The provision of social services for families remains a sensitive issue due to the lack of focus on preventive or universal services for the child and his or her parents. The research indicates that there is a need for universal services in the areas of education and leisure, which was clearly pointed out by the research participants—the children.
3. The issue that arises in the context of family social work in Lithuania is that it is not the child but parental problems that are the focus of family social work interventions, which leads to the simplification and depersonalization of the child's participation in the process. Child-related issues tend to be simplified to a mere description of estranged behavior and the fulfillment of basic physical needs. Although the consideration of the child's voice can be observed in the assessment stage, the intervention process carried out by family social workers focuses more on changing the relation, attitudes, and behavior of parents, especially of the mother, than on the child.

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## **SCHENGEN BORDERS CODE IN THE ASPECT OF BORDER SECURITY**

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**Abstract.** *Latvia has joined the Schengen area in 2007 and has already passed three Schengen evaluations. The aim of the article is to analyse the Schengen Borders Code in the context of border security. Based on analysis of the Schengen Borders Code implementation in Latvia the author develops and puts forward suggestions on Schengen Borders Code content improvement as well as its judicial systematisation development.*

*The research tasks include the investigation of the current EU and national normative regulations, legal practices, the conclusions of Latvian and foreign law researchers by using analytical, historical and comparative methods.*

*The improvement of the national normative regulation was started long before Latvia's accession to the Schengen area. In 2006, the Schengen Borders Code entered into force, which was revised due to the migration crisis in the Mediterranean region and adopted in 2016 in an improved version. The further development of the Schengen Borders Code is important from the point of view of the right to free movement of persons and from the point of view of ensuring public security in the face of today's challenges related to terrorism, international crime, uncontrolled migration and the spread of disease.*

*The main achievement of the research is that the author has defined the main areas of Schengen Borders Code further development.*

**Keywords:** *Schengen Borders Code, third-country national, alien, border control, threat to public health.*

**JEL code:** *K19.*

### **Introduction**

The Schengen Borders Code was the first codified legislative act of its kind in the history of EU law to include rules on the crossing of external and internal borders, affecting not only EU citizens but also “third country” (Schengen Borders Code, 2006, Art 2) citizens and nationals, pursuing two main ideas: 1) no border checks on internal border crossing for EU citizens and third country nationals; 2) standardisation of external borders crossing. Also, in the second version, the Code was adopted by an EU Regulation and has direct effect (Schengen Borders Code, 2016) or force of law in each Schengen Member State and it does not require ratification or any transformation in the national regulatory framework.



The topicality of the research arises from the necessity to develop the Schengen Borders Code.

The research period is mainly related to the period from 2007, when Latvia joined the Schengen area and undertook the implementation of Schengen legislation in Latvia.

The following methods were used during research:

- 1) The historical method - studying the development of the Schengen regulatory framework in the historical context, within the framework of the evolution of the European Union and the national regulatory framework;
- 2) Analytical method - analysing the international, European Union, Schengen Borders Code and national regulatory enactments, legal practices, knowledge of Latvian and foreign law scholars;
- 3) Comparative method - comparing different national laws, as well as relevant European Union and international regulatory framework.

The purpose and tasks of the research are to study the Schengen Borders Code current normative regulation, legal practices, the findings and conclusions of Latvian and foreign law scholars concerning Schengen Borders code implementation aspects and based on research results put forward suggestions on Schengen Acquis development.

Hypothesis - The existing content of the Schengen Borders Code and other legislative acts do not comply with modern requirements of the State Border Guard activities and do not contribute to overall efficiency of the border guards' activities. There is a need to develop further appropriate legislation which will comply with the requirements of the Schengen acquis.

The provisions of the Schengen Borders Code are without prejudice to the provisions of the Directive on the right of EU citizens and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of Member States (Directive 2004/38/EC). However, due to the specificities of the implementation of visas related measures, the provisions of the EU (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2009, Title IV) Schengen Borders Code do not apply throughout the EU. The Schengen Borders Code defines the external borders of the EU, which are land, including river and lake borders, sea borders and airports, river ports, seaports and lake ports, provided they are not internal borders and internal borders: (a) the common land borders, including river and lake borders, of the Member States; (b) domestic airports within the Member States; (c) sea, river and lake ports of the Member States which operate a regular ferry service (Schengen Borders Code, 2016, Art 2, p 1), 2)). The definition of "river and lake borders" in the definition of the external borders of the Code is incorrect as this definition should be understood as the delimitation of the territory of rivers and lakes as separate geographical entities.

However, in the reality, the national border line either passes through or crosses these geographical features (in the border rivers along the river axis (midline), talweg or coast). On the other hand, the definition of airports and ports as external borders is incorrect, since international law still today refers to the state border, but not to the infrastructure, and airports and ports are usually not even close to the state border but within national territory. Rather, airports and ports should be defined in the context of the regime (On the State Border of the Republic of Latvia, 2009, Art 2) of border crossing points (Schengen Borders Code, 2016, Art 2, p 8), which is not included as legal concept in the Schengen Borders Code, however, in the case of border checks, certain rules of the regime are contained in several chapters in a non-systematic way, confused with the principles of border checks. The superficiality of the definitions of external and internal borders is also evidenced by the fact that alongside the ports and airports mentioned in the definitions, it would be logical to specify road border crossing points and railway stations, but they are not specified (Regulations Regarding Border Crossing Points and Checks to be Performed Therein, Regulation No. 704, 2010).

In the Schengen Borders Code, the definition of internal borders, like the definition of external borders, incorrectly mentions river and lake borders as common borders between the Member States, but in the continuation of the definition with the phrase “National airports of the Member States, ports of sea, rivers and lakes of the Member States used for regular ferry traffic” there are several shortcomings. It is not clear from the phrase “domestic airports of the Member States” whether this refers to domestic flights within a single Member State or to flights between the Member States. Moreover, in the context of this provision, the preamble provides a different definition of 'internal flight': 'any flight exclusively to or from the territory of a Member State and not landing in the territory of a third country'. By contrast, the term “third country” is not defined in the Schengen Borders Code, but “third country national” means any person who is not a Union citizen, within the meaning of Article 20 (1) of the Treaty (Levits, 2001), (Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2009, Art 20, p 1).

The sea border is an external border, because according to the Convention on the Law of the Sea, the principle of peaceful passage (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982, Art 19) through the territorial sea, including crossing the sea border, is allowed to ships of any country, but in the context of the state border regime crossing the border is only allowed in the locations provided for this purpose (On the State Border of the Republic of Latvia, 2009, Art 11).

The Schengen Borders Code includes the term “third-country national” to be understood as any person who is not a Union citizen. Persons enjoying the right

of free movement under Union law' means: a) Union citizens within the meaning of Article 20(1) TFEU, and third-country nationals who are members of the family of a Union citizen exercising his or her right to free movement to whom Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (21) applies; b) third-country nationals and their family members, whatever their nationality, who, under agreements between the Union and its Member States, on the one hand, and those third countries, on the other hand, enjoy rights of free movement equivalent to those of Union citizens (Directive 2004/38/EC), (Schengen Borders Code, 2016, Art 2, p 5, 6) In the Latvian Immigration Law, a person who is not a Latvian citizen or non-citizen is a foreigner. This means that it can be both a third-country national and a national of an EU Member State, the European Economic Area. However, it should be borne in mind that not all EU countries are parties to the Schengen Convention, and that there are countries which are party to the Schengen Convention but are not EU Member States. The term "third country" in the Code covers non-Schengen countries.

With the integration of the Schengen *acquis* into the EU legal order, the term "foreigner" was more often replaced by "third country citizen" or "third country national". There are different interpretations of the term "foreigner" in international, EU and national law. For the purposes of international law, in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons who are not Nationals of the State in which they reside (1985, Art 1), the term "alien" is used in Article 1 as a person who is not a national of the State in which he or she is. For the purposes of the Schengen Convention (1995, Art 1), "alien" shall mean any person who is not a national of a Member State of the European Community. In essence, the term "third-country national" has the same meaning as in Articles 20 to 22 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, meaning that it is any person who is not an EU citizen, i.e. not a national of any EU Member State (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2009, Art 20, p 1). EU legislation and documents use both concepts. It should be noted that, in the context of expulsion, persons who enjoy the same right to free movement as EU citizens under the relevant provisions of EU law (Directive 2004/38/EC, Art 2, p 1) should be excluded from the category of third-country nationals. For the purposes of the Directive on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying (Directive 2008/115/EC) third-country nationals, "third-country national" means any person who is not an EU citizen within the meaning of Article 20 (1) of the EC Treaty. has the right to free movement within the EU as defined in Article 2 (5) of the Schengen Borders Code.

Most of the international law uses the term "alien" in a broader sense, while EU law uses the term "third-country citizen" or "third-country national" in a narrower sense. The term "alien" is also used in the Convention determining the State responsible for examining a request for asylum lodged in one of the Member States of the European Communities is incorrect translation of the word "alien"

from English (Council Regulation (EC) No 343/2003) version to Latvia, which should rather be understood as “third-country national” meaning any person who is not a national of a Member State of the European Union, the Republic of Iceland or the Kingdom of Norway as defined in Directive 2003/110 / EC on assistance in cases of transit for the purposes of removal by air (Council Directive 2003/110/EC, Art 2, p a)) the way it used in Directive 2001/51/EC supplementing Article 26 of the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985 (Council Directive 2001/51/EC, Art 2,3) There is also this overlap in the case law, where the term “alien is used in the context of the Schengen Convention and Law on Citizenship of Latvia and the term “foreigner” as used in the Immigration Law of Latvia.

Harmonisation of the concepts of nationality of the persons analysed within the Schengen acquis is essential for determining the status of the person required to fulfil the conditions for crossing the border and applying the relevant legal framework, where the definition and framework of legal status of persons should be correct to eliminate any diversity and subjectivity of interpretation.

Schengen Borders code includes the term ‘border control’ meaning the activity carried out at a border, in accordance with and for the purposes of this Regulation, in response exclusively to an intention to cross or the act of crossing that border, regardless of any other consideration, consisting of border checks and border surveillance” (Schengen Borders Code, 2016, Art 2 p 10) which was identically included in the Schengen Convention meaning a check carried out at a border in response exclusively to an intention to cross that border, regardless of any other consideration which from Latvian translation should be understood as border checks - checks on persons and vehicles at border crossing points in accordance with the Schengen Borders Code.

The term “border surveillance” of the Schengen Borders Code defines border surveillance between border crossing points and border crossing points at fixed hours, in order to prevent persons from circumventing border checks with the main objective of preventing unauthorised border crossings, combating cross-border crime and taking measures against persons who crossed borders illegally (Art 2, p 12, Art 13). It is clear from the Code that border surveillance applies not only to external borders but also to internal borders, although this is not explicitly stated.

In the report on the application of the Schengen Borders Code in relation to internal borders in 2010, the EC identified three issues of concern:

- (1) obstacles related to possible regular and systematic checks being carried out at internal borders;
- (2) obstacles to traffic flows at road crossing-points at internal borders;
- (3) delayed notification of a planned reintroduction of border control at internal borders, with the tendency for the Member States to remove all obstacles

to facilitate the flow of traffic (EK: Par Šengenas Robežu kodeksa piemērošanu. LV, 2010. 15.okt., nr.164) under Article 22 of the 2006 Schengen Borders Code, but without taking into account the obligations and powers of inland checks, in accordance with Article 21 of the Schengen Borders Code. Such EC statements were rather populist and unobtrusive as no clear and unambiguous criteria for border checks near internal borders were set. Moreover, the Schengen Borders Code at that time provided that the abolition of border control at internal borders does not affect the police powers exercised by the competent authorities of the Member States under national law, unless they are equivalent in effect to border controls (extending to border areas): does not impose border controls; is based on general police information and experience with regard to possible threats to public security and is specifically designed to combat cross-border crime; are designed and executed in such a way that they are distinct from the systematic checks on persons at the external borders; are made on a random basis (Art 21). Subsequently, in 2013/2014, the subsequent migration crisis in the Mediterranean showed the inability of the EC and other EU institutions to anticipate and prevent negative consequences in a timely manner, largely due to a lack of regulatory framework in the Schengen Borders Code and other legislation.

The EC's rather vague statement and case law confirm that the Schengen Borders Code and its subordinated regulatory framework contain an unacceptably high number of regulatory "loopholes" (Kūtris, 2008). In the present case, the operative part contains inaccuracies both in the wording 'permits and documents', without explaining what is meant by them, nor in the legal basis of the 20 km area, since neither the Schengen Convention nor the Code specifically provides for such. However, international law (including bilateral treaties) allows such border areas to be defined by their respective regimes.

In the context of the reintroduction of border control, the term "threat to public health" in the Schengen Borders Code, - disease which may potentially develop into an epidemic as defined by the International Health Regulations of the World Health Organization (Schengen Borders Code, 2016, Art 2 p 21) and referred security measures regarding to border checks (Schengen Borders Code, 2016, Art 7, p 2) performed on external borders just like "a serious threat to national security" is not mentioned among the reasons for reintroducing border control. Moreover, the content and meaning of the threats to "public policy" have not been revealed within the Schengen acquis. In contrast, the regulatory framework of third countries, such as Russia, for reasons of national security (also at the request of neighbouring countries) provides for the possibility of closing the state border altogether and temporarily suspending the movement of persons across the border (О Государственной границе Российской Федерации: Закон РФ от 1 апреля 1993 г. N 4730-1.). A similar norm is included in the Belarusian regulatory framework (О Государственной границе Республики Беларусь:

Закон Республики Беларусь от 21 июля 2008 г. № 419-3). Furthermore, the term "public health risk" in the Schengen Borders Code is too narrow in its scope as it only covers public health threats from disease but may also result from various emergencies, such as natural and technological disasters (accidents).

### **Conclusions**

1. The Schengen Borders Code (2006 and 2016) and the Visa Code (2009) are the first codified legislative acts in the history of EU law to consolidate the rules on persons' border crossing of covering a substantial part of the Schengen acquis.
2. The definition of airports and ports as external borders in the Schengen Borders Code is incorrect because in international law national borders are understood to be a continuous, closed line and its coinciding plane, but not an infrastructure object. Moreover, neither airports nor ports are usually located directly on the national frontier, but on the national territory. Airports and ports are to be seen in the context of the border crossing point regime, which is not included as legal concept in the Schengen Borders Code, but with regard to border checks, certain rules of the regime are grouped in a non-systematic way mixed with border control principles.
3. For the purposes of the Schengen Convention, 'alien' means any person who is not a national of a Member State of the European Community. However, not all EU countries are members of the Schengen Convention and there are non-EU members of Schengen Convention.
4. For the purposes of the Directive on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals, the term "third-country national" shall mean any person who is not an EU citizen within the meaning of Article 17 (1) who have the right to free movement within the EU, as defined in Article 2 (5) of the Code.
5. The Immigration Law of Latvia, which is particularly important for the implementation of the Schengen Convention, does not include the term 'alien' but the terms 'Union citizen' and 'foreigner' (a person who is not a Latvian citizen or a non-citizen of Latvia). Citizens of the Union who are nationals of a Member State of the European Union, of a country in the European Economic Area or of the Swiss Confederation are also to be considered as aliens by definition. In its turn, in May 2013, the Latvian Citizenship Law replaced the word 'alien' with 'citizen of another country', which is still considered a foreign national (a citizen), which is essentially identical to the term 'foreigner' in the Immigration Law. Harmonisation of the concepts of 'alien', 'third-country national' and 'foreigner' in the Schengen acquis within the framework of the Schengen acquis is crucial for

determining the status of a person required to fulfil border crossing conditions and to apply the relevant legal framework.

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# SOCIAL SERVICES AS A SOCIAL INVESTMENT ON THE EXAMPLE OF A NEW INSTITUTION OF SOCIAL CENTERS IN POLAND, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE SOCIAL WORKERS

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**Abstract.** *The aim of the article is to present the empirical research conducted among Polish social workers in November of 2020 on the newly created institution named in Polish - - Centrum Usług Społecznych, CUS (Social Service Centers). The article also presents the theoretical framework, but mostly the authors focus on presenting empirical research of 79 social welfare centers in Poland. The main research problem proposed within the article was how social workers perceive the creation of a new institution in municipalities - social service centers and what deficits and strengths they see in the field of creating new social services, that meet new challenges such as aging of society, transformations of labor markets and changes within the family, ecological threats and new pandemics.*

**Keywords:** *social policy, economy, social work, labor market.*

## Introduction

Social services and social investments are currently an important paradigm of reorganization and reforms in modern welfare states in most European countries. Social services from an analytical perspective related to the so-called a new approach towards the welfare state is not sufficiently described and researched from the scientific point of view, hence the article brings the added value in this regard. Until recently, most of the analyzes concerned traditional systems of social security, which secured social risks and did not create a framework for pro-development activities. The article shows the theoretical framework, but the authors focus on presenting empirical research of 79 social welfare centers in Poland. The main research problem proposed within the article was how social workers perceive the creation of a new institution in municipalities - social service centers and what deficits and strengths they see in the field of creating new social services, that meet new challenges such as aging

of society, transformations of labor markets and changes within the family, ecological threats and new pandemics. The survey was conducted using the direct questionnaire with open and closed questions. Additionally, an expert focus was conducted with employees of social welfare institutions. The respondents belonged mainly to social workers.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The axis of the theoretical discourse on welfare state, highlighted in this article, is the issue of transferring social welfare and redistributing income and opportunities. The traditional, post-war welfare state was conceived in such a way as to primarily cover social risks and redistribute income through direct social benefits - insurance and budget (supply).

In order to redistribute cash benefits, welfare states have usually established large central public entities to dealing with social security, which are controlled and supervised directly by governments. It should be emphasized, however, that a modern, current, investing welfare state, as a part of social benefits, also redistributes services and in-kind benefits that relate to such areas as education, health care, social assistance, rehabilitation, etc., while the organization and supervision over the implementation of these benefits consisting of services as well as products is mostly decentralized (Golinowska, 2019).

Local governments and their subordinate social policy institutions and / or non-governmental organizations are responsible for the provision and creating of services. The state finances or co-finances public services to a greater or lesser extent, however, there are local entities of social policy that organize social services. In the traditional welfare state model, designed after World War II, money transfers policy has always dominated over service provision. Recently, however, for the first time in Scandinavian countries, since the end of the 1970s, started to pay more and more attention to the redistribution of services as a public investment aimed at increasing the opportunities, equality and opportunities for various social groups to improve the quality of life, in also the greater independence and inclusion of groups at risk of exclusion. In current Europe there is an increasingly popular model in which states, including local governments, begin to allocate more and more resources to investments in social services and infrastructure. Emphasis is placed on enhancing the sphere of services within the redistribution policy. Social services are treated as an increasingly important element of social investment and as an important component of modern welfare states. As J. Alber claims in one of his texts, social policy is moving towards the provision of services. Social services must inevitably take a leading role in social policy. Social services are becoming an increasingly important component of the

welfare structure and there is an urgent need to reorient research in this direction (Alber, 2001).

Many contemporary experts emphasize that social services are becoming a priority factor in contemporary discussions on social policy due to their relatively greater, than money transfers, because of its effectiveness and efficiency and an investing attribute (although critics question the alleged greater effectiveness). Therefore, many discussions between scholars and practitioners closely link the service approach with the investment perspective, both in terms of context and content (Grewiński, 2020).

The development of social services essentially results from the "post-Fordist" social reality. Solutions based on social (more broadly public) services fit better to the post-industrial reality of the new social order than traditional money transfers. The consequences of this approach were, among theoreticians, attempts to replace the term welfare state with the term "social services state", which more closely reflects the specificity of the organization of the social policy system, focused on services (Grewiński 2014, 2017). A wider interest in social services and other perceptions of social policy dates back to the end of the 1970s, when the traditional welfare state was subjected to severe neoliberal criticism, connected with the low effectiveness and weak efficiency of social activities including increasing costs. The reforms of that period mainly consisted in introducing financial restrictions on social assistance programs, but interestingly, the changes in the welfare states did not cover all strategies or programs uniformly.

Those reforms mainly concerned social security systems and state aids, including pension systems, due to disincentive benefits and financial burdens. In contrast, social services were not subject to restrictions at that time, despite the reform process, and in some cases, expenditure was even increased on services to compensate for reductions in money (Castles, 2008; Nikolai, 2012).

For this reason, expenditure on social transfers in GDP between the 1970s and 1990s in many countries did not decrease at all, because the introduced restrictions in financing social security systems did not have to mean a reduction in expenditure on social services, but on the contrary even meant an increase outlays on social services, which were to compensate for other passive activities, aimed at reducing the existing social problems (Clarke, 2004).

As a result of scientific discussions, but also the exchange of experiences among decision-makers and practitioners on how to deal with new social risks emerging in the process of globalization, welfare states began to assume new social obligations in the form of social services, due to the transformation of the structure of the economy and the weakened role of the family (due to the processes of cultural and civilization changes, in particular the role of women in their family functions and on the labor market (Bonoli, 2007; Taylor-Gooby, 2004). Particular

welfare states began to respond to new social threats because of these changes, both through reforms of social security systems, but also, by strengthening the social service system. For example, the aging of the population and the deterioration of family functioning have led to the necessity to provide public services for the care of children, disabled and elderly people. The crisis on the labor markets required a large investment in human capital through the creation of new social services related to active labor market policies and professional reintegration services within the framework of employment policy and social economy (Grewiński, Rymśa 2011).

Some authors, conducting the latest research on new types of welfare states, introduce very clearly classifications of states based on social services (Ahn, 2007). Taken into account the relative structural contribution of social services and direct benefits transfers, S. H. Ahn classified welfare states as a organization form of state with a high level of both social services and money transfers as a type of "social services focused" type, while on the other hand there is a type of state with low level of public aid in both areas and is called as "public social support focused" state. Countries with a relatively low level of social services but a high level of money transfer have been classified as a type of "money transfer focused" state (Ahn, 2007). The perspective of social investment, as emerging a new paradigm of welfare state, indicates a tendency in which the main point of welfare state reorganization is the transition from passive income compensation through money transfers to an active model of social policy, including improving the availability and provision of social services and their production. At the same time, the prospect of social investment is seen as the social strategy of states to counter new threats, increase employment rates and contribute to economic development as well (Esping - Andersen 1998; Evers, Heinze, 2010).

### **Social Service Centers in Poland as a New Institution of Local Social Policy**

From the perspective of the development of social services in Poland, reference should be made to the adoption in 2019 of the Act on the provision of social services by Social Service Centers (CUS). This act, as a legislative initiative of the President of the Republic of Poland, was prepared by a team of experts working as part of the National Development Council - in the Family and Social Policy Section. The act and its content undoubtedly refer directly to the concept of social investments in social services through the creation of a new coordinating entity, which is to be the Social Services Center (CUS) at the local level. The main objective of the adopted Act is to enable the establishment of social service centers at the local level, thus ensuring the development opportunities at the municipal and county level of an integrated system of coordination and management of social services. The legislator rightly assumed that the creation of a more

integrated model of social services for citizens is certainly very necessary in Poland, due to the fact that the solutions adopted at the beginning of the 1990s in Poland were too individual, inconsistent and disintegrated services, characteristic of the countries Central and Eastern Europe, which reformed their aid systems after the period of real socialism. The institutional system of social welfare created in Poland at the beginning of the 90s of the last century offered mainly passive benefits in cash and products assistance, and to a lesser extent offering integrated and personalized social services. Successive reforms of social welfare and other social policy systems in fact consolidated this state of affairs - hence the thesis that Polish support systems were largely based in the last 30 years primarily on cash benefits, with poorly developed social services, which had the features of separatist benefits, not integrated services. At the same time, many European countries significantly transformed and reorganized their systems aid towards social services and many reforms were related to the attempt to integrate and individualize them so that they better respond to the diverse and multi-problem needs of citizens aid towards social services and many reforms were related to the attempt to integrate and individualize them so that they better respond to the diverse and multi-problem needs of citizens (Grewinski, 2017).

The Act on the provision of social services by Social Service Centers, adopted in Poland in July 2019, assumes that social services mean activities in the field of many specific social policies. In art. 2.1 the following scopes of social services are listed: pro-family policy, supporting family, foster care system, social assistance, promotion and health protection, supporting disabled people, public education, counteracting unemployment, culture, physical culture and tourism, stimulating civic activity, housing, protection environment, professional and social reintegration.

This means that social services are treated very broadly in the Act, without limiting them to a particular specific detailed policy. Such an approach has significant repercussions - it essentially means the transformation of the current, common way of thinking about local social policy through the prism of the social assistance system. Pursuant to the Act, social services become an element that binds the wider context of local institutions and networks of various social policy stakeholders, where, due to the variety of services offered, not only the current beneficiaries of social assistance which comes from the Centers of Social Service, but also other social groups that have not used social assistance benefits. The Act, through the use of such broad provisions, in fact changes the perception of goals and priorities of local social policy from a protective and passive function to investment and development functions. For this reason alone, the Act is an interesting piece of legislation that may be of great importance for the change. For this reason alone, the Act is an interesting legal act, which may be of great

importance for changing the mentality of local decision-makers and for a different perception of social functions of local government, including municipalities.

## **Research**

### **Opinions of social workers on the newly created institution of Social Service Centers (CUS) and the challenges related to the development of social services and the social welfare system in Poland.**

There was conducted a survey on perception of renewed Act on Social Service Centers among 79 employees of main Polish institutions which deal in regions (ROPS) and cities (OPS) in the field of social service and direct helping people in need. Respondents were asked how they pertain a new institution of social service centers in Poland. Therefore, respondents in the 79-person group consisted of 91.1%, employed in OPS, 3.8% in ROPS, and 5.1% in NGOs. However, in terms of the positions held: 94% of the respondents were social workers, and the remaining 6% were administrative workers. The first question was on the Act on Social Service Centers:

*Table 1 Results of the Multiple Choice Questions on Perception of Renewed Act on Social Service Centers (from the chosen 79 employees of main Polish institutions which deal in regions (ROPS) and cities (OPS), in the field of social service and direct helping people in need)*

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
1. Are You familiar with The Act on Social Service Centers	There were collected 79 questionnaires with answers from the surveyed group, in which among the respondents, 46.79% admitted that the Act is little known to them, and only in general way. A similar number of respondents (40.51%) indicated that they had heard about it. On the other hand only 7.6% of the respondents answered that the law was not known to them, they had not heard about it at all. We can assume that only 5.1% declared that they knew the Act very well.
2. Are You familiar with idea of a social services as an important direction of the development of the assistance social system in Poland ?	More than half of the respondents (54.40%) say that they know the idea, but with no details. Successively, 33% of respondents admitted that they know this idea very poorly. An equal number of respondents (6.3%) chose the extreme answers: "Yes, I know it very well" and "I have not heard anything about the idea of developing social services in Poland.
3. If you know the CUS (The Centers of Social Service) Act and/or the idea of service development, where did you get information on this subject?	The vast majority of respondents (51.9%) replied that they themselves found information about it on the Internet and in publications. 24.1% of the respondents admitted that they did not know the Act / idea mentioned in the question. 10.1% of the respondents participated in a conference/seminar in which the topic was announced. At the university, this information was obtained by 6.3% of the respondents. 5.1% of respondents received this information from the Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Policy (MRRiPS) institution, and 2.5% from Regional Centers of Social Policy. (ROPS).

<p>4. Do you think that the development of social services is necessary in the social assistance system?</p>	<p>As many as 48.1% of the respondents answered the above question positively ("Yes, we absolutely have large deficits here"). Exactly the same number of respondents marked the answer: "It is possible to develop some services, such as care or specialist". Only 2.55% of the respondents believe that social services should not be developed, but rather be in form of offer of cash benefits. Only 1.25% believe that there is no need to develop social services.</p>
<p>5. Do you think that the benefit "The 500+ Children Benefits Program" contributes indirectly for the development of the social services market due to growing demand families in this area?</p>	<p>Most of the respondents (50.6%) chose the answer: "Yes, but to a limited extent". 24.1% of the respondents answered the question in the negative: ("No, it does not contribute"). As many as 17.7% of people participating in the survey do not have their own opinion in this regard. The answer: "Yes, absolutely, families mainly allocate these funds to the purchase of educational, sports, recreational and other services for their children" was chosen by only 7.6% of the respondents.</p>
<p>6. Do you think that the social welfare scheme is missing social services?</p>	<p>Almost half of the respondents (43%) believe that it is missing, but to a small extent. 38% of the respondents chose a decisively affirmative answer to the above question: ("Yes, there is a lot to do"). 14% of the respondents chose the negative answer: "There is no shortage, after all, the offer includes care and specialist services". Only 4% of the respondents believe that the social assistance system should not offer very extensive services.</p>
<p>7. Do you think that a reform and reconstruction are necessary for the social welfare towards strengthening the role of services in the social welfare system?</p>	<p>45.6% of respondents believe that there is no need for such a deep reform, rather minor corrections are needed. The absolute necessity of a thorough reform and reconstruction of social assistance institutions was indicated by 44.3% of the respondents. 6.3% of respondents believe that the social assistance system should be included in health protection. The rest of the respondents (3.8%) believe that there is no need to reform the social welfare system at all because the created system works well.</p>
<p>8. Would you be for a change of the name of a Social Welfare Center into a Social Service Center?</p>	<p>33% of the respondents believe that the current (old) name should remain, but in every social welfare institution there should be a social services department. 29.1% of the respondents believe that there is no such need. 20.3% of the respondents did not have an opinion on the above question. An affirmative answer ("I would be with it") was given by 17.6% of the respondents.</p>
<p>9. Who or which entity should be responsible for the management and coordination of social services?</p>	<p>When asked about who should be responsible for the management and coordination of social services, the respondents answered as follows, indicating individual professional groups: 60.7% - social service coordinators, 20.3% - managers of social services 14% - social workers 5.1% - other professions. None of the respondents decided on the answer - "family assistants".</p>
<p>10. Is your social assistance institution, where you work, is prepared competitively and as an organization for the development of social services?</p>	<p>35.4% of respondents believe that their institution is moderately prepared for this ("It is prepared on average - there is willingness, but lack of competence and money"). 34.2% of respondents admitted that their institution is not prepared at all. 17.7% of the respondents know nothing about it. Only 12.7% of the respondents answered this question affirmatively ("Yes, it is prepared very well - we have been investing in this approach for years").</p>

11. Do you consider that the social work/assistant should be treated as a social service?	The vast majority of respondents (64.5%) chose the answer: "Yes, of course". 25.4% of the respondents do not have an opinion. 7.6% of the respondents believe that social work should not be treated as a social service. Only 2.5% of the respondents decided to answer "It could, but under certain conditions".
12. Who, according to you, should be learning for new competences in the field of social services?	Most of the respondents (31.7%) pointed to universities, and 20.2% to training institutions. 11.4% see ROPS in this role. And only 3.7% of respondents see no need for education in this area. Most, however, as many as 33% expressed the opinion that all the above-mentioned entities should be involved in the education process.
13. If it depends on you, please point at, which other system should be integrated with social assistance too?	10.1% indicated that they were definitely for the labor market policy system, and 8.9% - that with the health system. Only 6.3% see such integration with the social economy or with the social rehabilitation and re-adaptation system. However, most - as many as 59.5% indicated the answer: "with everyone", and only 8.9% did not see any entity with which social assistance should be integrated.
14. Do you think there is a need for a new law on professions of support?	As many as 65.8% of the respondents see absolutely such a need, because various professions of support require valuation and regulation. In turn, 19% indicate that "not necessarily, as appropriate corrections to the Act on social assistance will be sufficient". 8.9% saw a need to evaluate only the profession of a social worker, and 6.3% had no opinion at all. However, no one indicated the answer: "there is no need to regulate this sphere that is well regulated."
15. Do you think that your institution is professionally managed ?	29.1% assessed rather average the management of their facilities, as the superiors' lack knowledge and competences. On the other hand, 25.3% point out that the superiors know about social welfare, but they do not have managerial and leadership competences. Only 12.6% say they are poorly managed and there is lack of total responsibility for leadership. But 33% say they have excellent leadership and a very competent management team.

To sum up the results of the presented research we should indicate also that respondents in the 79-person group who answered the questions consisted of mostly - 43% were employees with 6 to 10 years of service; 31.6%, however, worked for one to five years; and the next group - 22.8% of the respondents had the longest work experience (from 10 to 20 years). Only 2.5% worked less than 1 year. The vast majority, 91.1%, of the respondents were employed in OPS, 3.8% in ROPS, and 5.1% in NGOs. However, in terms of the positions held: 94% of the respondents were social workers, and the remaining 6% were administrative workers. During the questionnaire survey as well as during the focus meeting, the respondents answered open-ended questions that were synthetically presented in the table below.



**Table 2 Answers to Open Questions of Social Workers on Social Services and the Necessary Changes in Social Assistance in the Context of CUS (Centers of Social Service) in November 2020**

Open questions to social workers	Typical answers
<p>Which social services, according to you, are missing from the social welfare system in Poland?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Small Centers of Social Support (OPS) lack specialist services and focus only on the payment of cash benefits.</li> <li>2. Increasing the safety of social workers and equipping them with appropriate tools.</li> <li>3. Significant investments in the development of care and specialist services due to the aging society.</li> <li>4. There is a lack of 24/7 care service for the elderly and people with disabilities.</li> <li>5. There is a deficit of services for children, adolescents and addicts.</li> <li>6. There is no universal family mediation service.</li> <li>7. Development of the service of an assistant for the people with disabilities .</li> <li>8. Dissemination and development of respite care services.</li> <li>9. Development of family support services, including in the care and educational functions.</li> <li>10. Development of services for seniors, including active spending leisure time.</li> <li>11. Development of job placement services and career counseling for social welfare clients (low efficiency of Polish labor offices).</li> <li>12. In small provincial towns and social welfare centers, there is a lack of many services - psychological and therapeutic support, and rehabilitation services.</li> <li>13. There is a shortage of people willing to work in social services (i.e. seniors' assistants, people with disabilities, especially in Warsaw).</li> <li>14. The emphasis should be increased on social activation but not on the payment of benefits only.</li> <li>15. It is necessary to develop the services for organizing a local community.</li> <li>16. Development of psychological and psychiatric services and a community nurse.</li> <li>17. Development of coaching and supervision services for social workers.</li> <li>18. Linking the payment of cash benefits with activation and participation in services that strengthen clients' potential.</li> <li>19. Development of cleaning and disinfection services for the apartments of social welfare clients.</li> <li>20. Developing services for future challenges, but not only current problems.</li> <li>21. Development of alternative services, i.e. music therapy, dog therapy, hydrotherapy.</li> <li>22. Development of volunteering in social welfare centers</li> </ol>

<p>If it was up to you, what would you change in the social welfare system in Poland?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increasing of the prestige of social professions and an increase in wages and employment in social services (deficit of employees).</li> <li>2. Reassignment of social workers (higher professional group) and increasing the rank of the profession.</li> <li>3. Counteracting to a professional burnout.</li> <li>4. Introducing an annual health holidays for social workers.</li> <li>5. Provision of psychological support by the employer for employees of the social welfare system and legal support.</li> <li>6. Defining the rules of inter-institutional cooperation.</li> <li>7. Increasing activities in the field of prevention, not just intervention.</li> <li>8. Systemic separation of social work from administrative and paper work.</li> <li>9. Reducing formal reporting requirements in favor of practical field work.</li> <li>10. Greater integration of social assistance services with the health system, the labor market and the social economy.</li> <li>11. Persons managing social welfare entities should first go through a whole consistent professional path in social work and then apply for CEO positions.</li> <li>12. You need more flexibility in working with different categories of clients and less formal restrictions.</li> <li>13. Reducing bureaucracy and improving the management of social assistance institutions.</li> <li>14. Excluding family benefits from the OPS (local Centers of Social Support) institutional structure.</li> <li>15. There is a need to develop new competences among social workers.</li> <li>16. Reducing the distribution of cash benefits and turning into the development of social service vouchers.</li> <li>17. The payment for staying in a nursing home by residents should be reduced.</li> <li>18. Creation of a solid system of professional promotions.</li> <li>19. It is necessary to adapt the social legislation to the realities of small towns.</li> <li>20. It is necessary to improve the awareness of local decision-makers about the functions and role of social assistance.</li> <li>21. It is necessary to reduce the number of families served by a social worker.</li> <li>22. Development of a training and qualification improvement system as well as a consulting system.</li> <li>23. Greater cooperation of social welfare centers with the county labor offices.</li> <li>24. Promoting professions and social roles as part of social campaigns.</li> <li>25. De-politicization of local social policy.</li> <li>26. Greater cooperation with local universities and employment places.</li> </ol>
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Source: Own study based on research in November 2020.

## **Conclusion**

Summing up the research on the possibility of recently establishing Social Service Centers in Polish municipalities, on the basis of questionnaire and focus research with social workers, it is possible to give a certain, first opinion on this matter:

1. There is certainly a need in Poland to create a local, institutional system for coordinating social services and integrating a bundle of social services within one local institution. The Act on Social Insurance Institution (CUS) goes towards the direction, which should be considered as right one and which is open for changes in the social welfare system (more broadly in local social policy). Implementing of CUS may undoubtedly contribute to the popularization of the category of social services as an important value and an important element of the implementation of local social policy.

2. Establishing a new institution and structure in the institutional order of municipality is always risky and causes concern among the staff of Social Assistance Centers, and especially among local government decision makers. It seems that a more expected solution would be transforming all Social Welfare Centers into Social Service Centers while maintaining their existing tasks and functions and developing those relating to social services. At the moment, such transformation is optional, but not obligatory.

3. The optional, and not obligatory, implementation of CUS in municipalities is at risk, as it may lead to unequal access of citizens to the possibility of exercising their social and civic rights - in this case to social and social services. While it is possible to understand the intentions and justification of the authors of the CUS Act to such a solution that is gradually introduced by CUS in Polish local authorities, the consequences for recipients may lead to deepening differences in access to social services.

4. The respondents pointed out that the lack of sufficient funds for the implementation of the Act may be a serious problem for local authorities that would like to develop CUS centers. It could be difficult to predict the possibilities of supporting local governments which wish to design CUSs in their area and they do not know how it will look like after the corona virus pandemic in times of limited public funds and problems related to the economic recession. There is an uncertainty to the future of the funds from the EU funding for such causes.

5. It seems that without prior preparation of social services for the implementation of CUS centers and without raising the prestige and salaries of employees of the social assistance system and other services, no one should expect a will of the system employees to implement the CUS Act, which may be a serious problem in the context of convincing the community of social workers to the new idea.

6. An important link programming social services on the regional level in CUS should be the Regional Centers of Social Policy (ROPS), which should be earlier equipped with appropriate training and advisory instruments and tools. Failure to use this regional institution would be a serious strategic mistake, moreover, the ROPS centers should provide regional analyzes of various social services and their coordination of planning and organization on the regional level.

7. Regardless of how many the CUS centers will be created and maintained in Poland, the issue of developing a coordinated, integrated system of social services will be forward-looking in Poland, but perhaps in a different institutional formula. For this reason, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, in cooperation with ROPS centers, should prepare an offer of training and counseling for social service employees on topics related to - planning and coordination of social services, service management, multi-sector cooperation in the implementation of social services, leadership and social innovation in the field of social services, individualization and personalization of their production process, financing mixed services and the use of scientific knowledge in the organization of social services at the local level.

8. Due to the above, the issue of the competence of people who are to work at CUS becomes absolutely crucial. Therefore, it would be advisable to prepare the appropriate human resources in terms of qualifications and competences in order to ensure the appropriate organizational quality of the new institution. At the moment, there is no coordination of the social services education system in Poland.

9. The introduction of the CUS Act should go at the same time with the preparation of the Act on social services, which would organize issues related to social professions, and which would increase the prestige of welfare professions and contribute to the professionalization of services. At the moment, such works are not carried out, although there are signals from the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland that this type of law on the welfare professions could be processed as a presidential initiative.

10. There should be taken into consideration the idea whether a Strategy (Program) for the Development of Social Services should be prepared at the national level, which would refer to the investment perspective as a new welfare state paradigm. Such strategy should be accompanied by managed action plans and adequate funding should be allocated. Relevant strategies and documents could be reflected at the regional and / or local level. Such strategies could integrate solutions adopted in the framework of various social policy systems in a horizontal way, which would concern better coordination of production and delivery of social services.

11. In the context of the CUS Act, a comprehensive review of systemic solutions for social assistance and other social policies that require a thorough

reconstruction 30 years after the political transformation should be carried out. This would mainly mean such policies as: social welfare, labor market policy, social economy, rehabilitation and re-adaptation, long-term care, policy for the people with disability and dependent, social activation and integration, lifelong education.

12. For CUSs to have a chance for development, EU funds after 2020 should be programmed for the development of social services and the CUSs themselves at the local level, with simultaneous investments by the state and local governments in this area. Without additional funds, many local governments (especially those smaller and weaker) will not be able to bear the costs associated with establishing and maintaining another institution.

In conclusion, there are many arguments supporting the establishment and implementation of CSO centers in the Polish institutional space and local social policy. It is obvious, that, there are also many unknowns and even risks associated with it. The nearest future will show whether CUS centers will catch on in our model of social policy.

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# REĢIONĀLĀS NEVIENLĪDZĪBAS IETEKME UZ MIGRĀCIJAS TENDENCĒM LATVIJĀ

## *The Impact of Regional Inequality on Migration Trends in Latvia*

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**Abstract.** *The topic of current research and key findings are topical, taking into the consideration the territorial development tendencies of Latvia, which is characterized by the long-term regional inequalities and the tendencies of the migration of the population. The aim of the research is to analyse the impact of the regional inequalities on the migration tendencies of population in Latvia. The following research methods have been used in the research- logically constructive method, content analysis, monographic method, synthesis method, statistical analysis of interrelations, integral index method. Within the research, by using the selected research methods, authors have evaluated the influence of migration indicators-stimulators and indicators-de-stimulators on the migration trends in Latvia over time.*

**Keywords:** *standard of living, economic indicators, migration, regional inequality.*

### **Ievads**

#### ***Introduction***

Iedzīvotāju skaits Latvijā laika periodā no 2005.gada līdz 2019.gadam ir samazinājies par 14,65 %, ko ietekmēja ne tikai negatīvais demogrāfiskais saldo, kurš ir raksturīgs Latvijas demogrāfiskai situācijai jau kopš 1991.gada, bet arī ilgtermiņā emigrējošo iedzīvotāju skaits attiecīgajā laika periodā. Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos ir novērojama nevienmērīga iedzīvotāju skaita samazināšanās, kopumā ikgadu lielākā iedzīvotāju skaita samazināšanās ir novērojama Latgales reģionā, savukārt, Pierīgas reģionā kopš 2017.gada ir novērojams iedzīvotāju skaita pieaugums (Centrālā statistikas pārvalde (CSP), 2020).

Iekšzemes migrācijas tendences valstī norāda uz dažādu teritoriju novietojuma īpatnībām, attīstības pakāpi, pievilcību un dzīves kvalitātes aspektiem (Bērziņš, 2011). Reģionālā nevienlīdzība ir Latvijas un arī daudzu Eiropas attīstītāko valstu problēma (Rutkovska, 2018), kļūstot par nozīmīgu

aktualitāti ne tikai reģionu, bet arī valsts un ES ietvaros. Izpētot Latvijas reģionu teritoriju attīstības indeksus ir jāsecina, ka pēc 2019.gada datiem pēc attīstības līmeņa pirmajā vietā ir Rīgas un Pierīgas reģioni (0,924), savukārt pēdējā – Latgales reģions (-1,306). (Valsts reģionālās attīstības aģentūra, 2020) Tik krasas teritorijas attīstības indeksa atšķirības norāda uz to, ka pastāv viennozīmīga reģionālā nevienlīdzība Latvijā, kas motivē Latvijas iedzīvotājus migrēt uz vairāk attīstītām teritorijām, bieži vien Rīgu un Pierīgu. Savukārt, nesasniedzot vēlamo dzīves līmeni attīstītākajos valsts reģionos, iedzīvotāji izvēlas migrēt uz ārzemēm. Par ko liecina arī tas, ka Rīgas un Pierīgas reģionos dzīvo 52,52 % (CSP, 2020) no kopējā iedzīvotāju skaita Latvijā.

Reģionu un teritoriju nevienmērīga attīstība un iedzīvotāju migrācija un šo ekonomisko kategoriju mijiedarbība ir aktuāla visos pasaules kontinentos un līdz ar to tās izpētei ir pievērsušies daudzi zinātnieki. Populācijas migrāciju ietekmējošos faktoros ir pētījuši Levystka O., Mulcka O., Ivaniuk U., Kunytska-Iliash M., Vasylytsiv T., Lupak R. u.c., savukārt Portnov B.A. ir izpētījis reģionālās nevienlīdzības ietekmi uz migrācijas tendencēm. Iedzīvotāji migrācija notiek dažādu faktoru ietekmē, kas atsaucas arī uz indivīdu lēmumiem. Erlinghagen M., Kern C., Stein P. pētījuma ietvaros izvērtēja personu subjektīvo viedokli par dzīves līmeņa izmaiņām pēc lēmuma pieņemšanas par pārvietošanos uz citu teritoriju. Savukārt daži autori, piemēram, Sustenberga E. uzskata, ka nevar gūt pilnīgu izpratni par mūsdienu migrācijas tendencēm, izmantojot tikai vienu konceptuālo modeli.

Nav iespējams ierobežot valsts iedzīvotāju vēlmi migrēt uz galvaspilsētām un uz vairāk attīstītiem reģioniem. Pastāvīga iedzīvotāju migrācija ietekmē iedzīvotāju blīvuma izmaiņas, ienākuma uz vienu iedzīvotāju disproporciju un resursu izmantošanas efektivitātes iespējas (Rutkovska, 2018). Pieredze rāda, ka reģionālās nevienlīdzības noskaidrošana ir sarežģīts, lēns un dārgs process, kā arī nav iespējams sagaidīt strauju un izcilu rezultātu. Tāpēc ir patstāvīgi jāveic turpmāku reģionālās attīstības pasākumu un esošo problēmu identificēšanu un jāparedz to iespējamo iznākumu (Ravbar, 2004).

Iedzīvotāju emigrācija valstij kopumā rada zaudējumus kā nodokļu maksājumu zaudējumi, neiegūtie ienākumi darbaspēka trūkuma dēļ, zaudējumi no ieguldījumiem izglītības sistēmā, demogrāfiskās situācijas pasliktināšanās iespaidā gūtie zaudējumi un zaudējumi no inflācijas pieauguma (Šīna, 2010). Iekšējā migrācija ir vienmēr tikusi uztverta kā iespēja uzlabot savu sociālekonomisko statusu, sevišķi tām personām, kuras pieder pie zemāka sociālekonomiskā slāņa. Šādas tendences ir sevišķi izplatītas lauku teritorijās, kur tiek uzskatīts, ka pārcelšanās uz lielpilsētām ir drošs veids kā izbēgt no nabadzības jeb uzlabotu savu materiālo stāvokli (Jabeen, Tahir, & Sahito, 2017).

Pētījuma mērķis ir analizēt reģionālās nevienlīdzības ietekmi uz migrācijas tendencēm Latvijā. Pētījumā tika pielietotas sekojošas pētījuma metodes -



loģiski konstruktīvā metode, kontentanalīze, monogrāfiskā metode, sintēzes metode, savstarpējo sakarību statistiskās analīzes metode, indeksu metode.

### **Pētījuma metodoloģija** *Research Methodology*

Pētījumā tika pielietotas sekojošas pētījuma metodes - loģiski konstruktīvā metode, kontentanalīze, monogrāfiskā metode, sintēzes metode, savstarpējo sakarību statistiskās analīzes metode, indeksu metode. Šī pētījuma ietvaros tika veikta iedzīvotāju migrāciju stimulējošo un bremzējošo rādītāju izmaiņu, savstarpējo sakarību un vispārējās ietekmes uz migrācijas tendencēm Latvijas reģionos izpēte. Pētījuma periods tika izvēlēts no 2005.gada līdz 2019.gadam, ietverot trīs periodus – pirms krīzes (2005.-2007.gads), krīzes (2008.-2010.gads) un pēc krīzes (2011.-2019.gads). Pētījuma empīriskās analīzes pamatā ir līdzšinējos pētījumos izmantotās metodoloģijas, kas adaptētas Latvijas situācijai un izmantoti pieejamie statistikas rādītāji reģionu ietvaros. Pētījuma metodoloģija, kas paredz reģionu iedzīvotāju migrāciju ietekmējošo apstākļu noteikšanu, balstās uz integrālā indeksa aprēķina pieeju.

### **Pētījuma rezultāti** *Research Results*

Pētījuma ietvaros darba autores izpētīja vispārējās migrācijas (iekļaujot gan iekšējo, gan starpvalstu migrāciju) ietekmējošos apstākļus, kuri tika apkopoti 1.tabulā. Migrāciju ietekmējošie apstākļi, atbilstoši izvēlētajai metodoloģijai (Levytska et al., 2020), tika iedalīti stimulējošos un bremzējošos.

*1.tabula. Izmantojamie rādītāji iedzīvotāju migrāciju ietekmējošo apstākļu noteikšanai, autoru veidots pēc Levystka et al., 2020*

*Table 1 Indicators for Assessing the Conditions Affecting Population Migration*

<b>Rādītājs</b>		<b>Ietekme uz migrāciju</b>
<b>x1 Demogrāfiskā stabilitāte</b>		
<b>x1.1.</b>	Dzimumstības koeficients uz 1 000 iedzīvotājiem	Stimulējoša
<b>x1.2.</b>	Mirstības koeficients uz 1 000 iedzīvotājiem	Bremzējoša
<b>x1.3.</b>	Noslēgto laulību vispārīgais koeficients uz 1 000 iedzīvotājiem	Bremzējoša
<b>x2 Darba tīrgus</b>		
<b>x2.1.</b>	Nodarbinātības līmenis, %	Bremzējoša
<b>x2.2.</b>	Bezdarba līmenis, %	Stimulējoša
<b>x2.3.</b>	Neto darba samaksa, eiro/mēnesī	Bremzējoša

x3 Dzīves līmenis		
x3.1.	Mājsaimniecību rīcībā esošie ienākumi uz vienu mājsaimniecības locekli, eiro/mēnesī	Bremzējoša
x3.2.	Džini koeficients, %	Stimulējoša
x3.3.	Iedzīvotāju materiālās nenodrošinātības indekss, %	Stimulējoša
x3.4.	Nabadzības riska indekss, %	Stimulējoša
x3.5.	Dzīvojamais fonds uz vidēji vienu iedzīvotāju, m <sup>2</sup>	Bremzējoša
x4 Izglītības pieejamība		
x4.1.	Iedzīvotāju skaita īpatsvars ar arodizglītību, %	Bremzējoša
x4.2.	Iedzīvotāju skaita īpatsvars ar augstāko izglītību, %	Bremzējoša
x4.3.	Iedzīvotāju skaita īpatsvars ar vispārējo vidējo izglītību, %	Stimulējoša

Ņemot vērā izvēlēto migrāciju ietekmējošo rādītāju izmaiņas 2005.-2019.gadā Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos, katrs no šiem rādītājiem tika standartizēts, lai varētu nodrošināt to savstarpējo turpmāku salīdzināšanu, izmantojot (Levytska et al., 2020) 1.formulu un 2.formulu.

$$Z^s_{ij} = \frac{x_{ij}}{x_{maxj}}, \quad (1)$$

$$Z^d_{ij} = \frac{x_{minj}}{x_{ij}}, \quad (2)$$

kur  $Z^s_{ij}$  ir  $i$ -migrāciju stimulējošo rādītāju standartizētās vērtības  $j$ - laika intervālā ( $i = \overline{1, n}; j = \overline{1, m}$ )

$Z^d_{ij}$  ir  $i$ -migrāciju bremzējošo rādītāju standartizētās vērtības  $j$ -laika periodā ( $i = \overline{1, n}; j = \overline{1, m}$ )

$x_{ij}$  rādītāju vērtība ( $i = \overline{1, n}; j = \overline{1, m}$ )

$x_{minj}, x_{maxj}$  minimālās un maksimālās  $i$ -rādītāju vērtības  $j$ - laika periodā ( $i = \overline{1, n}; j = \overline{1, m}$ )

Pēc standartizētajām migrāciju ietekmējošo rādītāju vērtībām, tika aprēķināts šo rādītāju svars pēc to nozīmības attiecīgās grupas ietvaros. Rādītāju svars tika aprēķināts izmantojot korelācijas matricas metodi katrai rādītāju grupai, izmantojot 3.formulu un 4.formulu.

$$a_t = \begin{pmatrix} r_{11} + r_{12} + r_{13} + r_{14} + \dots + r_{1n} \\ r_{21} + r_{22} + r_{23} + r_{24} + \dots + r_{2n} \\ r_{31} + r_{32} + r_{33} + r_{34} + \dots + r_{3n} \\ \dots \\ r_{n1} + r_{n2} + r_{n3} + r_{n4} + \dots + r_{nn} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} a_1 \\ a_2 \\ a_3 \\ \dots \\ a_n \end{pmatrix}, \quad (3)$$

$$a_t = \sum a_n$$

kur  $r_{ni}$  -  $k$  - grupas  $n$  – rādītāja pāra korelācijas koeficients

$a_n$  - korelācijas matricas  $n$ - rindas elementu kopsumma

$$w_{ki} = \frac{a_t}{\sum_{n=i}^i r_{ni}}, \quad (4)$$

$$w_{ki} > 0, \sum w_{ki} = 1$$

kur  $w_{ki}$  -  $k$  – grupas  $i$  – rādītāja svara vērtība ( $i = \overline{1, n}; k = \overline{1, 5}$ )

Migrāciju ietekmējošo rādītāju svars attiecīgās grupas ietvaros, pēc to nozīmības Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos ir apkopots 2.tabulā.

2.tabulā apkopotie dati liecina, ka migrāciju ietekmējošo rādītāju nozīmības līmenis Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos variē. Kopīga iezīme visos Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos- būtisks nozīmības svars ir nodarbinātības līmenim un tā izmaiņu tendencēm. Demogrāfiskās stabilitātes grupā Rīgā lielākais svars pēc nozīmības ir mirstības koeficientam (34,92 %), Latgalē dzimstības koeficientam (36,23 %), savukārt pārējos reģionos nozīmīgākās ir noslēgto laulību koeficienta izmaiņas. Dzīves līmeņa grupā Rīgas (23,25 %), Pierīgas (26,69 %) un Zemgales (21,34 %) reģionā nozīmīgākie ir mājsaimniecību rīcībā esošie ienākumi, savukārt Kurzemes (22,60 %) un Latgales (23,18 %) reģionos dzīvojamais fonds uz vidēji vienu iedzīvotāju un tikai Vidzemes (37,90 %) reģionā nozīmīgais ir džini koeficients un tā izmaiņas.

2.tabula. *Svērtie rādītāji grupās Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos ( $w_{ki}$ ), %, autoru aprēķini*  
 Table 2 *Weighted Indicators in a Groups in the Statistical Regions of Latvia ( $w_{ki}$ ), %*

	Rīgas reģions	Pierīgas reģions	Vidzemes reģions	Kurzemes reģions	Zemgales reģions	Latgales reģions
<b>x1.1.</b>	30,68	30,86	32,62	28,95	29,23	<b>36,23</b>
<b>x1.2.</b>	<b>34,92</b>	30,84	32,36	31,62	31,66	31,00
<b>x1.3.</b>	34,41	<b>38,30</b>	<b>35,02</b>	<b>39,43</b>	<b>39,10</b>	32,68
<b>x2.1.</b>	<b>40,14</b>	<b>38,50</b>	<b>38,60</b>	<b>39,44</b>	<b>36,23</b>	<b>39,92</b>
<b>x2.2.</b>	35,04	35,62	33,38	34,35	34,10	30,39
<b>x2.3.</b>	24,82	25,88	28,02	26,21	29,68	29,69
<b>x3.1.</b>	<b>23,25</b>	<b>26,69</b>	21,92	21,22	<b>21,34</b>	21,50
<b>x3.2.</b>	16,31	18,45	<b>22,68</b>	22,35	20,97	18,81
<b>x3.3.</b>	22,88	21,26	20,83	21,81	20,07	22,95
<b>x3.4.</b>	16,52	11,59	13,46	12,02	17,18	13,57
<b>x3.5.</b>	21,04	22,02	21,10	<b>22,60</b>	20,44	<b>23,18</b>
<b>x4.1.</b>	<b>36,69</b>	32,11	36,60	32,96	26,90	<b>35,21</b>
<b>x4.2.</b>	35,19	32,11	<b>37,90</b>	<b>34,85</b>	33,11	34,25
<b>x4.3.</b>	28,12	<b>35,78</b>	25,50	32,18	<b>40,00</b>	30,54

Kā nākamā tika veikta migrāciju ietekmējošo rādītāju grupu svērto indeksu noteikšana, aprēķinot tos pēc 5.formulas.

$$I_{kj} = \sum_{k=1}^m w_k * z_{ij} \quad (5)$$

kur  $I_{kj}$  svērts rādītāju  $k$ -grupas svērtais indekss  $j$ -laika periodā ( $i = \overline{1, n}; k = \overline{1, 5}$ )

Aprēķinātie svērtie indeksi parāda izvēlēto iedzīvotāju migrāciju ietekmējošo rādītāju ietekmes līmeni, nosakot, kura no migrāciju ietekmējošajām rādītāju grupām konkrētajā gadā bija noteicošā, sekmējot iedzīvotāju “izstumšanu” no valsts, šī pētījuma ietvaros – Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos.

Svērto indeksu svars norāda, ka Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos migrācijas tempu izmaiņas galvenokārt nosaka darba tirgus un dzīves līmeņa grupu rādītāju izmaiņas (3.tab.). Līdz ar to šo rādītāju samazināšanās gadījumā pieaug iedzīvotāju iekšējā un ārējā migrācija.

3.tabula. Svērto multi – dimensionālie indeksu ( $I_{kj}$ ) svars, %, autoru aprēķini  
Table 3 Weights ( $w_{kl}$ ) of Weighted Multi-dimensional Indexes ( $I_{kj}$ ), %

	Rīgas reģions	Pierīgas reģions	Vidzemes reģions	Kurzemes reģions	Zemgales reģions	Latgales reģions
$I_{1j}$	23,46	20,08	26,12	23,46	23,86	22,28
$I_{2j}$	<b>28,52</b>	<b>27,02</b>	24,97	<b>28,90</b>	25,62	21,70
$I_{3j}$	27,69	26,39	<b>26,60</b>	27,40	<b>27,16</b>	<b>28,19</b>
$I_{4j}$	20,34	26,51	22,30	20,40	23,36	27,84
<b>Kopā:</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Pētījuma praktiskās daļas galarezultātā tika aprēķināts integrālais indekss apstākļiem, kuri ietekmē iedzīvotāju migrācijas tempus.

$$Y_j = \sum_{k=1}^m w_k * I_{kj} \quad (6)$$

kur  $Y_j$  ir iedzīvotāju migrācijas tempus ietekmējošo apstākļu integrālā indeksa vērtība  $j$ -laika periodā ( $j = \overline{1, m}$ ).

Novērtējot integrālo indeksu ir jāņem vērā tā vērtību interpretāciju. Integrālā indeksa vērtība ir no 0 līdz 1, un tā pieaugums norāda uz to, ka pieaug apstākļi, kas ietekmē iedzīvotāju “izstumšanu” no valsts un otrādi. Integrālā indeksa gradācija ir atspoguļota 4.tabulā.

**4.tabula. Migrāciju ietekmējošo apstākļu integrālā indeksa vērtības gradācija  
("izstumšanas" līmenis), autoru veidots pēc Levytska et al., 2020**

**Table 4 Gradation of the Integral Index of the Conditions Affecting Population Migration Activity (the level of "pushing")**

Vērtība	Ietekmes līmenis
1.00-0.81	Maksimālā ietekme
0.80-0.64	Ietekmē
0.63-0.38	Pietiekama ietekme
0.37-0.21	Zema ietekme
0.20-0.00	Neietekmē

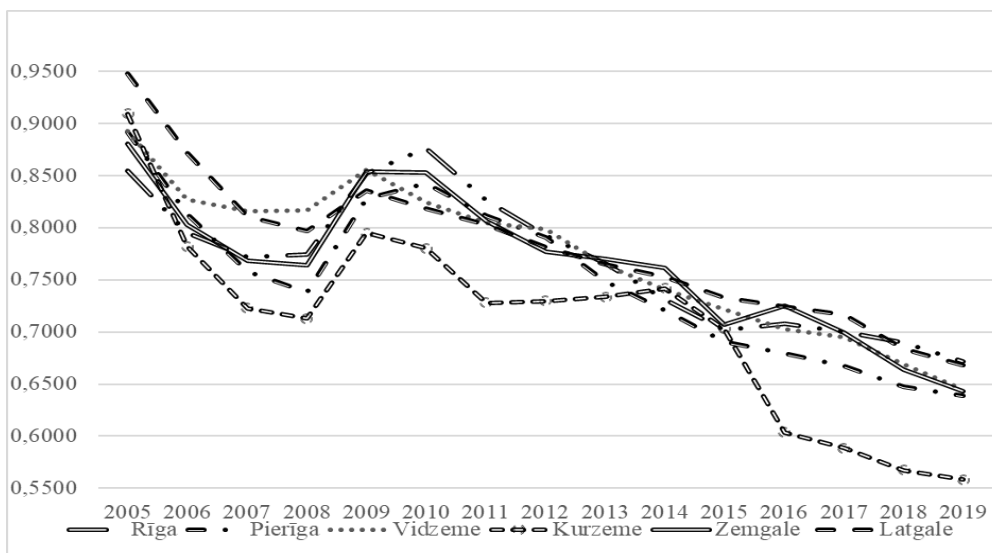
Latvijas statistisko reģionu iedzīvotāju migrācijas tempus ietekmējošo apstākļu integrālā indeksa vērtības un tās izmaiņas no 2005. līdz 2019.gadam ir apkopotas 5.tabulā. Zemāk izvietotās tabulas dati liecina, ka 2005.-2019.gadā visos Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos 2008.-2010.gada globālā finanšu krīzes ietekmē ir novērojams straujšs migrāciju ietekmējošo apstākļu integrālā indeksa pieaugums. Šajā periodā pasliktinājās visu migrāciju ietekmējošo rādītāju rezultāti - samazinājās dzimstība, pieauga bezdarbs, samazinājās neto darba samaksa, pieauga nabadzības riska indekss, utt.

**5.tabula. Migrāciju ietekmējošo apstākļu integrālā indeksa izmaiņas Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos ( $Y_j$ ), 2005.-2019.gads, autoru aprēķini**

**Table 5 Changes of the Integral Index of the Conditions Affecting Migration in the Statistical Regions of Latvia ( $Y_j$ ), 2005-2019**

	Rīgas reģions	Pierīgas reģions	Vidzemes reģions	Kurzemes reģions	Zemgales reģions	Latgales reģions
<b>2005</b>	0,8550	0,8913	0,8929	0,9091	0,8809	0,9475
<b>2006</b>	0,7951	0,8130	0,8266	0,7891	0,8027	0,8722
<b>2007</b>	0,7719	0,7577	0,8161	0,7229	0,7679	0,8104
<b>2008</b>	0,7744	0,7383	0,8163	0,7129	0,7638	0,7969
<b>2009</b>	0,8522	0,8277	0,8554	0,7949	0,8538	0,8360
<b>2010</b>	0,8764	0,8422	0,8242	0,7803	0,8531	0,8182
<b>2011</b>	0,8259	0,8116	0,8042	0,7281	0,8060	0,8026
<b>2012</b>	0,7928	0,7911	0,7981	0,7298	0,7773	0,7814
<b>2013</b>	0,7653	0,7482	0,7641	0,7335	0,7696	0,7651
<b>2014</b>	0,7309	0,7209	0,7405	0,7417	0,7611	0,7525
<b>2015</b>	0,7018	0,6910	0,7218	0,7030	0,7066	0,7327
<b>2016</b>	0,7075	0,6792	0,7025	0,6037	0,7250	0,7243
<b>2017</b>	0,6997	0,6671	0,6949	0,5886	0,6993	0,7162
<b>2018</b>	0,6894	0,6477	0,6691	0,5673	0,6637	0,6833
<b>2019</b>	0,6716	0,6390	0,6447	0,5581	0,6431	0,6681

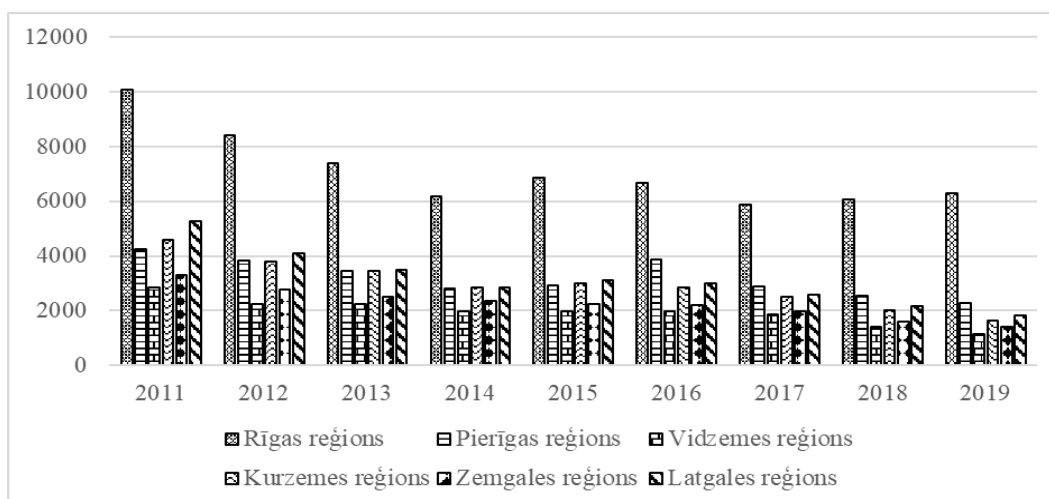
Zemāk izvietotajā attēlā (1.att.) ir atspoguļotas Latvijas statistisko reģionu integrālā indeksa izmaiņu tendences, kuras nav vienmērīgas, norādot uz nevienmērīgu visu Latvijas statistisko reģionu attīstību, ņemot vērā to, ka integrālā indeksa aprēķina pamatā tiek ņemti vērā rādītāji, kuri stimulē un bremzē iedzīvotāju migrāciju.



1.attēls. Integrālā indeksa ( $Y_j$ ) izmaiņu tendences Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos, (autoru sastādīts)

Figure 1 Trends of the Changes of Integral Index ( $Y_j$ ) in the Statistical Regions of Latvia,

Migrācijas koeficienta aprēķinam un aprēķināto datu ticamības novērtējumam tika izpētītas emigrējošo iedzīvotāju skaita izmaiņas Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos laika periodā no 2011.gada līdz 2019.gadam. (2.att.)



2.attēls. Emigrējošo iedzīvotāju skaits Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos, 2011.-2019.gads, (autoru sastādīts)

Figure 2 The Number of Emigrants in the Statistical Regions of Latvia, 2011-2019

Augstākais emigrējošo iedzīvotāju skaits attiecīgajā laika periodā ir bijis Rīgas reģionā, savukārt, zemākais - Vidzemes reģionā. Laika periodā no 2011.gada līdz 2019.gadam emigrējošo Latvijas statistisko reģionu iedzīvotāju skaits no 2011.gada pakāpeniski samazinājās, tomēr 2015.gadā vairākos Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos tika novērots neliels jauns emigrācijas vilnis (2.att.).

Pirmskrīzes periodā, neskatoties uz to, ka pēc Latvijas iestāšanās Eiropas Savienībā valsts ekonomikas attīstības tempi strauji pieauga (Eiropas Ekonomikas un sociālo lietu komiteja, 2013), tika novērota ne tikai iekšējā, bet arī ārējā migrācija.

Lai novērtētu aprēķināto datu ticamību, sevišķi izvērtēto faktoru reālo ietekmi uz faktisko Latvijas statistisko reģionu iedzīvotāju emigrācijas tempiem, tika veikts Pīrsona korelācijas koeficients starp diviem kvantitatīvajiem mainīgajiem ( $p < 0,05$ ) aprēķins starp aprēķinātajiem multidimensionālajiem indeksiem ( $I_{kj}$ ), integrālajiem indeksiem ( $Y_j$ ) un ilgtermiņa migrācijas koeficientu ( $M_j$ ).

**6.tabula. Kopsakarība starp migrāciju ietekmējošajiem faktoriem un migrācijas koeficientu Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos, 2011.-2019.gadā, autoru aprēķins**  
**Table 6 Relationship between the Conditions Affecting Migration and the Rate of the Migration in the Statistical Regions of Latvia, 2011-2019**

	<b>Rīgas reģions</b>	<b>Pierīgas reģions</b>	<b>Vidzemes reģions</b>	<b>Kurzemes reģions</b>	<b>Zemgales reģions</b>	<b>Latgales reģions</b>
<b>Y<sub>j</sub>-M<sub>j</sub></b>	0,8869	0,7269	0,8996	0,8040	0,9720	0,9374
<b>I<sub>1j</sub>-M<sub>j</sub></b>	0,6664	0,6854	0,9357	0,8912	0,7602	0,6340
<b>I<sub>2j</sub>-M<sub>j</sub></b>	0,9114	0,7555	0,7827	0,7142	0,9734	0,8776
<b>I<sub>3j</sub>-M<sub>j</sub></b>	0,8548	0,7647	0,8742	0,9226	0,9497	0,9139
<b>I<sub>4j</sub>-M<sub>j</sub></b>	0,0699	0,1083	0,8706	-0,3231	0,4765	0,7580

Kopumā var secināt, ka pastāv cieša korelācija starp aprēķināto integrālo indeksu un migrācijas koeficientu Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos. Rīgas (0,9114) un Zemgales (0,9734) reģionā ciešākā korelācija ir starp migrācijas koeficientu un darba tirgu (0,9114), Pierīgas (0,7647), Kurzemes (0,9226) un Latgales (0,9139) reģionā ar dzīves līmeni, savukārt Vidzemes reģionā ar demogrāfisko stabilitāti (0,9357). Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos iedzīvotājus migrēt motivē to potenciālās iespējas iegūt labāku darba vietu un kopumā paaugstināt to dzīves līmeni.

Latvijā ekonomiskā izaugsme 2005.-2019.gadā nav bijusi vienmērīga, to var vērtēt divos laika periodos – pirms krīzes (2005.-2007.gads) un pēc krīzes (2011.-2019.gads). Ekonomiskai izaugsmei pieaugot, pirmskrīzes periodā pakāpeniski samazinājās migrāciju ietekmējošo apstākļu integrālais indekss, norādot uz iedzīvotājiem labvēlīgas un migrāciju bremzējošas vides sakārtošanu.

Integrālā indeksa augstākais punkts Rīgas un Pierīgas reģionos tika sasniegts 2010.gadā, savukārt pārējos reģionos gadu agrāk – 2009.gadā. Tas norāda uz to, ka pastāv atšķirības starp Latvijas statistisko reģionu spējām ilgāk uzturēt migrāciju bremsējošu vidi un ātrāk sasniegt pirmskrīzes līmeni, ko var definēt kā reģionālo nevienlīdzību.

### **Secinājumi** *Conclusions*

Migrācija gadiem ilgi paliek viena no aktuālākajām tēmām Latvijā, jo pieaugot emigrējošo iedzīvotāju skaitam, tiek zaudēts viens no galvenajiem valsts ekonomiskās izaugsmes pamatā esošiem resursiem – cilvēks. Pieaugot emigrācijai tiek zaudēts ne tika darbaspēks, bet arī veidojas “smadzeņu noplūde”, kas ilgtermiņā noved pie zaudējumiem.

Otra no aktuālākajām tēmām Latvijā ir reģionu nevienlīdzība un iedzīvotāju skaita samazinājums mazāk attīstītās teritorijās, kas noved pie valsts teritoriju iztukšošanās un neracionālu esošo resursu izmantošanas, sevišķi ņemot vērā to, ka bieži vien zemes īpašumi tiek pārdoti citu valstu rezidentiem.

Latvijas reģionu attīstības nevienlīdzību vispārīgi raksturo teritoriju attīstības indekss, kurš pēdējo gadu laikā norāda uz viennozīmīgu Rīgas un Pierīgas reģionu attīstības līmeņa pārkumu salīdzinājumā ar pārējiem Latvijas statistiskajiem reģioniem. Turklāt Rīgas un Pierīgas reģionā dzīvo puse no kopējā Latvijas iedzīvotāju skaita un tajos ir lielākā uzņēmumu koncentrācija, kas nodrošina darbavietas un augstāku darba samaksu, salīdzinājumā ar pārējiem Latvijas reģioniem.

Pētījuma ietvaros tika izmantota integrālā indeksa aprēķina metode, kuras mērķis ir noskaidrot apstākļus, kas var ietekmēt iedzīvotāju migrāciju Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos. Sākotnēji tika izpētīti rādītāji, kas var simulēt vai bremsēt iedzīvotāju migrāciju, iedalot tos vairākās grupās – demogrāfiskā stabilitāte, darba tirgus, dzīves līmenis un izglītības pieejamība.

Pētījuma laikā tika secināts, ka Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos lielāko ietekmi uz emigrējošo iedzīvotāju skaitu atstāja rādītāju (gan migrāciju stimulējošo, gan bremsējošo) izmaiņas, kuri raksturo darba tirgu un iedzīvotāju dzīves līmeni. Integrālā indeksa pieaugums norāda uz to, ka pieaug apstākļi, kas sekmē iedzīvotāju “iztumšanu” no reģioniem un no valsts kopumā. Straujākais integrālā indeksa pieaugums tika fiksēts Rīgas un Pierīgas reģionā 2010.gadā, bet pārējos Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos 2009.gadā, t.i., globālās finanšu krīzes laikā. Šādas laika nobīdes integrālā indeksa pieauguma rādītājos, pēc darba autoru domām, ir skaidrojamas ar Rīgas un Pierīgas reģionu spēju ilgāk noturēt vidi, kura bremsē migrāciju.



Analizējot svērto indeksu nozīmības svarus, sadalījumā pēc to grupām, tika secināts, ka Latvijas statistiskajos reģionos iedzīvotāju migrācijas tempu galvenokārt ietekmē darba tirgu un dzīves līmeni raksturojošo rādītāju izmaiņas. Līdz ar to Latvijas reģionu iedzīvotāji tiecas uz to materiālās nodrošinātības celšanu, kas reģionālās nevienlīdzības dēļ nav iespējama visas Latvijas teritorijas ietvaros, jo, piemēram, vidējā neto darba samaksa Rīgas reģionā atšķiras no tās, kas tiek piedāvāta Latgales reģionā, tādējādi aizvien vairāk Latgales reģiona iedzīvotāju dodas uz Rīgas un Pierīgas reģioniem.

Pēc autoru domām, Latvijas valdībai, izstrādājot kārtējo teritoriju attīstības plānu ir jābalstās nevis uz vispārējiem valsts ekonomiskās izaugsmes rādītājiem, bet jāanalizē katru Latvijas statistisko reģionu kopumā, nosakot to priekšrocības un trūkumus un risinot problēmas, kuras ir aktuālas attiecīgajam reģionam.

### Summary

For years migration remains as the one of the most topical issues in Latvia, because, as the number of emigrants increases, country is losing human resources which are needed for the economic growth of the country.

Within this research authors have carried out the evaluation of the changes of migration indicators-stimulators and indicators-de-stimulators, their interrelationships and general impact on the migration trends in the statistical regions of Latvia. The empirical analysis of the research is based on the methodologies used in the previous studies, which are adapted to the situation in Latvia and by using available statistical indicators within the statistical regions in Latvia. The methodology of the research, which envisages the determination of the conditions affecting migration of the population in the statistical regions in Latvia, is based on the integral index calculation approach.

Initially the indicators that can stimulate or de-stimulate population migration were studied. These indicators were divided into several groups – demographic stability, labour market, standard of living and access to education.

Within the research it was concluded that the greatest impact on the number of regions in the statistical regions of Latvia was left by the changes of indicators (both stimulators and de-stimulators) that characterize the labour market and the standard of living of the population. The increase of integral index indicates that the conditions which contribute to the “pushing” of the population out of the regions and country in general are increasing. The fastest growth of the integral index was in Riga and regions close to Riga in 2010, but in the other statistical regions of Latvia in 2009, i.e., during the global financial crisis. According to the authors of the paper, such time shifts in the growth rates of the integral index can be explained by the ability of Riga and Pierīga regions to sustain an environment that slows down migration for longer period of time.

During the analysis of the weights of the significance of weighted indexes broken down by the groups, it was concluded that in the statistical regions of Latvia the pace of migration of population is mainly influenced by such factors as changes in the labour market and standard of living. Consequently, the population of statistical regions of Latvia strive to increase their material security, which is not possible within the entire territory of the country due to regional inequality in Latvia.

According to the authors of the research, the government of Latvia within the process of the composing of territorial development plan, should consider not the general economic growth indicators of the country, but should analyse each region separately, determining their advantages and disadvantages and solve the problems which are relevant to the specific region.

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# PSIHOLOĢISKO LABKLĀJĪBU IETEKMĒJOŠO FAKTORU IZVĒRTĒJUMS PAŠVALDĪBAS DARBA VIDĒ

## *Evolution of Factors Affecting Psychological Well-being in the Municipal Work Environment*

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**Abstract.** *Employees' wellbeing and health are very broad concepts, but different kinds of stressors are influencing them. The aim of this research is to identify the risk factors in the municipal work environment of Latgale region and to find solutions for risk reduction. The need for such research is justified by recent research in various countries, which shows that the psychosocial problems adversely affect wellbeing, productivity and health. In addition, forthcoming administrative-territorial reform in 2021 may intensify tensions. 123 employees were surveyed and surveys data were analyzed. It has been found that tension at work is caused by uncertainty about the future career prospects, overload and competition. Sometimes there is a lack of emotional intelligence, insufficient effective communication skills with colleagues and clients, and reassessment of one's affective abilities.*

**Keywords:** *employees, municipality, stress, stressors, well being.*

### **Ievads**

#### ***Introduction***

Pētījumos pasaulē arvien lielāku uzmanību pievērš darba vides kvalitātei, faktoriem, kas to nosaka, un tam, cik labi cilvēks jūtas savā darbavietā. Ar šo aspektu saistītos jēdzienus (*well being, welfare, happiness at work,*) tulko kā labbūtību, labjūtību, labizjūta, labklājība, saistot tos ar personību, darba vidi, motivāciju un iesaistīšanos. Arvien vairāk uzņēmumu pasaulē pieverš uzmanību darbinieku labklājībai. Ja 2018. gadā Labklājības stratēģija bija izstrādāta 20% Lielbritānijas uzņēmumu, tad 2020 gadā – jau 44% uzņēmumu (CIPD, 2018; CIPD, 2020). Taču latviešu valodā pieejamajos interneta resursos vārdu savienojums *labklājības stratēģija* pagaidām vēl nav atrodams, un tas liecina, ka labklājības darba vidē izpētei Latvijā pagaidām nav pievērsta pietiekama

uzmanība. Aktuāls ir jautājums par to, kāda ir pašvaldību darbinieku psiholoģiskā labklājība pirms administratīvi teritoriālās reformas un kas to visvairāk ietekmē. Tāpēc pētījuma mērķis ir apzināt psiholoģiskās labklājības būtību, izzināt riska faktorus pašvaldības darba vidē un meklēt risinājumus to novēršanai vai mazināšanai. Pētījumā izmantotas teorētiskās un empīriskās pētījumu metodes.

Pētījumā piedalījās Rēzeknes un Viļānu novada pašvaldības darbinieki. Rēzeknes novads ir 2524 km<sup>2</sup> liels, tas ir viens no lielākajiem novadiem Latvijā, aizņemot 3,9% no kopējās Latvijas teritorijas (Rēzeknes novada ilgtspējīga..., b.g.). Novadā darbojas 50 pašvaldības iestādes un 2020.gada 1. janvārī tajā bija deklarēti 26465 iedzīvotāji. Savukārt Viļānu pašvaldības teritorija aizņem 286,7 km<sup>2</sup>, tajā darbojas 22 pašvaldības (Viļānu novads, n.d.). Pēc LR Pilsonības un migrācijas lietu pārvaldes datiem 2020. gada 1. janvārī Viļānu novadā bija deklarēti 5761 iedzīvotājs. Saskaņā ar Konceptuālo ziņojumu "Par administratīvi teritoriālo iedalījumu" (VARAM, 2020) tiek plānots Viļānu novadu pievienot Rēzeknes novadam, izveidojot Rēzeknes novadu.

### **Literatūras apskats** *Literature Review*

Labklājība (*well being*) ir viena no dzīves kvalitātes sastāvdaļām. ASV psihologa Dinera subjektīvās labklājības trīspusējā modeļa pamatā ir trīs faktori: bieža pozitīva, reta negatīva ietekme un apmierinātība ar dzīvi (Diener, 1984). Filozofiskā skatījumā labklājībai ir divi aspekti: viens ir orientēts uz laimi, bet otrs – uz potenciāla realizēšanu (Ryan & Deci, 2000), kas mūsdienās bieži īstenojas darbā. Saskaņā ar Oksfordas vārdnīcu, *labklājību* definē kā stāvokli, kurā ir ērti, veselīgi un laimīgi. Labklājību biežāk saista ar ikdienas dzīvi, taču pētnieki Robertsons un Kūpers (Robertson & Cooper, 2011) labklājības jēdzienu attiecina uz produktivitāti un laimi darbā: labklājība nozīmē darbinieku fizisko, psiholoģisko un emocionālo veselību, komfortu un laimi. Vars (Warr, 1999) labklājību definē kā visaptverošu darbinieka pieredzi un funkcija gan no fiziskās, gan psiholoģiskās dimensijas. Cvenkela (Cvenkel, 2020) to raksturo kā visaptverošu un daudzdimensionālu fenomenu, kurš arvien vairāk tiek pētīts ar mērķi noteikt, kā vislabāk uzlabot šādu labklājību, lai darba vietu padarītu fiziski, garīgi un emocionāli veselīgāku.

Labklājību nosaka psiholoģiskā labsajūta, kas ietver sevis un savas dzīves pozitīvu novērtējumu, pašnoteikšanās sajūtu un sevis kā personības attīstību; pārliecību, ka dzīve ir mērķtiecīga un jēgpilna, labas attiecības ar citiem, spēju efektīvi vadīt savu dzīvi un apkārtējo pasauli (Page & Vella- Brodrick, 2009). Pasaules Veselības organizācija (WHO, 2013) rezumē, ka labklājība ir katra atsevišķa darbinieka stāvoklis, lai saprastu savas spējas, tiktu galā ar normālu dzīves stresu, strādātu produktīvi un dotu savu ieguldījumu sabiedrībai.

Darbinieku labklājībai ir neatsverama loma organizāciju sniegunā un izdzīvošanā, tā ietekmē darba rezultātus (Wright & Cropanzano, 2007), izmaksas, kas saistītas ar darba kavējumiem slimību dēļ, un veselības aprūpi (Spector, 1997; Pradhan & Hati, 2019). Labklājība paātrina produktivitāti gan individuālā, gan organizatoriskā līmenī, savukārt, ja tās nav, organizācijai var rasties gan finansiāli, gan nefinansiāli zaudējumi (Pradhan & Hati, 2019). Tā ietekmē darbinieku lēmumus, darbinieku iesaistīšanos (Spector, 1997) izturēšanos pret stresu, garīgo un fizisko veselību (Folkman, 1997), un vispārēju apmierinātību gan profesijā, gan personīgajā dzīvē (Diener, 2000).

Līdztekus vēlamajai labklājībai, mūsdienu darba vidē pieaug informācijas plūsma, darba intensitāte, ienāk jaunas tehnoloģijas, rodas nepieciešamība apgūt jaunas kompetences, un dinamiskajā pasaulē stress darbavietā ir kļuvis par globālu problēmu. Stresori rada kognitīvas, emocionālas, psiholoģiskas un uzvedības izmaiņas var kaitēt gan indivīda fiziskajai, gan psiholoģiskajai veselībai (Cvenkel, 2020, 136), tāpēc pētījuma empīriskajā daļā akcents ir likts uz stresa izvērtējumu un stresoru apzināšanu pašvaldību darba vidē.

Stresa būtību 20. gadsimta 40. gados aprakstīja kanādiešu fiziologs Hanss Selje, kurš stresa dinamiku iedalīja trijās fāzēs: trauksmes reakcijā, pretestības un izsīkuma fāzē. Pirmās divas fāzes viņš raksturoja kā savā ziņā veselīgu stresu (eistresu), bet pēdējo – kā kaitīgu stresu (distresu), kas izsmel organisma rezerves (Selje, 2012).

Ilgspējīga labklājība nenozīmē to ka cilvēki nepārtraukti jūtas labi: stresa situāciju, sāpīgu un negatīvu emociju piedzīvošana ir normāla dzīves sastāvdaļa, un spēja tās pārvaldīt ir būtiska ilgtermiņa labklājībai. Psiholoģiskā labklājība tiek apdraudēta, ja spriedzes situāciju radītās negatīvās emocijas ir ilgstošas un traucē cilvēka spēju darboties (Hupper, 2009). Tāpēc cilvēkam ir jāattīsta emocionālā inteliģence jeb spēja pazīt un vadīt gan savas, gan arī emocijas attiecībās ar citiem cilvēkiem.

Cilvēka uzvedību stresa situācijās palīdz izprast Edvarda (Edwards, 1992) Kibernētiskā stresa pārvarēšanas un labklājības teorija (*Cybernetic Theory of Stress, Coping and Well being*), kas apraksta pašregulējošu (autonomu) sistēmu darbību. Tās mērķis ir minimizēt ārējās vides neatbilstību iekšējiem standartiem. Saskaņā ar šo teoriju stress attiecas uz neatbilstību starp personas uztveri un vēlmēm, ja persona šo neatbilstību uzskata par svarīgu (Schuler, 1980). Uztvere ir notikumu, situāciju un apstākļu nevērtējošs subjektīvs attēlojums, ieskaitot fizisko un sociālo vidi, kas ieskauj personu, un paša cilvēka iezīmes (piemēram, dzimums, sociālais statuss, kompetence, fiziskais izskats). Indivīda uztveri maina un papildina izziņas procesi un informācija no sociālās vides. Ja ir informācija, tad uz situāciju var reaģēt krietni adekvātāk. Uztvere neaprobežojas tikai ar tagadni, tā var būt saistīta ar pagātnes atcerēšanos vai nākotnes gaidām. Vēlmes pārstāv to, ko cilvēks apzināti vēlas, un ietver mērķus, vērtības, intereses un

vajadzības. Katras neatbilstības ieguldījums kopējā darba stresā ir atkarīgs no tā nozīmīguma un ilguma. Jo lielāka ir neatbilstība – jo lielāks ir stresa līmenis, un, atbilstoši – zemāka psiholoģiskā labklājība. Tāpēc apzinoties stresa izraisītājus, iegūstot informāciju un apgūstot stresa pārvarēšanas tehnikas, var mazināt draudus psiholoģiskajai labklājībai un veselībai indivīda, grupas un organizācijas līmenī.

### **Empīriskā pētījums metodoloģija** *Methodology or Empiric Research*

Empīriskā pētījuma mērķis bija apzināt un novērtēt stresorus un stresa ietekmi uz pašvaldības administrācijas darbinieku psiholoģisko labklājību. Datu ieguvei tika izvēlēta aptauja. Tā tika veikta 2020. gada pavasarī pirms COVID-19 krīzes, laikā, kad sabiedrībā notika diskusijas par administratīvi teritoriālo reformu. Apzinot pētāmo problēmu, tika sagatavota aptaujas anketa – tā satur 38 jautājumus, no kuriem 31 ir slēgta, bet 7 – atvērta tipa jautājumi. Uz potenciālo pētījuma respondentu e-pastiem, kas pieejami pašvaldību mājas lapas, tika nosūtīts uzaicinājums un anketas elektroniskā adrese: <https://www.visidati.lv/aptauja/1551578298/>. Tika saņemtas 123 darbinieku anketas. Tās apstrādātas, izmantojot MS Excel programmu. Rakstā apkopotā veidā tiek analizētas tās atbildes, kas atbilst pētījuma mērķim un kontekstam: 1) stress, stresori un spriedzes darbā cēloņi un 2) reakcijas uz stresa sitācijām un rīcība psiholoģiskās labklājības uzlabošanai.

### **Empīriskā pētījuma rezultāti** *Results of an Empirical Study*

Pētījumā piedalījās dažādu profesiju Rēzeknes un Viļanu pašvaldību darbinieki. Pētījuma respondenti bija minēto pašvaldību iestāžu vadītāji (31), sociālie darbinieki (19), grāmatveži (15), projektu vadītāji (9), inženieri (5), juristi (3), ekonomisti (3), bāriņtiesu vadītāji (2), lietveži (2), policisti (2) un citu profesiju pārstāvji. Pašvaldību administrācijās visvairāk nodarbināto ir vecuma grupā 45-55 gadi: tie ir 34% no kopējā respondentu skaita, bet vismazāk ir nodarbināto vecuma grupā virs 65 gadiem – tikai 2%. Lielākajai daļai respondentu (84%) ir augstākā izglītība, 8% respondentu ir nepabeigtā augstākā izglītība, 6% ir vidējā profesionālā izglītība, bet 2% respondentu ir vispārējā vidējā izglītība.

## Stresori un spriedzes darbā cēloņi *Stressors and Causes of Stress at Work*

Efektīvs vadības stils, atklāta komunikācija, spēja produktīvi risināt organizācijas, tai skaitā pašvaldības, iekšējās problēmas veicina labklājību darba vidē, bet neziņa un pieļautās kļūdas – stresu, spriedzi, darba apjoma un kvalitātes kritumu, kā arī stresu, trauksmi, kas nelabvēlīgi ietekmē darbinieku psiholoģisko labklājību. Aptaujas dati liecina, ka apmēram 35% respondentu – pašvaldību darbinieku – stresu un spriedzi darba vidē izjūt dažas reizes mēnesī, 27% to izjūt gandrīz katru dienu, 19% – katru dienu. Tikai apmēram piektdaļa vērtē, ka darba vidē stresa situācijās rodas reti – dažas reizes gadā. Biežākie stresa cēloņi pašvaldības darbā ir pārslodze, laika un informācijas trūkums kvalitatīvai darba izpildei un komunikācijas problēmas (skat. 1. tabulu).

*1. tabula. Stresoru izpausmes biežums  
Table 1 Frequency of Stressors*

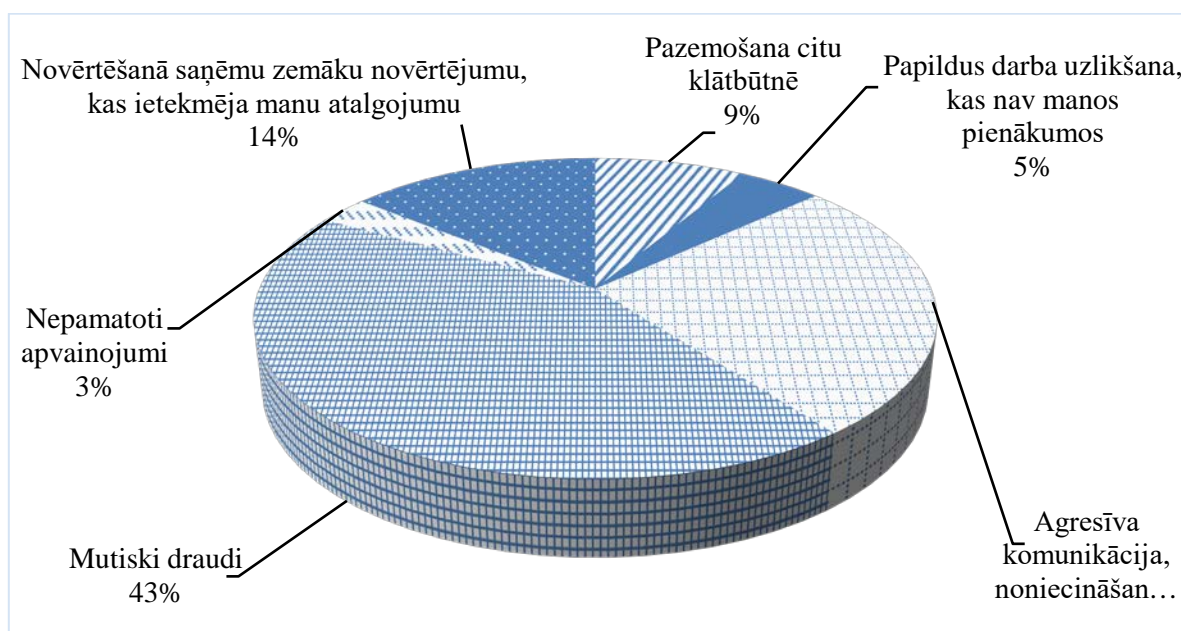
Stresors	Nekad	Reti (dažas reizes gadā)	Dažreiz (dažas reizes mēnesī)	Bieži (gandrīz katru dienu)	Vienmēr (katru dienu)
Pārslodze	3%	34%	46%	11%	5%
Laika trūkums darba izpildei	4%	41%	45%	9%	2%
Spriedze darbā ar tiešo vadītāju	13%	29%	54%	5%	-
Bosings	14%	43%	41%	2%	-
Mobings	18%	48%	33%	-	-
Konfliktsituācijas ar kolēģiem	11%	55%	33%	1%	-
Seksuālā uzņēmšanās vai pazemošana	40%	44%	16%	-	-

Pārslodze bieži ir saistīta ar papildus pienākumiem, piemēram, bieži ir jāgatavo atbildes uz iedzīvotāju iesniegumiem, jāpārbauda dati un jāgatavo pārskata informācija, jāsniedz atbildes uz dažādu valsts iestāžu – LR Finanšu ministrijas, Izglītības un zinātnes ministrijas Valsts kontroles – pieprasījumiem vai aptaujām. Parasti tiek noteikts arī informācijas iesniegšanas termiņš, kas var būt no vienas dienas līdz pat divām nedēļām, atkarībā no svarīguma pakāpes. Darbam nepieciešamā informācija pirms tās apstrādes ir jāpārbauda dažādās datu bāzēs, kas bieži vien darbiniekam nav pieejamas, un tas rada stresu. Diezgan bieži arī Domes deputāti pašvaldības speciālistiem steidzīgi pieprasa sniegt viņus interesējošo informāciju. Aptauja parādīja, ka, sakarā ar lielo darba apjomu, 33% darbinieku dažas reizes mēnesī strādā arī pusdienu pārtraukumā, bet 7% – pusdienu pārtraukumā strādā gandrīz katru dienu.



Pašvaldībās ir samērā laba komunikācija starp darbiniekiem un tiešo darba vadītāju. Liela daļa (46%) respondentu ir norādījuši, ka gandrīz katru dienu var brīvi komunicēt ar savu tiešo vadītāju, bet gandrīz trešdaļa (30%) brīvi var komunicēt ar tiešo vadītāju katru dienu. Taču respondenti norāda arī to, ka diezgan bieži darbā ar tiešo vadītāju rodas spriedze.

Arī bosings – vadības īstenots psiholoģiskais terors – ir diezgan biežs stresa cēlonis pašvaldības darbiniekiem: 41% respondentu ar to saskaras dažas reizes mēnesī, 43% – dažas reizes gadā. Biežāk akcentētās bosinga izpausmes ir apkopotas 1. attēlā.

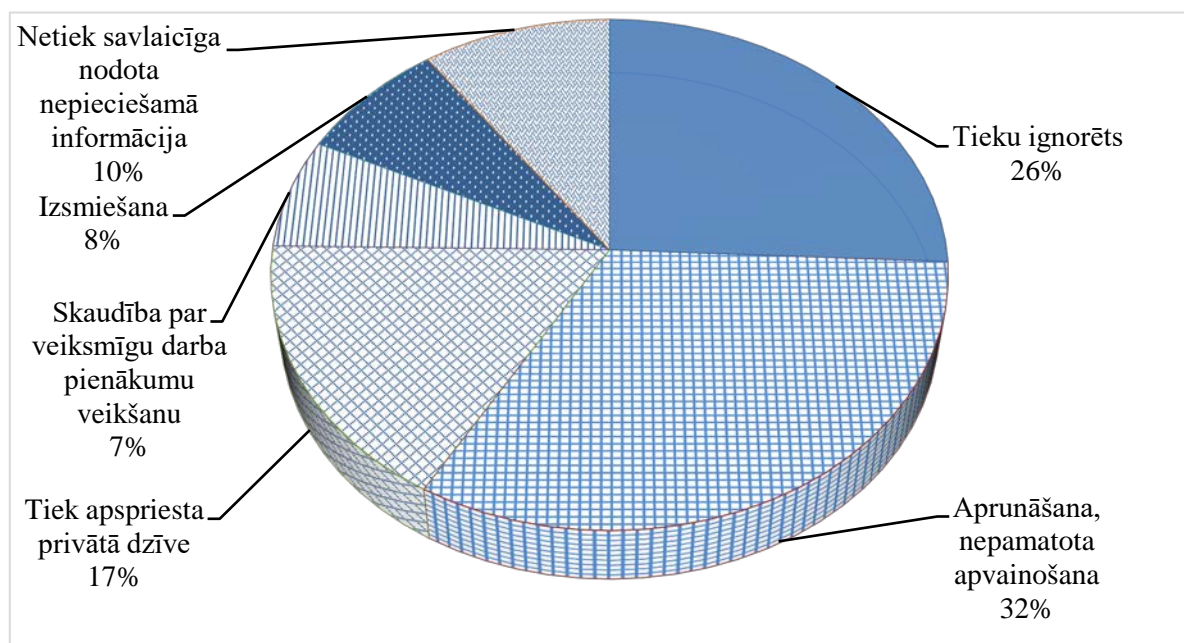


1. attēls. *Bosinga izpausmes veidi*  
Figure 1 *Kinds of Bossing Manifestation*

Respondentu atbildes liecina, ka visbiežāk (43%) darbinieki saskaras ar mutisku draudu izteikšanu no vadītāja puses, agresīvu komunikāciju vai noniecināšanu (26%). Darbinieki ir saņēmuši nepamatoti zemu novērtējumu (14%), kas ir ietekmējis viņu atalgojumu. Dažkārt ir bijusi pazemošana citu klātbūtnē, papildus darba uzlikšana, kas nav amata pienākumos. Tas liecina par autoritāru vadības stilu un emocionālās inteliģences trūkumu.

Mobings jeb darbinieku īstenotais psiholoģiskais terors izpaužas nedaudz retāk nekā bosings. Dažas reizes mēnesī ar to saskaras vidēji 33% respondentu. Biežākie mobinga izpausmes veidi un to īpatsvars apkopoti 2. attēlā. Tie ir: aprunāšana un nepamatota apvainošana (32%), ignorēšana (26%), privātās dzīves apspriešana (17%), izsmiešana (8%). Kolēģi dažkārt kritiski uztver citu veikumu

un apzināti kavē citu darbu, piemēram, savlaicīgi nenosūtot nepieciešamo informāciju – to norāda 10% respondentu. Tā rezultātā rodas konfliktsituācijas.



2. attēls. *Mobinga izpausmes veidi*  
 Figure 1 *Kinds of Mobbing Manifestation*

Konfliktsituāciju biežākie iemesli ir nekvalitatīvs darbs (norādījuši 49% respondentu), personiskie aizvainojumi (26%), nesaprašanās (14%), norādījumu neizpildīšana (11%). Tādēļ izpildes termiņa beigās konstatētās nepilnības bieži vien arī nodaļu vadītājam rada stresa situāciju, kas rezultējas ar konfliktu, nesaprašanos vai aizvainojumu un diskomfortu.

Liela daļa respondentu (54%) ir atzinuši, ka viņiem ir svarīgi būt labākam par citiem vienmēr, 23% ir svarīgi dažreiz būt labākam par citiem. Tas liecina, ka pašvaldībās liela daļa darbinieku ir A tipa personības (Friedman & Booth-Kewley, 1987) ar viņiem raksturīgo līderību, mērķtiecību, augstu pienākuma izjūtu, darbaholismu un uzcītību. Šie darbinieki ne vienmēr pietiekami daudz laika velta atpūtai un rūpēm par savu veselību, tāpēc dažkārt asi reagē uz kritiskām piezīmēm un rada stresa situācijas sev un citiem. Vēlme būt labākam neapzināti ir saistīta ar vēlmi apliecināt sevi un ar nedrošību par palikšanu darbā pēc administratīvi teritoriālās reformas – to norādījuši 51% respondentu. Nodarbināto skaita samazināšana jaunajās pašvaldībās ir neizbēgama, un daudziem tas ir spriedzes iemesls. Turklāt autores personīgie novērojumi liecina, ka 2020. gada nogalē nodarbinātie ir kļuvuši vēl vairāk uztraukušies par savu nākotni, ko ietekmē COVID-19 ierobežojumi un tiešās komunikācijas trūkums.

Salīdzinoši nelielai daļai (23%) respondentu nav svarīgi būt labākiem par citiem. Tas liecina, ka šie darbinieki ir atkarīgas personības, viņi pakļaujas un izpilda citu rīkojumus. Šie darbinieki dažreiz izjūt personības iekšējo stresu, spriedzi vai protestu, jo notiek viņu vēlmju apspiešana, kas arī rada psiholoģisko diskomfortu un mazina psiholoģisko labklājību.

### **Reakcijas uz stresu un rīcība psiholoģiskās labklājības uzlabošanai** *Responses to Stress and Actions to Improve Psychological Well-being*

Apkopotie dati liecina, ka darbinieku reakcijas uz stresu vai spriedzes situācijām ir dažādas: jūtas nemierīgi, nespēj koncentrēties, zūd darba spējas (33%), izjūt miega traucējumus (29%), izjūt galvassāpes (10%), ieraujas sevī, mazāk runā ar darba kolēģiem (10%), izjūt ēstgribas trūkumu (7%), kļūst viegli sakaitināmi (5%).

46% atzīst, ka pārslodzes rezultātā lēnāk virzās darbs, par darbu tiek domāts arī mājās, rodas bailes par savu veselību. 17% norāda, ka satraukumu izjūt situācijās, kad ierodas valsts iestāžu revidenti, jo darbinieki uztraucas par pārbaudes rezultātiem. Audita laikā parasti rodas stress, paaugstinās asinsspiediens. Arī saskarsmē ar agresīviem klientiem un klientiem ar garīga rakstura traucējumiem rodas spriedze. Minēto faktoru negatīvo ietekmi uz darbinieku veselību ir norādījuši 87% respondentu, kas ilgtermiņā var radīt nopietnas veselības problēmas: saslimšanas ar sirds un asinsvadu, centrālās nervu sistēmas vai citām slimībām.

Stresa un spriedzes mazināšanai darbinieki izvēlas sev piemērotāko veidu: nodarbojas ar fiziskām aktivitātēm (30%), klausās nomierinošu mūziku (24%), dodas pastaigā (23%), apmeklē draugus (8%) vai izvēlas citu aktivitāti – dodas iepirkties, zīmē, lasa grāmatas, skatās romantiskas filmas vai nedara neko.

Organizācijas līmenī darbinieku aptauja ir viens no veidiem, lai apzinātu aktuālās problēmas un darbinieku redzējumu un meklētu risinājumus to novēršanai. Pētījumā Lielbritānijā konstatēts, ka tikai puse (52%) organizāciju veic riska novērtēšanu vai stresa auditu, trīs no desmit (30%) veic stresa pārvaldības apmācību darbspēkam (CIPD, 2020).

Aptaujas rezultāti norāda uz nepieciešamību vadītājam mainīt attieksmi pret darbiniekiem (17%), samazināt/ izlīdzināt darba slodzi (12%) un skaidri definēt darba pienākumus (10%). Darbinieki vēlas tikt uzklausīti, nevis tikai izrīkoti, atbalstošu darba vidi. Respondentu skatījumā biežāk ir jāorganizē kopīgi sporta un atpūtas pasākumi, lai neformālā vide saliedētu kolektīvu.

Visu līmeņu darbiniekiem ir jāpilveido savas prasmes un kompetences, tai skaitā prasmes reaģēt uz stresa situācijām un klientu, darba devēja un kolēģu emocijām. Apmēram 41% respondentu atzīst, ka viņi zina un prot reaģēt uz

emocijām. Taču 22% norāda, ka viņiem nav šādu zināšanu un prasmju, bet 37% par jautājumu kā reaģēt uz emocijām nav domājuši.

Jāakcentē, ka pašvērtējot savu profesionālītāti, 20% respondentu norādīja, ka viņiem nekad nepietrūkst zināšanu un prasmju kvalitatīvai darba izpildei, bet 74% tās pietrūkst reti – dažas reizes gadā. Šāds rezultāts liek domāt, liela daļa darbinieku, būdami A tipa personības un ieņemot vadošos amatus, savu profesionalitāti atsevišķos aspektos ir pārvērtējuši.

Lielbritānijas pētījumā (CIPD, 2020) darbinieku labklājības uzlabošanai tiek rekomendēts, pirmām kārtām investēt vadītājos, jo ikdienā parasti tiešie vadītāji ir tie, kas visvairāk ietekmē cilvēku labklājību darbā. CIPD (2020) pētījumā biežākie ar darbu saistītā stresa cēloņi ir nepārvarama slodze un vadības stils (tos min attiecīgi 60% un 41% respondentu), kuri abi ietilpst vadītāja kompetencē.

### **Secinājumi** **Conclusions**

Pasaulē arvien vairāk tiek pievērsta uzmanība psiholoģiskās labklājības kā visaptveroša un daudzdimensionālu fenomena, izpētei, lai katru darba vidi padarītu fiziski, garīgi un emocionāli veselīgāku. Tai ir svarīga loma organizāciju ilgtermiņa efektivitātes nodrošināšanā, tā ietekmē darba rezultātus un darbinieku labsajūtu. Par labklājību kā stāvokli, kurā darbinieks jūtas ērti un strādā produktīvi ir jārūpējas gan indivīdam, gan grupai, gan organizācijai kopumā. Efektīvs vadības stils un spēja produktīvi risināt organizācijas iekšējās problēmas veicina labklājību darba vidē, bet pieļautās kļūdas – stresu, spriedzi, darba apjoma un kvalitātes kritumu un ilgtermiņā arī veselības problēmas. Lai arī MK noteikumi Nr. 660 “Darba vides iekšējās uzraudzības un veikšanas kārtība” uzliek par pienākumu darba devējam veikt psiholoģisko un emocionālo darba vides novērtējumu darba vietā, tomēr aptaujas rezultāti ļauj secināt, ka pašvaldībās tas tiek darīts nepietiekami.

Apmēram trešdaļa darbinieku stresu un spriedzi ikdienas darbā izjūt dažas reizes mēnesī, apmēram ceturtdaļa to izjūt gandrīz katru dienu, un apmēram piektdaļa – katru dienu. Izplatītākie stresori ir pārslodze darbā, darba laika un informācijas trūkums, kas dažkārt noved pie konfliktsituācijām, nepietiekami efektīvas komunikācija un dažreiz arī izpaužas psiholoģiskais terors – mobings un bosings. Darbinieku reakcijas uz stresu vai spriedzes situācijām ir dažādas: nemiers, nespēja koncentrēties, darba spēju zudums, miega traucējumi, galvassāpes, ierauššanās sevī. Bailes par savu veselību darbinieki izjūt pārslodzes gadījumā, saskarē ar agresīviem klientiem un klientiem ar garīga rakstura traucējumiem.

Vairāk nekā puse pašvaldības darbinieku izjūt stresu un spriedzi, sakarā ar nedrošību par palikšanu darbā un amatā pēc administratīvi teritoriālās reformas.

Liela daļa respondentu (54%) ir atzinuši, ka viņiem ir svarīgi būt labākam, viņi augsti vērtē savu profesionalitāti, taču relatīvi biežās stresa situācijas neliecina par augsta līmeņa psiholoģisko labklājību un spēju vadīt stresu.

Labklājības darba vidē uzlabošanai, jāveic profilaktiski pasākumi, jāveicina atklāts dialogs par problēmām, piemēram, darba slodzes un pienākumu pārskatīšanu, un jāveicina darbinieku izglītošana efektīvas komunikācijas un stresa pārvaldības tehniku apguvei.

### **Summary**

Well-being in the workplace is an all-encompassing and multidimensional phenomenon which continues to attract more and more research around the world aimed at determining how best to enhance such well-being to make the workplace healthier from both a physical and mental and emotional standpoint.

Employee psychological well-being plays an important role in ensuring the long-term efficiency of organizations and groups, it affects the results of work and the well-being of employees. About the welfare as a state, in which the employee feels comfortable and works productively must be taken care by both the individual and the organization as a whole. Effective management style and the ability to productively solve the organization's internal problems contribute to a well-being, but mistakes – stress, tension, and a decline in the volume and a quality of work, and in the long run also health problems. Although Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 660 “Procedures for Internal Monitoring and Performance of the Work Environment” makes the employer to perform a psychological and emotional assessment of work environment at the workplace. The results of the survey allow to conclude that this is not done sufficiently in a local municipality.

About a third of employees are experiencing stress and tension in their daily work few times a month; about a quarter of employees are experiencing stress almost every day, and about one fifth of employees experience stress almost every day. The most common stressors are overwork, lack of working time and information, which sometimes leads to conflict situations, insufficiently effective communication and sometimes psychological terror - mobbing and bossing. Employees' reactions to stressful or tense situations vary: anxiety, inability to concentrate, loss of ability to work, sleep disturbances, headaches, self-indulgence. Fear about one's health is felt by employees in contact with aggressive clients and clients with mental disorders.

More than half of the employees experience stress and tension due to insecurity about staying in work after the administrative-territorial reform.

A large majority of respondents (54%) have acknowledged that this is important for them to be better, they value their professionalism, but frequent situations of stress do not indicate a high level of a psychological well-being.

By improvement of a well-being at work, one needs to undertake preventive measures, to promote an open dialogue on such issues as reviewing workloads and responsibilities, and to promote employees ability to apply effective communication and stress management techniques.

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## **EFFECTS OF SOCIAL ISOLATION ON MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19 IN THE CONTEXT OF AGEING**

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**Abstract.** *The COVID-19 pandemic brought significant changes to the usual rhythm of life. Reduced opportunities to meet with family members and friends in a situation of heightened stress leads to increased feelings of loneliness and social isolation, as well as increases the risk of mental health problems. The aim of this paper is to evaluate the effect of social contacts on the changes in psychoemotional states in the elderly population in Latvia during the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis draws upon quantitative data collected by the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe within Wave 8 in Latvia (n=1207). Measurements of the frequency of social contacts were used to construct social isolation indexes. Changes of psychoemotional state, characterized by sleeping problems, nervousness, frustration during the pandemic were included as dependent variables in multinomial logistic regression models that were run to identify the effect of social isolation on psychoemotional health in the context of other factors: age, gender, perceived health status, affluence and feelings of loneliness. The results show that in the group of those aged 50+, close to one-fifth of respondents experienced the effect of the COVID-19 crisis on their mental health. The link between reduced social contacts and changes in psychoemotional states proved to be statistically significant. In the group with the highest level of social isolation, irregularities in psychoemotional health are three times higher compared to other groups.*

**Keywords:** *ageing, COVID-19, psychoemotional disorders, social isolation, Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement (SHARE).*



## **Introduction**

In contrast to seniors in other countries in Europe, the elderly in Latvia are one of the risk groups for social exclusion (European Commission. Eurostat, 2017). 50.5% of the population aged 65 and older are vulnerable to the risk of social exclusion, in comparison with the average of 18.9% in Europe (Eurostat, 2021). Social exclusion can be separated into three core dimensions – material exclusion, exclusion from the labour market and social isolation (Gallie, 2004). Ageing is linked to an increase in the risk of exclusion in practically all dimensions (Rungule et al., 2012). However, if material exclusion and exclusion from the labour market in seniors is determined more by circumstances that cannot be influenced at an individual level – the national social insurance and social support system in a country, as well as age – then the existence of social isolation is determined by a lack of interaction with other members of the community and physical separation from others, which can be a person's individual choice but could also be an inevitable consequence of family circumstances (J. Cacioppo & S. Cacioppo, 2014). Studies show that as one ages, the frequency of all types of social contact decreases, as well as the network of social contacts, and the number of people who live alone increases (Baranowska-Rataj & Abramowska-Kmon, 2019).

According to Eurostat, almost 45% of all households in Latvia are one-person households, over 15% of all households comprise of persons living alone, and aged 65 or older (European Commission. Eurostat, 2017).

The requirement to limit face-to-face contact during the COVID-19 pandemic additionally increases the social isolation of the older generation and decreases the already limited opportunities to obtain social support (J. Cacioppo & S. Cacioppo, 2018). Life in circumstances of social isolation increases the feeling of loneliness, anxiety, stress and consequently the risk of developing mental health disorders. The aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of social contacts on the changes in psychoemotional states among the population aged 50 and older during the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, also taking into consideration other factors.

### **Social Isolation and Loneliness among the Ageing Population**

Social isolation and loneliness, although similar, are not necessarily always connected. Social isolation is usually defined as a lack of social contact and social support, provided by social relationships and engagement in social groups (Rungule et al., 2007). However, loneliness is a subjective feeling of agitation about the fact that a person is alone or separated from others (J. Cacioppo & S. Cacioppo, 2014). Therefore, it is possible to feel lonely while living in a family

and maintaining contact with friends, as well as the contrary – not feeling lonely while living alone.

Studies have shown that social isolation, as well as loneliness, can impact the development of various physical and mental health states and disorders: increased blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, a decrease in cognitive abilities, development of Alzheimer's disease and mortality (J. Cacioppo & S. Cacioppo, 2014).

For elderly people, social isolation and loneliness are also risk factors for suicidal behaviour, especially during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic as shown by the suicide rate in 2003 during the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic in Hong Kong (Cheung, Merry, & Sundram, 2015; Yip, Cheung, Chau, & Law, 2010). As observed in the case of Hong Kong, the effects of the epidemic lasted for years following the outbreak; for instance, the suicide rate never returned to the pre-epidemic level (Cheung, Chau, & Yip, 2008).

The World Health Organization states that due to the COVID-19 epidemiological restrictions that call for social distancing and restriction of face-to-face social contact, elderly people may become agitated, upset, stressed (WHO, 2020). Studies also show that already at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, elderly individuals experienced increased depression indicators, and showed more frequent feelings of loneliness. Yet it must be noted that an important theoretical restriction to researching loneliness in elderly individuals is that normally research into the impact of loneliness on one's health includes measuring loneliness over a prolonged period of time, e.g., several years (Hawkey & Cacioppo, 2010). Currently, it is not known how long COVID-19 epidemiological restrictions will be in place, and it is not possible to accurately predict the total duration of the period of social exclusion that can lead to loneliness and consequently to impact the physical and mental health of elderly individuals.

### **Data and Methods**

In light of current demographic trends in Latvia indicating that society is ageing and the population is decreasing, improving the situation of active ageing and increasing the length of working life falls within the scope of policy planning in Latvia. The target group for solutions in a report by the Cabinet of Ministers “An active ageing strategy for a longer and better working life in Latvia” are elderly persons aged 50 and older, especially until they reach retirement age (Cabinet of Ministers, 2016). For this reason target group for the problems analysed in this article are Latvian nationals who are aged 50+.

Empirical analysis is based on data from Wave 8 of the international longitudinal study *The Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe* (SHARE) (Börsch-Supan, 2020). Since 2004, SHARE is carried out biennially with unified methodology in over 20 European countries. The study acquires comparable data on people aged 50 and older: their daily lives, health and social life circumstances, views, values and habits. Two surveys were administered within the scope of Wave 8: data was obtained before the COVID-19 outbreak and also after the first wave of the outbreak in the summer of 2020. The first survey of SHARE Wave 8 was administered using a computer-assisted personal interview method, but the second survey – using a computer-assisted telephone interview method (CATI), reaching a total of n=1207 respondents in Latvia.

The first step of data analysis was focused on determining the level of social isolation by examining the measures of intensity of social contacts and characteristics of social networks. The second step drew upon the proposed hypothesis that social isolation caused by the restrictions to social contacts affected the feelings of loneliness and caused changes to the psychoemotional state of the elderly population in Latvia during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social isolation is addressed at two levels: the primary, consisting of family links and contacts with family members (adult children, close relatives), and the secondary, consisting of contacts and relations with friends, neighbours, distant relatives. In order to assess the level of social isolation in the group of people aged 50+, social isolation indexes have been calculated at different levels of social relations. The calculation of the index was based on measurements of the frequency of social contacts. In addition, an index was calculated to encompass two types of contacts: direct and indirect (by phone, via internet, etc.). The first stage calculated individual indexes for the primary network of social contacts (frequency of respondents' contacts with adult children and close relatives) and the secondary network of social contacts (frequency of contacts with neighbours, friends, etc.). At the second stage, a summary isolation index was calculated for each individual. The resulting index value was split into quartiles creating a new scale variable where 1 means frequent social contacts, 2 – average frequency of social contacts, 3 – average isolation and 4 – high level of social isolation. The high level mostly includes individuals who didn't contact any of their closest relatives or friends or those who didn't have relatives or friends at all. In order to assess the differences in social isolation across socio-demographic groups, a chi-square test was employed.

Further data analyses were carried out using the statistical package Stata (version 14.1). To account for complex survey sampling design, Taylor series linearization methods were used to calculate the standard errors. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level of significance. The Rao-Scott Chi

square test was used to test for differences in categorical variables between the “no psychoemotional problems”, “having psychoemotional problems”, and “having psychoemotional problems which increased during the pandemic” respondent groups. Student’s t-test was used for continuous variables. The Rao-Scott Chi square statistic was chosen over classical Pearson Chi square to account for the complex sampling design (Rao & Scott, 1984).

Multinomial logistic regressions were used to calculate relative risk ratios (RRR) for both a crude (Model 1) and adjusted (Model 2) model. Multinomial logistic regression was used because the dependent variable (psychoemotional problems) had more than two categories. Three categories of psychoemotional status (no PE problems, having PE problems, having PE problems and problems which increased during the pandemic) were used for the dependent variable. Model 1 examined the association between PE problem status (as the dependent variable) and each of the factor variables, separately controlling for gender and age. The regression analyses performed for Model 2 examined the multivariate associations between depression and each factor variable, controlling for the presence of other variables in the model according to maximum likelihood ratios.

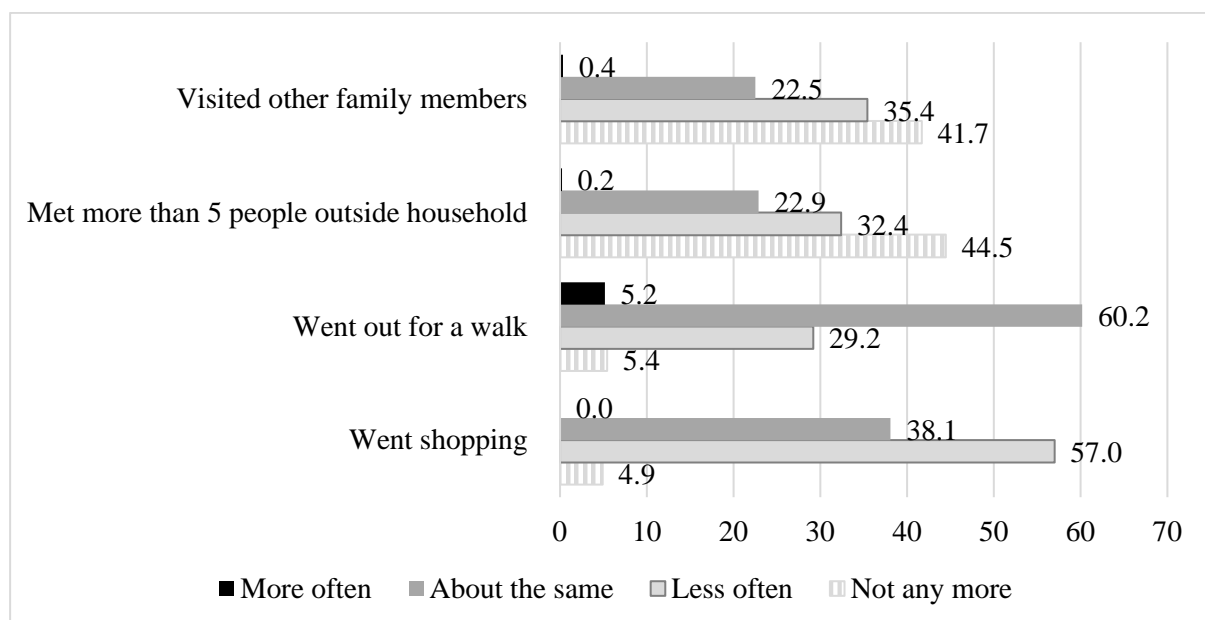
## **Results**

Social contacts and social networks form the social capital of individuals and social groups. Each group of contacts in every person’s life has its special meaning. Weakening of social contacts or the lack thereof at any given level can be successfully compensated with expanding contacts at another level. For instance, upon reaching retirement age, the loss of colleagues or shrinking number of friends due to exit from the labour market can be compensated by close family relations, contacts with children and grandchildren. In daily life, the most frequent are contacts at the primary level of family relations. This is especially characteristic of the 50+ age group, for whom family ties and contacts dominate among other types of social contacts. Restrictions that were introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic led to the decrease of social contacts at virtually any level.

As it was expected, since the beginning of the pandemic, the level of activity has decreased in most spheres of social activity. The only exception was walks in the fresh air that became even more frequent than before – 5% of individuals went outside to take a walk more often than before (Figure 1). We observe that the pandemic-induced restrictions had a significant effect on the sphere of social contacts. The majority of the population aged 50+ (75% on average) visited their family members less often or not at all, as well as didn’t meet with other people outside their household: 42% didn’t meet with family members living outside their household, but 44% skipped on direct contacts with other people outside

their household, and respectively 35% and 32% reduced the frequency of such contacts compared to pre-pandemic times.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, half (51%) of the elderly had rarely met or not seen their children at all, but 86% had not seen their relatives. The vast majority (62%) had not met in person or had rarely seen their neighbours, friends or other acquaintances during that period. Data analysis shows that most of the elderly have replaced contacts in person during the COVID-19 with calls or digital communications with their closest relatives. 90% have been in contact with their children every day or several days a week by phone or by digital means, and part of the group (49%) has maintained regular phone or digital contacts with their relatives, while two-thirds have been in contact with their neighbours and friends in this format.



*Figure 1 Engagement in Various Activities since the Outbreak of COVID-19 Compared to the Situation prior to the Outbreak (%)*

Source: authors' estimates. Data: SHARE Wave 8 COVID-19 Survey data, Latvia, n=837.

### **Impact of Social Isolation on Mental State**

The data shows that both at the general and at the primary level of contacts (frequency of relationships and contacts with adult children and close relatives) there are differences according to the individuals' age and sex. Affiliation to a group with high levels of isolation is more common in men at a statistically significant level. But it is interesting to note that this applies directly to primary relations and social contacts in general. On the other hand, when secondary contacts are considered (including contacts with friends and other non-relatives),

men fall into the opposite group to those who are more socially active/involved. This may be partially explained to have originated from the fact that women traditionally are more likely to maintain contacts with children and relatives.

*Table 1 Level of Social Engagement and Isolation according to Gender (column %)*

	Primary contact network		Secondary contact network		Summary contacts	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
High level of engagement	22	29	21	17	20	21
Average level of engagement	14	18	28	27	30	34
Average level of isolation	23	23	19	22	16	19
High level of isolation	41	29	32	34	34	26

Source: authors' estimates. Data: Wave 8 COVID-19 Survey data, Latvia, n=965.

As age increases, so do the risks of social exclusion. However, here too there are differences depending on the level of contacts. In the primary group of contacts, while the aforementioned trend holds, a higher level of isolation is typical for individuals aged 58–64, possibly due to the fact that most individuals in this age group are employed and, therefore, spend less time on contacts with adult children and grandchildren. Meanwhile, these individuals usually do not yet need help or care from children or other relatives and that may also have its effect on the frequency of contacts. The effect of age on the frequency/extent of contacts is very significant in the secondary group of contacts. As age increases, the risks of social isolation also increase to a very significant extent, and in the age group 75+ the level of social isolation is almost 3 times higher than in the age group 50–57 years. According to the aggregate index, the risks of social isolation increase steadily and at a statistically significant level as an individual's age increases. Thus, we can unequivocally conclude that the highest degree of social isolation is characteristic of pensioner households and single pensioners who have a relatively narrow or lack a group of primary contacts (family members, children, close relatives) as well as a group of secondary contacts which are particularly affected by pandemic restrictions.

*Table 2 Level of Social Engagement and Isolation Depending on Age (%)*

	50–57 years	58–64 years	65–74 years	75+ years
<b>Primary contact network</b>				
High level of engagement	36	22	22	29
Average level of engagement	23	16	15	14
Average level of isolation	14	20	30	26
High level of isolation	28	41	34	31

	50–57 years	58–64 years	65–74 years	75+ years
<b>Secondary contact network</b>				
High level of engagement	34	21	13	10
Average level of engagement	28	32	27	23
Average level of isolation	21	19	26	18
High level of isolation	17	28	33	49
<b>Summary of social contacts network</b>				
High level of engagement	34	19	13	17
Average level of engagement	35	32	34	29
Average level of isolation	15	20	20	17
High level of isolation	16	28	33	37

Source: authors' estimates. Data: Wave 8 COVID-19 Survey data, Latvia, n=965.

Before analyzing the impact of social contacts and other factors on changes in psychoemotional health during the COVID-19 pandemic, we will look at the direct relationship between social isolation indicators and changes in the state of psychoemotional health. The results presented in Table 3 indicate that there is a significant association between declining social contacts, social isolation, and psychoemotional health in general. Individuals with average and high levels of social isolation are more likely to experience some of the changes in psychoemotional health conditions. But those who have experienced changes in all measured psychoemotional health indicators, namely those respondents who have experienced sleep problems, nervousness or anxiety, and sadness and depression during the pandemic are 3 times more represented in the group with the highest level of social isolation.

*Table 3 Influence of Social Engagement and Isolation on Changes in Psychoemotional States (%)*

	High level of engagement	Average level of engagement	Average level of isolation	High level of isolation
No changes in mental state	60	56	51	45
Have experienced negative changes in any of the psychoemotional health indicators	35	34	39	39
Have experienced negative changes in several psychoemotional health indicators	5	10	10	16

Source: authors' estimates. Data: SHARE Wave 8. COVID-19 Survey data, Latvia, n=972.

To assess the effect of social isolation on changes in psychoemotional state in the context of other factors, multinomial logistic regression models were calculated by including the experience of changes in psychoemotional states in one of three dimensions (sleep disorders, nervousness, depression) as a dependent variable and as the independent variables – the characteristics described above, which have a statistically significant correlation with psychoemotional health indicators. Table 4 shows the regression results, including only those independent variables that have a statistically significant effect on psychoemotional health. The results of the analysis show that the lack of social contacts is a significant risk factor for the development of psychoemotional health disorders. As previously concluded, based on the results of descriptive statistics, psychoemotional disorders are also associated with gender and age. Women, as well as the elderly, are more likely to experience any of the psychoemotional disorders during COVID-19. Accordingly, as the age of the respondents decreases, the probability that a person will experience some change in the psychoemotional state decreases. The characteristic of the emotional state, namely the feeling of loneliness, was included in the model as an independent variable. Loneliness is closely correlated with the level of social isolation of the individual and this variable is also very significantly associated with psychoemotional disorders. People who often feel lonely are also more likely to experience psychoemotional disorders. Self-assessment of health status is one more important influencing factor; those who rate their health status as poor or rather bad have more frequently experienced changes in psychoemotional status during COVID-19. The level of material well-being is also the cause of psychoemotional stress, which is undoubtedly exacerbated by the crisis. In this case, the model includes a subjective assessment of material well-being (“how easy is it to make ends meet”). The lower the level of material prosperity, the more likely it is that the crisis will increase the risk of disorders in the psychoemotional sphere as well.

### **Conclusion**

In the age group 50+, almost one fifth of respondents have felt the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on their psychoemotional health, although overall health has deteriorated by only 8%, according to subjective assessments.

Face-to-face social contacts during COVID-19 have not occurred or have been extremely rare for most of the elderly. These are usually replaced by personal phone contacts or electronic communication with relatives or friends. On the whole, high social isolation has been found to occur in 36% of men and 26% of women.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, loneliness was often felt by 9% of the population aged 50+, while in 30% of the elderly the feeling of loneliness was



sometimes present during that period. Most elderly people (61%), despite the restrictions on social contact during the COVID-19 crisis, have never felt alone.

Among those who are single and more socially isolated, there is a significantly higher proportion of people who have experienced a deterioration of their psychoemotional state: three times more people who have experienced nervousness, anxiety, twice as many people who have experienced sadness or depression but 44% of this group have experienced sleep disorders .

The results of the analysis show that women, as well as the elderly, are more likely to experience psychoemotional disorders during COVID-19. Also, those who rate their health status as poor or rather bad and who had experienced loneliness, have experienced changes in their psychoemotional status more often.

## Discussion

Previous analyses based on data from the SHARE study have shown that social isolation at the primary level of social contacts is particularly pronounced among seniors who were once divorced (Žilinčíková & Kreidl, 2018). According to research, divorce also affects the ability of older people to form close relationships and care for their grandchildren (Žilinčíková & Kreidl, 2018). Further research is needed to examine how social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic has been affected by previous family life experiences, including divorce.

**Table 4 Relative Risk Ratios\* of Increased Psychoemotional Problems during COVID-19 and of Existing but not Increased Psychoemotional Problems According to Gender, Age and Contacts**

Factor	Model 1			Model 2		
	RRR increased problems vs non-problems	RRR non-increased problems vs non-problems	RRR increased problems vs non-increased	RRR increased problems vs non-problems	RRR non-increased problems vs non-problems	RRR increased problems vs non-increased
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Female	<b>2.3<sup>(c)</sup></b> (1.6–3.2)	<b>1.7<sup>(b)</sup></b> (1.2–2.3)	1.3 (0.9–2.0)	<b>2.1<sup>(c)</sup></b> (1.4–3.1)	1.4 <sup>(d)</sup> (1.0–1.9)	1.4 (0.9–2.2)
<b>Age</b>						
50–57	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
58–64	1.2 (0.7–2.1)	1.2 (0.7–2.2)	1.0 (0.5–1.9)	0.9 (0.5–1.6)	1.0 (0.5–1.8)	0.9 (0.4–1.8)
65–74	1.6 <sup>(d)</sup> (0.9–2.7)	<b>2.9<sup>(c)</sup></b> (1.7–4.9)	0.6 <sup>(d)</sup> (0.3–1.1)	0.9 (0.5–1.6)	<b>1.8<sup>(a)</sup></b> (1.0–3.2)	<b>0.5<sup>(a)</sup></b> (0.3–1.0)
75+	<b>2.9<sup>(c)</sup></b> (1.6–4.9)	<b>3.7<sup>(c)</sup></b> (2.2–6.4)	0.8 (0.4–1.4)	1.0 (1.0–2.1)	<b>1.9<sup>(a)</sup></b> (1.0–3.3)	0.6 <sup>(d)</sup> (0.3–1.1)

Factor	Model 1			Model 2		
	RRR increased problems vs non-problems	RRR non-increased problems vs non-problems	RRR increased problems vs non-increased	RRR increased problems vs non-problems	RRR non-increased problems vs non-problems	RRR increased problems vs non-increased
<b>Economic difficulties</b>						
No	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Yes	<b>2.2<sup>(c)</sup></b> (1.6–3.1)	<b>2.0<sup>(c)</sup></b> (1.4–2.7)	1.1 (0.8–1.6)	1.4 <sup>(d)</sup> (1.0–2.1)	<b>1.4<sup>(a)</sup></b> (1.0–2.0)	1.0 (0.7–1.4)
<b>Perceived health</b>						
Good	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Fair	<b>3.7<sup>(c)</sup></b> (2.4–5.9)	<b>2.9<sup>(c)</sup></b> (2.0–4.3)	1.2 (0.8–2.2)	<b>2.9<sup>(c)</sup></b> (1.8–4.6)	<b>2.5<sup>(c)</sup></b> (1.7–3.7)	1.2 (0.7–2.0)
Poor	<b>12.9<sup>(c)</sup></b> (7.1–23.7)	<b>5.2<sup>(c)</sup></b> (2.9–9.4)	<b>2.5<sup>(b)</sup></b> (1.3–4.6)	<b>7.5<sup>(c)</sup></b> (4.0–14.3)	<b>3.6<sup>(c)</sup></b> (2.0–6.5)	<b>2.1<sup>(a)</sup></b> (1.1–4.0)
<b>Contacts</b>						
High	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Medium	<b>4.4<sup>(b)</sup></b> (1.9–10.6)	1.6 <sup>(d)</sup> (1.0–2.7)	<b>2.8<sup>(a)</sup></b> (1.1–7.0)	<b>4.3<sup>(b)</sup></b> (0.4–1.1)	1.6 (0.9–2.7)	<b>2.8<sup>(a)</sup></b> (1.1–7.0)
Low/very low	<b>9.6<sup>(c)</sup></b> (3.8–24.3)	1.7 <sup>(d)</sup> (0.9–3.4)	<b>5.4<sup>(b)</sup></b> (2.0–15.0)	<b>8.5<sup>(c)</sup></b> (3.2–22.5)	1.6 (0.8–3.2)	<b>5.2<sup>(b)</sup></b> (1.9–14.3)
<b>Feeling lonely</b>						
No	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Yes	<b>4.6<sup>(c)</sup></b> (3.2–6.6)	<b>3.2<sup>(c)</sup></b> (2.2–4.4)	1.5 <sup>(d)</sup> (1.0–2.1)	<b>3.4<sup>(c)</sup></b> (2.3–5.0)	<b>2.5<sup>(c)</sup></b> (1.8–3.6)	1.3 (0.9–2.0)

\* – 95% Confidence interval.

**Model 1** results from multinomial logistic regressions expressed as relative risk ratio (RRR) with respective 95% confidence intervals controlled for gender and age.

**Model 2** results from multinomial logistic regressions expressed as relative risk ratio (RRR) with respective 95% confidence intervals controlled for all factor variables (gender, age, experienced economic difficulties, perceived health status, social contacts, feeling lonely).

Bolded text indicates a significant difference from the reference group:  $a=p < 0.05$ ;  $b=p \leq 0.01$ ;  $c=p \leq 0.001$ ;  $d=p < 0.1$ .

Reducing social contacts and restricting the availability of social support in times of crisis can lead to an increase in social isolation, the development of psychoemotional disorders, as well as mental illnesses. Previous research suggests that deteriorating mental health, in turn, contributes to an unjustified increase in demand for health care services (Rancans, Vrublevska, Snikere, Koroleva & Trapencieris, 2014). For these reasons, it is important to continue to provide social support during the COVID-19 pandemic, to involve volunteers in providing support and assistance to reduce loneliness, isolation and the associated deterioration of mental health, and to implement strategic communication at the

national level that reduces anxiety among seniors. Initiatives that improve the ability of older people to cope with social isolation on their own should also be implemented, such as strengthening social links through online applications, video chats, telephone helplines or support groups, lifestyle changes (regular sleep and wake-up calls, physical activity and nutrition) and cognitive stimulation (use of mobile applications or stimulation via mental exercises). Such activities are particularly important for people with a history of cognitive impairment (Sepúlveda-Loyola et al., 2020).

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## KULTŪRAS PĀRNESE UN IDENTITĀTES UZTURĒŠANA LATVIEŠU EMIGRANTU ĢIMENĒS

### *Passing Identity and Ethnic Culture in Latvian Emigrant Families*

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**Abstract.** *The paper discusses the problem of preserving native Latvian language and the transfer of cultural identity in Latvian diaspora. One of the central tasks for Latvia's diaspora policy is to support preservation of Latvian language and culture in diaspora with the aim of strengthening the Latvian identity and the sense of belonging to Latvia. Support is provided to diaspora schools for preserving Latvian language, culture and identity outside of Latvia. However, for children not to lose their Latvian language skills it is important that the language is used also in the family.*

*This paper uses a combination of a quantitative survey and in-depth interviews with the parents of children in diaspora. The aim is to ascertain the language situation in the diaspora, explore practices and perspectives on sustaining Latvian language and ethnic culture.*

*In the theoretical aspect, the research data is approached with reference to P. Bourdieu's view on language skills as linguistic capital, a form of cultural capital. Parent's attention to sustaining their heritage language in emigration is analysed in relation to children's identity formation and family communication with family members left behind.*

*The data confirms that parents play a big role in language acquisition and sustaining by children in emigration, and parents hold the main responsibility in the process of realizing ethnic identity as a value.*

**Keywords:** *cultural capital, heritage language, language and identity, migration.*

### **Ievads**

#### ***Introduction***

Latviešu valodas un kultūras saglabāšana diasporā tiek definēts kā viens no galvenajiem diasporas politikas uzdevumiem (LR Diasporas likums, 2018). Kā norāda LU pētniece Daina Grosa, "latviešu valodai likumā piešķirta būtiska nozīme diasporā saistībā ar diasporas latvisko identitāti, valodas saglabāšanu

(uzturēšanu) un apguvi (pārsvarā bērniem), un likumā ietverti atbalsta pasākumi un darbības, kas Latvijas valstij būtu jāveic, lai diasporas politikas uzdevumus varētu īstenot” (Grosa, 2020, 47). Īpaši nozīmīgi tas ir tiem Latvijas iedzīvotājiem, kuri dzīvo ārvalstīs ar maziem bērniem un vēlas rūpēties par viņu valodas un latviskās identitātes saglabāšanu.

Latvijas zemā dzimstība nenodrošina paaudžu nomaiņu, un to vēl pastiprina darbspējīgā vecumā esošu iedzīvotāju ekonomiskā migrācija. Ja vēl pat pēc 2008.–2009. gada ekonomiskās krīzes Latvijā visbiežāk sastopamā prakse bija vecākiem emigrēt, bērnu audzināšanu uzticot ģimenes locekļiem, tad pēdējo gadu tendences liecina, ka ģimenes biežāk emigrē kopā ar bērniem vai arī bērni pārceļas pie vecākiem uzreiz pēc tam, kad vecāki ir iekārtojušies jaunajā mītnes zemē (Kamerāde & Skubiņa, 2019). Analizējot Latvijas emigrantu bērnu valodas un identitātes veidošanos, īpaši aplūkota t.s. “viena ar pusi paaudze” jeb bērni, kuri dzimuši Latvijā, bet emigrējuši bērna vecumā (Kārkliņa & Kamerāde, 2019). Aizvien vairāk bērniem, kas jau dzimuši ārpus Latvijas, latviešu valoda jāapgūst jau kā otrā vai trešā valoda. Ņemot vērā aizbraucēju vecumu, pieaug to bērnu skaits, kuri dzimuši jau emigrācijā un kuru saikne ar Latviju, veidojas lielā mērā pateicoties viņu vecāku un radnieku pūlēm.

Nozīmīga loma valodas un identitātes stiprināšanā ir diasporas latviešu skolām (Lulle & Kļave, 2015; Grosa, 2020), kurām tiek sniegts atbalsts arī no Latvijas puses. Tomēr būtiskākā ietekme latviešu valodas, kultūras un nacionālās identitātes saglabāšanā ārpus Latvijas un atslēga tam, lai bērns apgūtu un nezaudētu latviešu valodas prasmes, ir latviešu valodas lietošana ģimenē. Vecākiem šajā ziņā ir svarīgākā loma bērna valodas apgūvē, un vecāki arī uzņemas galveno atbildību latviskuma kā vērtības apzināšanās procesā.

Pētījumi liecina, ka vecāki rūpējas un viņiem ir svarīga savas valodas un kultūras nodošana bērniem, arī esot emigrācijā. Taču bieži tas prasa piepūli – ir jāatrod papildu laiks, līdzekļi, motivācija. Īpašs izaicinājums tas ir etniski jauktajās ģimenēs. Vecākiem nav pienākums iemācīt bērniem latviešu valodu un dot ieskatu kultūrā un vērtībās, pat pretēji – reizēm daudz vienkāršāk ir iekļauties jaunajā sabiedrībā, īpaši jau pašiem bērniem, kuri izglītību iegūst un ar saviem vienaudžiem komunicē ne latviešu, bet citā – mītnes zemē dominējošā valodā.

### **Teorētiskais pamatojums** *Theoretical Basis*

Migrācija nozīmē daudz vairāk nekā ģeogrāfisko robežu šķērsošana. Tā ietver arī pāreju no vienas sabiedrības citā ar tai raksturīgām apakšstruktūrām, kas veicina liela mēroga pārmaiņas sociālajā, ekonomiskajā un kultūras ziņā. Valoda

ir pamatnosacījums integrācijai un dalībai jaunajā sociālajā telpā, un tai ir liela loma sociālās mobilitātes pieredzē (Zschomler, 2019).

Pjērs Burdjē (*Bourdieu*) valodas zināšanas kvalificē kā lingvistisko kapitālu, kas ir viens no kultūras kapitāla veidiem. Tas ir mantots vai apgūts laika ritējumā, tas ietekmē *habitus*. Kultūras kapitāls “ir zināšanas, prasmes un citi ieguvumi kā izglītība vai tehniskā kvalifikācija” (Bourdieu, 1991).

Burdjē un Žans Klods Paserons (*Passeron*) definē kultūras kapitālu kā kultūras labumus, kas nākamajai paaudzei tiek nodoti ar ģimenes dažādu pedagoģisko darbību – izglītību visplašākajā nozīmē, kuras vērtība ir atkarīga no starpības starp dominējošās pedagoģiskās darbības uzspiesto un ģimenes pieņemto pedagoģiskās darbības ieaudzināto kultūru dažādās sabiedrības grupās vai šķirās (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

Pēc Burdjē domām, kultūras kapitāls ir ar tādu pašu vērtību kā ekonomiskais kapitāls un sociālais kapitāls. Kultūras kapitāls var izpausties kā lingvistiskais kapitāls, kas arī pārsvarā tiek nodots ģimenē. Lai gan kapitālu tā dažādajos veidos bērni manto no saviem vecākiem mājās, tas var tikt iegūts arī citā ceļā (Bourdieu, 1991). Lingvistiskais kapitāls kā kultūras kapitāla sastāvdaļa ir ar nepārvērtējamu ietekmi uz sasniegumiem izglītībā. Burdjē un Paserons uzsver, ka “valoda nav tikai komunikācijas instruments: tā kopā ar bagātāku vai trūcīgāku vārdu krājumu nodrošina lielāku vai mazāku kategoriju kompleksu, tādējādi spējot atšifrēt un veikli rīkoties ar sarežģītajām struktūrām, un tas lielā mērā atkarīgs no ģimenē nodotās valodas” (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990: 73). Bet kapitālu vērtība ir atkarīga no konteksta. Mainoties kontekstam, kapitālu vērtības var tik revidētas, pārvērtētas. Mainot mītnes zemi, emigrējot, dzimtā valoda var zaudēt savu kā lingvistiskā kapitāla vērtību, indivīdam nonākot zemē ar citu dominējošo valodu.

Valoda kā simboliska vara, atsaucoties uz Burdjē, ir ārkārtīgi svarīga migrantu simboliskajām cīņām dažādās sociālajās hierarhijās, kurās viņi nonāk, – no vienas puses, pašā migrantu populācijā un, no otras puses, uzņemošās valsts sabiedrībā attiecībās ar vietējo populāciju (Sayad, 2004). “Pareizā” valodas kompetence ir galvenais faktors, kas ietekmē migrantu atšķirības attiecībā uz izglītības līmeni, ienākumiem un sociālo stāvokli, piemēram, vai viņi savā jaunajā apkārtnē piedzīvo iekļaušanu vai atstumtību dažādās sociālajās jomās (Adsera & Pytlikova, 2015).

Uzņemošās valsts valodas zināšanas ir viena no galvenajām prasmēm, lai sekmīgi integrētos tajā. Savukārt dzimtās valodas zināšanas ir svarīga etniskās identitātes un piederības dimensija. Valodas un etniskās piederības savstarpējo saikni raksturo identificēšanās ar noteiktu kultūras kopienu. Šī piederība noteiktas kultūras kopienai un pakāpe, ar kuru cilvēki sevi identificē kā kultūras kopienas locekļus, var būt dažādu līmeņu, sākot no dziļas iesaistes līdz piederības



noliegumam. Indivīds var izvēlēties, dodot priekšroku kādas valodas apgūšanai un zināšanām tajā, bet atšķirībā no tā, nav iespējams izvēlēties dzimto valodu.

Akadēmiskos pētījumos un ikdienas kontekstā, domājot par dzimtās valodas uzturēšanu ārpus izcelsmes valsts, tiek lietots termins “mantotā valoda” (*heritage language*). Līdztekus tam tiek lietoti arī termini “mājas valoda”, “dzimtā valoda”, “etniskā valoda”, “kopienas” un “izcelsmes valoda”. Šie termini attiecas uz valodām, kas nav dominējošās un kurās runā valstī dzīvojošās minoritātes (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). Mantotā valoda konkrētajā pētījumā un rakstā domāta kā valoda, kura ir dzimtā valoda un ar kuru tiek veidota un uzturēta saikne ar savas izcelsmes kultūru, un kas tiek nodota nākamajām paaudzēm. “Valoda kvalificējama kā mantotā valoda, ja tā ir mājas runāta valoda vai kā citādi viegli pieejama bērniem, un būtībā šī valoda nav sabiedrības dominējošā valoda” (Rotman, 2009, 156).

Izšķir valodas pārnesei, t.i., mantoto valodu nododot bērniem ģimenē, un valodas uzturēšanu plašākā sabiedrībā, vērstu uz tās tālāku attīstību. Pētījumi rāda, ka divvalodība ir relatīva: ļoti maz cilvēku labi runā divās valodās, paturot dzimtās valodas kontroli pār abām valodām. Bilingvālajiem indivīdiem tomēr dominējoša ir viena no valodām (Bialystok & Feng, 2010).

Mantotās valodas saglabāšanu un zaudēšanu ietekmē dažādi faktori, kurus iedala divās kategorijās: individuālais līmenis un grupas līmenis. Individuālā līmeņa faktori ir personas vecums, dzimums, dzimšanas vieta, izglītība, laulības modelis, migrācijas iemesls, uzturēšanās ilgums uzņēmējā valstī, dominējošās valodas priekšzināšanas un valodu dažādība mītnes zemē. Grupas līmeņa faktori ir etniskās grupas lielums un izklīde mītnes zemē, valsts valodas politika un dzimtās valodas lingvistiskās atšķirības no vairākuma valodas (Kipp, Clyne, & Pauwels 1995).

Pētījumi rāda, ka labāki rezultāti valodas pārnesei ir bērniem nekā valodas uzturēšanā pusaudžu un jaunu pieaugušo vidū (Nesteruk, 2010). Analizējot zinātnisko pētījumu rezultātus, Olena Nesteruka uzsver, ka nozīmīgākie faktori, kas veicina dzimtās valodas saglabāšanu imigrantu bērniem, ir vecāki, kas mājās runā dzimtajā valodā, tās pašas etniskās izcelsmes draugi un atbalstošie etniskie tīkli. Imigrantu vidē dominē vēlme mācīt bērniem viņu dzimto valodu, tādējādi veicinot dzimtās kultūras pārnesei un pozitīvu mijiedarbību šajā aspektā ģimenē, un valodas praktiskā lietošana mājās ir viens no spēcīgākajiem faktoriem mantotās valodas uzturēšanā (Nesteruk, 2010). Turklāt dažas kopienas motivē bērnus mācīties savu mantoto valodu, uzsverot ne tikai kultūras un identitātes uzturēšanas nepieciešamību, bet arī šīs valodas lietotāju iespējamus ekonomiskos ieguvumus (Diskin, 2020).

Pētījumi rāda nacionālās identitātes un valodas ciešu saistību un pamato, ka tā tiek konstruēta caur valodu. Nacionālās identitātes attīstība norisinās paralēli ar sociālo integrāciju un valodas apgūšanu, un, apgūstot jaunās mītnes zemes

valodu, migranti var sekmīgāk internalizēt tās vērtības, tradīcijas un kultūru (Kamerāde & Skubiņa, 2019). Ģimenes saites, piedalīšanās dažādos rituālos, kultūras praksēs un aktivitātēs ir galvenie līdzekļi, lai uzturētu sapratni par etnisko identitāti un mājas un piederības sajūtu transnacionālās ģimenēs (Goulbourne, Reynolds, Solomos, & Zontini, 2011). Gan iepriekšējie pētījumi (Nesteruk, 2010), gan raksta autoru pētnieciskā pieredze liecina, ka mantotās valodas uzturēšanā un kultūras pārnesē līdzās vecāku ieguldījumam nozīmīga loma ir arī iespējām iegūt izglītību skolās, kas nodrošina apmācību mantotajā valodā. Mantotās valodas apguvē svarīga ir arī etniskās kopienas resursu izmantošana ar baznīcu, kopienu centru u.tml. palīdzību, veicinot mantotās valodas apguves pieejamību skolās, dienas centros un valodas apmācību nodarbībās.

Izmantojot Entonija Gidensa (*Giddens*) “ontoloģiskās drošības” jēdzienu, cilvēks var justies drošs, kad izjūt kārtības, nepārtrauktības un stabilitātes izjūtu, kas izraisa kontroles sajūtu. Modernitāte ir padarījusi patību (*self*) par refleksīvu projektu, kur sociālais stāvoklis nav tik nozīmīgs un indivīdi, veidojot sevi, piedzīvo gan jaunas brīvības, gan jaunus izaicinājumus (Giddens, 1991). Gidensa raksturoto ontoloģisko drošību, esot emigrācijā, vecāki mēģina gan meklēt paši, gan nodrošināt to bērniem. Koncentrējoties uz ģimenes pieredzi, Stratklaidas Universitātes profesore Daniela Saima (*Sime*) analizē spriedzi, ko migrācija rada ģimenes attiecībās, emocionālos traucējumus un draudus indivīda piederības izjūtai un ontoloģiskajai drošībai, vienlaikus uzsverot šīs iekšējās (ne)drošības, kuras uztvere laika gaitā mainās atkarībā no ģimenes apstākļiem, nepastāvīgumu (Sime, 2018). Pētnieki norāda uz to, cik trausls ir līdzsvars starp ekonomiskajiem ieguvumiem migrācijas rezultātā un “upuriem” attiecībā pret emocionālo “samaksu/ maksu”, kas visbiežāk tiek identificēta ar kontaktu zaudēšanu ar bērniem un ģimenes locekļiem, ar sociālā atbalsta tīklu zudumu, kas viennozīmīgi ietekmē indivīda apmierinātību, subjektīvās labklājības līmeni (Skrbiš, 2008; Sime, 2018).

Latvijas emigrantu kopienas izpētes dati rāda, ka nereti tieši bērnu nākotne, izglītības iespējas un plašāki veselības aprūpes pakalpojumi ir bijuši pamatā galīgajam lēmumam emigrēt (Hazans, 2015; Saulītis & Mieriņa, 2015). Finansiālā drošība tiek uzskatīta par visas ģimenes drošības priekšnoteikumu, pieņemot, ka tai sekos arī emocionālā drošība (Sime, 2018). Taču finansiālā un materiālā drošība ne vienmēr atsver emocionālo nedrošību, ko bieži izjūt bērni, šķirti no tuviniekiem (Sime, 2018). Vecāki jūt pienākumu rūpēties, lai kompensētu nedrošības sajūtu emigrācijā, sniedzot cita veida drošību – materiālo labklājību, kā arī cenšoties panākt, lai bērni saglabā dzimto valodu, kultūru, piederības sajūtu etniskajai dzimtenei un apgūst arī mītnes zemes kultūru.

## **Metodoloģija** **Methodology**

Pētījuma mērķis ir analizēt datus par vecāku motivāciju un iespējām saglabāt bērniem latviešu valodu emigrācijā, kā arī identitātes un kultūras pārnesei caur valodu un vecāku pieredzi, izmantojot kvantitatīvās pētījumu metodes, lai aptvertu pēc iespējas plašu un daudzveidīgu mērķa grupas auditoriju, un kvalitatīvās pētījumu metodes, kas dod iespēju padziļināti analizēt izvirzītos pētnieciskos jautājumus.

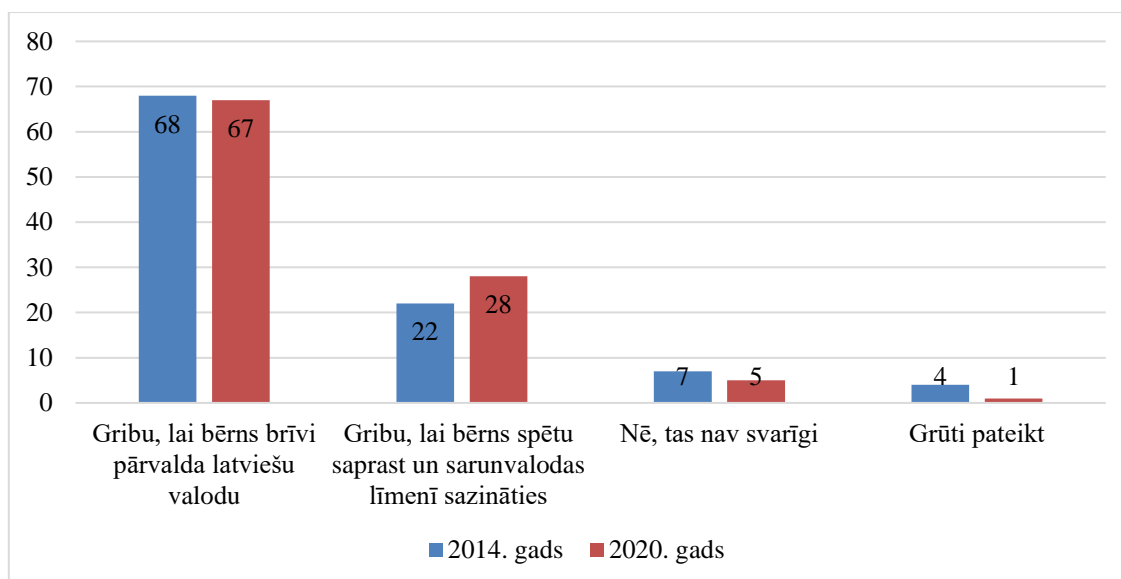
Lai kopumā raksturotu vecāku attieksmes pret latviešu valodas lietojumu un valodas nozīmi bērnu identitātes veidošanā, izmantoti Latvijas emigrantu longitudinālā pētījuma kvantitatīvo aptauju dati. Pirmā viļņa jeb bāzes aptaujas, kura veikta ESF granta “Latvijas emigrantu kopienas: nacionālā identitāte, transnacionālās attiecības un diasporas politika” ietvaros 2014. gadā, izlase aptver 14 048 respondentus no 118 valstīm. Pētījuma otrajā vilnī, kas realizēts 2019. gadā Latvijas Zinātnes padomes (LZP) granta “Labklājības un sociālās integrācijas izpēte likvidās migrācijas kontekstā: longitudinālā pieeja” ietvaros, aptaujāti 6242 ārpus Latvijas dzīvojošie latvieši un Latvijas valstspiederīgie, bet longitudinālā pētījuma paneļa dalībnieku aptaujā, kas veikta Latvijas Valodas aģentūras pasūtītā pētījuma “Latviešu valoda diasporā: situācijas izpēte” vajadzībām 2020. gadā, piedalījās 1452 vecāki, kuri dzīvo kopā ar nepilngadīgiem bērniem.

Lai padziļinātu izpratni par kultūras, valodas pārnesei emigrantu ģimenēs, skaidrotu vecāku viedokļus par bērnu valodas situāciju emigrācijā, kā arī ilustrētu kvantitatīvi raksturotās attieksmes, izmantoti dzīvesstāsti un padziļinātās intervijas ar emigrācijā dzīvojošajiem latviešiem no Latvijas Nacionālās mutvārdu vēstures (NMV) krājuma. Stāstu jeb naratīvu vērtība ir ne vien faktoloģiskās informācijas ieguvē, bet arī analizējot komplicētās attiecības starp pašu naratīvu, laiku un atmiņu, kad tiek caurskatīta un revidēta pagātne, lai atrastu saikni ar pašreizējo identitāti (Riessman, 2008).

Pētījuma vajadzībām tika atlasītas divdesmit piecas dzīvesstāstu intervijas ar respondentiem, kuri emigrējuši no Latvijas pēc neatkarības atjaunošanas 1991. gadā, kā arī viena intervija ar respondentu, kura atstājusi Latviju kā bērns astoņu gadu vecumā. Intervijas ierakstītas laika posmā no 2010. gada līdz 2019. gadam Zviedrijā un Lielbritānijā. Veicot naratīvu tematisko analīzi, pētīta respondentu attieksme pret etniskās kultūras un valodas saglabāšanu emigrācijā. Lai nodrošinātu datu konfidencialitāti, respondentu vārdi tekstā ir mainīti. Intervijas tekstā apzīmētas ar saīsinājumu, kur “NMV” norāda uz Nacionālās Mutvārdu vēstures kolekciju, savukārt sekojošais skaitlis norāda uz intervijas atrašanās vietu kolekcijā.

## Valoda un identitāte: Vecāku aptaujas dati *Parents' Views on Language and Identity: Analysis of Survey Data*

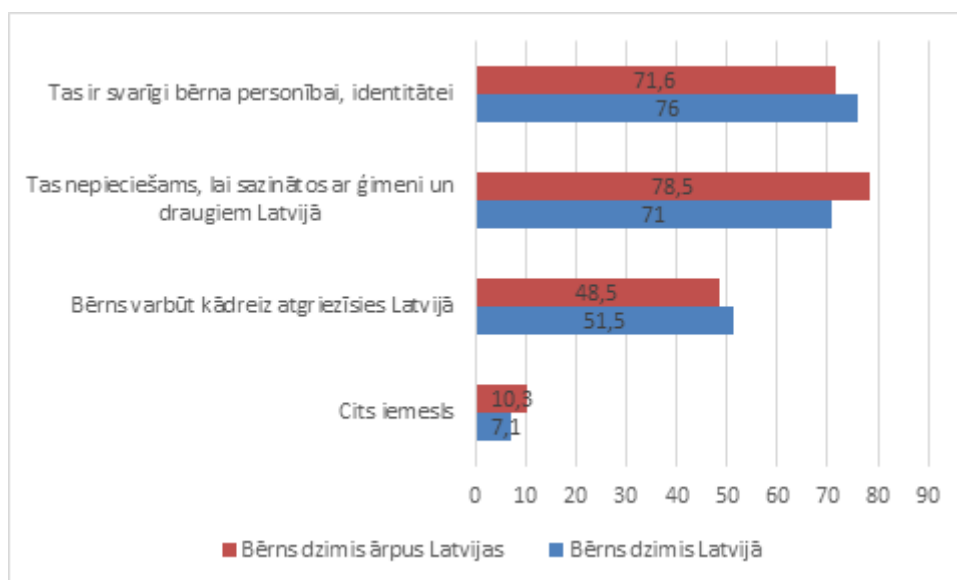
Ņemot vērā valodas izšķirošo nozīmi etniskās kultūras pārnēsē un identitātes veidošanā emigrācijā (Nesteruk, 2010; Grosa, 2020), viens no svarīgākajiem aspektiem ir latviešu valodas lietojums ģimenē, bet jo īpaši – vecāku attieksme pret latviešu valodas mācīšanu bērniem. Kvantitatīvo aptauju dati liecina, ka lielākā daļa emigrācijā dzīvojošo vecāku vēlas, lai bērni saprastu un runātu latviešu valodā. Turklāt vecāku attieksme laika gaitā saglabājas salīdzinoši nemainīga. Līdzīgi kā 2014. gadā (Mieriņa, 2016), tāpat arī šobrīd aptuveni 68% vecāku vēlas, lai viņu bērns/-i brīvi pārvaldītu latviešu valodu. Bet to vecāku īpatsvars, kuri vēlētos, lai bērns saprastu un vismaz sarunvalodas līmenī spētu sazināties latviešu valodā, ir pat nedaudz pieaudzis (no 22% līdz 28%) (Mieriņa, Koroļeva, Jansone, & Grosa, 2020).



*1. attēls. Vecāku attieksme pret bērna latviešu valodas zināšanām (%)*  
*Figure 1 Parents' Attitude towards Children's Knowledge of Latvian (%)*

Lai saglabātu latviešu valodu un stiprinātu latvisko identitāti diasporā, svarīga ir vecāku motivācija un vēlme mācīt bērniem šo valodu, sekmēt valodas apguvi un lietošanu. Pētījumu dati (Mieriņa et al., 2020) liecina, ka viens no būtiskākajiem iemesliem, kāpēc vecākiem šķiet svarīgi, lai bērns zinātu latviešu valodu, ir nepieciešamība sazināties ar ģimeni un draugiem (šo iemeslu min 78% respondentu). Aplūkoto problēmu kontekstā īpaši jāatzīmē tas, ka gandrīz tikpat liela daļa vecāku (73%) uzskata, ka latviešu valoda ir svarīga bērna personības attīstībai un identitātei. Lūkojoties nākotnē no izcelsmes zemes skatpunkta,

cerības vīstas, ka 49% vecāku min arī bērnu iespējamo atgriešanos Latvijā (2. attēls). Starp nosauktajiem valodas zināšanu svarīguma motīviem nav novērojamas statistiski nozīmīgas atšķirības atkarībā no tā, vai bērns dzimis Latvijā vai ārpus tās. Latvijā dzimušo bērnu vecāki nedaudz biežāk nekā pārējie min identitātes saglabāšanu (76%) un pieļauj atgriešanos Latvijā (52%), savukārt, runājot par bērniem, kuri dzimuši jau ārzemēs, vecāki biežāk (79%) uzskata, ka valoda ir svarīga, lai bērns spētu sazināties ar vecvecākiem, radiem un draugiem Latvijā. Pie citiem iemesliem minēts gan tas, ka jebkura valoda ir svarīga bērna attīstībai, izaugsmei, gan tas, lai bērns apzinātos savas saknes, piederību savai vai savu vecāku izcelsmes zemei. To spilgti ilustrē respondentu komentāri: “*Bērnam ir jāzina, jāiepazīst un jāgodā savu sakņu zemi!*”; “*Tā ir svarīga daļa no latvietības ... Nepieciešama, lai izprastu mūsu kultūru, vēsturi*”; “*Lai saprot, kādā valodā dzied mammas sirds un dvēsele*”; “*Man ir svarīgi, lai mani bērni mani saprot un sajūt, un saprast un sajūst mani līdz galam var tikai latviešu valodā!*”



2. attēls. *Kāpēc latviešu vecākiem svarīgi, lai bērns zinātu latviešu valodu (%)*  
Figure 2 *Why Is It Important for Latvian Parents that Their Child Knows Latvian (%)*

Veidu, kā apgūt, uzturēt latviešu valodu un stiprināt bērnos latvisko identitāti, ir daudz, un to izvēle atkarīga gan no ģimenes motivācijas, gan no dažādu resursu pieejamības. Latviešu valodas apguvei un uzturēšanai visbiežāk izmantotās aktivitātes var iedalīt vairākās grupās. Vairāk nekā puse vecāku nosauc grāmatu lasīšanu latviešu valodā un saziņu ar ģimenes locekļiem (bērnu gadījumā pārsvarā tie ir vecvecāki) vai draugiem Latvijā, kā arī atbilstoši iespējām bērnu viesošanos brīvlaikā pie vecākiem, radiem Latvijā. Liela daļa respondentu atzīst latviešu gadskārtu un valsts svētku svinēšanas nozīmi latviešu valodas

saglabāšanā. Citas aktivitātes, kuras nosauc gandrīz puse respondentu, ir laika pavadīšana kopā ar citām latviešu ģimenēm, filmu skatīšanās un spēles latviešu valodā, latviešu pasākumu apmeklēšana. Aptuveni trešdaļa vecāku atzīmē nedēļas nogales skolas, nometnes Latvijā kā nozīmīgu resursu valodas un kultūras uzturēšanā. Un pēdējā aktivitāšu grupa, kas lielā mērā atkarīga no iespējām katrā atsevišķā valstī, dzīvesvietā, – tā ir līdzdalība pašdarbības kolektīvos – deju kopās, koros utt. (Mieriņa et al., 2020).

Arī 2014. gada emigrantu kopienas aptaujas datu padziļināta analīze ļāva secināt, ka galvenais faktors, kas nosaka, cik labas vai pretēji – vājas būs bērna latviešu valodas zināšanas, ir tas, kāda valoda tiek lietota ģimenē. Tikai tad seko ārējie faktori – iespēja uzturēties latviskā vidē un bērna paša ieguldījums – grāmatu lasīšana utt. Būtiska loma ir vecāku motivācijai iemācīt bērnam šo valodu. Visnegatīvāk mazu bērnu latviešu valodas prasmes ietekmē ārpus Latvijas pavadītais laiks, turpretī, pieaugot bērna vecumam un valodas prasmēm nostabilizējoties, zināšanas tik ātri vairs nepiemirstas (Mieriņa, 2016).

Gan 2014. gadā, gan 2020. gada aptauju dati apstiprina arī, ka uzturēt ‘dzīvu’ latviešu valodu un palīdzēt bērniem veidot latvisko identitāti ārpus Latvijas īpašs izaicinājums ir etniski jauktajām ģimenēm, kurās viens no vecākiem ir cittautietis (Mieriņa, 2016). Lai arī vairākumā gadījumu (74%) dzīvesbiedra attieksme ir atbalstoša (izņemot krievu tautības respondentus, no kuriem atbalstoša attieksme ir tikai 27%), tomēr nereti jārēķinās ar negatīvu dzīvesbiedra attieksmi vai pat nopietniem iebildumiem pret viņam nesaprotamas valodas lietošanu ģimenē: piemēram, dažas atbildes no atklātajiem jautājumiem: “*Tēvs mājās vēlējās dzirdēt tikai [mītnes zeme] valodu*”, “*vienmēr esam sarunājušies mājās angļiski, jo viņam [vīram] nepatīk, ka viņš nesaprot, ko es saku bērniem, ... man nav iespēju runāt ar bērniem latviski*”. Ņemot vērā, ka, dzīvojot citā (vecāku mītnes zemes) valodas vidē, bērniem šī valoda “pielīp” daudz ātrāk nekā pašiem vecākiem, pēdējiem jāpieliek īpašas pūles, lai bērnu motivētu apgūt un lietot mantoto, sava tēva vai mātes valodu.

Pēdējos secinājumus, kā arī iepriekš aplūkotos kvantitatīvos raksturojumus padziļina un spilgti raksturo tālāk aplūkotie fragmenti no emigrantu dzīvesstāstiem.

### **Valoda un identitāte: dzīvesstāstu interviju analīze** *Language and Identity: an Analysis of Life Stories*

NMV kolekcija pārsvarā glabā vecākās paaudzes cilvēku dzīvesstāstus, liela daļa no kuriem pēc Otrā pasaules kara devušies trimdā un kuru stāsti liecina par piespiedu forsētās migrācijas radīto lūzumu, par adaptācijas stratēģijām jaunajā vidē un dažādiem veidiem, kā uzturēt un saglabāt dzimto valodu un etnisko

identitāti. Pēdējos gados NMV kolekcija ir mērķtiecīgi papildinājusies arī ar t.s. jaunās emigrācijas (pēc Latvijas neatkarības atgūšanas 1991. g.) pārstāvju dzīvesstāstiem, kas devušies prom no Latvijas dažādu iemeslu dēļ, pārsvarā labāk apmaksāta darba meklējumos, kas nodrošinātu ģimenes labklājību, bērniem nepieciešamo veselības aprūpi, izglītības iespējas, kā arī dažādu personisku faktoru dēļ.

Dainas (emigrējusi kopā ar mazgadīgiem bērniem 2016. gadā ekonomisku apsvērumu dēļ un lai apvienotos ar vīru, kuram Latvijā bija grūti atrast pietiekami labi apmaksātu darbu) stāsts dod iespēju padziļināt izpratni par iemesliem, kādēļ emigranti vēlas bērniem uzturēt latviešu valodu. Tie ir identitātes izjūta un saikne ar ģimeni Latvijā: *“Noteikti man mājās būs latviešu valoda. Pati mācīšu viņiem [bērniem]. – Kāpēc tev tas ir svarīgi? – Tā ir mana identitāte. Tas ir svarīgi dēļ omēm. Ja viņš izdomās, ka viņš grib atpakaļ, lai nebūtu tā, ka es viņam esmu to liegusi. Man šķiet, ka jebkuram aizbraucējam jārunā latviski, vai tas ir Anglijā vai Īrijā.”* [NMV-4561]

Arī Ieva (emigrējusi, apprecoties ar ārzemnieku pagājušā gadsimta 90. gadu beigās; pirmais bērns dzimis Latvijā, vēl divi emigrācijā) norāda uz latviskās piederības sajūtas saglabāšanas nepieciešamību un to, ka viņa radījusi apstākļus, ka viņas dēls nākotnē varēs izvēlēties – atgriezties Latvijā vai dzīvot citur: *“Tā ir sava veida piederība. Varbūt tas saistīts ar sajūtu, kad augu, tad Latvija bija kaut kas tāds, kas bija jāargā, jālolo un jāpatur, lai tas netiktu iznīcināts. [..] Tā latviskā piederība, kultūras mantojums, tas vienkārši ir, tā pat nav diskutējama lieta. Bērni ir dzimuši šeit. Dēlam joprojām ir Latvijas pilsonība. [Intervija ierakstīta 2010. gadā, kad Latvijā vēl nebija atļauta dubulpilsonība. – aut.] Es domāju, ka mēs nekad neatmetam domu, ka kādreiz varbūt atgriezāties tur dzīvot. Tās tomēr ir mūsu saknes.”* [NMV-3703]

Sanitas stāstā (emigrējusi 2000. gadu vidū personīgu iemeslu vadīta; emigrācijā apprecējusies, vīrs – ieceļotājs jaunajā mītnes zemē Zviedrijā no trešās valsts, ģimenē aug bērni) blakus nepieciešamībai sazināties ar radniekiem Latvijā un domām par bērna iespējamo atgriešanos kaut kad nākotnē atklājas arī dzimtās valodas nozīme saziņā ar bērnu, iespēja izteikt visu emociju gammu, precīzāk nodot otram savus pārdzīvojumus: *“Latviešu ir mana dzimtā valoda, kurā es varu pateikt visu, kurā es varu izdziedāt, kurā es varu izraudāt, jo mēs ne tikai runājam, bet arī raudam savā valodā. [..] Latviešu valoda ir mana automātiskā valoda, kurā es ar saviem bērniem gribu runāt. Es nevaru iedomāties ar saviem bērniem runāt angļu valodā. Runāt valodā, kurā es nevaru runāt kārtīgi, pateikt nepareizi un būt nesaprasta. Otrs, latviešu valoda ir ļoti skaista valoda, tā ir valoda, kurā runā Latvijā, un, ja mēs kādreiz braucam uz Latviju, es gribu, lai viņi [bērni] runā latviešu valodā, un arī viņi paši gribētu runāt un saprast.”* [NMV-4568]

Savukārt Anita Latviju atstājusi kā bērns 2000. gadu sākumā, pievienojoties mātei, kura uz Zviedriju devās darba meklējumos, bet vēlāk tur izveidoja jaunu

ģimeni ar vietējo iedzīvotāju. Anitas stāsts apliecina, ka latviešu valodas saglabāšanā un piederības sajūtas uzturēšanā liela loma bijusi gan mātes stingrajai nostājai, gan ciešām attiecībām ar radniekiem un draugiem, tajā skaitā regulārām vizītēm Latvijā: “*Kad es pārvācos, tas pirmais brīdis bija grūts. Es nemācēju [zviedru] valodu, es nemācēju angļu valodu. Un viss bija jauns. Mamma bija ļoti stingra. Kad bijām mazi, mums bija jālasa grāmatas, lai latviešu valoda paliktos. [..] Mamma darīja visu, lai man turētos latviešu valoda. Arī es tādā ziņā esmu stingra, un, kad man būs bērni, es arī gribēšu, lai viņiem ir latviešu valoda. Tas ir kaut kas, ko var dabūt par velti, nevis atņemt.*” [NMV-4564]

Zīmīgi, ka Anita arī citā epizodē uzsver, ka viņa ir stingri nolēmusi latviešu valodu mācīt saviem bērniem, kad viņai tādi būs, jo vēlas saglabāt un nodot tālāk saikni ar savu dzimto zemi: “*Kad man piedzims bērni, viņi zinās, ka viņu mamma nāk no Latvijas un ka tur mums ir neliels īpašums. Svarīgi turēt tās saites, no kurienes mēs nākam, [sajust], ka tas kaut kādā veidā turpināsies. Kad man dzims bērni, tad viņi arī runās latviešu valodā. Varbūt ne tik perfekti, jo es arī sāku aizmirst un man ir jādomā zviedriski. Taču svarīgi ir paturēt to, no kurienes mēs nākam.*” [NMV-4564]

Lai arī pašlaik Anita neplāno pārcelties (atgriezties) uz dzīvi Latvijā, viņa ar to saista iespējamus nākotnes plānus. Studiju laikā strādājot Latvijā un pamanot, viņasprāt, nepilnības vecāka gadagājuma cilvēku aprūpē, Anita nolēmusi kādreiz Latvijā pati atvērt veco ļaužu pansionātu un tur likt lietā iegūto pieredzi un zināšanas: “*Varbūt es nepārvāksos uz Latviju, es nebūšu tā, kas tur dzīvos, bet es gribu izdarīt kaut ko labu tajā valstī, no kurienes es nāku.*” [NMV-4564]

Gan dzīvesstāstu, gan iepriekš aplūkotā kvantitatīvo datu analīze atklāj, ka identitātes un piederības tēmas aktualizējas kā nozīmīgas arī jaunās emigrācijas stāstos. Emigrācijas situācija var piešķirt papildus dimensijas refleksijai par personas pašas identitātes izjūtu, attieksmi pret valodu, piederību kādai vietai u.tml. Respondenti atklāj, ka bieži šie jautājumi tiek padziļināti reflektēti tieši pēc bērnu piedzimšanas emigrācijā vai arī laikā, kad Latvijā dzimušais bērns ārzemēs uzsāk skolas gaitas. Kā tika analizēts iepriekš, migrācija parasti nav bijusi bērna izvēle (atsevišķos gadījumos gan izvēle par emigrāciju izdarīta bērna veselības problēmu risināšanas dēļ vai domājot par labākām izglītības iespējām bērniem), tādēļ vecāki jūtas atbildīgi, lai viņu izdarītās izvēles būtu ieguvums arī bērniem.

## **Diskusija** *Discussion*

Nereti tieši bērni kļūst par sava veida starpniekiem starp vairākām kultūrām (*cultural brokers*) savai ģimenei, jo viņi, iegūstot obligāto izglītību skolā, bieži arī ātrāk apgūst mītnes zemes valodu un iekļaujas jaunajā sabiedrībā (Sime & Fox,



2015). No otras puses, akcentējot valodas kā kultūras kapitāla vērtības nozīmi, dominējošās valodas apgūšana nodrošina jaunākajai paaudzei labākas sekmes izglītībā un augstāku konkurētspēju darba tirgū, jo valoda nav tikai komunikācijas līdzeklis, bet kalpo kā simboliskās varas instruments, radīta noteiktā kontekstā vai lingvistiskajos tirgos, kur tirgus īpašības nosaka lingvistiskā produkta vērtību, vērtējot dažus produktus augstāk nekā citus (Bourdieu, 1992). Un mītnes zemes dominējošā valoda pārsvarā ir ar augstāku “tirgus” vērtību.

Emigrantu vēlme uzturēt etnisko identitāti un dzimto valodu kā vērtību var nonākt pretrunā, īpaši jauniešu vidē, ar vēlmi piemēroties dominējošajai, t.i., mītnes zemes kultūrai, valodas videi. Emigrējušie vecāki ar bērniem bieži izjūt divējādu spiedienu: gan iekļauties jaunajā mītnes zemē, gan nepazaudēt saikni ar izcelsmes valsti. Īpaši emigrantu bērniem pieaugot var rasties personiskās un emocionālās krīzes, kad rodas nepieciešamība izvēlēties starp divām “konkurējošām” kultūrām (Mannitz, 2005). Identitātes veidošanās dažādās dimensijas var ietekmēt jaunākās paaudzes emigrantu psiholoģisko labklājību. Migrantu bērniem literatūrā bieži tiek piedēvēta salauzta (*fractured*) jeb mainīga identitāte, dalīta piederības sajūta, pretrunīga mājas izjūta (Kasinitz, 2008). Tomēr Daina Grosa norāda, ka, dzīvojot Eiropas Savienībā ar tās atvērtajām robežām, aizvien vairāk jāreķinās ar daudzvalodību ģimenē, un aicina mobilitāti un transnacionālo dzīvesveidu uztvert “nevis kā izcelsmes valstu valodu zuduma nolemību, bet drīzāk kā iespēju, kas diasporā dzīvojošajiem jānovērtē un jānodod tālāk” (Grosa, 2020, 54).

Tādējādi vecākiem un sabiedrībai ir izaicinājums, kā palīdzēt bērnam pielāgoties dzīvei vairāku valodu un kultūru vidē, neraisot konfliktus un problēmas identitātes veidošanās procesā, kā padarīt valodas un kultūras apguvi piemērotu un aizraujošu Latvijas bērniem, kuri dzimuši vai auguši ārpus tās. Risinājums meklējams, apvienojot ģimeņu individuālos pūliņus, sabiedrības atbalstu ar diasporas politikas realizāciju.

## **Secinājumi** *Conclusions*

Pētījuma rezultāti liecina, ka vecākiem ir visnozīmīgākā loma gan bērna valodas apgūvē un uzturēšanā emigrācijā, gan arī etniskās identitātes kā vērtības apzināšanās un pārnese procesā. Latviešu izcelsmes vecāki emigrācijā paši apzinās un akcentē latviešu valodas apguves īpašo nozīmi bērnu latviskās identitātes uzturēšanā.

Etniskās identitātes un mantotās valodas saglabāšanā nozīmīga loma ir arī emigrantu bērnu piederības sajūtai gan jaunajai mītnes zemei ar tās valodu un tradīcijām, gan etniskajai dzimtenei un tās kultūrai, uzsverot, ka starp šīm abām piederības sajūtām un identitātēm pastāv konflikta riski. Piederības sajūta kā

viena no būtiskākajām dzīves vajadzībām ir atzīstama kā psiholoģiskās un fiziskās labklājības viens no nosacījumiem.

### **Summary**

The aim of the research is to ascertain the language situation in the diaspora, explore practices and perspectives on sustaining Latvian language. The research focuses on analysis of parents' potentialities and motivation to maintain Latvian language to their children in emigration, as well as support preservation of Latvian culture in diaspora with the aim of strengthening the ethnic identity and the sense of belonging to Latvia. The paper uses a combination of a quantitative survey and in-depth interviews with the parents of children in diaspora. In the theoretical aspect, the research data is approached with reference to P. Bourdieu's view on language skills as linguistic capital, a form of cultural capital considering Latvian language as the heritage language of diaspora in host countries. Parent's attention to sustaining their heritage language in emigration is analysed in relation to children's identity formation, family communication and possible future career building. The research shows that parents play a big role in language acquisition and hold the main responsibility in the process of realizing ethnic identity as a value.

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## MANIFESTATION OF ETHNICITY AND VALUES: THE CASE STUDY FROM THE EASTERN LATVIA

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**Abstract.** Values has been explored in connection to a deeper understanding of human behavior. Values provide the answer to the basic existential questions, help to provide meaning in one's life. Values are the key aspects of one's self-esteem. They reflect diverse aspects of one's social identity. According to a number of scientists, ethnic identity is a part of social identity. A number of studies in psychology has a focus on the connection between ethnicity and ethnic values. There are two main approaches towards the study of values can be distinguished. On the one hand, there are values that have the existential basis for the existence of people. On the other hand, the information about ethnic values can have applied aspect. The aim of this study is to identify differences in value orientation among representatives of two main linguistic groups that live in Eastern Latvia: the group of Latvian and Russian-speaking participants. The second goal is to explore the influence of religion, age and gender on the values of the research participants. The methodology used for the purpose of this study was to determine value orientation towards family, religious and friendship. The authors discovered statistically significant differences only in relation to a value of friendship. This value turned out to be the highest among the Russian-speaking group as compared to the Latvian-speaking group, as well as in the Orthodox group as compared to the group of Catholics.

**Keywords:** Eastern Latvia, ethnic identity, religion, religious affiliation, value.

### Introduction

Values in the social sciences can be explored in connection to understanding of a human behavior, especially in cases where behavior is not determined only by the biological needs. According to D. Karp, values provide an answer to the basic existential questions by helping to give meaning for people's lives (Karp, 2020). Therefore, people's values determine common aspirational goals, which, in turn, motivate their actions and serve as guiding principles in their lives (Anýžová, 2017; Kluckhohn, 1951; Meeussen, Agneessens, Delvaux, Phalet, 2018). Individual's behavior can be ambivalent in terms of values; they can serve more than a motivational purpose. In such cases, people with different value

priorities can behave in the same way. This leads to the inconsistent relationship between values and behavior (Sagiv, Roccas, Cieciuch & Schwartz, 2017).

However, multiple ethnic values may motivate certain ethnic behavior. For example, representatives of ethnic groups may be motivated to participate in their own ethnic festivals as quidded by values of their ethnic engagement, ethnic awareness and/or ethnic heritage. Moreover, some ethnic behaviors express ethnic values more than other values (Jugert, Titzmann, 2020; Yang, Liang, Quan, Jiang, Yu, Zheng, 2019). The variability of behavior can be explained by the degree of generalization of values. The higher is the degree of generalization of values, the more varied and selective is their influence on one's behavior. Thus, people may see equality as relevant in situations of ethnic or gender diversity, but they may not see it in relation as relevant to a weight discrimination (Cieciuch, Schwartz, & Davidov, 2015). The importance of specific values can change over time as a part of psychosocial development during childhood and adolescence. Hierarchies of values stabilize at the age of adolescence and change quite little in adulthood and stay as relatively stable key element of personal and ethnic identity (Sagiv, Roccas, Cieciuch, & Schwartz 2017).

The research also proves that the relationship between ethnic values and behavior among the believers as more pronounced than among atheists (Yang, Liang, Quan, Jiang, Yu, Zheng, 2019), as well as indicate to the influence of religion on ethnic values (Winaja, Prabawa, & Pertiwi, 2019; Devos, Spimi, & Schwartc, 2002). In psychology, there are two approaches towards the study of values. These approaches are known as Rokeach and the Schwartz's traditions. Rokeach divides the list of 36 values into two groups. One of them includes instrumental values, and the second - terminal ones. The life goals of a person are associated with terminal values. Instrumental values allow one to achieve these goals, so they are more susceptible to changes than terminal values (Rokeach, 1973). After a detailed analyses of this classification, D. Karp wrote that, on one hand, one of the advantages of the study carried out by Rokeach, is that it is a fairly simple tool that can be used by the researchers in variety of contexts. But, on the other hand, the assumption values influence one's behavior directly, does not appear anywhere in these studies. Therefore, Karp concludes, that the relationship either do not exist, or there are several links in a long chain of causes that interfere with the relationship between those two important variables (Karp, 2020).

S. Schwartz proposed a different concept of classification of values. According to his point of view, all values could be located within one system, where values relate to the dichotomy "Conservatism and Openness to the world" that are located along one axis, and values related to the dichotomy "Your interests and the interests and well-being of other people" that are located on the second axis. The theory of Schwartz's refers to structural theories by assuming

that if a person prefers values that are located at one pole of the dichotomy, he/she simultaneously rejects values that are at the other pole of the same dichotomy (Schwartz, 1992). D. Karp wrote that the research tool designed by S. Schwartz allows to predict the political behavior of an individual (Karp, 2020).

Thus, the sequence of shifts in theoretical paradigms in the study of values can be represented by the following diagram:

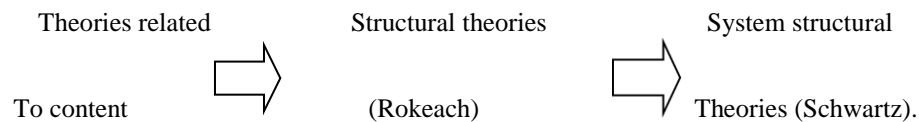


Figure 1 Paradigms in the Study of Value

### Research on the Relationship between Values and Ethnicity in Modern Psychology

Values play the key aspect of one's self-esteem. As such, they are associated with and are reflected in aspects of personal and social identity of individuals (Sagiv, Roccas, Cieciuch, & Schwartz, 2017). The concept of ethnicity in modern psychology includes two aspects: ethnic origin and ethnic identity. The first is determined by the ethnic origin of parents. The second is determined by the internal acceptance of oneself as a representative of a certain ethnic group. This acceptance depends on a socio-historical context. Therefore, as L. Kiang wrote, ethnic identity is a social construct that is dynamic in its nature (Kiang, 2014).

A number of studies point to the connection that exist between ethnicity and ethnic values in modern psychology, leading to two main directions. On the one hand, researchers are trying to determine those values that serve as the existential basis explaining the existence of people. At the same time, this is assumed that an unformed ethnic identity can lead to an individual's orientation towards other values that are not characteristic to a given ethnos (Durovic, 2008). On the other hand, how can information about ethnic values be used for practical and marketing purposes?

The researchers who represent first approach, wrote about the relationship of values and a genetic heritage and the impact of various social environments on one's values such as family, education system and a social environment as a whole (Sagiv, Roccas, Cieciuch, & Schwartz, 2017; Jakupova, Perlenbetov, Ilimkhanovac, & Telebayev, 2012).

The researchers who have studied Asian values, namely, D. Iwamoto and W. Liu, wrote that the most important Asian values such as collectivism, conformity to norms, respect for authority, emotional self-control, family recognition through achievement, humility, hierarchical relationships and

avoidance of shame, determine the purpose of life for the representatives of Asia (Iwamoto & Liu, 2010).

As T. Kirby and others indicate, a special place in the list of ethnic values is occupied by a value of ethnic space. Ethnic space is a place where representatives of one or similar ethnic groups form their ethnic identity in the interpersonal communication and interaction with other assimilate ethnic values. As the authors discuss, the creation of such ethnic spaces is particularly important for ethnic minorities, whose representatives strengthen their self-esteem and gain self-confidence as a result of such communication (Kirby, Tabak, Ilac, & Cheryan, 2020). The second direction in the research can be illustrated by the group of authors, who studied the choice of the Singaporean women in selling cosmetics in relation to those values (Koubaa, Ulvoas, & Chew, 2011).

We propose the following definition of ethnic values: ethnic values are collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable, and proper or bad, undesirable, and improper in ethnic and world culture.

### **Research Methodology**

The research methodology was based on views of representatives of the content approach towards values, as well as the point of view of Schwartz and his colleagues about the place of values in the structure of motives that affect the behavior of an individual, and the connection between values and ethnic identity (Cieciuch, Schwartz, Davidov, 2015; Sagiv, Roccas, Cieciuch, Schwartz, 2017; Schwartz, 1992).

In the questionnaire offered to the research participants, consisted of three items and the participants had to assess the place of values in the structure of ethnic identity of their ethnic group. Family, religion and friendship values were assessed in a five-point scale. Five points meant that the value is very important, and value of one is not significant. In addition, each subject could supplement this list with those values that, in their opinion, are significant for their ethnos.

In total, sixty-one participants took part in this study. Taking into account the peculiarities of the particular region, where the main factor that influence the formation of ethnic identity is language, both groups of respondents were divided into the groups whose mother language was Latvian and the respondents from the other group who hold Russian as their mother tongue. The first group consisted of 26 research participants (20 men and 6 women), and the second - 34 (27 women and 7 men) participants. This was also required to indicate one's age and religion. The study excluded individuals who had two native languages: Russian and Latvian (5 people).



### Research Results and Discussion

The aim of this study was to explore the degree of importance of values of family, religion and friendship as chosen by the participants as they make sense for two ethnic groups united. The study focuses on the influence of religious affiliation of individuals on these values, the age characteristics on one's orientation towards the indicated values. Table 1 display the results of the study. The table reflects the assessments of values by the respondents

*Table 1 Respondents' Assessments of Values (Mean)*

VALUES	The group of respondents with the Latvian language as a native language	The group of respondents with the Russian language as a native language	Mann-Whitney U test	Statistical significance
Family	4.1	4.2	292.5	No
Religious	3.4	3.6	308	No
Friendship	3.4	4.4	98.5	True at the significance level of 0.01

The table shows that for the first and the second group the most significant are family values. The biggest differences were found for the value of friendship. The group with the native Russian language evaluates it significantly higher than the group with the Latvian as native language. The group consists of nine non-believers. In the group of respondents with the Russian as a native language, the distribution by religious preferences is the following: Catholics – 6, Lutheran-1, Orthodox believers – 13, Old Believers – 12, nonbelievers - 4. The Latvian language speaking group consisted mainly of Catholics. The Russian-speaking group was dominated by the Orthodox and Old Believers. Within each group, the average values of the respondents' can be identified by assessing the significance of values for their ethnic group (for each religion). The average scores were compared with each other. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine statistical differences. For the family values, only one statistically significant difference was found (see Table 2).

**Table 2 The Assessment of the Importance of Family Values by the Representatives of the Russian Speaking Catholics and Orthodox Believers**

Values	Catholics	Orthodox	Mann-Whitney U test	Statistical significance
Family	4.7	3.8	17	True at the level of significance 0.05

In the Russian-speaking group, the family values were more important for the Catholics as compared with the Orthodox Christians. In regards to religious values, two significant differences were found. They are seen in Table 3.

**Table 3 Differences in the Assessment of Religious Values by Representatives of Different Religious Denominations**

Groups	Average rating	Mann-Whitney U test	Statistical significance
Catholics (Latvians)- Catholics (Russians)	3.3 / 3.8	33.5	True at a significance level of 0.05
Orthodox (Russians) Non-believers (Russians)	3.8 / 2.5	10	True at a significance level of 0.05

Catholics, whose native language is Russian, consider religious values as more important for their ethnic groups as compared to the Latvian-speaking Catholics. This is typical for the Russian-speaking group to evaluate religious values as more significant for their ethnic groups as compared to non-believers. As this is seen in Table 4, statistically significant differences are found in the assessments of the value of friendship and its significance for the ethnic group.

**Table 4 Differences in the Assessment of Values of Friendship by the Representatives of Different Religious Denominations**

Groups	Average value	Mann-Whitney U test	Statistical significance
Catholics (Russians) Non-believers (Russians)	3.7 / 5.0	2	True at a significance level of 0.05
Non-believers (Latvians)- неверующие (Russians)	3.1 / 5.0	3	True at a significance level of 0.05

Table 4 indicates that the highest assessment of the importance of the value of friendship for their ethnic groups was presented by the Russian-speaking non-believers. At the same time, statistically significant differences in the assessment of values were acknowledged between the group of the Russian-speaking non-believers and the groups of Russian-speaking Catholics and the Latvian-speaking non-believers.

The authors have also explored the effect of age on the respondents' assessments of the significance of these values. In each language group, the participants were 30 years old and older. No statistical differences were found here. Among the added values in the Latvian-speaking group, the most frequently mentioned values were hospitality, perseverance, striving for order, adherence to traditions and tolerance to other things. The representatives of the Russian-speaking group most often have mentioned such values as hospitality, openness, and love of literature.

In conclusion, this can be stated that the respondents who belong to different ethnic groups are close in their assessments in regards to the importance of family and religious values for their ethnic groups. The exception was value of friendship, the importance of which was highly appreciated by the representatives of Russian-speaking group. Perhaps this is due to the peculiarities of the cultural and historical development of various ethnic groups and the degree of involvement in the processes of globalization.

At the same time, small groups were distinguished in groups that have different opinion about values from the general group. In the Russian-speaking group, Catholics and non-believers turned out to be such groups. Moreover, the last statement needs to be verified due to a small number of individuals belonging to this subgroup. No significant differences were found in the assessments of values by the individuals from different age categories.

### **Conclusion**

No statistically significant differences were found in the assessments of family and religious values by subjects from the Latvian-speaking and Russian-speaking groups. Russian-speaking respondents assessed that values of friendship are higher than among the Latvian-speaking ones. The Russian-speaking Catholics value family higher than the Russian-speaking Orthodox.

The Russian-speaking Catholics rate religious values higher than the Latvian-speaking Catholics, and Russian-speaking Orthodox Christians evaluate religious values higher than Russian-speaking non-believers. The Russian-speaking non-believers evaluate values of friendship higher than the Russian-speaking Catholics and the Latvian-speaking non-believers.

It should be noted that the samples concerning the religious affiliation of respondents turned out to be small in number. Therefore, these statements apply only to this sample and cannot be applied to the entire region. In the age groups under 30 and after 30 years, no statistically significant differences in the assessments of these values were found.

The study confirmed the hypotheses of D. Iwamoto and W. Liu that peoples living nearby for a long time develop similar ethnic values.

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# CAN RETURN MIGRATION REVITALISE LATVIA'S REGIONS? FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS TO HUMAN CAPITAL GAINS

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**Abstract.** Migration researchers from East-Central Europe most often focus on the impact of 'brain drain' which is characterised by the loss of human capital from emigration. In this paper focus is placed on the assumption that migrants living abroad gain valuable experiences and education opportunities, that lead to personal growth, facilitate entrepreneurship and psychological resilience, amongst other important skills. This experience may be used for the revitalisation of the less-developed regions the migrants return to. To explore what facilitates or inhibits the fulfil potential of 'brain circulation' or gain, we use data from two large-scale surveys of return migrants in Latvia, in-depth interviews, media analysis, regional workshops and secondary data. We find that return migrants often choose to return to the capital city and not their original point of departure. While towns and villages offer some advantages such as little competition, easier adaptation and high neighbourhood quality, reliance on personal contacts distorts the efficiency of job placement and there are fewer work opportunities in one's acquired profession. The skills are wasted and employers remain unappreciative of knowledge gained abroad in towns and villages more than in Riga.

**Keywords:** return migration, brain circulation, brain gain, knowledge, education.

## Introduction

During the last decade migration researchers have increasingly focused on the human capital costs of emigration on the sending countries such as those in East and Central Europe. This is most pronounced when people with higher education are over-represented among emigrants or when young people acquire higher education abroad and decide to stay there (Atoyán et al., 2016; Hazans, 2015a). The return of educated professionals is widely recognised as an important contributory resource for the economic innovation and development in the country of origin (Suciu & Florea, 2017). Thus, in order for international mobility to have a positive effect on sending countries such as Latvia, it is crucial to achieve

substantial rates of return migration or, alternatively, of highly qualified immigration. The regional inequalities in development in Latvia are significant and continue to grow (Rasnača & Bela, 2015; VARAM, 2013; VRAA, 2020). The gap between the capital Riga with its surrounding municipalities (Pierīga) and the rest of the territory, especially Latgale, continues to widen in terms of income, job opportunities, production volumes, GDP, investments etc (Rutkovska, 2018; VRAA, 2020). A similar situation is observed in relation to human capital – it is higher in Riga and Pierīga and lower in all other regions (Šķiņķis, Vilka, Cimdiņš, & Ušča, 2015).

We posit that return migration has a potential to revitalise and strengthen economic development and competitiveness of Latvia's regions. Because return migrant may bring enhanced human capital in the form of professional competency and transferrable skills that were acquired abroad through education. The aim of this paper is to provide a more detailed understanding of the transfer of human capital acquired abroad by return migrants. To achieve this, factors that hinder or facilitate migrants' return to smaller localities and utilisation of their skills, are explored. The research questions we ask are: i) are migrants less likely to return to towns and villages than the capital city or other large cities? ii) what advantages attract returning migrants to smaller towns and localities in regions and iii) what factors, including those related to job-search and employers' attitudes, can hinder the utilisation of return migrants' skills in regions. Research implements a mixed-method model with the use of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis, alongside analysis of secondary statistical data.

### **The Importance of Migration for Regional Development**

On the one hand, the new economics theories and the neoclassical growth models elaborate various mechanisms on how international labour mobility can accelerate convergence between countries, boost employee wages and boost national development (McCann, 2013; Barro & Sala-i-Martin, 2004). On the other hand, the classical rational choice theories or Wallerstein's (1990) world systems theory see international migration as inevitably draining the resources of the poorer countries and turn them into permanently dependent peripheries of the global economy. Brain drain – the emigration of skilled people reduces development opportunities in poor countries (because it reduces social capital) and deepens the inequality as poor countries continue to subsidise the rich countries. The negative effect of brain drain is observed in reduced productivity of stayers (Docquier, Ozden & Peri, 2014) and in lowered stock of human capital (Haque & Kim 1995; Atoyán et al., 2016; Hazans 2015a). We argue that this may be offset by real wage convergence and expected positive productivity effects from return migration.

Migration balance in Latvia is still negative, and emigration remains the main source of population decline (Kaša & Mieriņa, 2019). The Ministry of Economics (2019) points out that it is crucial to achieve a positive migration balance in the near future, as has already been done by the neighbouring Estonia, in order to ensure economic growth and meet the increasing demand for labour. Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030 also indicates that the demographic and labour market changes require targeted return migration or controlled labour immigration policies (Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 2010). Both policy-makers and employers report preference for return migration instead of immigration (Mieriņa, Ose, Kaprāns, & Lāce, 2017). Unfortunately, current return migration policies have not successfully achieved brain drain compensation in Latvia, as less than 40% return in within 10 years after emigrating (Hazans, 2015b, 2020).

When analysing regional trends in migration flows in 2012-2013, Hazans (2015b) concluded that during these two years return migration flows in Riga and the countryside were less than 40% of the emigration flows, whereas in Daugavpils, Liepāja and Jelgava it was more than 50%. Return migration rates were the lowest, compared to emigration, in Riga and Zemgale, but the highest – in Pierīga (Labour Force Survey [LFS] data). Simultaneously, domestic migration should also be taken into account. Many emigrants, whose last place of residence in Latvia was in a city, were born and raised in the countryside. This means that the full (direct and indirect) effect of emigration on rural depopulation may be much greater than can be judged from the LFS data. Because in LFS the emigrants' last place of residence in Latvia is used as the point of reference. With the exception of Riga and Pierīga, all parts of Latvia experience a population loss not only as a result of international but also domestic migration. If current tendencies continue, the number of inhabitants in most regions is expected to decrease by almost 1/3 by 2030 (Krēsliņš, Miglavs, & Spuriņš, 2015). Another reason for scepticism that return migration may compensate for the brain drain, is that across all time periods there are fewer university graduates among return migrants than among those of similar age in Latvia (Hazans, 2015a).

Though a formal education background may not be exclusively needed for the brain drain compensation. As research on return migration in Italy and Spain indicates that soft skills, informal and tacit competences acquired abroad are considered to be as important as formal qualifications (Staniscia et al., 2019). Research by Kurekova and Žilinčiková indicates, that foreign work experience is an asset for (re)integration into the home labour market (2018). Research from Bulgaria suggests, that return migrants' foreign education and experience encourages them to pursue activities which are meaningful both for civil society development and for innovative (social) entrepreneurship (Glorius, 2019).



To counter depopulation that deepens existing regional development disparities in Latvia, increasing positive effects of return migration is of great importance. Therefore, the study examines whether and how return migrants' human capital gains – education, professional competences and transferable skills acquired abroad, helps them re-integrate into the home labour market and contribute to regional development. The study also investigates whether the same trends can be observed as demonstrated by research above.

## **Methodology**

The analysis combines quantitative and qualitative data, alongside media analysis and analysis of secondary statistical data. The quantitative data are drawn from two large scale Web surveys conducted by the researchers at the University of Latvia: a survey of return migrants: “Returning to Latvia” in 2016 (3088 respondents, Hazans, 2016) and “Well-being and integration in the context of liquid migration” in 2019 (1460 respondents, Koroļeva, 2020). Respondents were recruited online through a variety of recruitment channels such as a job-search portal CV-Online and social media. The data were statistically weighted so that the ethnicity, education, gender and age distribution of respondents at the time of return would match as closely as possible the reference group of return migrants (information obtained from the latest LFS, see Hazans, 2016). In this paper we particularly focus on questions concerning the perceived value of knowledge acquired abroad, job-search strategies, application of the acquired skills, adaptation to difficulties and satisfaction with various aspects of life (precise wording indicated in the figures). Return migration statistics is drawn from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. The data were analysed in IBM SPSS 22 using simple univariate and bivariate statistics, dispersion analysis (ANOVA), T-tests and chi-square statistics to test for the significance of differences between groups.

The qualitative data was obtained from several key sources. 15 biographical interviews with transnationals, Latvian students abroad and return migrants (conducted 2019) was obtained from the National Research Programme «Towards sustainable development and inclusive society in Latvia: response to demographic and migration challenges». Data from four regional workshops (2019) was used. 28 interviews with return migrants and their spouses (40 people) were obtained from the IR weekly magazine thematic series “Back Home” (published in 2018 and 2019). Thematic analysis was used to gain an in-depth understanding on how skills, experiences, formal and informal education that is gained abroad is transferred and applied in Latvia. The analysis sheds light on the facilitators and barriers for return migration and human gains. Qualitative and

quantitative data were integrated during analysis. Qualitative data are used to illuminate and expand some findings from quantitative analysis.

## **Research Results**

### ***Return migration in numbers***

The Central statistical bureau [CSB] of Latvia data shows that most emigration-caused depopulation occurred in small towns, villages and the countryside. For example, in 2015-2019 the ration of immigration to emigration was 79% in Riga, 47% in the other eight largest cities and 42% in towns, villages, and the countryside. This means that during these five years the number of people who emigrated from the smaller towns and the countryside was double to those who immigrated (37.3 thousand vs.15.5 thousand). While there are no specific data about regions, CSB data shows that in the last two years almost half (45%) of all immigrants were return migrants (CSB 2019). We may only assume that outside the larger cities this percentage is even higher.

The number of return migrants that CSB defines as people who have returned after spending at least 12 months abroad, has fluctuated at around 5000 each year since 2015. However, as Hazans (2020) notes, the estimates for return migration and the net number of return migrants in the country depend on the definition that is used. Mainly, on how long they had to live or work abroad and for how long they are considered return migrants after returning (ibid.). For example, using LFS and EU-SILC data, Hazans (2020) calculates that during 2013-2018, 10,000-11,000 people who worked abroad in the previous year returned to Latvia every year, i.e., about twice as many as the CSB estimate. In total, according to Hazan's (2020) calculations from the CSB data, at the beginning of 2019, 12,670 adult (aged 15 years old or older) return migrants lived in Latvia who had returned to Latvia in 2015-2018 before spending at least 1 year abroad. Based on LFS and EU-SILC data, between 2008-2018, 53,000 unique persons returned to Latvia with work experience gained abroad during the previous 15 months, and 117,000 unique persons with work experience gained abroad during the previous 4 years (Hazans, 2020).

The distribution of return migrants by regions during 2015-2019 mostly correspond to the distribution of the population (average total number), but with a slightly smaller share of return migrants in Latgale and a larger share – in Pierīga (Table 1). This means that return migrants boost the number of inhabitants in Pierīga, yet in Latgale return migration is not able to compensate for the loss of population.

*Table 1 Return Migration Statistics (%)*

	Number of return migrants							Percentage of inhabitants of Latvia residing in particular regions	Net migration	
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2015-2019	2015-2019 (%)	2015-2019 (%)	Net	As % of inhabitants during 2015-2019
Total	5617	5409	5455	4852	5114	26447	100	100	-38942	-0.4
Riga region	1929	1813	1897	1499	1529	8667	32.8	32.8	-4120	-0.1
Pierīgas region	824	840	845	865	874	4248	18.9	16.1	6865	0.4
Vidzemes region	534	525	534	509	566	2668	9.8	10.1	-9595	-1.0
Kurzemes region	734	701	713	673	708	3529	12.6	13.3	-10900	-0.9
Zemgales region	724	658	636	591	640	3249	12.1	12.3	-8576	-0.7
Latgales region	872	872	830	715	797	4086	1.8	15.4	-12616	-0.9

*Source: CSB (2019), data provided at request of the authors*

Interestingly, the number of people returning to Latgale and Riga in the last 5 years has decreased, while the number of those returning to Pierīga has slightly increased. Overall, the net migration (i.e., the difference between immigration and emigration) during 2015-2019 is relative to the number of inhabitants, Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Latgale have lost the most inhabitants to migration (almost 1% during the 5 years' time). The net migration in Riga is close to zero, whereas Pierīga has been the beneficiary of migration. Though the net migration rates provided by CSB include both internal and external migration.

According to CSB data, most return migrants 15+ years of age who resided in Latvia at the beginning of 2019 and had returned to Latvia during 2015-2018 are young – up to 44 years of age (Table 2). Just 17% are 55 years or older. This attests to their economic potential. Particularly few returning to Latgale, Zemgale and Vidzeme are 55 or older. However, only 23% of return migrants 15 or older who resided in Latvia at the beginning of 2019 and had returned in 2015-2018 had higher education – a lower number than among emigrants or diaspora (CSB 2019; Atoyan et al., 2015; Hazans, 2015b).

**Table 2 Age Structure of Return Migrants Residing in Latvia in 2019 Who Returned during 2015-2018 (%)**

	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Total	6	38	25	14	11	6
Riga region	6	34	25	16	12	7
Pierīgas region	6	37	26	12	11	7
Vidzemes region	5	42	24	13	10	3
Kurzemes region	7	40	22	13	11	5
Zemgales region	7	40	25	14	9	4
Latgales region	3	43	26	13	10	3

Source: CSB (2019), data provided at request of the authors. Row percentages.

### **Job placement**

In the survey return migrants were asked, how did they find their job after returning. Chi-square tests show that there are significant differences between different types of localities (Sig.<0.001). While advertisements are the most common route for finding work in Riga, elsewhere social contacts play a bigger role: people often find a job with the help of family or friends (46-47%), some return to their previous employer or just create a workplace themselves (Table 3). Reliance on personal contacts does not guarantee a job that is best suited for their level of skills and competences, thus, there is a higher risk that outside Riga return migrants' skills might be wasted. Interestingly, the data provides no clear indication that such strategies of job-search are a result of being unable to find a job using other methods: there are no statistically significant differences in how long it took for the return migrants to find a job in Riga, other large cities or towns and villages (Sig.>0.05). Thus, this could rather be explained by cultural traits or a lack of belief in other possibilities to find a job (not trying).

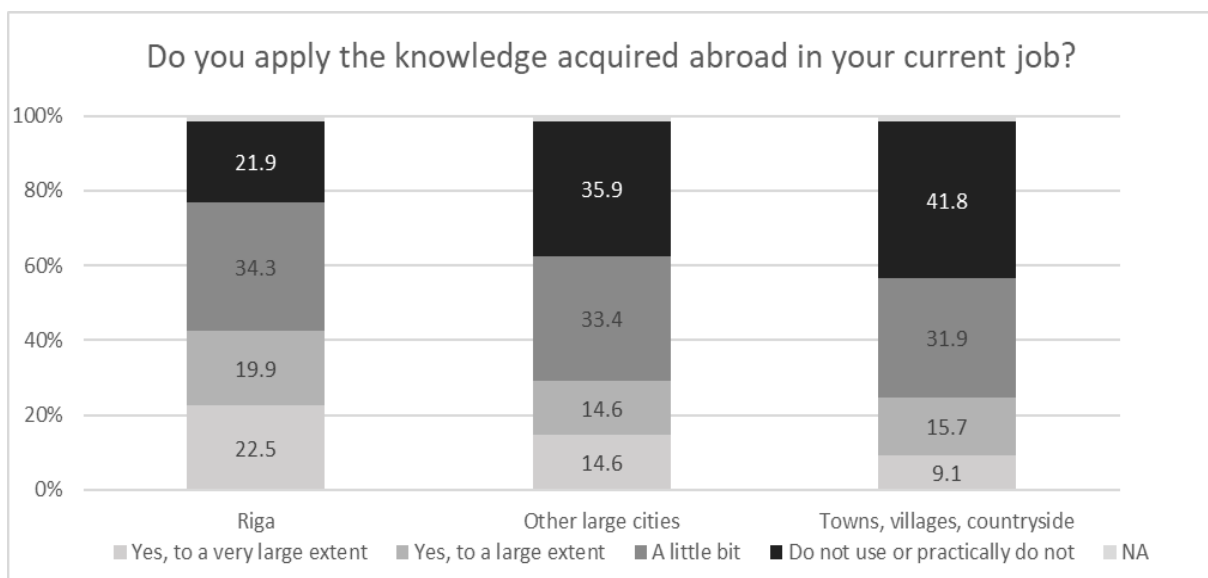
**Table 3 How Return Migrants Found Job after Returning (%)**

	Riga	Other large cities	Towns and villages, countryside
Referring to an advertisement	41.8	27.2	27.5
With the help of family and friends	37.2	46.3	46.9
By placing an advertisement or CV on one of the Internet portals	9.7	7.7	6.3
Created the workplace myself	7.8	12.3	9.4
Returned to my previous employer	7.4	7.7	10.3
Using the services of public employment services	1.0	3.1	5.2
Other	4.6	4.8	5.4
Difficult to say/ Don't remember	0.4	0.0	1.2

Source: "Returning to Latvia" (2016)

The brain wasting is confirmed by the respondents' further answers to the question about the use of skills acquired abroad in their current job (Fig.1). In Riga just 22% do not use or practically do not use skills acquired abroad, whereas in towns and villages this proportion reaches 42%.

We also asked if the respondent works in a profession that fits their qualification. 23% in Riga, 26% in other large cities and 33% in towns, villages and the countryside work a simpler job, attesting to down-skilling after return. 10-11% in Riga and other large cities work a job that exceeds their formal qualifications, which indirectly indicates the appreciation for their skills among employers. Yet just 5% have managed to secure such a job in towns, villages, and countryside.



*Figure 1 Application of Skills Acquired Abroad in Current Job (%)*  
 Source: "Returning to Latvia" (2016)

Additional confirmation of smaller town, village and the countryside employer insufficient use of return migrant skills is visible in further questions. The share of return migrants who believe that employers 'do not value' or 'rather do not value' experience and skills acquired abroad is just 35% in Riga, compared to more than half (51-52%) in other cities, towns, villages or countryside (Fig.2).

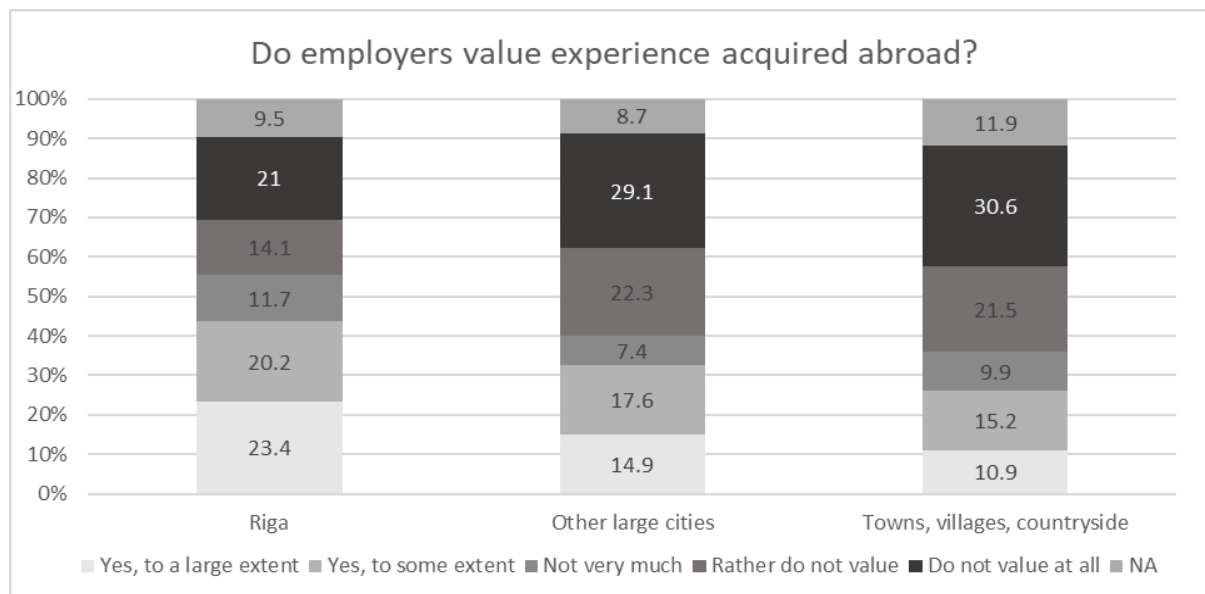


Figure 2 To What Extent Employers Value Skills Acquired Abroad in Current Job (%)  
 Source: "Returning to Latvia" (2016)

Simultaneously, the data from the regional workshops indicate a lack of human resources. Particularly all regions display a lack of skilled specialists in many areas (in education, health care, IT, engineering). The brain-wasting, down-skilling of return migrants and the insufficient use of return migrants' skills may be explained by a mismatch between the return-migrant qualifications and the needs of the regional labour market, more narrow employment opportunities, or irresolvable workplace cultural differences. Another factor may be that those who have worked abroad more critically evaluate employer attitudes and tend to have higher demands for work conditions and wages as they realize the value of their work (Mieriņa, 2015). Thus, for some employers in the regions the extra experience acquired abroad makes a potential employee too demanding or too expensive, even though the skills would fit the job perfectly. This can result in scepticism towards returnees and in downplaying the value of their experience. In addition, the qualitative data suggests that people who are oriented towards work in a multinational collective and value opportunities provided by globalization prefer employment in international companies. Those for whom opportunities and choices (employment, services, culture, sports etc) offered by the capital city are important, are more inclined to stay in Riga. Towns and rural areas are attractive to families with children who prioritise quality of life (facilitating factors for this are discussed in detail in the next section), may adapt flexibly to the existing labour market, see opportunities to develop their own business or can continue their work remotely for employers or customers outside Latvia. The interviews also confirm a perception that there is no demand or limited opportunities for

niche qualifications in Latvia (e.g. gender studies, urban studies, human rights). In contrast to quantitative data, qualitative data shows more successful transfer of knowledge, skills, acquired formal and non-formal education.

### ***Skills, formal and non-formal education acquired abroad***

The knowledge economy of the 21st century can develop only if there is sufficiently high human capital – skilled and educated people who can create innovative, high quality products and services. According to the results of the 2019 survey, 41% of return migrants think that they are irreplaceable or difficult-to-replace employees in their current job. The skills that make them so valuable are, according to our respondents, their ability to perform certain tasks better than others (61%), broad professional competence, experience (59%), ability to handle non-standard situations (52%), ability to think differently, to notice different solutions (49%), as well as language skills (44%). Thus, the return migrants themselves consider as valuable not just the professional skills they have acquired while working abroad, but also competences they have learnt outside of workplace, in a non-formal way, by having to adapt to unfamiliar circumstances in terms of language, culture, institutions, etc.

The qualitative data suggest that it is not just particular skills, but also attitudes and mindsets, that create life transformative consequences. Attitudes identified in the media interview analysis are – not to be afraid, take initiative, try new things, do not give up, openness to diversity, tolerance, a positive mindset. Skills mentioned are – a friendly communication style, punctuality and precision, a quick pace of work, strong adaptation skills, ability to talk freely about all topics. Professional qualifications were also mentioned, both university education and formal and non-formal professional training. Some have acquired professional training in the hospitality sector, which allowed them to start their own businesses in Latvia (mainly outside Riga). Few learned the language of the host country at a level that allows them to teach it in Latvia after their return. Indeed, experience gained abroad is an asset that motivates many return migrants to start their own businesses. Many are engaging in the activities, which are meaningful for civil society or local communities.

Regarding the place of residence, where skills and knowledge are applied in Latvia, interview data and media interview analysis correspond to the same trend as surveys show – return migrants with higher education are tended to stay in Riga (even if they are born in rural municipalities or smaller towns), with very few exceptions. But even so towns and villages are benefiting from return migrants' human capital and transfer of attitudes, skills and knowledge. Some are starting university studies because while abroad they have seen the importance of higher education and found their field of interest.

**Barriers and facilitators to returning to regions**

In terms of barriers for adaptation after the return to Latvia, almost half (45%) of respondents who returned to towns, villages or the countryside characterise it as being very easy or easy, compared to approximately 37% in Riga and other large cities, thus, their adapting was somewhat easier (Fig.3).

However, the respondents also highlighted some barriers to integration after their return. Those working in Riga more often than others mention language issues among difficulties they faced – mainly due to a common requirement in the business sector to be fluent in both Latvian and Russian. Return migrants in other cities were more concerned than others about economic issues: difficulty finding employment and the calculation and transfer of pensions and benefits. This aligns with the CSB data that shows that while income levels are lowest in villages and the countryside, unemployment rates there are lower than in large cities (Hazans, 2015b).

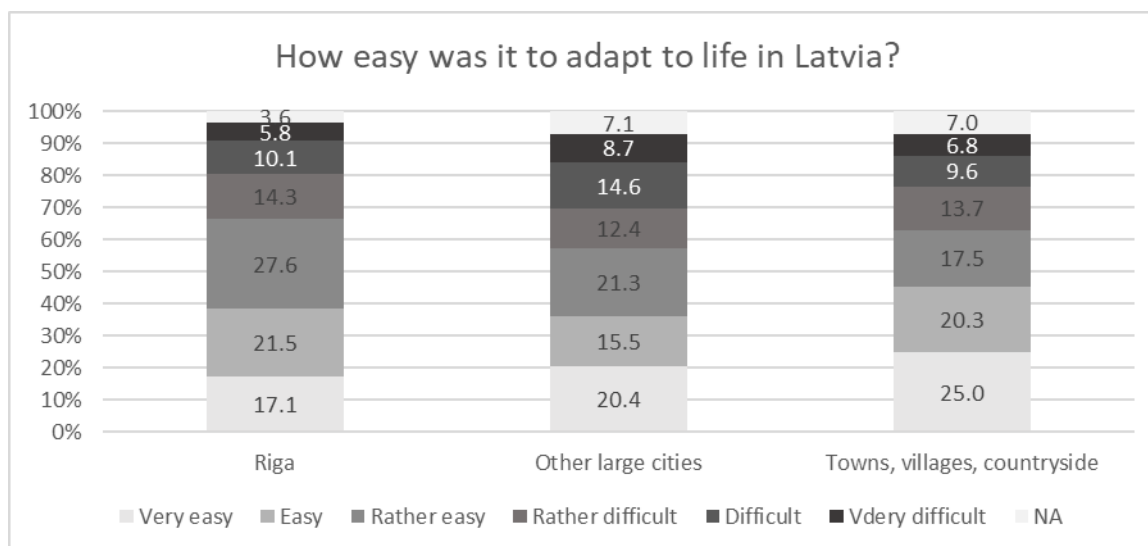


Figure 3 Difficulty of Adapting to Life in Latvia (%)

Source: “Returning to Latvia” (2016)

Finally, those who returned to work in towns, villages or the countryside less often report difficulties integrating into the local society due to a different mentality, and had fewer uncertainties about the health care system compared to those in Riga (Table 4). The later could be because fewer elderly people return to the countryside and potentially due to tighter and more personal relations between doctors and patients in small towns and villages.

The survey also asked respondents what would have helped them to better integrate after their return. Return migrants living and working in different types of settlements provide the same answers (Sig,>0.05): employment opportunities with adequate pay would help the most (64%), followed by business and



municipal support to find a place to live (27%). Interestingly, return migrants in small towns, villages and countryside would find information about employment opportunities less useful (27%) than those in Riga (36%). This points to the fact that the lack of *information* about jobs is not seen as the main problem, but rather the key problem is the lack of adequately paid jobs in general.

*Table 4 What Difficulties Return Migrants Faced after Returning (%)*

	Riga	Other large cities	Towns and villages
Language difficulties	15.2	6.7	6.9
Difficulty finding a place for a child in kindergarten	7.9	7.5	7.4
Difficulty finding a place for a child in school	2.3	1.5	0.8
Dissatisfaction with the school environment, attitude	7.2	6.7	4.1
Difficulties in getting a diploma or a qualification recognized in Latvia	4.1	3.3	2.1
Difficulty for a spouse to find a job	12.6	18.2	14.2
Uncertainty about taxes	28.3	30.6	29.5
Difficulties with benefits and pension calculation or coordination	8.5	15.6	7.5
Difficulty finding a job	29.6	38.5	28.2
Difficulty finding a place to live	16.9	22.6	18.0
Uncertainties about the health care system	25.4	22.4	17.6
Difficulties in integrating into society (different people's mentality)	27.5	27.5	20.5
Difficulty getting used to a different work culture	33.5	34.0	29.1
Other difficulties	12.6	6.7	13.4
There were no difficulties	16.7	18.3	18.4

*Source: "Returning to Latvia" (2016). The percentages show how many respondents in the particular group mentioned certain difficulties. More than one answer was possible, thus, they can sum up to more than 100%.*

Data from the regional workshops confirm that low remuneration is one of the key factors why people leave towns, villages and the countryside and what prevents recruitment of skilled labour and highly qualified specialists. Also, difficulty to find affordable quality housing is a lingering factor. Despite depopulation, the housing stock is limited, out of date and inadequate to contemporary requirements. Furthermore, banks do not provide mortgage for housing acquisition or construction outside prospective city centres. On the other hand, successful companies offer competitive salaries to qualified professionals, but the limited opportunities in small towns and the countryside (limited access

to and choice of services, limited cultural and entertainment opportunities) discourage young people from moving to a place that is far from the capital.

Those working in Riga are significantly more satisfied with work conditions, remuneration and are happier with their life in general than those who work outside of Riga in towns, villages, and the countryside (Sig.<0.05). Income-wise, too, those working in towns, villages or countryside, or even large cities often (41% and 37%, respectively) find it difficult to make ends meet – compared to just 25% of return migrants working in Riga (Table 5).

*Table 5 Satisfaction with Various Aspects of Life (0-10)*

	Riga	Other large cities	Towns, villages, countryside
Job	6.8	6.5	6.5
Work conditions	7.1	6.5	6.2
Remuneration	5.5	4.9	4.7
Family life	7.2	7.3	7.4
Relationships with people outside family	7.1	7.4	7.3
Home/ dwelling	6.9	7.4	6.9
Current standard of living	5.8	5	5.3
Life in general	7.1	7	6.7

Source: “Well-being and integration in the context of liquid migration” (2019)

Overall, those who returned to Riga, mention diverse reasons for why they decided to return. More than those who returned to other types of settlements they mention social reasons (missing their family and friends, the fact that their loved one lives in Latvia or decided to return), as well as economic reasons (dissatisfaction with some aspects of life abroad or an attractive job offer in Latvia) which indicates that Riga is probably seen as better able to offer them better conditions. Those who returned and work in Riga, also more often returned due to finishing their studies abroad. The fact that Riga is better able to attract the young specialists who have acquired education abroad is worrying. Those who returned to other cities, towns or villages in Latvia, most often did so mainly due to emotional reasons: missing family and friends, longing for Latvia, other family or personal circumstances or desire for children to live and study in Latvia. Interviews also show this trend. It is people without higher education that return to the towns and the countryside more often. They see their way of life closer to nature, family and their roots. A multicultural city environment and a higher salary are not priority attractors.

When asked about their plans for the future, both surveys, and different measures point to the same – return migrants working in small towns, villages or

the countryside are much less willing to emigrate again: 40% say that after five years they will definitely still live in Latvia (compared to 21% in Riga and 28% - other large cities). Simultaneously, the former group is also more unsure about whether in five years' time they will still live in Latvia (19% compared to 13% in cities). This means that their plans are dependent on opportunities presented. These results align with "The emigrant communities of Latvia" survey results that found that those from the small towns, villages and the countryside were most likely to express willingness to return to Latvia (approximately 20% had plans to return), especially those from Vidzeme or Pierīga. This seems indicative of a stronger attachment among those from smaller settlements to their place of origin and community. Indeed, survey data shows that in rural areas, as well as in Riga, fewer individuals do not feel attached to Latvia compared to other larger cities or towns (Hazans, 2015).

The qualitative data also confirms the importance of place attachment and sense of belonging. Here qualitative analysis provides a deeper understanding of other attractive factors for choosing a rural life, identified in regional workshops and media interviews. Firstly, families with children positively review the quality of life in towns, villages and the countryside in three key aspects. Firstly, the life environment is perceived as green, quiet, peaceful, close to nature, with clean air and food, with safe opportunities for children to go to and from school and extracurricular activities and no time is spent in traffic jams. Secondly, rural life offers a peaceful rhythm of life. Lastly, a rural life gives a chance to practice one's own life philosophy, sustainable lifestyle or to live in accordance to Latvian traditional values and ways of life. For parents of minors, a significant factor is availability of kindergartens, as well as a broad, affordable, and high-quality offer of extracurricular activities for pupils.

An additional important factor for the return and the retention of migrants in Latvia is related to sensemaking – the meaning and sense people attribute to life in Latvia. The data in this study supports the data from Zača et al (2018) on youth return migrants – life in Latvia is seen as an opportunity to contribute to the development of the homeland (Zača, Hazans, & Bela, 2018). Interviews illuminate in an in-depth manner that the sense of belonging is important – life elsewhere denotes one as just a guest of whose difference they are reminded of in different ways. In several interviews, return migrants highlight that one feels needed in Latvia, that one can make a significant contribution to the development of country and the wellbeing of society. Some also see it as their mission: to challenge and change the system (especially in medicine), to improve something, to transfer experiences, as well as values and attitudes, acquired abroad, such as self-respect, tolerance, kindness, and positive attitudes towards life and one another.

## **Conclusions**

In Latvia, like for other countries with high emigration rates, return migration can play an important role for economic competitiveness and development if policy is implemented accordingly. Our findings confirm the findings of previous studies – contribution of return migrants is linked to both the transfer of knowledge and skills, and to the transfer of values, ideas, practices, identity and social capital (Levitt & Lamba-Nieves, 2011; Kuznetsov, 2013). Regarding migration trends, return migrants boost the number of inhabitants in Riga and Pierīga, yet in Latgale and other regions return migration is not able to compensate for the loss of population. Potential for return migration to revitalize the regions is questionable as the majority of highly skilled migrants stay in Riga and Pierīga. The study illuminates the barriers for return to towns, villages and countryside – it is limited job opportunities, lower salaries, reliance on personal contacts, devaluation of experience gained abroad, limited access to affordable quality housing, as well as limited scope of services and leisure activities are all more pronounced when compared to Riga and Pierīga. The facilitating factors that contribute to choosing towns, villages or countryside as places of residence after return are lower competition, stronger place attachment, high neighbourhood quality, a family friendly environment, slower life pace, opportunities to develop one's own business or practice sustainable way of life. However, at present moment the emotional and lifestyle factors seem to be of greater importance when one chooses to return to a town, village or countryside.

An analysis of migration trends and return migrants experiences allows to formulate some recommendations for policy makers. In order to attract a higher share of return migrants, including high skilled return migrants, to settlements outside of Riga and Pierīga, the income gap between regions should be reduced, and the availability of diverse and quality services in regions should be promoted. The results clearly show that return migrants' decision of where to live after returning is not just based on the availability of a good job, but on a variety of factors. Namely, these are access to education, hospitals, culture, entertainment, housing and infrastructure etc. Support for the diversification of business in regions is important, so that specialists with different skills and qualifications would be able to find a job better suited to their skills. The increase in the prevalence of remote work following the recent pandemic could contribute to the choice of residence outside the capital and Pierīga. Affordable quality housing also is one of key factors to attract young specialists. The benefits of small towns and rural life must be strongly promoted, and municipalities should enhance targeted communication with their emigrants abroad.

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## WHY DID THEY NEED TO COME NOW? COVID-19 CRISIS STRAINS RELATIONSHIPS WITH RETURNING AND VISITING COMPATRIOTS

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**Abstract.** *One of the first areas severely hit by the Covid-19 pandemic was international travel. In March/April, with commercial flights coming to a near halt, the governments were struggling to help their stranded citizens to return home. Extra flights and ferry trips were organised, and the opportunity to return was used by many emigrants worried about the uncertainty and the possible future development of the pandemic. This paper containing both data collected through survey and in-depth interviews with people aged 50+ in Latvia, is the first to explore the reactions of the society to repatriation policy implemented by the government of Latvia, and to explore how the Covid-19 situation has affected the attitudes towards return migrants in general. Importantly, it demonstrates how education moderates these attitudes. The results show that most of the population consider returning migrants as a significant source of infections, and many had doubts if they follow self-isolation and other rules responsibly. Those with the higher education were in general more supportive of the repatriation policy demonstrating the importance of education and explaining difficult decisions in order to reduce tension and fear.*

**Keywords:** *return migration, Covid-19, public attitudes, education.*

### Introduction

One of the somewhat unexpected consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic has been an increased willingness of emigrants to return to their home country. This was demonstrated in a recent survey conducted by the researchers of the University of Latvia in September-October 2020 where one out of ten diaspora parents admitted that the conditions related to the pandemic – particularly the facts that the situation in the world was becoming too unpredictable, Latvia had a less stringent regime, “more normal” life and that they could no longer visit their relatives in Latvia as often as they would like to - had made them wish to return to Latvia (Mierina et al., 2020). Estimates of the total size of the Latvian diaspora differ, but Hazans (2020) argues that since 2000, 315 thousand people had emigrated from Latvia, and until the pandemic, every year approximately 5000



people returned to Latvia after having spent at least one year abroad (Hazans, 2020). The respondents' answers indicate that we can expect this number to increase.

In March 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized so-called repatriation trips to enable compatriots "stuck" abroad to return to Latvia which were used both by those returning after business or tourist trips abroad, and also by those nationals willing to return permanently or at least visit Latvia for a longer period of time. Overall, in March and April of 2020 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had helped more than 5000 people to return to Latvia using planes, trains, and ships (Vārna, 2020). Nevertheless, the news articles in the Latvian media as well as stories on social networks pointed to ambiguous reactions and sometimes contained openly hostile statements towards compatriots returning to Latvia during this period of time. Such reactions were in stark contrast to the government efforts in the recent years to strengthen relationships with the diaspora and facilitate return migration, culminating in the adaptation of Diaspora law in 2019. Thus, we ask – what was the cause of such reactions of the public?

Xenophobia arising from health concerns is certainly not new - it has its roots as far back as the 1800s (Huang & Liu, 2020, Mierina & Koroleva, 2015, White 2020). Xenophobic response to infectious diseases has been observed since the 19th century with the spread of smallpox, as well as various tropic diseases threatening Europeans, and such health-driven xenophobic sentiments were not exclusive to Europe (White, 2020). Most recently, in Europe it flared up again during the migrant crisis of 2015, reflecting in debates and media articles, for example, in Germany and Denmark. As part of the dehumanising narratives, immigrants and refugees were often portrayed in the media as spreading infectious diseases (Esses et al., 2013). However, the role of health concerns in attitudes towards immigrants has so far been understudied in academic articles (although see, for example, Sunpuwan & Niyomsilpa, 2012; Haslam & Holland, 2012), researchers focusing much more on other determinants of xenophobia such as competition for resources (jobs, social benefits) or cultural tensions (Mierina & Koroleva 2015).

Over the years, researchers have been addressing the belief that migration spreads disease, and particularly communicable diseases. In regards to some diseases the myth has been dispelled, yet research showed that rates of TB and HIV/AIDS are indeed higher among immigrants than natives, mainly because many migrants come from countries with a high incidence of these conditions (Lillebaek et al., 2002; Norredam et al., 2014). In Latvia, as well as in most other European countries, at the onset of the pandemic many COVID-19 cases were brought in from abroad, resulting in various travel restrictions and providing a fact-based justification for anti-migrant sentiments. Huang and Liu (2020) were among the first to raise concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic becoming

another event that due to uncertainty, misinformation, and, in some cases, existing covert xenophobia can exaggerate racism and fear of people of certain ethnic or national origin. While they point to fears toward people of Chinese origin in the USA, one would not be surprised to find heightened fear and marginalisation of immigrants or minorities in Europe during the latest pandemic as well.

Referring to evolutionary psychological reasoning, Faulkner et al. (2004) demonstrated in four empirical correlation studies and two experiments that chronic and contextually aroused feelings of vulnerability to disease provoke negative reactions to foreign peoples. Thus, older people as of the risk category of COVID-19 can be expected to be more concerned about immigration and hold more negative attitudes towards immigrants during the pandemic. Interestingly, though, the authors also found that participants under high disease-salience conditions expressed less positive attitudes toward foreign (but not familiar) immigrants and were more likely to endorse policies that would favour the immigration of familiar rather than foreign peoples (Faulkner et al., 2004). Thus, the fear should be less pronounced (or absent) in regard to ones 'own people' such as repatriates or visiting nationals from abroad.

Of course, one needs to consider the specifics of the situation, mainly, who are the ones that travel, visit or return during the pandemic. The so-called 'salmon bias' or 'remigration bias' hypothesis implies that severely ill migrants or those with poorer health are more likely to return or to move closer to their origin communities in order to be cared for by their relatives in a familiar environment (Pushmann et al., 2017; Spallek et al., 2011). One can assume that during a pandemic such as COVID-19 the threat of falling ill and having to deal with an unfamiliar health care system (and possibly pay for the treatment) provides an extra motivation for migrants to return. On the other hand, the 'healthy migrants' hypothesis holds that those who are healthier are generally more likely to migrate or travel (e.g., Pushmann et al., 2017, Norredam et al., 2014). Both hypotheses have found some support meaning that the situation and context plays a big role. So how does the Latvian society see their returning compatriots?

The aim of this study is to test the hypothesis that the COVID-19 pandemic has seen a part of Latvian society to become more negative in its attitude towards repatriates and visiting compatriots, straining relationships between the members of diaspora / migrants and stayers. The novelty of our study is the proposition that the threat of COVID-19 can lead to marginalisation and stigmatisation of not just immigrants, but own nationals returning from abroad as well. This has not been explored before, moreover, in the context of an ongoing pandemic.

## **Data and Methods**

The quantitative data was collected as part of a special module developed in Latvia adjacent to the 8th wave of the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE). Unlike other phases of the study, the special extra module implemented in Latvia after the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, was conducted using paper assisted telephone interviews (PATI). The target population of the SHARE survey consisted of permanent residents of European countries over the age of 50 and their spouses. The survey at the end of the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic was conducted from June 2020 to September 2020. The sample consisted of SHARE longitudinal panel participants, SHARE wave 7 respondents, as well as those respondents in the wave 8 update who managed to be interviewed before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. The final achieved sample size consisted of 977 individuals.

In order to ensure the representativeness of the data and a balanced composition of respondents according to the general population of Latvia, the data were subjected to a weighting procedure by gender and age groups (Central Statistical Bureau data). The data was analysed in IBM SPSS 22 using univariate and bivariate statistics. The statistical significance of differences between groups was tested using Chi-square tests as well as dispersion analysis (ANOVA).

In addition, 16 partially structured in-depth interviews were conducted with people aged 50 to 80, from various parts of Latvia, representing different types of settlements (capital city, other cities, towns or the countryside); among them, there were 6 women and 10 men. 10 respondents had higher education. Written instructions were developed for the study participants, which included a brief description of the study, as well as confirmation of the participation in the interview. All interviews were transcribed and anonymized, the real names of the respondents being replaced with pseudonyms. Qualitative data analysis was based on the Grounded Theory Approach, which offers a systematic process of qualitative data coding. Coding of one data element (expression), continuous comparison and contrast with all other elements was performed to develop a theoretical basis for a possible relationship between different data elements. Both inductive and deductive approach was used.

## **Research Results**

### ***Attitudes towards repatriation and repatriates***

This survey finds that, however, at least half of respondents admit that repatriation was necessary in these difficult circumstances to get people back home.

*“There can be different experiences, both good and bad, who was lucky who was not, but the positive thing is that they did something, that people somehow got home, maybe not quite one hundred percent, but it also hardly possible, so...”* (Normunds, 52).

At the same time, the in-depth interviews reveal dissatisfaction among some in regard to how the repatriation was organised, mainly, that the arriving people were allowed to simply go on their way.

*“For those repatriation trips, when those people arrived and boarded the 22nd bus in a friendly way and their first trip was to eat at Lidins in Spice [restaurant at a popular shopping mall], that was a simply a phenomenon. [...] They all needed, I don't know, a hospital where they would all be examined but well...”* (Didzis, 53).

Another proposal included testing travellers against COVID-19 abroad, and only then allowing them to travel to Latvia. Another interviewee mirrors these sentiments:

*“[...] renting out the hotels for some isolation time, accommodating people there, so that they have at least state-paid purchase of products and everything else, I would understand that, but to bring people home and to let them out by a supermarket is simply stupid, the government's action was stupid”* (Normunds, 52).

He also complains about uncoordinated government action, lack of specific instructions how to act in different situations (e.g., shopping, transportation to the Covid-19 testing site).

Some respondents believe that the government should not have helped those who travelled abroad already when it was clear that there was a pandemic, because they did not want to lose their reservations or tickets. They were characterised as selfish, irresponsible, or abusing the system.

*“Those who travelled on tourist trips in the last days before the emergency and when the emergency started, they should have had to get home on foot”* (Elita, 60).

One interviewee (Inara, 57) complained that repatriation trips were extremely expensive – three times more expensive than normal. Still, majority of interviewees are hesitant to criticise the government:

*“Thinking rationally, we were all in such a situation for the first time, so how to act and what to do, how to do it exactly, this is what everyone is learning from mistakes, it is human to make mistakes. To give an accurate assessment of whether it was really good what they did or if it could have been better, I cannot do that”* (Guntis, 57).

Most also express empathy and understanding of their compatriot's willingness to return:

*“It is simply a human desire to escape and save one's life, but when money is needed again, they will leave, they are people who have always been so flexible and looking for the best decision for their life, because they fled I think not to visit - maybe also to use this opportunity - but they fled from the situation that began to develop there, that there could be very severe health risks, they could be exposed to Corona” (Aiga, 50).*

And, in some ways, are happy about migrants returning home:

*“Well, ee ... from the statehood point of view it certainly was good and also the familial point of view, it was pretty good, and, and apparently a man is somehow genetically encoded so that when the situation turn bad, he wants to get home. [...]” (Armands, 53).*

Most respondents consider returnees from abroad to be a significant potential source of infection (Figure 1). This was illustrated by one of the interviewees:

*“[...] well, as far as I know many were already terribly dissatisfied that they [the government] dragged from there [abroad] all this garbage to here, if I can say that. That's all I can say. What concerns me, I was outraged that all those sick people needed to be called back here” (Normunds, 53).*

Another interviewee (Armands, 53) also directly blames repatriates for the spread of disease in Latvia. From this point-of-view some interviewees consider the Latvian nationals returning or visiting Latvia during the pandemic as irresponsible. *“I wouldn't go back at this time. I would stay there at that moment, because [by returning] I would also endanger those who are here”*, strict in her assessment is Dzintra (59); her sentiment mirrored by several other women. Zigismunds (77) also notes that visitors from abroad just create stress, anxiety and unnecessary risk for pensioners like himself, and that communication opportunities on Skype, WhatsApp etc. are enough for keeping in touch at the moment. Nevertheless, he points to situations where returning would be justified:

*“Well, you see, those whose parents are helpless here, because the children have left and then they are left alone and those children, whether they want it or not, have to run back, that's another thing, isn't it? But then if they respect all measures this is not so bad. However, I do not support the principle of circulating [back and forth]” (Zigismunds, 77).*

Only 20% believe that those arriving from abroad followed the established quarantine and other regulations in good faith, while 35% have the opposite opinion (Figure 1). The in-depth interviews reveal a general consensus that there were those who followed the rules, and those who were reckless and did not. Most interviewees knew someone who has not abided by the rules after returning, and some specifically point to such information in the media:

*“We talked to some people, they really organized distancing for their loved ones [who had return from abroad] and it was all right, but what could be read*

on the Internet is that a person is caught seven times, well five times, that he leaves his house, which means that ...” (Aiga, 50).

Still, some believe that returnees were very responsible:

“Very responsible. Those who returned and those who drove, they observed all those rules, self-isolation, wearing masks. I know this, when my son-in-law returned to my family, he observed it perfectly or not and he even blamed me when I treated it so lightly” (Egils, 69).

While others think that almost no returnees abided by the rules:

“Of those who returned to Saulkrasti no one obeyed the rules. I reported [them] to the police several times. [...] Simply, they had to live in isolation [but] they met local people, walked through the shops, shook hands, as if nothing had happened” (Elita, 60).

The answers reveal anger towards those who did not follow the rules, especially about their arrogance. Interestingly, several interviewees noted that *their* relatives or children who returned from abroad did follow the rules, or even delayed traveling in order not to endanger anyone. One can notice a stark contrast between those ‘others’ who break the rules and their ‘own people’ who do not.

Several interviewees noted that due to health concerns they felt uncomfortable around those who had just returned from abroad and tried to stay away from them. However, this caution does not refer to their closest family members. When asked if he was not worried to meet his own son who had returned from abroad, Normunds (52) answer was: “No, what fear, this is my child and what is there to fear. I know he's healthy, he's an athlete. No, there was no fear. Everything was OK.”. This shows that people tend to underestimate threat coming from those closest to them.

Gunta (70) believes that it is practically not possible in her small rural locality not to obey the rules, as distancing comes naturally. Some (Normunds, 52) put the blame for some returnees not obeying the rules on the government who should have provided clearer instructions, explanations, and control.

Interestingly, there is no significant correlation between the three parameters, i.e., the fact that respondent believes that those arriving from abroad pose a significant risk does not affect their belief about the need for repatriation flights, and is not particularly connected to the belief about how strictly those returning follow the regulations (Spearman correlation coefficient <0.3>). The only weak correlation worth mentioning is between the belief that those returning from abroad comply with rules and regulations, and the support for repatriation flights (coeff.=0.29, Sig.<0.001).

The analysis of demographic differences shows that those with the lowest level of education were more often than others not sure whether those returning from abroad pose a significant risk of infections, and those with the higher education more often felt sure of it (48%). Nevertheless, those with higher

education were also more often fully supportive of the repatriation flights (31%) while those with the basic education were often not sure if they were necessary.

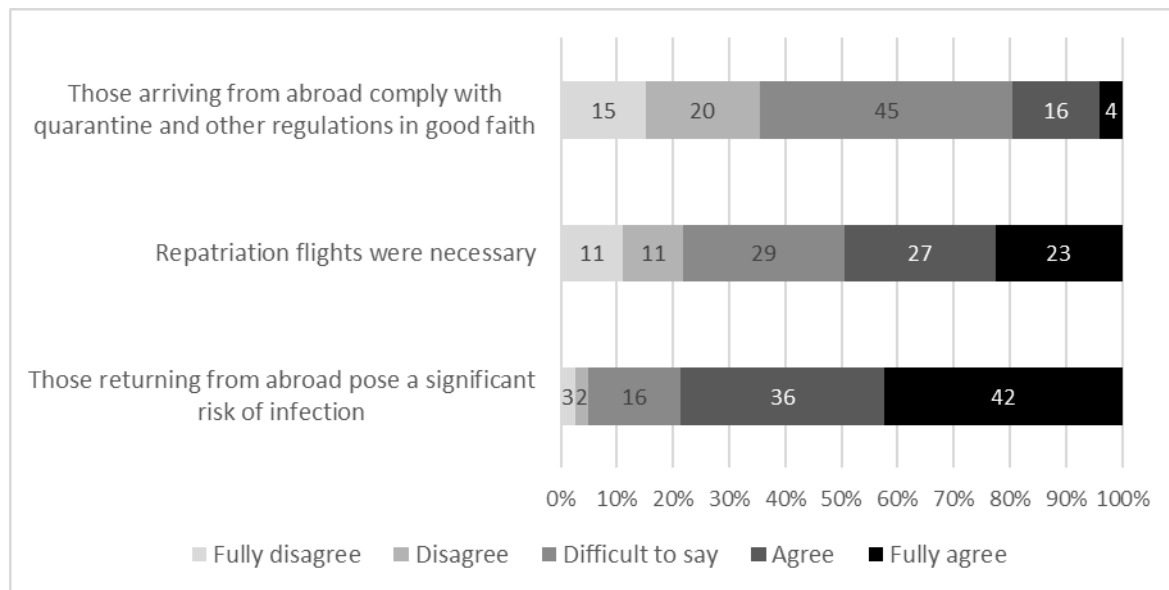


Figure 1 Perception of Return Migrants and Repatriation Flights (%)

Interestingly, there are significant ( $p < 0.01$ ) differences in attitudes between those from larger cities or other types of settlements. Those from smaller towns, villages or countryside more often thought that those returning do not comply with regulations, and much less often supported repatriation flights.

Regarding the possibility of Covid-19 reaching the size of a pandemic again in the autumn, the majority of respondents believe that the government's actions in various areas should be the same as in the spring. Relatively, most elderly people would like the government to implement different solutions in the autumn regarding assistance for the repatriation of compatriots from abroad (23%) and restrictions on movement (20%). Open responses suggest that, for fear of being a potential source of infection, immigrants would like to see stricter rules on quarantine, including ensuring that it is actually complied with, and possibly testing immediately. According to one respondent: *"It is necessary to help, but to control and ensure immediate isolation, to place in empty hotels, etc."*. Some consider that repatriation flights should not have been organized at all *"in order not to import the disease"*. As to why the Latvian state should not help repatriates, there are sometimes indications of seeming disloyalty to Latvia: *"If you make money and pay taxes in other countries, you also solve your problems there"*, for their higher income: *"If the money is enough to travel or make a profit abroad, Latvia is unlikely to have to fund return and treatment"*, as well as the fact that it

is their own responsibility: “People’s own irresponsibility should not be addressed at the expense of others”.

Table 1 Attitudes towards Repatriation and Repatriates among Different Groups (%)

		Education			Type of settlement	
		Basic education or lower	Secondary education (incl. professional)	Higher education	Smaller town, village, countryside	Large city
Those returning from abroad pose a significant risk of infection	Fully disagree	2.0	1.6	4.2	2.0	3.7
	Disagree	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.7	1.7
	Difficult to say	26.7	15.6	11.0	15.0	19.0
	Agree	32.9	38.9	34.1	39.6	30.3
	Fully agree	37.6	41.0	47.8	40.7	45.4
Repatriation flights were necessary	Fully disagree	8.9	12.2	13.0	13.8	5.7
	Disagree	6.4	14.5	10.2	12.6	7.1
	Difficult to say	38.2	29.6	19.9	30.6	25.1
	Agree	27.7	28.2	26.0	29.6	21.7
	Fully agree	18.8	15.5	30.8	13.4	40.5
Those arriving from abroad comply with quarantine and other regulations in good faith	Fully disagree	12.0	16.1	15.9	15.6	14.1
	Disagree	15.3	23.4	21.9	22.9	15.4
	Difficult to say	57.3	40.8	37.4	41.9	50.9
	Agree	11.3	16.8	19.2	16.8	13.4
	Fully agree	4.1	2.9	5.5	2.8	6.2

With regard to movement restrictions, 20% would like to see a different government reaction. Most who would like a different government response in the autumn point to the need for tighter controls on both migrants and emigrants, up to and including the complete closure of the border, like "strictly restrict cross-border movement, only allow if necessary", and introduce immediate quarantine and greater monitoring of isolation. Some would like an immediate test for immigrants. There are also some respondents who want less stringent restrictions, such as 'do nothing to ruin the economy', but there are extremely few of them in the general context of those in favour of tighter and longer restrictions. However, it should be noted that at the time of the survey, the prevalence of Covid-19 in the community was indeed relatively low, with a large proportion of cases being



'imported' from abroad. At the moment, it is very possible that the opinions of the population may have changed.

Interestingly, those with higher and secondary education significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) more often think that in the next possible wave of the pandemic the government should act differently with regards to organising assistance for the repatriation of compatriots from abroad (26-27% in comparison to 16% among those with basic education).

## Conclusions and Discussion

According to the survey conducted in the autumn 2020, in the conditions of the pandemic the majority of the population consider the members of diaspora returning or visiting Latvia as a potential source of infection. 78% of people aged 50+ agreed with the statement: "*People returning from abroad pose a significant risk of infection*". Many Latvian residents believe that those who have arrived from abroad do not observe the rules of self-isolation, quarantine or other regulations, or are not sure whether they observe them. Partially caused by negative information in the media and social networks, this situation has led to suspicion, lack of trust and bitterness on both sides, weakening emotional connections and leaving a lasting impression on relations with the diaspora. In the aforementioned diaspora parent survey (Mierina et al., 2020) 4% of the respondents have indicated that the COVID-19 crisis has reduced their desire to return to Latvia.

Interestingly, the study reveals that people are much less cautious and suspicious about their own relatives following the established rules and being a potential source of infection, but more about the 'others'. This provides some support to the Faulkner et al. (2004) thesis about the threat being attributed much more to unfamiliar immigrants.

When asked directly whether the COVID-19 pandemic has *changed* their opinion of the members of diaspora or returnees, all but a few deny that it has. In this regard it is important to remember that even before the pandemic, the Latvian population did not hold a uniformly positive opinion of emigrants. This can be seen from the in-depth interviews where several respondents characterised them as essentially footloose, not loyal to Latvia, who came to Latvia during the crisis when the situation is bad, but will leave as soon as the situation improves.

*"This set of people, constantly moving back and forth, is such a bunch... It is difficult to change, and they will never change, and in principle, with the change of generations, those who are now freer and have the financial means to travel around somewhere, they will"* (Arturs, 53).

This study, unfortunately, does not include the opinion of returnees themselves – it is a topic for future studies that would provide a clearer answer about their motivations and attitudes towards COVID-19 related restrictions.

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## ОБУЧЕНИЕ В МЕДИАЦИИ НА ОСНОВЕ МОДЕЛИ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

### *Training in Mediation: Application on the Communication Model*

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**Abstract.** *Teaching the participants of the conflict to conduct a communication is an important process in the mediation. A positive result of the mediation, i.e., resolution of the conflict, is impossible without teaching the participants the rules of a conflict-free communication; that will allow them to avoid conflict situations in society also in future. The publication considers a model of communication between the participants in the conflict as well as the mediator. The model is built on the basis of an analysis of the principles of existing communication models and experience of a practicing mediator. The types of communication noises (including constructs as communication barriers) have been identified and classified, and techniques for detecting these noises has been proposed. By selecting and studying them the mediator has the opportunity to effectively arrange a training for the participants of the conflict. The objective of the study is to build a communication model in a mediation, taking into account semantic and psychological noises; to demonstrate the role of a mediator in a constructive conflict resolution for dialogue teaching; to determine the mediator's tools. The theoretical study is based on the analysis and assessment of philosophical, pedagogical and psychological literature and a mediation practice. Results: a model of communication in the process of mediation, questionnaire for identifying noises and a processing algorithm for it to determine the methodology for teaching communication to the participants of the conflict.*

**Keywords:** *communication, sign, construct, questionnaire, communication noise, teaching a dialogue.*

### **Введение** **Introduction**

С одной стороны, современная общественная жизнь характеризуется увеличением количества доступной, воспринимаемой и перерабатываемой нами информацией, а в последнее время и ее избыточностью. К принципиальному изменению привело появление новых технических средств и интернета. С другой стороны, наша жизнь, взаимоотношения с другими людьми, наше сознание и самосознание связаны с коммуникацией. Существовая в обществе, мы вынуждены коммуницировать с ним и

неизбежно, по-разному, воспринимая получаемую информацию, вступаем в противоречия, которые приводят к конфликтам. Разрешением конфликтов, обучением бесконфликтной коммуникации занимается медиация. К тому же действия каждого человека все больше основаны на неких относительно устойчивых психологических конструктах (шаблонах), которые формируются на основе его опыта, полученной наследственности, индивидуальности психофизиологического строения. Ввиду того, что обработка получаемой информации, происходит на основе некоторых ранее созданных конструктов поведения человека, его генетической памяти, его эмоциональности коммуникация является сложным процессом.

Увеличение количества информации, совершенствование средств переработки и распространения информации, увеличение количества интерпретаций информации, используемой человеком для коммуникации в обществе, наличие несовместимых конструктов поведения неизбежно приводят к усложнению процесса коммуникации и возрастанию роли медиации, разрешающей противоречия и конфликты.

Еще в античной литературе, мы знаем попытки построить модели коммуникации. Модели коммуникации давали возможность структурировать процесс коммуникации для разных целей. Рассматривались социологические, психологические, семиотические модели коммуникации, одна из моделей была положена и в основу создания искусственного интеллекта.

При медиации стороны конфликта достигают согласие. В процессе достижения согласия стороны конфликта коммуницируют с помощью медиатора. Задача работы построить модель коммуникации и наметить пути ее использования для достижения положительного результата медиации. В модели коммуникации выделим и классифицируем шумы коммуникации, которые мешают участникам конфликта прийти к соглашению, определим роль медиатора и применяемые им виды обучения коммуникации для устранения этих шумов, которое будет способствовать достижению соглашения.

Применяемые методы: теоретический анализ существующих моделей коммуникации, шумов (барьеров) коммуникации, способы их определения.

### **Теоретический анализ основных понятий коммуникации в медиации** *Theoretical Analysis of the Basic Concepts of Communication in Mediation*

Что нам нужно для обеспечения коммуникации сторон в процессе медиации:

- учесть участие в такой коммуникации медиатора;

- обеспечить передачу информации;
- передать информацию, которая не будет эмоционально отвергнута;
- передать информацию, которую другая сторона поймет;
- интерпретировать полученную информацию с учетом уровня сложившихся у передающей стороны психологических конструктов;
- обеспечить корректировку конструктов, мешающих достижению соглашения;
- обучить стороны бесконфликтной коммуникации.

Для построения модели коммуникации участников конфликта в медиации мы будем использовать (обобщать) существующие модели коммуникации Клода Шеннона, Уилбура Шрамма и Чарлза Осгуда, Умберто Эко. А для объяснения используемых понятий и определений исследования Никласа Лумана, Пола Вацлавика, Юргена Хабермаса, Чарлза Сандерса Пирса, Мартина Бубера, Джорджа Келли.

При этом учтем результаты некоторых исследований по вопросу моделей коммуникации в образовании, проведенных в Латвии (ЕСО PARTNERS, 2014).

Прежде всего необходимо рассмотреть понятия «коммуникация», «информация», основные используемые формы коммуникации при медиации - «диалог и дискурс», а также психологический «конструкт», без которого невозможна интерпретация информации, которой обмениваются коммуницирующие стороны. В зависимости от научных направлений их рассматривающих, существуют различные определения этих понятий. Придем к их трактовке, которые мы использовали в предлагаемой модели коммуникации.

Коммуникация - (лат. *Communicatio* от *communico* — делаю общим, связываю, общаюсь). Будем использовать определение данное Н. Луманом: «Подобно жизни и сознанию коммуникация является эмерджентной реальностью, таким же фактом *sui generis*. Она устанавливается через синтез трёх различных селекции — а именно: селекции информации, селекции сообщения этой информации и селективного понимания или непонимания сообщения и его информации» (Luman, 1995).

То есть вслед за Н. Луманом под коммуникацией будем понимать не просто передачу информации в виде сообщения, ее восприятие, которое может быть осуществлено с помощью органов чувств или технических средств распознавания информации, но и осмысление, которое предполагает ее интерпретацию.

Все эти составные части коммуникации не могут осуществляться сами по себе и только вместе они производят коммуникацию.

Коммуникация в медиации в условиях, когда коммуницирующие стороны сознательно, при направленном посредничестве медиатора, ограничивают свои действия достижением необходимого согласия в существующем между ними конфликте, нами рассматривается в более широком смысле, как категория, охватывающая и последующее действие с ней связанное, то есть поведение коммуницирующего человека.

При понимании сути коммуникации, используя некоторые утверждения П. Вацлавика (Vaclavik, Bivin, & Dzhekson, 2000) и практический опыт медиации, выделим следующие аксиомы коммуникации, которые имеют практическое значения для правильной организации коммуникации при медиации:

- Невозможность отсутствия коммуникации.
- Любая коммуникация обладает информационной ценностью.
- Коммуникация вызывает определенное действие, определяет поведение.
- Каждая коммуникация содержит содержательный аспект и аспект отношений
- Природа отношений между коммуникантами (участниками) зависит от пунктуации коммуникационных последовательностей.
- Коммуникация будет симметрической при равенстве коммуникантов или комплементарной при их различии.
- Коммуникация может быть планируемой и случайной.
- Коммуникация может быть внутренней и межличностной.

В процессе коммуникации мы обмениваемся **информацией** (от лат. Informātiō «разъяснение, изложение»), которая является одной из центральных фундаментальных концепций науки и современной философии и использовалась в науке с 50-х годов двадцатого века. Эта концепция все чаще рассматривается как третья составная часть бытия - наряду с материей и энергией.

Как термин в повседневном языке в существующих словарях, «информация» относится к когнитивно-коммуникативной сфере человеческой деятельности и относится к сбору информации о любых событиях или фактах.

Один из основоположников кибернетики и теории искусственного интеллекта Н. Винер дал следующее определение информации: «Информация — это обозначение содержания, полученное нами из внешнего мира в процессе приспособления к нему нас и наших чувств» (Viner, 1983, p.119). А такое определение стандартизировано ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International

Electrotechnical Commission) «знание об объектах, таких как факты, события, вещи, процессы или идеи, включая понятия, которые в определенном контексте имеют определенное значение».

Для наших целей мы будем использовать такое определение информации, которое означает любые знаки, гены наследования, результаты деятельности (сигналы, мысли) мозга и сознания, результаты деятельности (сигналы, мысли) гипотетически существующего высшего разума, зафиксированный в виде конструкторов порядок (алгоритм) обработки поступающей информации (Portere & Morevs, 2020a).

Составной частью информации будет рассматриваться **знак**, то есть материальный, чувственно воспринимаемый (в том числе с помощью технических средств) объект, явление, действие, который действует как представитель другого объекта, явления или действия. Знак это только доступная нам с помощью органов восприятия часть информации.

Один из основоположников семиотики - науки о знаках, Ч. С. Пирс так характеризует знак: «...существует трехчастное соединение знака, при познании вещи, производимом в уме. Может быть просто отношение между знаком и означаемой вещью; в этом случае знак есть икона. Или может быть прямая физическая связь; в этом случае знак является индексом. Или может быть отношение, которое состоит в том, что ум связывает знак с этим объектом; в этом случае знак есть имя [или символ]» (Peirce, 2008, CP 1.372).

Итак, базовая классификация знаков содержит:

- иконические знаки, содержащие образ предмета;
- знаки-индексы, прямо указывающие на предмет
- знаки-символы, произвольно и на основании конвенции обозначающие предмет.

Передаваемые при коммуникации знаки позволяют понять смысл сообщения, эмоции, настроение, характер человека его передающего. Исследования в области теории знаков - семиотике, в частности в области интерпретанты знаков, можно использовать для анализа содержания передаваемой при коммуникации информации.

Для передачи знака при коммуникации применяются коды, которые резко сокращают количество передаваемой информации и, благодаря определенным правилам (алгоритмам) применения кодов, позволяют правильно понимать ее содержание. Например, диалог при коммуникации будет осуществляться на заранее определенном сторонами языке по его синтаксическим и семантическим правилам.

При коммуникации знак передается с помощью **сообщения**, которое становится кодированным эквивалентом знака. Сообщение выражается с



помощью последовательности условных физических символов (алфавита), образующих некую упорядоченную совокупность.

Материальным воплощением сообщения (знака) для использования при передаче, переработке и хранении информации становится **сигнал**.

Основной формой коммуникации в медиации, которую нам нужно обеспечить, является **диалог**. Философ М. Бубер писал: «Я знаю три вида диалога: подлинный, который может быть выражен как в словах, так и в молчании, в этом диалоге каждый из его участников действительно имеет в виду другого или других в их наличном и своеобразном бытии; технический, вызванный лишь необходимостью объективного взаимопонимания; замаскированный под диалог монолог, в котором два человека или несколько собравшихся людей странными извилистыми путями говорят с самими собой, полагая при этом, что они избавлены от мучительного пребывания лишь с самим собой» (Vuber, 1995, p.108).

И сложная форма диалога - **дискурс**. Немецкий философ Ю. Хабермас называл это «ситуацией обсуждения, где каждый обязан принимать точку зрения каждого другого, чтобы проверить, может ли та или иная норма быть желательна для всех с точки зрения каждого. Такова ситуация нацеленного на достижение взаимопонимания рационального дискурса, в котором участвуют все заинтересованные лица» (Habermas, 2001, p.98).

Основываясь на требованиях разработанной им теории коммуникативной этики, дискурс характеризуется тем, что:

- ни один из участников конфликта, не должна исключаться из дискурса;
- все участники должны иметь равную возможность на значимость суждений и критиковать высказанное другой стороной;
- участники должны быть готовы и способны принять претензии других на общезначимость;
- существующие между участниками различия в общественном и материальном положении не должны оказывать воздействия на достижение согласия;
- участники должны открыто разъяснить свои цели и намерения (Habermas, 2001).

Для обеспечения медиации необходимы следующие виды диалога:

- 1) Диалог, направленный на создание атмосферы сотрудничества;
- 2) Распознающий диалог, в процессе которого медиатор и участники выясняют информационные характеристики конфликта, приходят к единому пониманию его сути и правовых оснований;
- 3) Дискурсивный диалог - дискурс;
- 4) Диалог кризисной интервенции - направленный на распознавание и анализ эмоций;

- 5) Трансформативный диалог — направлен на выяснение и сближение точек зрения, мнений и мировоззрения участников конфликта;
- 6) Провокативный диалог (Portere & Morevs, 2020b).

Принципиальным для объяснения механизма межличностной коммуникации, в том числе при медиации является понимание того, что реакция на полученную информацию формируется на основе психологических **конструктов**. При этом мы используем понятие сформированное Дж. Келли: «Человек смотрит на мир сквозь прозрачные трафареты или шаблоны, которые он сам создает, а затем пытается подогнать их по тем реалиям, из которых состоит этот мир. Подгонка не всегда оказывается хорошей. Однако без таких шаблонов мир предстает перед ним в виде настолько неразличимой однородности, что он не в состоянии извлечь из него никакого смысла. Для любого человека даже плохая пригонка своих шаблонов к реальности полезнее их полного отсутствия» (Kelly, 2000, p.4,5). То есть мы живем в реально существующем мире и наши психологические процессы основываются на личных версиях этого мира, которые и являются личными конструктами.

Использование существующего у человека системы конструктов это способ истолкования полученной при коммуникации информации. Это они являются основанием для человека выстраивать линию поведения, независимо от его логического обоснования, сформулированности, безотчетности, выраженную словесно или безмолвно, согласующуюся или расходящуюся с другими линиями поведения. Пока исследователями не предложено единой системы и исчерпывающего перечня конструктов, но мы считаем необходимым использовать подход, при котором считается, что человек создает свои собственные способы видения и понимания мира, он примеряет построенные им конструкты к истинному положению вещей

Особенно важно, что конструкты могут измеряться, передаваться корректироваться. Личные конструкты себя и других могут истолковываться нами как наблюдателями в процессе осознанного наблюдения.

### **Результаты исследования, модель коммуникации в медиации** *The Results of the Study, the Model of Communication in Mediation*

Сформулировав подходы и определив основные понятия, с которыми мы сталкиваемся в процессе коммуникации при медиации построим **модель коммуникации**, которая приведена на рисунке 1. Прежде всего охарактеризуем те модели коммуникации, которые использовались нами. При описании отметим прежде всего те отличительные особенности этих моделей, которые использованы в настоящем исследовании.

Модель коммуникации К. Шеннона - У. Уивера (Shannon, 1998) дополнила существовавшие линейные модели - помехами (шумами), затрудняющими или делающими невозможной коммуникацию. Помехи или не работоспособность канала передачи информации были выделены, как физические шумы, искажение значений или содержания, которое не позволяло адекватно воспринимать информацию. Коммуникация в этой модели рассматривалась как линейный, однонаправленный процесс.

Модель коммуникации В. Шрамма и К. Осгуда (Schramm, 2018, р.16-17) названная в последствии циркулярной и сбалансированной, рассматривала отправителя и получателя информации как равноправных партнёров, предусматривалась обратная связь между коммуникантами. Рассматривались процессы кодирования и декодирования, передача сообщения, интерпретация информации. Модель была ориентирована на существование информационных знаков, в состав которых включали и эмоции, и знаки внутренней коммуникации.

В построенной на базе модели К. Шеннона - У. Уивера модели У. Эко (Jeco, 1968, р.74-76) особое внимание уделяется кодированию передаваемой между отправителем и приемником информации (сообщений), вводятся понятия кодов и лексикодов, проверке значимости передаваемых сообщений.

Проанализируем предлагаемую модель коммуникации. Обмен информацией происходит между участниками конфликта, с участием медиатора.

Участник конфликта совместно с медиатором:

- раскодирует сообщение, получая передаваемые знаки. В связи с наличием физических шумов в канале коммуникации часть сообщения отсекается. Подготавливая коммуникацию, медиатор убеждается в том, что стороны одинаково и однозначно понимают используемые коды и при необходимости проводит обучение их использованию.
- на основе использования хранимой информации и конструктов участник конфликта интерпретирует получаемые знаки. Результаты интерпретации получает также медиатор, который может их корректировать, а при устойчивости существующих конструктов, которые не позволяют достичь положительного результата медиации проводит дальнейшее обучение коммуникации участников.
- на основе интерпретации получаемой информации, поставленной перед собой целью, скорректированных конструктов участник конфликта, используя коды, формирует ответ или предпринимает действия по достижению согласия.

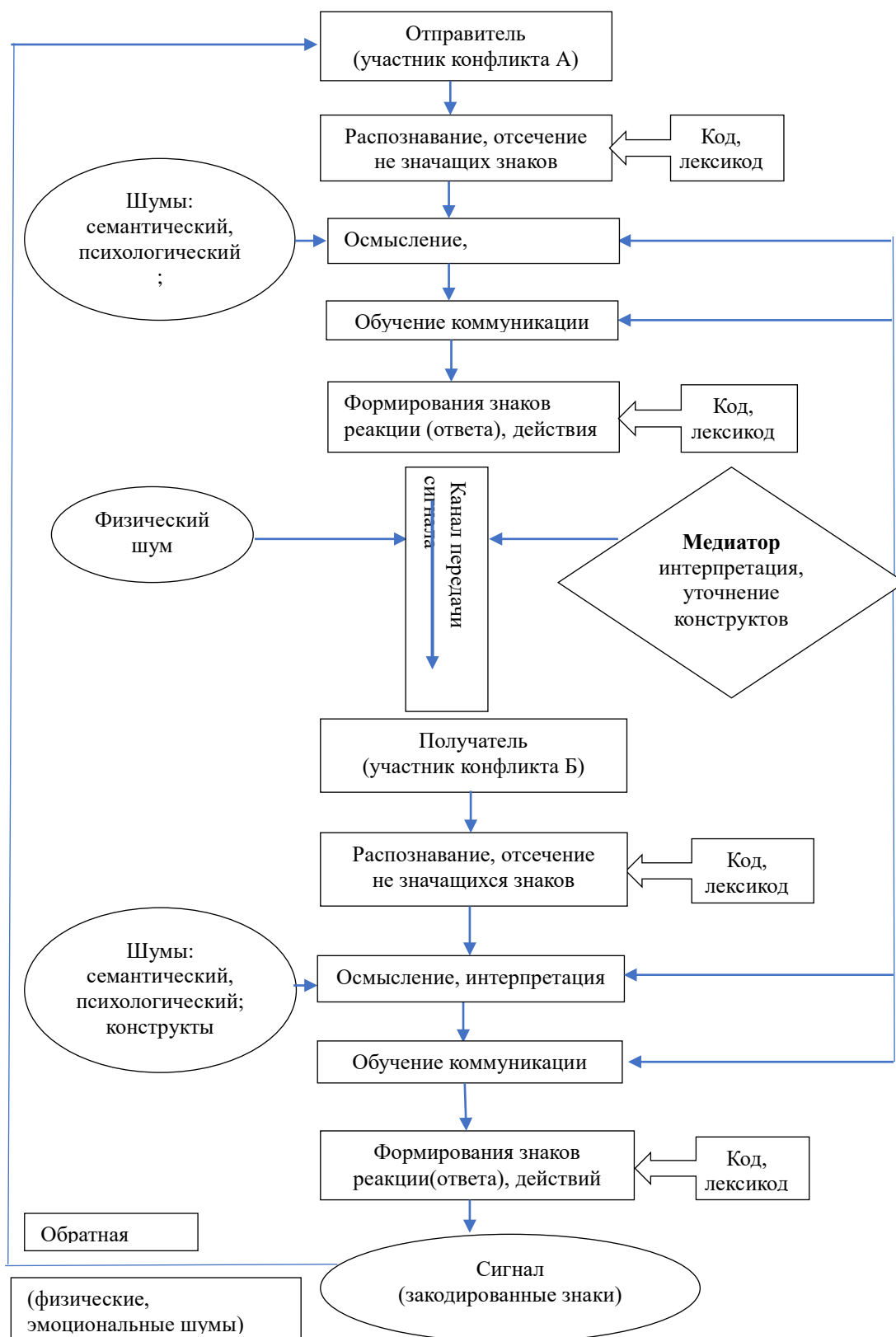


Рисунок 1. Модель коммуникации при проведении медиации  
 Figure 1 Communication Model for Mediation

Особо необходимо остановиться на понятии **шум**. Среди шумов выделим физический шум, связанный с помехами в работе канала передачи информации, а при проведении очной встречи с физическим состоянием участников и условиями проведения встречи, которые должны способствовать благоприятному диалогу. Каналы передачи информации должны за ранние проверены медиатором, а условия очной встречи продуманы с учетом соблюдения санитарных норм, удобств для участников.

Психологические шумы, среди которых выделим конфликтную настроенность, чрезмерную эмоциональность сторон. Наличие этих шумов предполагает проведение предварительной работы медиатора по их устранению.

Учитывая, что основной целью медиации является достижение обоюдного желаемого согласия между сторонами конфликта, в процессе медиации коды и конструкты могут стать шумами и препятствовать коммуникации между участниками конфликта. При использовании принимающей стороной кодов, которые не соответствуют кодам передающей стороны, при интерпретации получаемых при коммуникации знаков на основе конструктов, которые противоречат поставленной цели медиации - достижению согласия между сторонами, эти коды и конструкты становятся в нашей модели коммуникации шумом, который, необходимо и возможно устранить с помощью медиатора.

Как шум может восприниматься сообщение, если оно не соответствует коду. При этом адресат может усмотреть в этом сознательное намерение, сообщения в этом случае представляется ему двусмысленным. Этот вопрос составляет проблематику неоднозначных сообщений, а также сообщений, наделенных эстетической функцией рассматриваемую также в модели У. Эко (Еко, 1968, р.76).

Медиатор, участвуя в коммуникации выясняет однозначно ли сторонами конфликта воспринимаются коды, степень и причину их несоответствия и рассогласования конструктов. Это выяснение можно проводить и с помощью опроса (анкетирования) сторон конфликта и последующего их обучения. Уточняются одинаковость восприятия сторонами знаков коммуникации и возможные барьеры диалога, такие как:

- отсутствие времени на диалоги;
- индивидуальные приоритеты партнеров и боязнь диалога;
- страх перед информацией и новыми знаниями;
- страх перед недостатком знаний и неуважение к партнеру;
- нежелание менять свою позицию;
- несоответствие ценностей и / или интеллекта;
- отсутствие эмпатии;

- отсутствие непонимания невербального и вербального общения партнера и фобии;
- недостаточность сконцентрированности на процессе;
- различные внешние раздражающие, мешающие условия (Portere & Briede, 2019).

В зависимости от обработки результатов опроса медиатор проводит обучение участников конфликта. Обучение проводится с целью достичь однозначности использования кодов и соответственно восприятия знаков, передаваемых в процессе коммуникации, корректировки конструктов участников конфликта, которые мешают достижению согласия.

Должно также проводиться обучение бесконфликтной коммуникации, освоение которой позволит уменьшить возможность возобновления или появления нового конфликта.

Виды обучения:

- ознакомление с правилами применения знаков, принятых при коммуникации участниками;
- изучение правил формирования и корректировки конструктов;
- объяснения техник переговоров и их преимуществ;
- использование техник переговоров в процессе медиации, в том числе с участием медиатора.

### **Выводы** *Conclusions*

В результате исследования была разработана модель коммуникации в медиации, выявлены шумы (барьеры) коммуникации, даны рекомендации по проведению медиатором обучения участников конфликта медиатором в ходе медиации. Принципиальным является распознавание шумов коммуникации участников конфликта при медиации, выделение среди шумов конструктов участников конфликта, которые не позволяют достичь соглашения в результате медиации, а также участие в коммуникации медиатора. Правильная структуризация процесса коммуникации позволит медиатору эффективно организовать процесс медиации, определить причины отрицательного результата медиации, обучить участников конфликта преодолению шумов коммуникации, позволяющему позитивно закончить медиацию.

### **Summary**

The task is to build a communication model and outline the ways of its use to achieve a positive result of mediation. Communication is not just the transfer of information in the form of a message, its perception, which can be carried out using the senses or technical means of recognizing information, but also comprehension, which involves its interpretation. These

components of communication cannot be carried out by themselves and only in combination they produce communication.

Communication in mediation, when the communicating parties deliberately, with the directed mediation of the mediator, limit their actions to the achievement of the necessary agreement in the existing conflict between them - is considered in a broader sense, as a category that covers the subsequent action associated with it.

The following actions are determined when developing a communication model that must be implemented in the mediation process:

- take into account the participation of the mediator in such communication;
- ensure the transfer of information;
- convey information that will not be emotionally rejected;
- convey information that the other party will understand;
- interpret the information received, taking into account the level of psychological constructs that have developed at the transmitting side;
- ensure the adjustment of constructs that hinder the achievement of agreement;
- train the parties for further conflict-free communication.

The communication model identifies and classifies communication noises that prevent the parties to the conflict to come to an agreement. Given the purpose of mediation, the information codes and constructs necessary for their interpretation can become noise and interfere with communication between the parties to the conflict. It is the mediator's job to eliminate these noises.

The existing communication models and research in the field of social communication, dialogue, discourse ethics, the theory of signs, psychological constructs were generalized and used to build a communication model for the parties to the conflict in mediation.

Based on the author's practical experience and analysis of communication during mediation, the main noises (barriers) are identified. Formation of these noises made it possible to set the task of training the conflict participants by the mediator to reach an agreement on the results of mediation.

The mediator trains the communication of the mediation participants. Training is also conducted for the participants to master the techniques of conflict-free communication in society.

Mediator shall conduct training in the following areas:

- familiarization with the rules for the use of signs adopted by participants in conflict-free communication;
- study of the rules for formation and adjustment of constructs;
- explanations of negotiation techniques and their advantages;
- use of negotiation techniques in the mediation process, including with the participation of a mediator.

The result of the study is a model of communication in the process of mediation, identification of a list of noises (barriers) of communication, definition of the need and directions of training in communication of participants in the conflict.

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# INSTITUTIONALISATION OF RETURN MIGRATION IN LATVIA: THE CASE OF REGIONAL COORDINATORS

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**Abstract.** *Emigration countries such as Latvia institutionally should address the negative consequences of the ageing populations' economic and demographic challenges. To this aim, in 2018 network of five regional return migration coordinators was established to foster and nationally encourage return migration. The primary function of the regional coordinator is to foster and facilitate requests of potential return migrants.*

*Drawing on interview materials collected in 2020 with return migration coordinators at the regional level – Latgale, Vidzeme, Zemgale, Kurzeme and Riga, we illustrate good-practice of return migration institutionalisation in Latvia.*

*Our study focuses on three main fields of interest within the work of regional return coordinators: 1) what are the typical return migration paths from the coordinators' perspective? 2) what are the main challenges in coordinators' work? 3) how education-related issues for return migrants are solved?*

*The research reveals that people typically return for family reasons and long for their homeland, traditions, and traditional settings. The research states that the main challenges coordinators' work relates to is the low standardisation level as each returnee's case is unique.*

**Keywords:** *return migration, regional coordinators, qualitative approach, regions, interviews.*

## Introduction

Studies on return migration is a recognised research topic in most European countries, as emigrants' return helps to address demographic challenges associated with declining and ageing populations (Lang, Glorius, Nadler, & Kovacs, 2016; Zaiceva & Zimmermann, 2016). Returnees are often associated with possible economic and societal gains and such aspects as input to labour market and new knowledge are highly valued, however, among returnees the decision-making, re-integration experiences are diverse (Coniglio and Brzozowski, 2018). There are

previous studies concerning socio-institutional aspects upon return (De Haas et al., 2014) and analysis of national policies that stimulate and increase the numbers of potential returnees (Boros and Hegedus, 2016).

Recent research in the European Migration Area has linked the enlargement of the European Union (EU) and labour mobility in the new Member States (Zimmermann, 2005) and the impact of the 2008 economic crisis on return migration (Galgóczi & Leschke, 2012), considering turbulent economic conditions (Zaiceva and Zimmermann, 2016) and also perception of individual and prolonged crisis and the ways uncertainties are perceived (Apsite-Berina, Manea, & Berzins, 2020).

Thus, recognising the importance of human capital in recent years, Latvia has paid increased attention to remigration processes and trends at an institutional level. In 2013, the government approved a plan of remigration support measures. However, in 2018, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (MEPRD) and regions planning institutions started to implement a new return migration project - "Supporting your return to your home" or PAPS. It is implemented based on the competence specified in the DPRES Law of the MEPRD and the planning regions and following the tasks set in the Government Action Plan in 2019, which envisages a permanent program. Within the project framework, a network of remigration coordinators was established in Latvia, providing one remigration coordinator in each planning region (Riga, Kurzeme, Vidzeme, Latgale, Zemgale). The coordinators' straightforward tasks include mutual electronic communication with emigrants outside Latvia (PAPS, 2020).

The aim of the paper is to explore the internationalisation of return migration in Latvia. The study raised three main research questions: 1) What are the typical return migration paths from the coordinators' perspective? 2) What are the main challenges in coordinators' work? 3) How education-related issues for return migrants are solved?

## **Literature Review**

Research on return migration dates back to guest worker recruitment programs, which were widely implemented in several Western European countries in the second half of the 20th century (Cassarino, 2004). As the economy developed, labour was needed in the agricultural, industrial and service sectors, but attracting migrant workers through reciprocal agreements between countries was a quick fix. As labour demand declined, many migrant workers returned to their origin countries (Dustmann & Weiss, 2007). EU enlargement and labour mobility in the new Member States and the impact of the 2008 economic crisis on remigration explain recent migration studies in Europe (Zimmermann, 2005; Galgóczi & Leschke, 2012).

In recent years, improving networking with the Latvian diaspora has become topical in Latvian politics to support and promote Latvian emigrants' return to their homeland (Kļave & Šūpule, 2019). One of the main reasons is that returning migrants are seen as potential human capital that can be re-invested in the country of origin. Also, complexity and uncertainty in return migration-decisions have been studied (Apsite-Berina, Burgmanis, & Krisjane, 2019; Apsite-Berina, Manea, & Berzins, 2020). Return motives to Latvia mostly relate to the combination of career-related opportunities and nostalgia and family-related moves, which has already been confirmed in several previous studies (Apsite-Berina, Sechi, & Bērziņš, 2018).

Institutional national or regional level support to potential and actual returnees are essential. Moreover, during the planning of the return it is essential to acquire necessary information. Besides policies can be drawn towards particular group of returnees, like, high skilled returnees (Jonkers, 2008), migration programmes for various groups of migrants while tailored policies selectively increase the return (Haddad, 2020). There are countries that are that are thoroughly working return migration strategies, incentive based programmes in Israele distributing general call and focusing on individuals with high added value of the returnee (Cohen, 2009),

### **Data and Methods**

This study is part of a Latvian national research grant project, "DemoMig" (Development of a Sustainable and Cohesive Latvian Society: Solutions to Demographic and Migration Challenges), which allowed us to gather valuable data in the regions of Latvia. The data was gathered via regional workshops, which employed the "World Café" method and allowed a broad assessment of the regional needs (Apsite-Berina et al., 2021).

In the study, to determine remigration coordinators' opinion on the effectiveness of remigration measures in Latvia, interviews were conducted with the regional remigration coordinators addressed during the DemoMig project. In-depth, semi-structured interviews with remigration coordinators were conducted. Interviews were held with the remigration coordinators of Latgale, Vidzeme, Zemgale and Kurzeme planning regions. A conversation with the remigration coordinators of the Riga planning region took place during the regional brainstorming workshop. The interviews took place according to a previously prepared interview plan. The interview plan was constructed around three blocks, but the interviewees were not limited to commenting on other issues related to the return of Latvian residents:

1. Introduction: acquaintance and personal experience;
2. Work and responsibilities of the remigration coordinator;

3. Questions about the return migration process (education, career, and health care).

The remigration coordinators of the Riga, Latgale and Kurzeme planning regions were interviewed at the DemoMig project's events. Besides, regular communication took place electronically. On-site interviews were documented both by a transcript and electronically with audio recording, with the interviewees' prior consent. All interviewed coordinators were previously introduced to the prepared interview plan. Interviews with remigration coordinators took place in January and February 2020. The average length of one interview was at least one hour.

## **Results**

This study is based on the interview material with regional return migration coordinators'. Materials allow exploring coordinators' work experience, job responsibilities, benefits and challenges coordinators faced in their daily work. The results achieved so far in the PAPS remigration project are also described.

Since 2013, when the importance of return migration became actual in Latvia, several return migration support programs have been launched. In 2013, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Re-emigration Support Action Plan 2013-2016 year (The Cabinet of Ministers, 2013). The aim was to nominate and determine specific support measures for Latvians living abroad who are considering returning to work and/or establish their own business in Latvia, promoting business development. Since 2018, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (MEPRD), together with the planning regions, has developed a return migration support project, "Regional Remigration Coordinator" or "PAPS - Supporting your return to your home". It is implemented in cooperation between the MEPRD and the planning regions, observing the division of competences between the mentioned institutions specified in the Diaspora Law. The program is financed from the state budget. For example, in 2020, its funding was 643,529 euros, of which 30% is directed to support economic activities, 30% to ensure the activities of regional coordinators and 30% to the development of remigration services at the municipal level. The remaining 10% is spent on administration costs. The program's primary goal is to help returnees returning home and municipalities to re-gain the population (PAPS, 2020).

The regional coordinators' network has been established in each planning region (Riga, Latgale, Vidzeme, Zemgale and Kurzeme) to ensure remigration processes in Latvia. The main tasks of the coordinators are:

- To provide information on services for families with children (including educational opportunities);

- To provide information on business and employment opportunities;
- To provide information on accommodation options;
- To provide answers to return migrants on other issues in the field of municipal services.

Interviews with remigration coordinators revealed the coordinators' personal experience and previous experience with migration which is diverse. For example, the Latgale region coordinator pointed to her personal migration experience to Great Britain, where she had worked for some time. The Vidzeme region coordinator has no experience of international migration at all. There are also no migrants in her family. The Kurzeme region coordinator does not have personal migration experience, but one family member has lived abroad. The coordinators of the Zemgale and Riga region have had contact with the Latvian diaspora. Latgale and Vidzeme region coordinators have been performing their duties since the project was established. The coordinators of Riga, Kurzeme and Zemgale have started working in this program later. All remigration coordinators have participated in the competition announced by the MEPRD for this vacancy. The primary day-to-day responsibilities of the interviewed coordinators are:

- To maintain proactive communication with clients about opportunities to return to Latvia;
- To help clients with actual issues and problems related to opportunities to return to Latvia;
- To create personalised offers - the coordinator, following the client's interests and needs, prepares and improves the offer. The offers include information on topics of interest to clients - services for families, residence opportunities, business and employment opportunities, job opportunities according to the return migrant's skills and vacancies offered in the region, as well as other vital services that may be of interest to return;
- To improve and update remigration client database information;
- To network with remigration project managers in regional municipalities and other municipal specialists to improve the integration process of return migrants in Latvian municipalities. Cooperation also includes the development of proposals for municipalities to improve services; as well as the adoption of examples of good practice in attracting return migrants to local governments;
- To maintain cooperation with various public administration institutions, including the branch ministry (MEPRD);
- To sustain effective cooperation with other regional remigration coordinators, especially in situations when the client has chosen the municipality of residence in another planning region;

- To organise joint regional events to attract return migrants, including in cooperation with coordinators from other regions;
- To interact with the media and use social networking platforms to communicate with the public, informing about remigration policy initiatives;
- To develop proposals for the improvement of remigration policy;
- To follow changes in regulatory enactments (in the labour market, social support, tax and housing policy).

Remigration coordinators acknowledge that the workload is immense, and they have many responsibilities. Each return migrant's story is different, and it takes much time to create a personalised offer. As illustrated in the quotes below, sometimes the work must be done after working hours:

*"No, I cannot manage all my duties during working hours (8 hours a day), I also work on holidays and evenings. Clients are also interested and call in the evenings, as well as communication in social networks" (Vidzeme region remigration coordinator)*

*"No, it often happens to finish what is started at home. I do a little wrong that I work like this, but only when the work is done, I feel good" (Latgale region remigration coordinator).*

Remigration coordinators point out that there is no single system or guidelines for customer service. The Diaspora Law is the primary normative act of remigration policy and administration. The coordinators mentioned that the diversity of return migrants prevents everyone from developing unified management of the process. The coordinators also note that information exchange among authorities should be enhanced:

*"The exchange of information is very slow, which is strange, because this is the digital age, but at the moment it seems that only 5% of information is effectively exchanged" (Latgale region remigration coordinator).*

Therefore, remigration coordinators work together and actively communicate with the municipal institutions and even foreign colleagues to make remigration management more successful. For example, seminars are being organised to exchange experiences with Lithuanian remigration coordinators within the framework of projects such as the development of the city of Utena and the reduction of emigration (Globali Utena, 2020). The remigration coordinator needs regular training to understand the needs of return migrants better. All coordinators acknowledged the importance of professional development in this

position. At the same time, coordinators have both success stories and negative ones, such as:

*"Integration into the Latvian education system should be mentioned as the most significant social adaptation problem among return migrant children and young people. These children are often born and have spent most of their lives in their home country and integrated into its environment. Often these children do not speak Latvian or speak very poorly. Another subject and culture is also a big problem in adaptation. Then the school and the return migrant family try to look for these solutions and help" (Kurzeme region remigration coordinator).*

*"The main problems in the field of education that I have observed in my practice with return migrants are the availability of kindergartens and people's anxiety about whether there are psychologists and assistants in kindergarten. Russian-speaking Latvians are worried that children generally speak only English and communicate with their parents in English or Russian, then they think about how to integrate children without any experience in Latvian into the Latvian education system - kindergartens, schools. Another situation, which is quite common with Latvians returning from Scandinavia, parents quite emotionally perceive differences in education systems, the fact that the child is not assessed with marks elsewhere and then returning to Latvia, it causes stress for both parents and children" (Latgale region remigration coordinator).*

Coordinators have observed the main motives for the return and the most common paths of return:

*"The motives for returning are different, but mostly it is patriotism, longing for relatives, so many examples where people sit in a car, drive to England and cry, cry for many years, but in the end realise that they want to return home. Many people come back because they look at ideas abroad and then want to go to Latvia to implement them here, and in cases where the return migrant knows about our grants or budgeting opportunities, then this desire to return increases several times" ((Latgale region remigration coordinator).*

Some of them are very easily integrated into Latvian society after their return. Common reintegration difficulties relate to finding a job. The coordinator must be able to help in these situations to overcome the difficulties faced by return migrants. Remigrant's most often contact the coordinators to find out the issues they are interested in about health care, social assistance, education, employment and information about housing, and questions about the entry of non-citizens and foreign citizens into Latvia. Often the remigration coordinator is the only person who can help and support in solving everyday issues. Coordinators should also be able to focus on legal and financial issues related to the recognition of various

documents, credit and lending opportunities, entrepreneurship, support funds and tax policy.

The state's involvement in promoting remigration is positive because, since the PAPS project launch in 2018, 4827 families have received support under this program by March 2020, but 463 of them have returned to Latvia (PAPS 2020). Since the Diaspora Law was passed in 2019, support and assistance for return migrants have expanded. The state provides various social support measures, such as free Latvian language training, organises camps for children and youth. The involvement of diaspora organisations and Latvian local governments is also essential in remigration. It helps to implement social support measures for return migrant families. One example of good support is grant competitions organised by MEPRD to support starting own business. Appropriate assistance is provided to all return migrants who seek it.

According to the remigration coordinators, the most frequently mentioned reasons for return are patriotism, longing for the homeland, business start-ups, and of course, family and friends. It has been observed that young families who want to educate their children in Latvia seek help. The main reasons that make it difficult to return to Latvia are fear of finding a suitable job, lower wages, unavailability of housing, ignorance of the Latvian language, unwillingness to cause stress to oneself and family, outstanding credit obligations, as well as distrust of the Latvian education system:

*"One of the factors hindering the return of Latvians to their homeland is distrust of the Latvian education system" (Vidzeme regional remigration coordinator)*

Fundamental intentions to return are influenced by the fear that the return may fail and risk to have to travel abroad again. Also, for many, the current life abroad is very satisfying, and people do not want to take risks and change their everyday lives:

*"Many of them are worried about employment because, over time, they have lost their qualifications, do not have a proper education, or do not know where to look for job vacancies" (Vidzeme regional remigration coordinator)*

The coordinators mention that the remigration process is usually not immediate - communication and return planning can take several years. However, each case is very individual. There is also a need for regular measures to improve remigration coordinators' competencies and quality of work. According to the coordinators, remigration would be facilitated by the balanced economic and labour market development of the regions and more even wages throughout the country. Currently, there are more significant opportunities to attract those who have left in the Riga planning region. According to the coordinators, balanced



regional development would facilitate those who have left even without special remigration programs and support measures.

### **Conclusions**

In Latvia, increased institutional and academic attention has been paid to the return migration, as the return of previously emigrated groups of the population might positively influence demographic challenges related to the population decline and ageing.

Since 2018, the responsible ministry has implemented a return migration project - "Supporting your return to your home" or PAPS in cooperation with regional planning institutions. The work of regional remigration coordinators is essential in the project.

Similar to previous studies, regional return migration coordinators recognises the importance of patriotism, longing for the homeland, family, and friends as the main factors favouring return (Krisjane et al., 2018; Apsite-Berina et al., 2020). Return to the origin most often is medium or long term project which acquires proactive communication with the regional coordinator, subsequent steps from the intention, decision-making and actual move. Moreover, potential risk assessment is considered, especially if the return of several family members is planned.

The main challenges in coordinators' work are responsibility overload; each return migrant's case is unique; there is a lack of guidelines, a system to ensure more efficient work and communication with institutional bodies. Also, individual resilience capacity for quick adaptation to different situations, changing laws and political situations in the country and globally is essential.

Return migration coordinators acknowledge that the following issues are most often related to education: access to schools and pre-school education, support measures for pupils with foreign educational experience, opportunities to learn the Latvian language, and inclusion Latvian education system.

Return emigration support measures are essential for the success and sustainable return process. In return migration management, it is crucial to improve regulatory enactments, such as the Diaspora Law, and support coordinators' training and mutual collaboration.

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## AGE COMPOSITION CHANGES OF RIGA AGGLOMERATION RING

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**Abstract.** *Over the course of several previous decades the post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe have experienced notable population disposition and composition changes in the vicinity of large cities. Despite this, age composition related studies have rarely paid attention to changes within these city regions. Thus, the aim of this paper is to shed light on age composition changes of Riga agglomeration ring. For this study official statistical data, along with population ageing index is utilized. Changes are studied for the entire ring and its structures of urban and rural areas for the years 2000, 2011 and 2020. Results indicated that, despite a decrease, the 25-44 year old age group remained the most populous. 15-24 year old group had the largest decrease. Pre-working age and the two oldest groups were the ones which had tended to increase the most in comparison to situation in 2000. However, ring and urban areas first saw a decrease of pre-working age population leading up to 2011, followed by a more notable growth. Population ageing index values showed that for all territory types population ageing had slowed after 2011. Also, urban areas of Riga agglomeration have been ageing more rapidly than rural ones.*

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**Keywords:** *Age composition, Population ageing index, Population change, Riga agglomeration, Urban and rural areas.*

### Introduction

Particularly rapid development of suburban forms of population in recent decades has been observed in the post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Gentile, Tammaru, & van Kempen, 2012; Stanilov & Sykora, 2014). As a result, the surroundings of large cities are characterized not only by significant changes in population disposition, but also by changes in population composition. Surrounding areas of Riga have also seen similar changes and processes (Krisjane & Berzins, 2012).

Studies on agglomerations and other similar types of territories have paid limited attention to age composition and it has mostly been done within the comparison between different types of populations, based on such aspects as their previous migration experience or housing characteristics (e.g. Leetmaa & Tammaru, 2007). These studies have been conducted using survey data. Research

based on statistical data has shed light mainly on countrywide characteristics (Walford & Kurek, 2008; Kerbler, 2015) and changes which have taken place in urban areas (e.g. Haase et al., 2010; Kurek & Wojtowicz, 2018). Consequently, characteristics of age composition in agglomerations remains an under researched topic.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to shed light on age composition characteristic changes in the ring part of Riga agglomeration. Two research questions are put forward. What are the characteristics of age composition changes which have occurred in the ring of Riga agglomeration? What kind of differences can be observed between the territorial structures (urban and rural areas) of the ring?

To achieve the aim of this study and to answer the research questions, statistical data from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia (*Centrālā statistikas pārvalde (CSP)*), along with population ageing index is utilized. Those few papers on this topic have all used relatively long timelines, comparing the situation at different years, spanning approximately a decade between each date. Hence, this study also uses similar type of a timeline. Changes and situation are studied for the entire ring and its structures of urban and rural areas for the years 2000, 2011 and 2020. This is the longest possible timeline and is fitting for the paper, since major residential development in the surrounding areas of Riga is considered to begin after the year 2000 (Krisjane & Berzins, 2012; Krisjane, Berzins, Ivlevs, & Bauls, 2012).

## Literature Review

Age composition characteristics and its changes have gained importance since there has been a shift in population age structures from being relatively youthful to relatively old (Pool, 2007). Ageing is also considered as a persistent process in many territories of post-socialist states of Central and Eastern Europe (Kulcsar & Brown, 2017). Thus, many studies pay attention to population ageing, since this process has considered the most dominant demographic process taking place in Europe and other parts of the world in recent decades (Walford & Kurek, 2008; Stockdale, 2011).

While ageing has certainly been an important research object, numerous studies have looked at overall age composition changes. As mentioned in the introduction part, most studies conducted in the post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe either focus on countrywide situation (Walford & Kurek, 2008; Kerbler, 2015) or on changes occurring in urban areas. The latter studies pay attention to aspects in gentrified inner-city areas or in urban areas which have experienced re-urbanization (e.g. Haase et al., 2010; Kurek & Wojtowicz, 2018).

Research done in Latvia also focuses on the countrywide situation on, for instance, dynamics of the three main age groups during various periods (e.g. Bērziņš, 2019). Some attention has also been paid to situation in Riga (Apsite-Berina, Paiders, Dahs, & Berzins, 2020).

Age composition related studies conducted in the region, have seldom looked at changes within these city regions, particularly the ring areas. Nonetheless, some research has been done with more of a focus on age composition and ageing. For instance, research on Lodz Functional Urban Region revealed that hinterland areas of the region were already experiencing population ageing during the 1988 to 2002, with the share of under 18 age group decreasing and shares of 45-64 and 65 and over groups increasing (Marcinczak, 2012)

More recently, a book on functional urban areas (FUA's) in Poland was published (Kurek, Wojtowicz, & Galka, 2019). A portion of this book is devoted to demographic trends, among which are age composition and population ageing. Since the fall of socialism (and up until 2016), share of pre-working age and mobile working age (ages 18-44) population has decreased, whilst older age groups (45-64 and 65 and older) have grown. That has been characteristic to most FUA's, with just a few ring areas seeing an increase. During the 1990-2016 period FUA's as a whole aged (core and ring) faster than territories outside of them and also surpassed the national average. Core parts accounted for majority of the increase. Nevertheless, for some types of FUA's (their rings) the index value increased by approximately 100%.

## **Methodology**

This research is based on statistical data from the CSP. In particular, this research utilizes the experimental statistics data set on the number of permanent residents by sex and age on territorial units level, based on the boundaries in force at the beginning of 2020. This provided information on the number of people in eight age groups (from 0-6 to 65 and older) at the beginning of 2000, 2011 and 2020. These years was chosen based on the aforementioned aspects of historical development and that papers on this topic have all used relatively long timelines.

The number of age groups utilized was reduced to five. These included the pre-working age population of 0-14, three age groups of working age population (15-24, 25-44 and 45-64) and post-working age population (65 and older). The change in absolute numbers and in percentages are studied for these age groups. Apart from overall (for the entire ring) characteristics, this paper also investigates spatial differences. In this case, urban areas (their totals) are compared to rural areas. Characteristics of the ring are compared to the general situation of Polish FUA's, since that study (Kurek et al., 2019) utilized a different timeline.

Percentage values of age groups for the entire ring are compared to situation in Riga and all of Latvia.

Population ageing index is also utilized. This index is a ratio, which shows the number of post-working age population per 100 people of pre-working age population. Increase of the index value indicates that population is ageing (Preedy & Watson, 2010, p. 4140). This too is calculated for the ring as a whole and separately for urban and rural areas and the values compared to those for all of Latvia and Riga – core of the agglomeration. Again, characteristics of the ring are compared to the general situation of Polish FUA's.

Lastly, general population changes are also briefly looked at, once again for both the entire ring and its urban and rural areas.

Spatial extent used for this study consists of 32 territorial units making up the Riga agglomeration ring shown in Figure 1 (Skadins, Krumins, & Berzins, 2019). The town of Vangazi is included in order to have a more complete territorial coverage. Among these territorial units are 11 urban and 21 rural areas. 14 of the rural areas are parishes and the remaining seven are counties not further divided into parishes and urban areas.

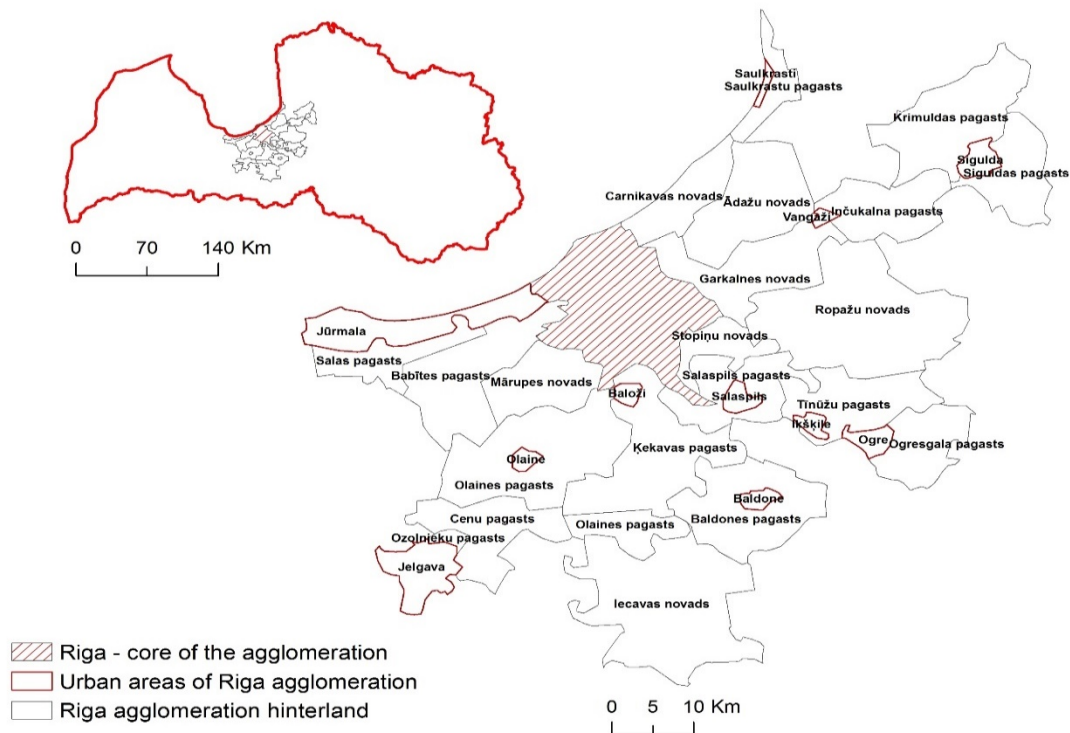


Figure 1 Territorial Units of Riga Agglomeration and the Location of Agglomeration in Latvia (author's elaboration based on Skadins et al. 2019)

Whilst this extent of Riga agglomeration accounts for only approximately 5% (3226.5 km<sup>2</sup>) of the territory of Latvia, its population of 342 434 (beginning

of 2020) made up nearly one fifth of the total population (Centrālā statistikas pārvalde (CSP), 2020).

### Research Results

The total population of Riga agglomeration ring saw an increase during both time periods (Table 1). Over the course of 20 years it had grown by 9.8%, with the bulk of growth occurring from 2000 to 2011 (increase of 6.5%). While the total population had grown during both time periods, the situation with age groups was much less uniform.

Only two of the oldest groups had grown during both periods, whilst for other groups the change was either not uniform or constantly negative. 15-24 year old group had the sharpest decrease, with its absolute numbers shrinking by nearly half. As a result, in 2020 this group was the smallest one.

*Table 1 Absolute Numbers and Share of Riga Agglomeration Ring Age Groups*

Year	2000		2011		2020	
Age group	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%
0-14	56 253	18	53 697	16.2	66 043	19.3
15-24	46 771	15	41 451	12.5	29 424	8.6
25-44	90 374	29	99 563	30	97 363	28.4
45-64	77 949	25	84 070	25.3	89 454	26
>65	40 483	13	53 346	16	60 150	17.6
Total	311 830	100	332 127	100	342 434	100

*Source: author's elaboration based on CSP, 2020 data.*

25-44 year old group first saw an increase by approximately 10% (of absolute numbers), followed by a 2.2% decrease. Despite these changes, it maintained its status quo as the largest group. The two oldest groups had the highest increases, with the absolute numbers of 65 and over group increasing by nearly 50%. 0-14 year old group first experienced a slight decrease (by 4.5%) and then had a more notable increase by 23%. This group, along 15-24 year old group, were the only ones which saw a more voluminous change from 2011 to 2020.

This indicates a rather interesting situation of increases in share for both the youngest and the oldest age group. During the 2011-2018 period similar situation was characteristic to all of Latvia (Bērziņš, 2019). The changes were partly similar to the situation of FUA's in Poland. The difference here was the changes for the pre-working age group, which in most cases was on the decline (during the 1990 to 2016 period) for the FUA's in Poland (Kurek et al., 2019).



As for share of each group, their changes were rather subtle, apart from the 15-24 year old group, the share of which shrunk by nearly half, and, to a certain extent, the post-working age group whose share went up by nearly 5%. This led to youngest working age group having the smallest share, being surpassed by the post-working age group. Remaining three groups maintained the same order throughout the entire timeline.

Table 2 shows the shares of age groups in Riga and all of Latvia. There have been distinct differences between the ring of agglomeration and these two territories. This was particularly evident for the youngest and oldest age groups. While the nature of change was similar (first a decrease, then an increase), ring maintained a higher share of pre-working population and a lower share of post-working population. Situation with 25-44 and 45-64 year old groups was just slightly less uniform. Characteristics of change were somewhat similar for 45-64 year old group, as the share tended increase (except for Riga, which in 2020 had a lower share than in 2011). Share of 25-44 year old group experienced an increase followed by a decrease for both the core and the ring, whereas for all of Latvia it had only decreased. In the case of youngest working group (15 to 24), differences in share were the least uniform (in half of the instances the ring had a higher share, in the other half it had a lower share) and the nature of change differed as for Riga and rest of Latvia the share slightly increased from 2011 to 2020.

*Table 2 Age Group Percentages in Riga and All of Latvia and Their Comparison to the Ring*

Year	2000		2011		2020	
	Riga	Latvia	Riga	Latvia	Riga	Latvia
0-14	15.2↓	18.1↑	13↓	14.2↓	15.6↓	16↓
15-24	14.1↑	14.2↓	6↓	7.1↓	8.4↓	9.1↑
25-44	28.3↓	28.4↓	29.3↓	27.4↓	29↑	26.6↓
45-64	26↑	25=	27.1↑	26.8↑	26.3↑	27.8↑
65 and older	14.8↑	15.6↑	18.6↑	18.4↑	20.7↑	20.5↑
↓ / ↑ / = - share compared to value of the ring; lower, higher, equal						

Source: author's elaboration based on CSP, 2020 data.

Population ageing index values fluctuated, though for the last two years they were noticeably higher (99.3 in 2011 and 91.1 in 2020) than in 2000, when there were 72 post-working age people per 100 people aged 14 and under. In comparison, index values for all of Latvia experienced similar changes, i.e., an increase leading up to 2011, followed by a more pronounced growth of the youngest age group, in turn decreasing the index values. Apart from that there were no similarities. In 2000 there 81.8 post-working age per 100 people aged 14

and under, which had increased to 129.3 in 2011 and just slightly decreased to 128.3 in 2020.

Whilst index values for all of Latvia were considerably higher than for the ring of agglomeration, they were lower than those for the core city of Riga. Already in the year 2000 there were over a 100 (102.8 to be precise) post-working age people per 100 people of pre-working age. By 2011 the index value had risen to 143.2, before a decline to 132.9 in 2020. These kind of increasing notable differences between core and ring have also been prevalent in all types of FUA's in Poland (Kurek et al., 2019).

Urban areas accounted for the majority of population in all three years (Table 3). Nevertheless, the number of people living in them had decreased by 8.1%, whereas the population of non-urban areas had grown rapidly, increasing by 47% during the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Most of this increase (by 30.7%), however, took place up until 2011. Most age groups had undergone similar changes. Population of age groups in rural areas tended to grow over time, with a more notable growth until 2011, whereas this kind of change was much less characteristic for urban areas. However, their changes too were, for the most part, more notable during the 2000 to 2011 period.

*Table 3 Riga Agglomeration Ring Age Groups in Its Urban and Rural Territories*

Year	2000		2011		2020	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
0-14	36 481	19 772	30 286	23 411	34 182	31 861
15-24	31 661	15 110	24 728	16 723	16 452	12 972
25-44	61 009	29 365	58 475	41 088	53 343	44 020
45-64	53 448	24 501	51 799	32 271	51 275	38 179
65 and older	27 846	12 637	34 259	19 087	38 141	22 009
Total	210 445	101 385	199 547	132 580	193 393	149 041

Source: author's elaboration based on CSP, 2020 data.

Similar to the situation of the entire ring, the 25-44 year old group maintained the highest absolute number and share. This remained unchanged for both territory types. Though for urban areas its numbers decreased by 12.6%, whilst rural areas grew considerably (by 61.1%; with most of the growth taking place before 2011). Contrary to the overall situation, the numbers of pre-working age group in rural areas increased both in comparison to 2000 and 2011.

These disparities between urban and rural areas could be attributed to the fact that suburbanization has been more pronounced in rural areas, in particular for rural areas surrounding the core city of Riga. Previous research has shown that suburbanization usually results in an influx of people from this age group (see e.g.

Ourednicek 2007) and often suburbanites are families with pre-school age children (see e.g. Krisjane & Berzins 2012).

The oldest working age group (45 to 64) had varying trajectories of change, with a 3.5% decrease in urban areas and a 56% increase in rural areas. Once again, biggest change took place leading up to 2011. Post-working age group grew in both areas, with urban areas experiencing a slightly more pronounced increase. In rural areas the number of people aged 15 to 24 actually increased by 10.7%, up until 2011. That was an exception for this group, since in every other case this group had decreased, with urban areas shrinking by nearly half. Interestingly, a more notable shrinkage took place during the 2011 to 2020, the lone such instance for urban areas.

Changes in population ageing index values were also rather notable. In 2000, urban areas did have a higher index value than rural areas; however, the gap was not as wide (76.3 to 63.9) as for the other two years chosen for this study. By 2011, the values for both types of territorial structures had increased considerably. In rural areas for every 100 pre-working age people there were 81.5 post-working age people, an increase by 27.5%. Still, it was not as voluminous as for urban areas which, by that point, had 113.1 people aged 65 and older per 100 pre-working age people. In the case of urban areas, the index value had gone up by 48.2%. Lastly, during the period leading up to 2020, the ageing had slowed down, due to bigger increase of the youngest age group. Once again rural areas had displayed a more positive trend. Urban areas had seen a slight decrease by 2.3%, down to 111.6, whereas for the rural ones the decrease was by 15.2%. Hence, the index value approached that of the year 2000 (down to 69.1).

It is also important to look at the share of each group and how those have changed over time. They are shown in Figure 2.

While the number of people belonging to each group changed considerably, the characteristics of shares changed much less notably. Nevertheless, some changes in absolute numbers also impacted shares. 15-24 year old group share decreased similarly for both areas, thus becoming the group with the smallest share. Similarly, to the changes for the entire ring, post-working age group constantly grew, surpassing the youngest working age group. Meanwhile, remaining three groups maintained the same order throughout the entire timeline. However, as in the case of absolute numbers their change was not uniform, with 25-44 year old group tending to decrease and the other two groups tending to increase.

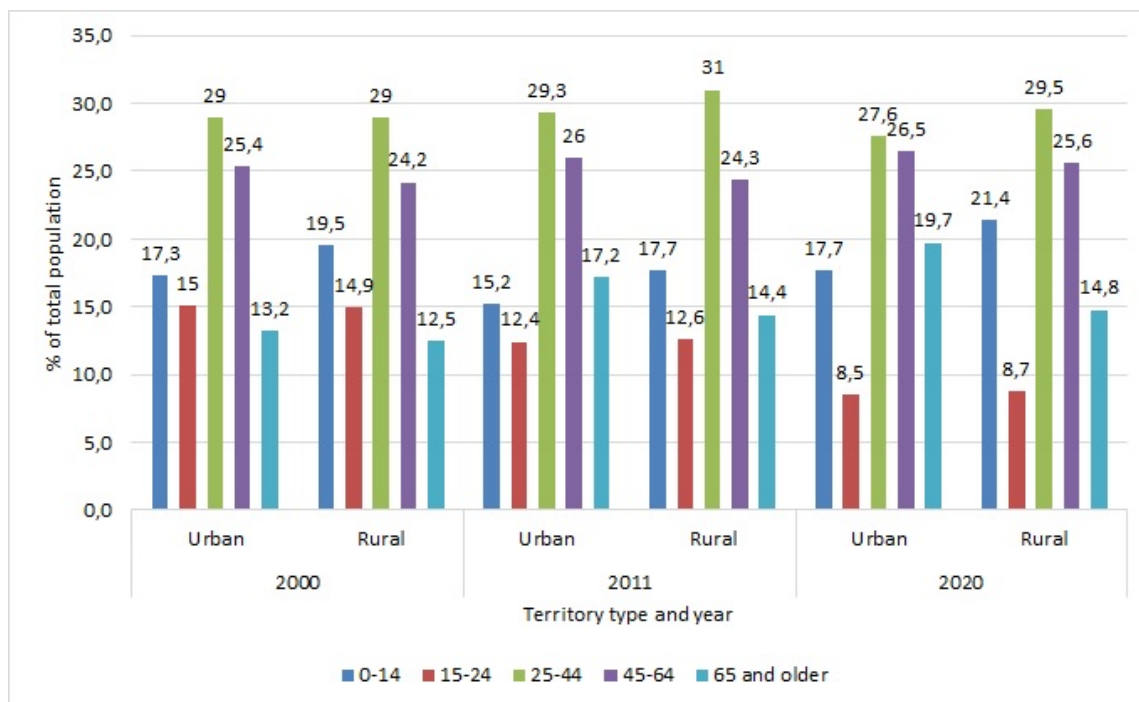


Figure 2 Share of Age Group Population among the Total Population for Urban and Rural Areas (author's elaboration, based on CSP, 2020)

## Conclusions

This paper focused on the age composition changes of Riga agglomeration ring. Changes were studied for the entire ring and its structures of urban and rural areas for the years 2000, 2011 and 2020. This was done by utilizing data on the number of permanent residents by sex and age on territorial units level. Lack of papers on this topic and their specific timelines limited interpretation and comparison of characteristics. Thus, characteristics of the ring were compared only to the general situation of Polish FUA's, as well as to situation in Riga and all of Latvia.

25-44 year old group maintained the highest absolute number and share for both the entire core and its structures. 15-24 year old group in turn had the largest decrease, leading to it becoming the smallest group. Pre-working age and the two oldest groups were the ones which had tended to increase the most in comparison to situation in 2000. However, ring and urban areas first saw a decrease of pre-working age population leading up to 2011, followed by a more notable growth. Characteristics of change for several groups were rather similar to characteristics for all of Latvia and for Riga, as well as for all types of FUA's in Poland.

For all territory types population ageing had slowed after 2011 as shown by population ageing index values. Population of the ring had aged less rapidly than for all of Latvia and for Riga. Similar differences between core and ring have also

been prevalent in all types of FUA's in Poland. In Riga agglomeration urban areas had experienced more significant ageing than rural areas, as highlighted by the considerable widening of gap in ageing index values.

Overall, these results are important since they not only filled a research gap and could be valuable for planning and policy making related decisions. In particular, they could be used for research-based decision making regarding the development of Riga Metropolitan Area.

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# WHO IS MORE EAGER TO LEAVE? DIFFERENCES IN EMIGRATION INTENTIONS AMONG LATVIAN AND RUSSIAN SPEAKING SCHOOL GRADUATES IN LATVIA

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**Abstract.** *Data on migration flows suggest that young people are highly mobile. Yet, there are gaps in the evidence concerning the factors driving young people's international migration in Latvia. Latvia is a potentially interesting case because of the high rate of migration from the country, but also because it is a complex ethnic and linguistic environment. Latvian and Russian speaking populations are shown to have diverse migration drivers, and this study addresses the differences in attitudes to studying and living abroad for adolescents at the time of school graduation. Literature suggests that Russian-speaking population have higher propensity to emigrate. We aim to contribute to the literature by exploring differences in migration intentions between Latvian and Russian speaking high school graduates.*

*This study is based on individual-level survey data of secondary school graduates in Latvia in 2020, amidst COVID-19 pandemic. We analyse the strength of migration intentions from definitely not leaving Latvia to surely planning to emigrate. We conclude that Russian-speakers exhibit stronger intentions to emigrate compared Latvian-speaking youngsters, driven by wider networks and expected higher returns to their human capital abroad.*

**Keywords:** *Youth migration, migration intentions, adolescents, Russian-speaking minority.*

## Introduction

In Latvian context language – Latvian and Russian – tend to be an important parameter, dividing the population Latvian- and Russian-speaking communities. Because the collapse of the Soviet Union brought to the fore and rearranged ethnic identities and at the same time these groups have coexisted for long, creating

mixed ethnicity and language families, ethnicity is a complex issue in Latvia. The two population groups manifest diverse behaviours also with respect to migration.

In the first two decades after the fall of the Soviet Union, the percentage of minorities, including Russians, who migrated from Latvia far exceeded the proportion of Latvians who migrated. Yet, between 2011- 2016, there has been a significant drop in migration of ethnic Russians; the difference in percentage points between ethnic Russians and Latvians was only 1.7% (Hazans, 2019).

Migration intentions saturate during the school times (Lulle and Jurkane-Hobein, 2017), hence in this study we focus on differences in migration intentions on the moment after school graduation that is a pivotal moment in person's life and assess willingness to study and live abroad for Latvian adolescents. We seek to learn how migration intentions differ between recent Latvian- and Russian-speaking school graduates, and aim to contribute to the literature by assessing migration intentions and differences between Latvian and Russian speakers.

## **Background**

Research on migration flows by age group suggest that youth is highly mobile – in Europe people aged 15–29 were by far the most mobile population group during the period 2013–2017, with mobility peaking at the age of 25–29. Yet, despite the fact that young people account for the bulk of international migrant flows and they consistently show stronger migration intentions than the rest of population, there are gaps in the evidence concerning the factors driving young people's international migration.

A relatively recent strand of research has tried to overcome this limitation by focusing on the drivers of potential migration rather than on actual migration. In recent years there has been growing interest from academic community in studying intentions to migrate, determinants and consequences (Migali and Scipioni, 2019; Esipova et al, 2016). Exploring the drivers of potential migration, though relevant in its own right, may help to better understand the factors that shape youth's actual migration behaviour. Even if choices and circumstances for young adults often change over time, it is important to analyse the migration intentions. Intentions to migrate do not necessarily translate into actual migration behaviour, but they are often driven by the same factors that trigger actual migration and can, therefore, represent a good predictor of actual emigration trends in the future. Aspirations and desires to migrate have been shown to be powerful determinants of actual mobility from as early as Ajzen et al. (1980) and De Jong et al. (1985), and later studies (for example, Bradley, 2014). Plentiful of recent studies engage in analysing “potential migration” instead of actual



migration patterns (Williams, 2018; Mintchev et al., 2017; Milasi, 2020; Dao et al., 2018 to name a few).

Part of the reason for this interest is that when the individuals have emigrated, i.e., post factum, they are difficult to reach and hence seldom anything is known about the subjective reasons and motivations of the persons to take the mobility steps. Especially if the inquiry is from the sending country point of view that might be interested in retaining the population, post-emigration research is too late to act upon, hence population surveys to study aspirations are crucial. As put by Plopeanu (2019): “In the context of insufficient or even no data regarding migration flows outside the country of origin, the data obtained through surveys on emigration intentions as proxies are extremely important for national decision makers”. Hence, from a policy perspective, exploring the migration incentives of those still residing in country of origin is just as important as investigating migration motives of people who already moved. Moreover, as data on migration intention are collected from the sending country, they are not affected by self-selection bias that allows having a broader picture of the propensity to migrate across different socioeconomic groups. Against this background, research on youth potential migration has grown in recent years, pointing to a wide range of demographic, socioeconomic, institutional, and contextual drivers of migration intention among young people.

A number of cross-country studies have addressed migration intentions in Latvia. Williams et al. (2018) studied one- and five-year migration intentions of young population in nine European countries, including Latvia, based on Eurobarometer data. They found that prior migration experience, weak status of economy, manual work and researched migration opportunities were four top factors contributing positively to intentions to migrate. Otrachshenko and Popova (2014) studied the impact of life satisfaction on migration intentions and found that Latvia, being among countries with relatively low level of life satisfaction, is associated with high emigration intentions. A further study by Van Mol (2016) that is based on Eurobarometer data for CEE and includes Latvia reveals the importance of individual factors and feelings of discontent among key drivers of youth migration intentions. Yet another cross-country study that covers Latvia among other 138 countries by Docquier et al. (2014) was based on World Gallup survey data on potential migrants. The emphasize the role of networks in migration intentions.

Separately for Latvia, actual migration flows across and within borders have been widely studied. Recent findings on emigration and the emigrant life abroad have been summarised in the book “The emigrant communities of Latvia” (eds. Kasa and Mierina, 2019). The profile and trajectories of Latvian external migrants has been analysed by McCollum, Apsite-Berina, Berzins and Krisjane (2017), internally by Apsite-Berina, Burgmanis and Krisjane (2019). On the other hand,

migration intentions with regards to youngsters and ethnic aspects, have not been scrutinised.

Latvia has a large share of Russian-speaking minority – in 2021 it accounts for 41% of the population. After the fall of the USSR, many Russian speakers felt more like Soviet citizens than Russian (Vihalemm and Masso, 2003; Linz and Stepan, 1996). These weak collective identities later consolidated around language, into Russian-speaking minorities (Laitin, 1995; Melvin, 1995) and thus remain substantially different from the identities of Russians in Russia (Zepa, 2006; Vihalemm & Masso, 2003; Cheskin, 2013). Complex issues remain around Russian-speakers integration in Latvia. Russian speakers would like to integrate rather than assimilate; they both want to learn Latvian language and culture and maintaining their cultural and linguistic identities (Kronenfeld, 2005; Pisarenko, 2006; Šūpule, 2007). As a result, Russian-speakers often observe different customs and behaviours; Russians are less involved in celebrating Latvian state holidays (Zelče, 2018). Russian speakers commonly consume different media, often from Russia (Ikstens, 2018) and express weaker sense of belonging to the state (Muižnieks, Rozenvalds and Birka, 2013).

That is not to say that Latvian and Russian speaking populations do not inhabit separate social and economic spaces in most of the country. Almost all (94%) Russian native speakers speak at least basic Latvian, 51% of Russian younger generation (18-34) speak good or very good Latvian (Latviešu valodas aģentūra, 2020). The majority (61%) of Latvian residents who speak primarily Russian at home feel proud to live in Latvia (Berzina, 2018). Furthermore, Latvian and Russian speakers interact on an everyday basis, at least 75–90 per cent of non-Latvian speakers have a Latvian friend or colleague (Eesti Koostöö Kogu, 2011).

The two population groups demonstrate different migration patterns too. In 1990s and 2000s, ethnic Russian's migration has been significantly higher than that of Latvians. In the decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, migration of all minority groups was high, Russians included (18%, according to the Census). Hazans (2016) finds that Russian-speaking population in pre-EU accession time had lower labour market outcomes and hence contained greater emigration potential which materialised in overrepresentation of Russian-speakers among emigrants. While in the 2000s migration of ethnic Russians was double that of Latvians (-11.8%); between 2011-16 the numbers almost converged: the difference was only 1.7 percentage points (Hazans, 2019). With respect to emigration reasons in ethno-linguistic context, Lulle and Jurkane-Hobein (2016), who interviewed Russian-speaking migrants from Latvia to London, illuminated the crucial role of power positions of being a 'stranger within' on migration decisions. Ivlevs (2013) concluded that minorities are more eager to emigrate than

the majority because of disadvantageous linguistic and citizenship policies, family migration capital and the way minority education is provided.

Lulle et al. (2016) notes that the idea of departure saturates already during school. However, to date, as far as our knowledge goes, there are no studies documenting youth emigration or migration intentions in Latvia from ethnic or linguistic perspective. We aim to close the gap by reporting results from secondary school graduate study. We hypothesize, based on the overall sentiment and previous studies, that Russian-speaking youngsters are more eager to study abroad and emigrate to live abroad.

### **Methodology**

This study adopts a mixed-method approach of survey research combined with qualitative interviews to address the research question and explore differences in Latvian and Russian speaking graduate sentiment with respect to study plans and migration intentions.

We point our attention to two indicators of intended migration. First of all, for those respondents that intend to start studies in the year of secondary school graduation, we ask where she intends to do so – Latvia, or abroad, and if the answer is abroad – the respondent is asked to specify the target country. Second, we ask all respondents if they intend to live abroad for some period of their life, offering answer options in Likert scale with the following anchors: ‘Definitely yes’, ‘Probably yes’, ‘Might or might not’, ‘Probably not’ and ‘Definitely not’. Purposefully, we chose to ask widely without specifying time limit. We realise that youngsters at the age of 18 and 19 are not able to plan the life in advance very well, and if they can, the plans are commonly not time-bound. From our perspective, it was important to record the sentiment and attitude towards life abroad. Similar approach – vague time frame – has been used in a number of other studies, for example Van Dalen and Henkens (2012) ask ‘Do you expect to work abroad for a couple of years in the next 10 years?’; Cairns (2014) for the Ireland study: ‘In the future, I see myself always living in Northern Ireland/Republic of Ireland.’ (Yes/’No’); Flash Eurobarometer 395 survey: ‘You want to study, undergo training or work in another EU country than [your own]’ = ‘Yes/’No’.

Respondents were able to indicate their native language with possible options ‘Latvian’, ‘Russian’ and ‘other’. The respondents could select multiple replies yielding a category “mixed” in the results. It was decided against asking for the ethnicity directly as we reasoned it would be too confusing and time consuming for a youngster to answer, and ease of answering was prioritised not to lose the attention of the respondents.

We run a survey for Latvian secondary school graduates in 2020. It was distributed to general and professional secondary school final year pupils in April

and May 2020. The moment for fieldwork was chosen bearing in mind that it is the last period of time when all the graduate cohort can be met together. After the end of the school year graduates leave schools and do not come together again. Also for online surveys there is no common platform to reach out to all graduates of the cohort, making the period of 1-2 months to end of the year the closest to graduation moment for survey. Running the fieldwork even closer to the graduation is not possible, since students have final examinations, and both, the target group and the teachers, are too busy.

The letter with a request to distribute the invitation to participate in the survey to final year pupils was sent to official email addresses of a selected sample of schools in Latvia, followed by a call to school's administration. The invitation was forwarded to pupils via e-klase.lv learning platform, that all secondary schools use. The sample of schools to address was selected to be nationally representative – include all regions, urban and rural schools, different size of schools, gymnasiums and regular secondary schools, as well as Latvian and Russian language schools.

The obtained sample can be considered representative, covering the entire country, including rural areas. The original obtained sample was 1074 responses. 92 responses had to be eliminated due to being empty. We reason these may have been school teachers or administration looking through the survey before forwarding to pupils, and some curious pupils without filling the survey. 97 other responses were eliminated because respondents did not indicate their native language, the critical parameter for this study. The final sample used for analysis is 885 respondents. In addition, we perform 5 semi-structured qualitative interviews with the aim to validate and triangulate the findings of the survey.

We apply descriptive and inferential statistics methods to study differences between the population groups of interest. In particular, we use contingency tables with Chi-Square tests. Insights from in-depth interviews help to explain the findings.

## **Results**

### **Study intentions**

We learn that 83% of secondary school graduates in Latvia, who plan to continue education in the year following secondary school graduation, intend to study in Latvia, while 16% aim for studies abroad. However, data show that there is statistically significant relationship (Pearson Chi-Square (6, N=885) = 27.55,  $p=0.000$ ) between native language and study migration plans (Table 1). 86% of Latvian-speaking, but only 73% of Russian-speaking graduates intend to stay in Latvia. We are careful to make firm conclusions about the pupils coming from

mixed backgrounds, as there were only 30 such observations. The group contains mostly Latvian-Russian, but also other combinations of native languages.

*Table 1 Study Plans in the Year Following Secondary School Graduation  
(% within native language)*

Where do you plan to study?	Native language				Total
	Latvian	Russian	Mixed	Other	
Latvia	85.8	73.2	90.9	40.0	82.9
Abroad	13.3	23.7	9.1	60.0	15.7
No answer	0.9	3.0	0.0	0.0	1.4
<b>Total count</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>885</b>
<b>Total %</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: authors' computations.

The choices of the study target countries abroad range from Europe to America, but we did not find specific patterns associated with the native language. United Kingdom takes the prominent first place - it was mentioned among targets in 18% of responses (UK alone or along with another country). Further, Denmark and the Netherlands are commonly mentioned, presumably because of wide availability of studies in English paired with no or low study fees. We also find Ireland, Sweden, Germany, Poland and Estonia among the countries of interest. A few Russian speaking respondents mentioned Russia for studies, while no Latvian-speaking respondent intends to study in the Eastern neighbour country.

### **Migration intentions**

Looking at more general migration aspirations, we find that notable 58% of school graduates are positively minded regarding possibility to live abroad for some period of their life (Table 2). Even more, 28% of the graduates say they definitely want to live abroad for some period, while 30% are vaguely positive. Only 14% are strongly (2%) or probably (12%) negative about intentions to live abroad. One third of the respondents had not made up their mind or were unsure.

Analysis by native language reveals important and statistically significant differences (as supported by Pearson Chi-Square (12, N=885) = 48.66, p=0.000). The Russian-speaking adolescents have significantly stronger aspirations to live abroad – 23% of Latvian-speaking and 44% of Russian-speaking graduates 'definitely' plan to live abroad at least for some period of their life. So, overall half of Latvian-speaking (53%), but striking three quarters of Russian-speaking minority youngsters can be considered potential migrants.

Table 2 **Migration Intentions** (% within native language)

Do you plan to live abroad for some period in the future?	Native language				Total
	Latvian	Russian	Mixed	Other	
Definitely not	2.2	1.5	0.0	0.0	1.9
Probably not	14.3	5.6	6.1	0.0	12.0
Might or might not	30.8	19.2	27.3	0.0	27.9
Probably yes	29.6	29.3	39.4	40.0	29.9
Definitely yes	23.1	44.4	27.3	60.0	28.2
<b>Total count</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>885</b>
<b>Total %</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: authors' computations. N=885.

Scrutinising the reasons behind the willingness to live abroad (Figure 1), we find major differences for the two native language groups.

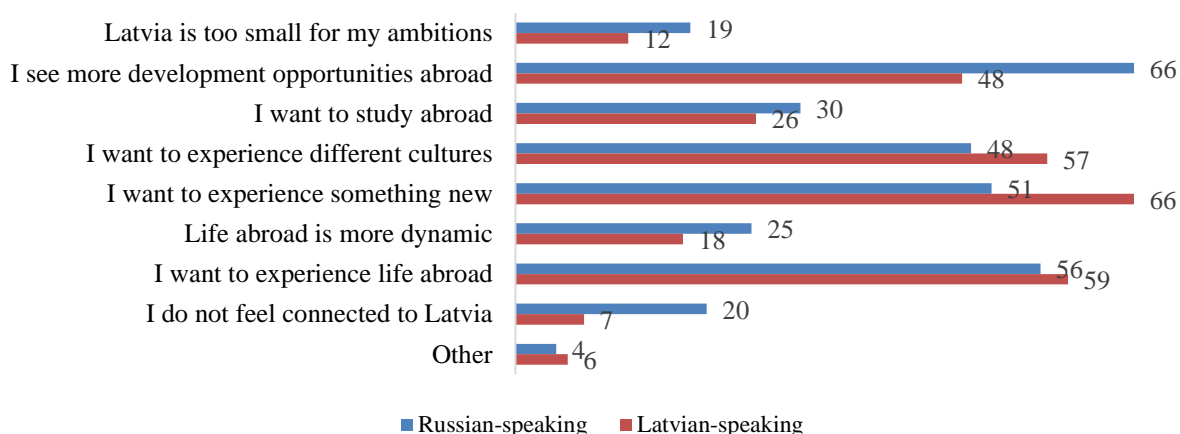


Figure 1 **Reasons for Willingness to Live Abroad in the Future** (multiple answers possible, % of respondents by native language).  
Source: authors' calculations

For Latvian-speaking adolescents new general, life and cultural experiences appear to be the primary reasons that drive their interest in living abroad, while for the Russian-speaking youngsters the most common reason is the fact that they see more development opportunities abroad, followed new experiences, similar to Latvians. The feeling of disconnection from Latvia is higher for the Russian-speaking minority (20% of respondents mention it among determinants in contrast to 7% Latvian-speakers). Also, more commonly among Russians, Latvia is perceived as being too small for one's ambitions.

## Discussion

The analysis revealed that Russian-speaking adolescents in Latvia exhibit higher migration intentions as indicated by higher aspirations to study abroad and more determined to live abroad for at least some period of their life. The results go in line with our hypothesis and previous research. The reasons for such a split can be several and are most likely interlinked, so the in-depth interviews with Russian school graduates can help to interpret them.

Russian-speaking population more commonly have ancestors in other countries, and relatives still living abroad. Aleksandrs (19, pseudonym), a Russian-speaking graduate explains: *“I have thought of moving to Azerbaijan, the native country of my father, because there are, too, a lot of opportunities, if you are clever enough. I have many relatives there. My grandmother, too.”* Kinship and other networks are shown to be important factor in migration decisions according to migration theory, and since the size of the Russian speaking diaspora is large (estimated over 30 million) this may provide significant opportunities for youth. In addition, given the high rate of migration of Russian-speakers from Latvia in recent decades, the network of Russian speaking Latvians is significant. Future migrants may know of these networks and rely on them for inspiration and information even prior to migration. These networks provide support during the migration journey, from moving to finding a job and finding a community.

Another explanation, in particular for higher intentions to study abroad, is the study language. While most Russian speaking youth in Latvia speak at least good Latvian, Russian graduates who have acquired secondary education primarily in Russian language, may choose not to study in Latvian (most higher education programmes in Latvia). On the one hand, studying in a language different from previous education could be challenging. Studying in English could be more convenient and may be seen as more beneficial for one’s future career. Indeed, research shows that return migrants may receive up to 88% wage premium if they have a master’s degree from abroad (Hazans, 2017). According to our survey, Russia does not appear to be among the prime study destinations, the graduates are looking West.

The third potential reason for higher emigration desires could be less satisfaction with the environment and disconnection from the state. This explanation appears higher among the Russian-speaking respondents, but it is not among the main reasons. This narrative would be supported by Ivlevs (2013), however, we could not back this argument by information from our interviews with Russian graduates. Instead, we tend to believe that they are more open to see the wide opportunities that the world offers, reinforced by being subject to more multicultural environment. This would go in line with Lulle’s et al. (2017) conclusion that Russian-speakers do not relate the future only to the Latvian

society but “to broader European space and opportunities”. One of our informants (Mihails, 19), who wants to go to Russia after studies reveals: “Well, I have this desire, which I cannot explain. To my mind, there are some wishes, which are inside us – I want it and that's it – and that means, that it is the right path to follow, but... Then again, I don't know, how I will do it there in Moscow and I don't know if I will like it there, and maybe after a year I will change my mind... (..) And at the same time, I cannot say that I have planned to stay in Latvia, me too, I plan to work abroad.”

Overall, our results confirm that Russian speaking high school graduates in Latvia have higher migration intentions. From the policy perspective, exploring emigration incentives are important to study as they can help to predict mobility and possibly pro-actively influence it. If in the coming years we can expect positive youth emigration, and especially by young Russians, it would be necessary to work out solutions to make their return more attractive. Labour market benefits from the experience and skills, but not to be forgotten is also the societal and demographic benefit from more diverse and multicultural society.

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**PĒTĪJUMI EKONOMIKAS UN  
VADĪBAS JOMĀ ILGTSPĒJĪGAI  
IZGLĪTĪBAI**

*Research in Economics and Management  
for Sustainable Education*



# ПОВЫШЕНИЕ НАЛОГОВОЙ ГРАМОТНОСТИ НАСЕЛЕНИЯ РОССИИ В УСЛОВИЯХ ЦИФРОВИЗАЦИИ ЭКОНОМИКИ

## *Improving of Tax Literacy of Russian Population in Terms of Digitalization of the Economy*

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**Abstract.** *The article presents an overview of the concept of tax literacy as the main element of financial literacy and the necessary prerequisite for the formation of the tax culture of society and the individual. The expansion of the field of knowledge and skills that form the tax literacy of the population in the era of the digital economy is shown.*

*The aim of the study is to analyze the prerequisites for the formation and development of tax literacy in the Russian Federation and its impact on improving the efficiency of the tax system. The study used traditional methods of scientific research, the monographic method, and the method of comparative analysis.*

*The results of a comparative analysis of the level of financial literacy in different countries showed the insufficiency of its development in Russia. Based on the analysis of the state of taxation of individuals in the Russian Federation, the problems of the formation of tax literacy and tax culture of the population of Russia are identified, for the solution of which the author formulated proposals.*

**Keywords:** *digitalization of the economy, tax culture, tax literacy, tax, taxation.*

### **Введение** **Introduction**

«Налоговое право – едва ли не единственная отрасль в правовой системе России, где подавляющее число правонарушений и злоупотребление правом совершается с неосторожной формой вины, то есть по причине незнания и непонимания налоговых норм, а также неумения их правильно интерпретировать и применять» (Bolotova & Ivanchenko, 2013). На макроэкономическом уровне низкая налоговая грамотность провоцирует развитие теневой экономики, подрывает доверие к государственным институтам и государственной политике по их регулированию, обуславливает низкий уровень поступления доходов в бюджет, приводит к снижению темпов экономического роста, способствует

росту социальной напряженности (Zybin & Krutova, 2016).

Кроме того, переход к цифровой трансформации экономики, с одной стороны, способствует повышению уровня налоговой грамотности населения, а с другой, создает дополнительные налоговые риски для всех участников налоговых отношений: недостаточность информационных и компьютерных компетенций и уязвимость текущих и долгосрочных активов от кибермошенничества.

В связи с чем, особую актуальность приобретают вопросы повышения налоговой грамотности населения.

Целью исследования является анализ предпосылок формирования и развития налоговой грамотности в Российской Федерации и ее влияния на повышение эффективности функционирования налоговой системы.

Методологической основой работы явились традиционные методы научного исследования, монографический метод, метод сравнительного анализа.

### **Экономические и правовые основы понятия «налоговая грамотность»** *Economic and Legal Basis for the Concept of "Tax Literacy"*

В настоящее время в законодательстве России понятие «налоговая грамотность» не раскрывается. Нет единого подхода к ее определению и среди научного сообщества. Н. Л. Шарандина в своем исследовании исходя из этимологии понятия «грамотный» указывает, на то, что «налоговая грамотность» – это обладание необходимыми знаниями и сведениями в сфере налогообложения, сборов, страховых взносов (Sharandina, 2019). В. А. Корецкая-Гармаш предлагает определять «налоговую осведомленность как систему знаний того, что представляют собой налоги, механизмы их исчисления и оплаты, выбор системы налогообложения, обязанности и, что более важно, права налогоплательщиков, позволяющие им защитить свою собственность от злоупотреблений налоговых органов» (Koretskaya-Garmash, 2017). Налоговая грамотность, по словам Т. В. Муравлевой, – «сложная сфера, предполагающая понимание ключевых налоговых понятий и использование этой информации для принятия разумных налоговых решений, способствующих с одной стороны, росту благосостояния страны, а с другой, способствующих экономической безопасности и формированию налоговых поступлений в бюджет» (Muravleva, 2015).

По нашему мнению, последнее определение имеет наиболее тесную взаимосвязь с понятием «финансовая грамотность», заявленным в «Стратегии повышения финансовой грамотности в Российской Федерации на 2017 – 2023 гг.», – это результат процесса финансового образования, который определяется как сочетание осведомленности, знаний, умений и

поведенческих моделей, необходимых для принятия успешных финансовых решений и в конечном итоге для достижения финансового благосостояния (Strategiya povu`sheniya finansovoj gramotnosti v Rossijskoj Federacii na 2017 - 2023 gody`).

Таким образом, при определении структуры и содержания понятия «налоговая грамотность», следует учитывать сочетание и взаимосвязь таких ее неотъемлемых элементов, как: осведомленность и знания в области налогов и налогообложения, умения их успешного применения и способность соотнесения моделей налогового поведения с реальной жизнью.

При выборе приоритетных тем для информирования населения в рамках реализации Стратегии повышения финансовой грамотности в Российской Федерации также рекомендовано принимать во внимание формирование у населения культуры ответственного финансового поведения, в том числе налоговой культуры.

На законодательном уровне понятие налоговой культуры не урегулировано. Среди ученых нет единого мнения в понимании данного понятия, в итоге центром их аргументации оказывается либо исключительно налогоплательщик, либо общение последнего с налоговыми органами, а эволюция налоговой системы и уровень развития национальной культуры в целом не рассматриваются. Ряд авторов соглашаются с содержанием понятия «налоговая культура», которое приводит немецкий ученый Биргер Нерре: «это специфическая для каждой страны совокупность всех соответствующих формальных и неформальных институтов, связанных с национальной налоговой системой и ее практической реализацией, которые исторически являются встроенными в культуру страны, включая зависимости и связи, вызванные их постоянным взаимодействием. Соответственно налоговая культура «tax culture» является более широким понятием, чем культура налогообложения «culture of taxation» или культура уплаты налогов «tax-paying culture» (Nerre, 2008).

Следует подчеркнуть, что большинство авторов рассматривая налоговую грамотность неразрывно связывают ее с налоговой культурой и отмечают, что «налоговая грамотность является необходимой предпосылкой (основой) формирования налоговой культуры» (Sharandina, 2019; Muravleva, 2015). Недостаточная налоговая грамотность, по мнению В. А. Авдеевой, в определенной степени обуславливает низкий уровень налоговой культуры (Avdeeva, 2017). Таким образом, можно рассматривать повышение налоговой грамотности, как один из факторов, способствующих развитию налоговой культуры.

## **Формирование налоговой грамотности и налоговой культуры в России** *Formation of Tax Literacy and Tax Culture in Russia*

По результатам одного из самых масштабных исследований финансовой грамотности населения в последние годы, проведенным в 2014 году рейтинговым агентством Standard & Poors совместно с Gallup, Всемирным банком и Глобальным центром исследования финансовой грамотности в университете Джорджа Вашингтона, Россия заняла только 55-е место в мире среди 150 тысяч человек в 148 странах. По данным исследования, в России 38% финансово-грамотных людей.

И хотя уровень финансовой грамотности в России оказался выше, чем в среднем по миру, но ниже, чем в США и Европе, например, в Эстонии (54% финансово-грамотных), и Латвии (48%). Среди стран БРИКС Россия оказалась на втором месте после ЮАР (42% финансово-грамотных). Первое место в мире, по данным исследования, заняли жители Норвегии, Дании и Швеции – 71% взрослых в этих странах знают, как распоряжаться деньгами. В первую десятку вошли также Израиль (68%), Канада (68%), Великобритания (67%), Нидерланды (66%), Германия (66%), Австралия (64%) и Финляндия (63%) (GFLEC, 2014).

Рассмотрим причины, которые препятствовали развитию финансовой, и, в частности, налоговой грамотности и культуры в России.

В советский период вопрос о формировании налоговой культуры, как социальном явлении не возникал, поскольку налоговая обязанность не была установлена в Конституции, а налоги имели скрытую форму и автоматически вычитались из заработной платы. Само понятие «налоги» было чуждым для коммунистического общества.

Как следствие, на этапе становления российской налоговой системы у налогоплательщиков отсутствовали налоговые знания и опыт уплаты налогов, не была выработана налоговая дисциплина, в то же время, налоговое администрирование в отсутствие опыта взаимодействия с гражданами имело низкий уровень развития. Что в результате привело к массовому уклонению от уплаты налогов. Чтобы компенсировать недостатки налоговой культуры, государство было вынуждено устанавливать механизмы переложения на налоговые органы обязанности по исчислению имущественных налогов, уплачиваемых физическими лицами, и включения налоговых агентов в механизм исчисления и уплаты налога на доходы физических лиц. Нагрузка по обязательным отчислениям во внебюджетные фонды полностью легла на самих работодателей. Кроме того, для стимулирования легализации теневых доходов граждан и частных предпринимателей, а также для упрощения процедуры налогового контроля



в период налоговых реформ 1999-2001 гг. была введена пропорциональная ставка налога на доходы физических лиц. Однако работодатели, проявляющие солидарность с работниками по выплате заработной платы «в конвертах», и уменьшая таким образом свою налоговую нагрузку по обязательным социальным отчислениям с заработной платы, этому процессу не способствовали.

В результате добиться сокращения теневой экономики так и не удалось. По оценкам Ассоциации дипломированных сертифицированных бухгалтеров (АССА), объем теневой экономики России к началу налоговых реформ – в 2001 году составлял 21% ВВП (1,7 трлн руб.), а 2016 году он достиг 39% ВВП (33,6 трлн руб.) (The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, 2017).

Причины такого неграмотного налогового поведения налогоплательщиков во многом объясняются несправедливым характером проводимой налоговой политики последних десятилетий, что проявляется в следующем.

Неоднократные попытки введения прогрессивной шкалы и необлагаемого минимума налога на доходы физических лиц, так и не нашедшие одобрения в правительстве; отмена налога на наследуемое имущество; затянувшийся процесс дифференциации налога на имущество; уравнительный характер льгот; отсутствие контроля за расходами граждан и другие политические решения по сути лоббировали интересы наиболее состоятельных слоев населения. Кроме того, неэффективное и «непрозрачное» расходование бюджетных средств; низкое качество общественных благ, предоставляемых государством в обмен на уплачиваемые налоги, а также отсутствие у налогоплательщиков возможности влиять на политические решения, привели к тому, что физические лица, не обладающие налоговой грамотностью, стали воспринимать налоги как исключительные доходы государства и безвозвратные потери для себя, что стало для них побудительным мотивом не участвовать в этом процессе.

Понадобилось более 20 лет рыночных преобразований, чтобы Россия осознала необходимость в повышении финансовой и налоговой грамотности населения. Проект Минфина России и Всемирного банка по повышению финансовой грамотности среди российского населения был запущен еще в 2011 году. Однако разработка и реализация «Стратегии повышения финансовой грамотности в Российской Федерации на 2017 – 2023 гг.» затянулась и была принята только в 2017 году. Стратегия направлена на охват финансовым образованием различных целевых аудиторий населения Российской Федерации с учетом их географических, возрастных, гендерных, социальных, профессиональных и образовательных

отличий. Выделены три основные целевые группы: школьники и студенты, граждане с низким и средним уровнем доходов; граждане пенсионного и предпенсионного возраста и лица с ограниченными возможностями здоровья. На сегодняшний день уже завершен первый этап реализации Стратегии. Получены первые положительные результаты.

Россия заняла 9-е место среди 17 европейских стран, принявших участие в исследованиях Организации экономического сотрудничества и развития (ОЭСР) по уровню финансовой грамотности (среди взрослого населения). Значение Индекса финансовой грамотности в России – 12,5 балла (OECD, 2020).

По оценкам международного мониторингового исследования PISA в 2018 году увеличился уровень финансовой грамотности подростков 15-летнего возраста России на 9 пунктов по сравнению с 2012 годом (табл. 1).

Сравнение результатов стран, участвовавших в циклах 2012 и 2018 годов (всего участников в 2018 году – 20 стран), показывает, что практически все страны улучшили свои результаты (за исключением Австралии) по качеству знаний и навыков, которые 15-летние обучающиеся демонстрируют в области финансов.

*Таблица 1. Динамика баллов финансовой грамотности по странам (в баллах)*

*(Finansovaya gramotnost`, 2018)*

*Table 1 Dynamics of Financial Literacy Scores by Country (in points)*

*(Finansovaya gramotnost`, 2018)*

Страна	2012 г.	2018 г.	Изменение (+,-)
Эстония	529	547	18
Польша	510	520	10
Австралия	526	511	-15
США	492	506	14
Латвия	501	501	0
Россия	486	495	9
Испания	484	492	8
Словакия	470	481	11
Италия	466	476	10

В последние годы происходит активное развитие процесса цифровизации в России. Одними из первых в этот процесс включились налоговые органы. На официальном сайте Федеральной налоговой службы России (ФНС России) можно найти любую актуальную информацию по любым вопросам исчисления и уплаты налогов. Что особенно важно в условиях наличия таких интернет-ресурсов, которые зачастую предоставляют гражданам недостоверную информацию, искажающую

реальные нормы налогового законодательства.

С 2016 г. действует единая автоматизированная информационная система «Налог-3» ФНС России (АИС «Налог-3»), обеспечивающая автоматизацию деятельности ФНС России по всем выполняемым функциям.

Одним из наиболее удачных информационных ресурсов налоговых органов является личный кабинет налогоплательщика, который размещен на официальном сайте ФНС России. В нем налогоплательщики могут найти актуальную информацию о начисленных им суммах имущественных налогов, проверить полноту и достоверность сведений об облагаемых видах имущества и транспортных средствах. Личный кабинет может использоваться для получения налогоплательщиком документов от налогового органа, а также для передачи в налоговый орган документов (декларации, информации), сведений в электронной форме. Обмен информацией с налоговым органом через личный кабинет исключает риск потери налогового документа, соответственно, позволяет вовремя получать и передавать максимально достоверную информацию. Кроме того, через личный кабинет налогоплательщики могут обратиться к налоговым органам с вопросами без личного визита, сформировать и оплатить налоговые платежи.

Наличие личного кабинета может стать той отправной точкой, когда при использовании, в том числе других цифровых технологий, налоговые органы самостоятельно, и даже в автоматическом режиме смогут взять на себя функции по исчислению налогов с физических лиц. Подобный подход уже применяется в России для самозанятых лиц.

С другой стороны, переход в цифровое пространство создает дополнительные налоговые риски для всех участников налоговых отношений. На сегодняшний день недостаточная грамотность наблюдается не только в области финансов, но и в области информационных и компьютерных технологий. Что требует также пристального внимания.

## **Выводы** *Conclusions*

Анализ состояния налогообложения физических лиц в Российской Федерации, позволил выявить причины низкой налоговой грамотности:

- несправедливый характер механизмов подоходного и имущественного налогообложения российских граждан не способствовал воспитанию налоговой дисциплины;

- отстранение налогоплательщиков от процесса исчисления налогов и составления налоговой отчетности препятствовало развитию навыков коммуникации с налоговыми органами;
- неэффективное и «непрозрачное» расходование бюджетных средств, а также отсутствие у налогоплательщиков возможности влиять на политические решения отразились на росте недоверия к власти.

Переход к цифровой трансформации экономики России, и в первую очередь налоговых органов, с одной стороны, создал предпосылки к повышению уровня налоговой грамотности населения, а с другой, - дополнительные налоговые риски для участников налоговых отношений: недостаточность информационных и компьютерных компетенций и уязвимость текущих и долгосрочных активов от кибермошенничества.

В результате для дальнейшего повышения налоговой грамотности и налоговой культуры граждан в России предлагаются следующие рекомендации:

- перейти к справедливому механизму исчисления налога на доходы физических лиц: ввести необлагаемый минимум, упорядочить налоговые льготы и установить прогрессивную шкалу. Это позволит погасить социальную напряженность в обществе и повысить доверие к налоговой системе;
- для более доступного и достоверного получения налоговых знаний размещать необходимую налоговую информацию в личном кабинете налогоплательщика, а также обеспечить обратную связь для разрешения сложных и спорных вопросов налогообложения,
- создание новой модели онлайн налогового администрирования с переводом функций по исчислению налогов с физических лиц полностью на сторону налоговых органов. Это снизит издержки для экономики и налогоплательщиков, а также позволит перейти на налоговый контроль расходов физических лиц с одновременным сопоставлением их с уровнем декларируемых доходов.

### **Summary**

The aim of the study is to analyze the prerequisites for the formation and development of tax literacy in the Russian Federation and its impact on improving the efficiency of the tax system.

Tax literacy is the result of the financial education process that is defined by a combination of awareness, knowledge of taxes and taxation, the ability to apply them

successfully and the ability to relate tax behavior patterns to real life. Improving tax literacy is one of the factors contributing to the development of a tax culture.

According to the results of one of the largest studies of the financial literacy of the population, Russia showed a rather low level of financial literacy, ranking only 55th among 148 countries.

Analysis of the state of taxation of individuals in the Russian Federation made it possible to identify the reasons of low tax literacy:

- the unfair nature of the mechanisms of income and property taxation of Russian citizens did not contribute to the education of tax discipline;
- the removal of taxpayers from the process of calculating taxes and drawing up tax reports hindered the development of communication skills with tax authorities;
- un-efficient and “opaque” spending of budget funds, as well as the inability of taxpayers to influence political decisions, have reflected in the growth of distrust in the authorities.

In recent years, a global reform has been carried out in Russia to improve financial literacy: several projects have been launched, and the Strategy for the Development of Financial Literacy of the Population of the Russian Federation for 2017-2023 has been approved. This made it possible to increase the level of financial literacy and, accordingly, the tax culture of the population.

The transition to digital transformation of the Russian economy, and primarily of the tax authorities, on the one hand, created the preconditions for an increase in the level of tax literacy of the population, and on the other, additional tax risks for participants in tax relations: insufficient information and computer skills and vulnerability of current and long-term assets from cyber fraud.

As a result, the following recommendations are proposed to further increase tax literacy and tax culture of citizens in Russia:

- switch to a fair mechanism for calculating personal income tax: introduce a non-taxable minimum, streamline tax benefits and establish a progressive scale. This will help to defuse social tensions in society and increase confidence in the tax system;
- for a more accessible and reliable acquisition of tax knowledge, place the necessary tax information in the taxpayer’s personal account, as well as provide feedback to resolve complex and controversial tax issues;
- creation of a new model of online tax administration with the transfer of functions for calculating taxes from individuals completely to the side of the tax authorities. This will reduce costs for the economy and taxpayers, as well as make it possible to switch to tax control of the expenditures of individuals while comparing them with the level of declared income.

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## THE EXPRESSION OF MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP IN SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

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**Abstract.** *The aim of social service organizations that provide modern social services is to give quality social services that would help a person (family) to become independent and able to integrate into society. Successful operation of organizations is ensured by the ability of managers to lead, motivate employees to achieve the set goals, and promote cooperation with stakeholders. Therefore, managerial leadership is especially important to influence the activities of the members of the organization, creating conditions for continuous improvement and cooperation. A leader must be able to bring employees into a team, evaluating achievements and facilitating social interaction between team members, and strive to continually improve employees' ability to provide individual, customer-oriented services. The aim of the article is, based on theoretical analysis and empirical research, to highlight the peculiarities of managerial leadership in social service organizations and to define the influence of leadership in the process of providing social services to employees, service recipients, and stakeholders. The research revealed what the most important characteristics, personal qualities, and competencies of a leader in an organization are and what influence managerial leadership has when organizing and providing quality social services. The research identified the aspects of managerial leadership that would help ensure successful operation of organizations when providing effective support to those experiencing exclusion in the community.*

**Keywords:** *leadership, managerial competencies, social service organizations, social services.*

### Introduction

Social inequalities, various social problems (such as poverty, social and health diseases, crime, etc.), and the resulting need to help weaker members of society with various social problems have always existed in state societies (Blakemore & WarwickBooth, 2013; Ščepkauskaitė, 2013; Vanagas & Čižikienė, 2015; Čižikienė & Urmanavičienė, 2018). Therefore, people are developing and improving social security systems. They are looking for effective ways and means to provide the most effective assistance to a person who has lost the ability to act independently and effectively in society while ensuring that every member of society has access to some help and support. One of the most widely - used

instruments for providing assistance and ensuring proper arrangement and accessibility of social services is social inclusion. In social service organizations, social programs are generally coordinated and delivered. Researchers from different countries study the activities of organizations and the peculiarities of social services provided in EU countries (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Lethbridge, 2005; Penna & O'Brien, 2006; Harpur, 2012; Bode et al., 2013; Greve & Sirovátka, 2014; Bode, 2017; Koprić et al., 2017; Wollmann & Marcou, 2017; Marimon et al., 2019; Abrahamson, Greve, & Boje, 2019). It should be noted that researchers regularly examine the problems of the framework of social services and organizations providing these services, they attempt to base their activities on certain principles, show how it is possible to evaluate the quality of activities and their efficiency in mixed market conditions (Vanagas & Čižikienė, 2015; Mažeikienė, Naujanienė, & Ruškus, 2014; Andrews & Jilke, 2016; Bode, 2017; Evers et al., 2019; Čižikienė, 2020). In social service organizations, however, there is a lack of studies on leadership issues.

The aim of the article is to unveil the characteristics of the leadership expression of the leaders of social service organizations to achieve good performance results and ensure the quality of services. To achieve the goal, the following tasks are set: to describe the leadership of managers providing social services within the scope of transformations in the social services sector; To define the principles that establish the leadership of social service provider organizations; to analyze the preconditions determining the leadership of managers in organizations providing social services.

### **Aspects of Managerial Leadership in the Field of Social Services**

When evaluating the leadership of social service managers, it is appropriate to consider the developments in the social services sector that have influenced leadership change. Researchers (Dunajevs, 2009; Blakemore & Warwick-Booth, 2013; Koprić, Wollmann, & Marcou, 2017; Wollmann & Bönker, 2018; Wollmann, 2018) identify these stages of development of the social service system: the first stage is linked to the emergence of social security systems in Germany and the affect of the activities of non - governmental organizations within the field of social services. The second stage is called the state's welfare stage, it started after the Second World War and there was a tendency to transfer the responsibility of personal social problems to the communities and the influence of public sector institutions to solve. The third development phase, which started after 1970, is marked by a trend towards the privatization of social risks and is based on the idea of mixed market for social services. Empirical research confirms (Williams & Glisson, 2014; Kremer, Villamor, & Aguinis, 2019) that the social context is crucial for the successful dissemination and



implementation of innovation because the social environment that surrounds an individual, shape his perception, behavior, attitudes, it influences innovation and implementation (DiMaggio, 1997; Hatch, 2004; Rogers, 2003; Scott, 2013). The effect of the social context therefore influences actions of the organizational manager's as a leader, his development and formation of the purpose of activity. (DiMaggio, 1997; Lawler & Bilson, 2013; Healy, 2014). It also explains the leadership differences in paradigm shifts and attitudes towards the quality of services provided. The social context of these organizations is stakeholder-dependent and related to the individual needs of the consumers of services and the results achieved (Lawler, 2007; Aarons et al., 2012; Healy, 2014; Michailakis & Schirmer, 2014). Tracing the development of leadership theories, it can be seen that leadership was determined by a single choice, such as personal characteristics, behavioral style, situation characteristics, and so on. Understanding the shortcomings of a one-sided approach, a combination of leadership models was introduced, encompassing several concepts of factors such as personal-situational, behavioral-situational, personality-behavioral. Modern leadership is dominated by a systemic approach that encompasses an individual's personality traits, his or her behavior, and the situation in which he or she is realized. Thus, leaders of social service organizations had to choose leadership models that best matched the organization's concept and mission to help sure the well-being of the individual and streamline the organization (Chang, Shih, & Liu, 2019; Zhang, Liu, & Wang, 2020). The most appropriate models were those that emphasized the following factors: participation, value creation in the organization's goals, and joint decision-making. Stoner et al., 2006 distinguish the "four C" model that reveals the results of management in the human resource management process, in which the expression of leadership is important: commitment, competence, congruence, cost-effectiveness. These components of the model allow us to explain the guidelines of managerial leadership in terms of commitment, competence, congruence, and cost-effectiveness (Chlivickas, Papšienė, & Papšys, 2010; Chlivickas & Luckutė, 2016; Brunetto & Beattie, 2020). The ever-changing social environment poses new challenges for the social services sector, society, community, so the manager must not only perform his / her direct management and leadership functions but also become an organizer and innovator of management practice (Lynch-Cerullo & Cooney, 2011; Carnochan et al., 2019; Hwang, 2019). Thus, managerial leadership was determined by the new public management factors in the social services sector: service commercialisation and increased competition in the service sector, total standards of quality management, local administrative control and transparency, legislative reforms accepted by the government, evidence-based organizational social work activities and technical developments (Carnochan et al., 2014; Bode, 2017; Wathne, 2020; Hansen et al., 2020)

## **Principles that Determine the Leadership of the Leaders in Organizations Providing Social Services**

Successful expression of leadership is closely linked to the progress of social cohesion in society. The participation and involvement of community members in the social services sector in volunteering is a necessary factor in promoting and increasing the social, civic, and economic activity of individuals. It is based on mutual understanding, common values, and goals of community members. Leadership must include social cohesion concept, which is characterized as the development of conditions for the environment. According to this concept, individuals, groups, or communities must be willing to trust and work together to achieve common goals, provide support and assistance and help to solve problems. Close links between social cohesion development and external/internal environment could help to address social exclusion in society and community.

Based on the insights of the authors of scientific literature (Adams et al., 2009; Raipa, 2011; Ife, 2012; Gvaldaitė et al., 2014; Rimkus, 2015; Fook, 2016; Gečienė & Raišienė, 2019; Čižikienė, 2020), EU strategy papers and legislation, the authors of the article single out the following principles that determine the leadership of social service providers:

*Principle of social justice:* The notion of social justice is based on the idea that social services are available to anyone who needs them. Receiving such assistance shall not be impeded by any circumstance, nor by the capacity of the person to pay for services;

*The principle of participation:* The principle of participation means that the manager is involved in the productive assistance process, involving the recipients and stakeholders;

*The principle of solidarity:* The principle of solidarity means that the manager is responsible for his own and others well-being by contributing to those who can not take care of themselves;

*Principle of cooperation:* The principle of cooperation means that the manager when planning the organization and protocol of social services, must rely on the cooperation of social services, municipal and state institutions, and social partners;

*Principle of complexity:* Family members and relatives participate in the process of providing social services because a person's social problem always affects his / her family and close environment. Family members also need help in getting rid of negative emotions, providing support;

*Eligibility:* Eligibility is defined as ensuring that the needs and priorities of an individual and his or her family are assessed and that social services are organized and provided with a proper assessment of their needs;

*Principle of universality:* The principle of universality states that services must be combined with other support measures, such as social assistance in cash, protection of children's rights, education and upbringing, employment, health care, provision of social housing, special assistance measures;

*Principle of availability:* The principle of availability means that services must be provided to a person as close as possible to his or her place of residence. This principle defines the significance of the community's role in the provision of social services;

*Principle of efficiency:* The principle of efficiency is understood as the ability to ensure that services in a social service organization are managed and delivered to achieve good results and rational use of available resources;

*Operational management:* The activities of social service organizations depend on the available financial, human, and time resources, which are rather limited. So the continuous development of social services must be encouraged, coherent strategies must be developed at local, regional, and national levels to achieve universal service availability, quality, and financial stability, given that social problems are often complex and therefore impossible to solve in the short term through fragmented activities;

*Continuity principle:* The principle of continuity means the aim of ensuring the stability of the organization's activities, as services must be organized in such a manner that they can be continued and, if necessary, assisted for the person and his family;

*Ethical principles:* While providing social services, security of rights needs to be assured, interests, and dignity of each person with due respect;

*Principle of quality assurance:* Ensuring the quality of the activities of a social services organization and the continuity and consistency of social services is considered to be a general principle in all member states of the European Union;

*Partnership principle:* This principle means that the provision of support is a collective process involving stakeholders, social partners, civil society organizations, the community, involving volunteers;

Accordingly, it can be noted that the principles that define leadership are based on the well-being of the recipient of the service and the evaluation of employee needs and interests. The successful operation of the organization can be ensured only if the service recipient himself is involved in the whole process of assistance and support not only as a recipient of social services but also as an active aid planner, organizer, and evaluator. The principles discussed also indicate that social service organizations cannot be closed or work alone, so every social service organization needs to have social partners, which can undoubtedly be related to the ideas of the new public management and private sector provisions that are transferred to the public sector. The principles discussed to make it possible to highlight certain general attitudes inherent in the leadership of social

service organization leaders. The following provisions can be distinguished: firstly, respect for the person and his individuality and recognition of differences, understanding that the provision and performance of social services must not be influenced by any features or peculiarities of the life of a person; secondly, recognizing that no assistance to a person will be effective if the person and his or her family members do not engage actively in the assistance process themselves; thirdly, leading managers must be directed by foundational humanistic values such as solidarity, respect for human rights, honesty, compassion, tolerance, etc. fourth, highlight the value of leadership in the society, believing that integration into society is much more efficient if the individual is assisted by members of the community who can contribute to the provision of social services because of the resources available (e.g., volunteering). Leadership emphasizes equal opportunities for individuals, and Organizational leaders are focusing on building a social service structure founded on democratic principles. They emphasize citizenship, evaluation more agile service delivery and quality service, and self-control, establishing a stable management environment. Analyzing the scientific literature, it should be noted that researchers confirm the distinctiveness of social service organizations and argue that this distinctiveness must be repeated in the process of organization and leadership (Lynch-Cerullo & Cooney, 2011; Sullivan, 2016; Gečienė & Raišienė, 2019), because the social services sector is based on values that promote human dignity, help combat discrimination, social stigma, and provide services to lessen suffering and social exclusion. Based on the scientific literature (Hasenfeld, 2010, 2015; Shanks et al., 2013; Hopkins et al., 2014; Shanks, 2016; Sullivan, 2016), it is possible to single out the determinants of leadership in social service managers that define leadership expression. In this case, the well-being of social service users and the motivation and needs of employees, social context, social harmony and community should be mentioned. Factors that determine the effectiveness of managerial leadership are also singled out: the stakeholders, management trends, and economic context

Consequently, leadership is geared to the well-being of service users and follows the concept of an 'open door', where service users are free to interact with the manager, make comments and share their concerns. Also, effective leaders need to not only think about productivity and efficiency but also take care of employee morale and satisfaction, consider their needs. It is necessary to emphasize that customer-centred leadership must involve service users and employees in the assessment of the organization's activities, make decisions together, take into account their suggestions and position on the issues under consideration. Recipient-centred leadership embodies the ideals of social work and reflects the concept of social integration concerning empowering the individual (family). Therefore, the leadership of social organization leaders is crucial in the social change process to ensure the organization's effectiveness and

efficiency. The key purpose of social leaders focused on social work principles and a humanistic approach to leadership from the spectrum of other service sectors must be the well-being of the user of the service.

### **Research Methodology**

To reveal the factors of leadership style in organizations providing social services, a qualitative study was selected (Bitinas, Rupšienė, & Žydžiūnaitė, 2008; Silverman, 2015; Žydžiūnaitė & Sabaliauskas, 2017). Qualitative research is applied to the analysis of little-researched topics - it helps to find new ideas and perspectives on how to better organize activities and achieve the intended goals (Bitinas, Rupšienė, & Žydžiūnaitė, 2008). Qualitative data analysis is revealed through experiences, meanings, and processes. Results are interpreted according to the meanings assigned to phenomena (Silverman, 2015).

The goal of the study is to convey managerial leadership in social services organizations. The study aims to reveal the characteristics of the expression of management leadership in social service organizations. Empirical research objectives: 1) to survey managers' opinions, which would help to determine the expression of managers' leadership in organizations providing social services; 2) to evaluate the preconditions determining the leadership of managers in organizations providing social services. Issues: *What are the main characteristics of a successful SSO leader? What leadership style, traits, and qualities do you choose in your organization? How does your leadership affect the organization's employees and service users?*

The interviews with the SSO (social service organization) executives were chosen because the executives have expert knowledge of the problem under investigation and their current duties allow them to speak on behalf of a professional activity or organization. Semi-structured interviews were chosen for the interviews of managers, it allowed to obtain detailed, systematized data, and the interview itself is informal, it takes place more in the form of dialogue (Rupšienė, 2007; Maxwell, 2008). Five SSO executives were interviewed through a semi-structured interview. Selected criteria for informants: management experience of at least 5 years, professional experience of social work at least 7 years (E1- management experience 5 years, work experience 15 years; E2- management experience 10 years, work experience 23 years; E3- management experience 7 years, work experience 12 years; E4- management experience 10 years, work experience 16 years; E5 management experience 6 years, work experience 10 years). It should be stressed that respondents decided to take part in the study when they were told of the study's ethics: the study course; the discretion and confidentiality of the data provided. The obtained data will be presented in such a manner that particular informant cannot be identified. Research limitations:

the study was conducted in Vilnius county and it may not accurately reflect the general situation in all organizations, therefore preliminary data obtained during this study are presented. To obtain more accurate and reliable information, more detailed quantitative studies are required.

## Research Results

All interview experts pointed out that the head of the SSO must have a vision of the organization if it wants to work effectively and take stakeholders into account: *Vision, because you must know what to accomplish (E1); The manager must have a clear vision, know the priorities of what he wants to achieve and be flexible, have a lot to anticipate (E5); Clear vision and the ability to pursue a vision by motivating staff (E3); It is a clear vision, a mission that the whole team contributes to, it is to put together a team in the sense of trusting everyone and revealing the benefits, but the meaning of the vision needs to be shown (E4)*. It can be argued that an organization's outlook is a very important subcategory that can provide a vision of the future, about its place as a leader and its relationship to the internal and external environment of the organisation, i. y. to model the system of his views and values, the system of competencies and abilities, anticipating future development in the structure of the social system. In order to respond effectively to a changing external environment, a manager needs to build on a vision when implementing a strategy and anticipating future organizational goals (Ejimabo, 2015).

As a key leadership style, informants cited democratic governance in the organization as an effort to involve all participants in the organization in decision-making, unleash the potential of each employee, and engage in ongoing change: *The manager must be like the leader and still be invisible ... in my opinion, a manager is good when an organization is running successfully at a time when everyone is already involved in the action, no one is collapsing, no disasters are happening, and all employees know what to do ... that is the most significant thing (E2); Because every change brings transformations ... it's important to want to change yourself and then already show employees it, involve them by calming and understanding them (E5)*. The study confirms that a democratic style of governance that promotes mutual assistance, cooperation, and the involvement of employees and service users in decision-making is the most appropriate in social service organizations.

By distinguishing the type of leadership, the study participants clearly emphasize transformational leadership, and the drive for change encourages managers to work effectively in the organization and their influence motivates employees and the environment to adopt new managerial practices. According to informants, the head of the SSO chooses transformational leadership, because

then it creates a connection with employees, service recipients, increases and promotes the motivation of followers to take responsibility to work together and achieve the intended goal: *Anyway, transformational leadership is used, for the most part. After all, things change in certain circumstances certain things, the manager working in the SSO covers a very large range of work (E2); And not everyone likes change because not everyone likes the decisions they make, it needs to grab everyone and inspire them to move forward (E4); Encouraging team development, involving members of the organization in planning, motivating and inspiring (E1).* The responses suggest that SSO executives, try to consider what can help inspire employees, see the advantages of communication, and therefore seek to see, evaluate, and persuade them to engage in the process. Most of the informants agreed that in order to achieve successful goals, it is necessary for employees to see the manager's efforts, as well as to show attention and confidence that the intended result will be achieved, and the efforts made will change the organization.

The study revealed that managers place a strong emphasis on the values of team and teamwork, as the delivery of social services involves collaboration and coordination of tasks within a team. Respondents indicated: *Ideal leadership is team-based, but whether it always succeeds here is the question (E3); You have to work already in a team, team leadership, look together (E5); I accept team leadership more, I mentioned before that without a team leader there is no one, you will not achieve anything without a team ... one is not a soldier in the field if you do not have a good team you will not achieve anything (E1).* The scientific literature (Braun et al., 2013) emphasizes the orientation of transformational leaders towards teamwork but faces challenges in reconciling individual personal goals and the desired mission in the process of building an atmosphere of trust and support, communication, task control, and interpersonal conflict resolution. Therefore, transformational leadership has an influence on the organisation and responsibility of teamwork, involving individuals and creating a teamwork environment in which one can achieve the desired change by showing individual concern and respect.

The goal of the study was to decide which management competencies have an important effect on the SSO's effective leadership. To find out the manager to have the skills to help achieve the strategic objectives of the company. Respondents singled out personal, social, professional competencies.

Respondents consider personal competencies to be the abilities that determine the desire to take responsibility in an organization and include emotional self-understanding by recognizing their emotions and understanding their impact as a leader in an organization: *Such personal qualities, very fast thinking and that's a trait of mine, I think very fast, and others do not keep up with me. I already understand that then I demonstrate that it is not a matter worth*

*noting. Man needs to set out the problem because I have already understood it, but man needs to set everything out (E2); accurate self-awareness, knowledge of one's strengths and limits: Excessive impulsivity interferes, again this personal trait is ... maybe I don't allow employees to express themselves fully ... and there is one employee slower, another faster (E4); and self-confidence based on self-esteem and personal possibilities: To the leader himself as a person and you just realize that sometimes you are like a blacksmith who can tilt people's lives in a certain direction ... and your decisions are very fateful (E5); A leader's calm, stubbornness, control of emotions is paramount (E1).*

Social competencies were identified by respondents as skills that determine the management of social relations and the maintenance of appropriate communication in the system. They singled out that understanding both, the external and internal environment is important for managing the relationship, on which the success of the deployment, collaboration with stakeholders, and team involvement in the service delivery process depends. Social awareness includes empathy for the service user, the attitude of the employees, the perception of emotions: *These qualities, sometimes very much and that knowledge and that ability, emotion control (E2); Because the manager has to be very competent, have a lot of knowledge, but also keep in mind that these are people with their own experiences and lives (E4).*

Professional competencies in social work are necessary for the head of the SSO, as respondents stated that managers need to be based on social values and have professional competencies related to social work, and knowledge of the social service organization. Then successful leadership is possible: *The supervisor must necessarily be a social worker and know the specifics and competencies of social work (E1); Leadership with social work practices has grown (E3).* It should be emphasized that all respondents have the qualification of a social worker and at least five years of experience in the SSO, so they all agreed that to lead the SSO a person needs to have a social work qualification and understand the specifics of the social services sector: *We know, for example, when it comes to a completely non-social leader, it is very difficult for him to comprehend this system and very difficult to understand (E2); Very well and you should move from the lowest level in the office or work, take a few different jobs to understand how it is and what the recipients of the services are, it should go in that direction (E1); Let's say those directors and managers who have a pedagogical degree ... where is a lack of social work and managerial knowledge, that willingness to change and accept challenges, well, we need competencies (E5).*



## Conclusions

The theoretical and empirical analysis of the expression of managerial leadership revealed that successful activities of social service organizations are focused on helping to solve social problems in society and community, therefore managerial leadership of organizations is influenced by social cohesion processes and principles which are based on respect to the individual and his/her uniqueness, recognizing that individual or lifestyle characteristics should not affect the provision of quality social services. In the process of social transformation, managerial leadership of organizations is important in ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization, but the main goal of social leaders is defined to achieve the well-being of social service recipients and is based on democratic principles and humanistic values.

The research revealed that managers, understanding the mission of a social service organization, have a vision of how to work effectively, encourage and involve all members of the organization in the operational process. In making strategic changes, managers have insight into the needs of social policy, and, in response to the changing external and internal environment of the organization, they look for an appropriate leadership strategy to help achieve the goals and mission of the organization. Based on the research results, it can be stated that managers choose a democratic management style that encourages teamwork and cooperation, and helps employees and service recipients to get involved in decision-making about the provided quality social services. The research showed that the respondents single out transformational leadership, which is determined by the pursuit of change and opportunities to apply new social work practices in the organization. It was found that the personal, social, and social work professional competencies, singled out by managers, are based on social values and define leadership expression in the social service sector.

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# О ТЕОРЕМЕ КОУЗА КАК ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКОЙ ОСНОВЕ КИОТСКОГО И ПАРИЖСКОГО ПРОТОКОЛОВ

## *On the Coase Theorem as a Theoretical Basis for the Kyoto and Paris Protocols*

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**Abstract.** *Purpose of the study: a critical examination of the so-called Coase theorem, which is largely the theoretical basis of the idea of trading in emission quotas for greenhouse gas emissions. Since the research is theoretical, research methods: critical analysis of texts written by researchers who adhere to the economic mainstream and theoretical construction. In our opinion, Coase's theorem is essentially reduced to indicating that two conditions are implicitly assumed in the proof of the optimality of the ideal market model: 1) the absence of transaction costs; 2) fully defined property rights to all resources, in any way involved in the transactions in question. The problem is that these two conditions in a situation of environmental problems are completely unrealistic. Therefore, the question of optimal environmental and economic regulation cannot be considered closed. Moreover, it is impossible to present this problem as already solved when writing textbooks for students and graduate students. Those who study must be aware of the real complexity of the problem of unwanted externalities destroying the Earth's biosphere. Only in this case, having become managers and politicians, they will be able to stop negative processes in the biosphere and implement the declarations adopted in Rio de Janeiro, Kyoto and Paris in the common interests of all people living on Earth.*

**Keywords:** *cap-and-trade, Coase theorem, ecology, environmental externalities, Kyoto Protocol, Paris Protocol, Pigu, sustainable education.*

## **Введение** *Introduction*

Ранее (Egorov, Romanov, Yarmolich, & Egorova, 2020; Egorov & Egorova, 2020) было высказано мнение, что изменения в биосфере Земли (и изменения климата как один из аспектов этих очевидно происходящих в биосфере изменений) так или иначе вызовут существенные изменения в экономике, - и это повлечет за собой трансформации в парадигме социально-экономического развития современной мировой цивилизации. При этом, чтобы человечество сумело достичь баланса между экономическим развитием и сохранением окружающей среды (ибо в ином случае само его существование окажется под вопросом (Gluhovcev & Salahova, 2016; Ioseliani, 2019)), требуется изменение не только экономической политики, но и лежащей в ее основе экономической теории. Поэтому нами был поставлен вопрос: что желательно было бы изменить в учебниках по экономике, чтобы те, кто учится, став менеджерами и политиками, не разрушали бы своими действиями биосферу Земли.

Также было показано, что парадигма экстенсивного социально-экономического развития связана с идеологемами экономического mainstream (неоклассической экономической теории, являющейся последние 50 лет теоретическим основанием основных институтов современной мировой экономики), в частности, с методологическим индивидуализмом (субъективизмом), принявшим в современной экономической теории форму отказа от категории «стоимость» (Egorov et al., 2020; Egorov, 2020).

В настоящей работе мы развиваем эту тему связи экономики устойчивого развития и экономической теории, могущей лежать в основе устойчивого образования. Мы предполагаем подвергнуть критическому исследованию одно из теоретических оснований мировой политики в сфере климатических изменений: так называемую теорему Коуза (Coase, 1960; 1988), которая в значительной степени является теоретической основой идеи торговли эмиссионными квотами на выбросы парниковых газов. Такая торговля по состоянию на сегодня – один из основных международных экономических механизмов по практической реализации Киотского (ООН, 1998), и пришедшего ему на смену Парижского (ООН, 2015) протоколов к Рамочной конвенции ООН об изменении климата: по состоянию на 2020 год существовало пять бирж, торгующих углеродными кредитами (Европейская климатическая биржа, NASDAQ OMX Commodities Europe, PowerNext, Братиславская товарная биржа и европейская энергетическая биржа).

Так как исследование является теоретическим, методы исследования: критический анализ текстов, написанных исследователями, придерживающимися экономического мейнстрим, и теоретическое конструирование.

### **Об антропогенности глобального потепления** *On the Anthropogenic Nature of Global Warming*

Аспект, заслуживающий обсуждения в настоящей работе: наше отношение к концепции антропогенности глобального потепления. Потепление *per se*, очевидно, последние десятилетия имеет место, - но приложение к его регулированию экономических механизмов адекватно только исходя из гипотезы об определяющей роли в нем именно антропогенной компоненты. Предположение, что климат на Земле меняется в результате антропогенной деятельности (выбросов в атмосферу парниковых газов, в первую очередь CO<sub>2</sub>), было положено в основу Рамочной конвенции ООН об изменении климата. В то же время, имеет место и достаточно серьезная критика гипотезы антропогенного изменения климата, со следующей аргументацией: природа глобальной климатической системы очень сложна, ее изменения не могут быть объяснены каким-то одним фактором (Kondrat'ev, 2010); рост температуры атмосферы в последние десятилетия с высокой степенью вероятности является частью большого природного цикла (Sorokhtin, Chilingar, Khilyuk, & Gorfunkel, 2007; Demirchan, Kondrat'ev, & Demirchan, 2010); etc.

Конкретно в нашем исследовании мы, тем не менее, принимаем выраженную в Киотском и Парижском протоколах официальную позицию Межправительственной группы экспертов по изменению климата (Швейцария), как рабочую гипотезу. Концепция Коуза может быть приложена отнюдь не только лишь к вопросам изменения климата, и такого рода методическое исследование имеет ценность безотносительно доли антропогенной компоненты в потеплении атмосферы Земли.

Обозначим также в явном виде нашу методологическую позицию: Научная теория (по сути и смыслу) – это модель реальности. А по форме научная теория – это система дедуктивно организованных двух типов предложений:

- 1) принимаемые априорно принципы (аксиомы);
- 2) логически следующие из принципов выводные предложения (теоремы).

Для того чтобы теория могла существовать, достаточно непротиворечивости ее принципов. Также как для одной территории может существовать несколько карт, также и в одной предметной области

может быть создано несколько теорий. При этом точное совпадение любой теории с реальностью (которая потенциально бесконечно сложна) невозможно (и не нужно). В то же время, вопросы: насколько адекватно описание реальности в рамках теории, какая из теорий более адекватно описывает реальность? – вполне законны.

Более подробное изложение принимаемой нашей исследовательской группой научной философии заинтересованный читатель может найти в работах (Stepin, 2000; Egorov, 2017; Egorov & Egorova, 2019).

А теперь перейдем к собственно теме нашего исследования: рассмотрим, при каких условиях теорема Коуза может быть адекватной теоретической основой для реализации идей, заложенных в Киотском и Парижском протоколах, и насколько эти условия релевантны реалиям современного глобального социума.

## **Результаты** ***Results***

Теоремой Коуза называют утверждение, которое впервые сформулировал Джордж Стиглер в своей работе (Stigler, 1966):

«Если права собственности четко определены и трансакционные издержки равны нулю, то размещение ресурсов (структура производства) будет оставаться неизменным и эффективным независимо от изменений в распределении прав».

Стиглер опирался на более раннюю работу Р. Коуза (Coase, 1960), в силу чего это утверждение и было названо теоремой Коуза.

Наконец, непосредственно идея торговли эмиссионными квотами на загрязнения окружающей среды была высказана в 1968 году канадским экономистом Джоном Дэйлсом (Dales, 1968).

Здесь следует заметить следующие два аспекта:

1) Сам Р. Коуз в своей работе (Coase, 1960) никакого ключевого утверждения, которое являлось бы выводом из его исследования, не выделял. Сделал он это почти четверть века спустя, в работе «Заметки к "Проблеме социальных издержек"» (Coase, 1988), в которой действительно дал формулировку, близкую к формулировке Дж. Стиглера.

2) Хотя формулировки Коуза-Стиглера именуют «теоремой Коуза», доказательства этого утверждения в работе (Coase, 1960) нет: во всяком случае, в том понимании понятия «доказательство», которое принято в современной науке. В своей знаменитой работе Р. Коуз (Coase, 1960) приводит только ряд примеров того, как можно, определяя права собственности, решать конфликты по поводу спорных ресурсов, вредных экстерналий, etc. В то же время как минимум с работы К. Поппера (Popper,



1934) известно и признано, что никакое количество отдельных примеров не является доказательством теории (а что отдельные примеры не доказывают теорем – известно со времен Пифагора). Как отметил В.И. Данилов-Данильян, предложить строгую формулировку, относительно которой можно было бы ставить вопрос о логически (математически) корректном доказательстве, по-видимому, невозможно (Danilov-Danil'jan, 2012).

В то же время, для случая двух участников доказать это утверждение можно: так, В.И. Данилов (Danilov, 2008), проанализировав варианты формулировок теоремы Коуза, пришёл к выводу, что теоретико-игровые формализации примеров Коуза приводят к известной аксиоматической модели торга Дж. Нэша (Nash, 1950).

Принципиальные трудности возникают, когда число участников превышает 2, и они имеют разные типы интересов. В случае экологических проблем ситуация практически всегда именно такова.

Далее: отдельную (и очень серьезную) сложность представляет задача количественной квантификации показателей торга (Danilov-Danil'jan, 2012). По нашему мнению, она может быть сформулирована как проблема квантификации стоимости.

Уже в 1997 году Эксперты Всемирного Совета предпринимателей за устойчивое развитие (WBSCD) указали как на одну из главных проблем реализации идей конференции в Рио-де-Жанейро 1982 года по устойчивому развитию – отсутствие надлежащей технологии измерения стоимости окружающей среды. Причем меры, которые искажают представления об окружающей среде, дает именно экономическая наука (Kuznesov, O., Kuznesov, P., & Bol'shakov, 2000).

Это по факту приводит к ситуации, когда точные стоимостные оценки для предполагаемого экологического ущерба неизвестны. Но отказ от предпосылки, согласно которой для всех вовлечённых в хозяйство ресурсов точная стоимость известна, приводит к задачам управления в условиях неопределённости (Danilov-Danil'jan & Hranovich, 2007), а отнюдь не к автоматическому оптимуму.

Как было отмечено одним из авторов в предшествующих исследованиях (Egorov, Dyatlov, Bogdanov, Shushpanov, & Egorova, 2018; Egorov et al., 2020; Egorov, 2020), проблема здесь в принципиальном отказе господствующего течения в экономической теории (экономического mainstream) от категории стоимость, и, вследствие этого, отсутствия объективной меры как в экономической теории, так и в практике (мы имеем здесь в виду в первую очередь плавающие курсы валют при отсутствии у резервной валюты эталона).

По нашему мнению, теорема Коуза сводится, в сущности, к указанию на то, что в доказательстве оптимальности модели идеального рынка (Allais, 1943; Arrow & Debreu, 1954) неявно предполагаются два условия (помимо иных условий, необходимых для доказательства моделей М. Алле, и еще большего их числа в случае модели Эрроу-Дебре):

- 1) отсутствия трансактных издержек;
- 2) полностью определенные права собственности на все ресурсы, каким-либо образом вовлеченные в рассматриваемые транзакции.

В случае, если все эти условия соблюдаются, идеальный рынок бесспорно приведет к оптимальному и максимально эффективному распределению ресурсов в любой системе. Проблема в том, что эти два условия в ситуации экологических проблем совершенно нереалистичны:

Спецификация прав собственности на биосферу между отдельными индивидуумами очевидно нелепа (ибо биосферу нельзя порезать на куски, она целостна). В то же время модели идеального рынка предполагают методологический индивидуализм, то есть сведение любых экономических интересов к индивидуальным. Конечно, экономическими акторами могут быть и фирмы, и даже страны (в моделях международной торговли, каковой и является торговля парниковыми квотами), – но биосфера не может быть поделена на части и между странами. Точнее, сделать это можно, но это будет волевое решение, очевидно навязанное кем-то кому-то, и говорить о его «математически рассчитанной оптимальности», конечно же, нельзя. Так, в дискуссиях по квотам на выбросы парниковых газов учитываются промышленные мощности стран (опять-таки, по состоянию на конец XX – начало XXI веков, что для развивающихся стран очевидно невыгодно экономически (Bomer-Kristiansen, 2000)), но не учитываются вклады имеющих на соответствующих территориях экосистем в поглощении CO<sub>2</sub> (Pavlenko, 2017).

В более общем теоретическом контексте речь может идти о неполной адекватности методологического индивидуализма *per se*, и основанных на основе этого принципа теориях современного экономического *mainstream* (Egorov, 2013; Efimov, 2016), а также о необходимости разработки альтернативных базовых экономических теорий, основанных на принципе методологического холизма (Grinberg & Rubinstein, 2005; Gorodeckij & Rubinshtejn, 2017; Egorov & Egorova, 2019).

Таким образом, по нашему мнению можно заключить: утверждение, именуемое «теорема Коуза», следует брать в кавычки, ибо теоремой оно не является. Соответственно, рассуждения, что торговля квотами эмиссионных выбросов есть наилучшее средство для решения экологических проблем (в целом), и проблемы глобального потепления (в частности), – ибо они «научно обоснованы», – не соответствуют

действительности. Это демонстрируют и последние социологические опросы: так, большинство американцев верят в изменение климата, однако неоднозначны в отношении практики торговли выбросами (WTO, 2020).

Коуз, бесспорно, был выдающимся экономистом. Его вклад в экономическую теорию связан с двумя его знаменитыми работами, и сводится, по нашему мнению, к уточнению условий, при которых рыночное (сетевое) регулирование экономики приводит к оптимальному распределению ресурсов в социуме. В первой из этих работ (Coase, 1937) им сформулировано понятие трансактных издержек, и показано, что при их наличии рынок может быть менее эффективным способом координации, нежели директивное управление. Во второй работе (Coase, 1960), которая и обсуждается в настоящем исследовании, Коуз показал, что рыночное регулирование эффективно только при полной спецификации прав собственности. Однако его научное наследие было в значительной степени использовано в идеологизированной апологетике рынка. Здесь уместна аналогия с другой известной работой (Arrow & Debreu, 1954), результаты которой (доказательство существования оптимального рыночного равновесия, - но при очень большом количестве совершенно нереалистичных условий) тоже были объявлены «теоретическим доказательством» превосходства рыночного регулирования над плановым, и вообще для апологетики неолиберализма последних десятилетий XX века.

Возвращаясь собственно к экологической проблематике, отметим, что, помимо практики торговли квотами на выбросы, существуют иные, и также научно обоснованные подходы к построению эколого-экономического регулирования, в частности, предложенный около века назад подход Артура Пигу (Pigu, 1984). Вопрос об оптимальном эколого-экономическом регулировании нельзя считать закрытым; проблема заслуживает дальнейших научных исследований (Analiticheskoye upravleniye Apparata Soveta Federatsii, 2014).

Тем более нельзя представлять эту проблему как уже решенную при написании учебников для студентов и аспирантов. В ряде учебников и курсов лекций по институциональной экономике материал излагается таким образом, что может создаться впечатление: проблема нежелательных экстерналий, в сущности, решена (в частности, работами Коуза и его последователей: см., например (Malkina, Loginova, & Lyadova, 2015).

Те, кто учится, должны представлять реальную сложность проблем нежелательных экстерналий, разрушающих биосферу Земли. Только в этом случае они, став менеджерами и политиками, смогут остановить негативные процессы в биосфере, и реализовать в общих интересах всех

живущих на Земле людей декларации, принятые в Рио-де-Жанейро, Киото и Париже.

## **Выводы** *Conclusions*

Какие выводы следуют из вышеизложенного?

а) Утверждение, именуемое «теорема Коуза», следует брать в кавычки, ибо теоремой оно не является.

б) Вопрос об оптимальном эколого-экономическом регулировании нельзя считать закрытым: практике торговли квотами на выбросы есть альтернативы. Проблема нежелательных экономических экстерналий заслуживает дальнейших научных исследований.

## **Summary**

In our opinion, for humanity to be able to achieve a balance between economic development and environmental conservation, it is necessary to change not only economic policy, but also the underlying economic theory. In this paper, we develop this theme of the relationship between sustainable economics and economic theory that can underlie sustainable education, and we critically examine one of the theoretical foundations of global climate change policy: the so-called Coase theorem (1960), which is largely degree is the theoretical basis for the idea of trading in emission quotas for greenhouse gas emissions. Coase's theorem is called the statement: "If property rights are clearly defined and transaction costs are zero, then the allocation of resources (production structure) will remain unchanged and efficient regardless of changes in the distribution of rights."

However, there is no evidence of this statement in the work (Coase, 1960): there are only a number of examples of how it is possible, by defining property rights, to resolve conflicts over disputed resources, harmful externalities, etc. In our opinion, Coase's theorem essentially boils down to indicating that in the proof of the optimality of the ideal market model (Allais, 1943; Arrow & Debreu, 1954), two conditions are implicitly assumed: 1) the absence of transaction costs; 2) fully defined property rights to all resources, in any way involved in the transactions in question. If all these conditions are met, the ideal market will undoubtedly lead to the optimal and most efficient allocation of resources in any system. The problem is that these two conditions in a situation of environmental problems are completely unrealistic.

Therefore, the question of optimal environmental and economic regulation cannot be considered closed. Moreover, it is impossible to present this problem as already solved when writing textbooks for students and graduate students. Those who study must be aware of the real complexity of the problem of unwanted externalities destroying the Earth's biosphere. Only in this case, having become managers and politicians, they will be able to stop negative processes in the biosphere and implement the declarations adopted in Rio de Janeiro, Kyoto and Paris in the common interests of all people living on Earth.

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# THE STUDY ABOUT ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN LITHUANIA

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**Abstract.** *Electric cars are very important for the circular economy. If we are using the electric vehicle we can reduce emission savings and protect the environment. Electric vehicles can contribute to energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions unfortunately, despite everything, the development of the electric vehicle market in Lithuania remains relatively slow. Electric vehicles are more expensive than traditional vehicles, there is a lack of the necessary infrastructure, and consumers do not have enough information on the benefits of green cars. The main purpose of this article is to research electric vehicles market in Lithuania. The methods of research include scientific literature analysis, statistics data comparative analysis. Electrical vehicle market in Lithuania is growing. From 2017 until 2020 M<sub>1</sub> class electric cars was purchased 35 %. At the same period the market of new electric car increased 50 %, used electric vehicle increased only 27 %.*

**Keywords:** *consumer, electric vehicles, promoting measures.*

## Introduction

Electric cars market is very important due to the European Union (EU) Strategy. This is because electric vehicles are a quick way to meet two challenges at once: to achieve national gas reduction targets and to solve the problem of high pollution in urban centres.

According to F. Brans et al. 35 % of vehicles will be electric, so it is important to create alternative to classical transport that is more expensive from economic, environmental and health security point of views (Bran, Popescu, & Diaconu, 2018).

Electric vehicles use energy more efficiently than fossil fuel vehicles, so replacing cars with electric vehicles could contribute to improving energy efficiency.

The potential of renewable energy sources to power electric vehicles has associated co-benefits in terms of reduced air pollution. However, the extent to which this may occur varies greatly by country.

The study aim to find out Lithuanian people willingness to use M<sub>1</sub> class electric cars, by using statistic data analysis from 2017 until 2020.

In order to achieve a purpose these objectives have been identified:

1. After literature review to identify the incentive factors and incentive measures for affecting purchase of electric vehicles.
2. To analyse and to compare results of the research.

The methods of research include scientific literature analysis, statistics data by evaluating the relative and dynamic chain sizes of the structure.

## **Literature Review**

Recently growing population generate the increase number of vehicles in cities and consumption of fuel. We have new regulations that encourage development of infrastructure and sale for electric vehicles.

The main required activities for green vehicles market are management of green infrastructure net; the regulation that facilitate companies, public entities and population to have access to vehicles but also to the infrastructure; management of financing procedures (Bran et al., 2018).

Following this F. Farkas (2018) identified the key factors for increasing electric cars. There are important financially supporting, the charging network. The most important are range of available services and wait-in-line time (Farkas, Gál, Tóth, Szabó, Bíró, Véha, & Molnár, 2018).

Consumers consistently rank vehicle purchase price, fuel economy, and reliability as attributes of primary importance in motivating their purchasing decisions (Krause, Lane, Carley, & Graham, 2016).

Cost, recharge time are all important factors in increasing the appeal of the electric car but reductions in purchase price have the largest effect size. Consumers should be better informed about the variety of fuel-efficient vehicles (Peters, Haan, & Scholz, 2015).

Several motivational factors have been identified to explain purchasing decisions about electric vehicles. Research suggests that government incentives, environmental concerns, and general interest in technological innovations are influential in driving vehicle-purchasing decisions (Dumortier, Siddiki, Carley, Cisney, Krause, Lane, & Graham, 2015).

Nowadays there is a significant number of news and programme attends with the expansion of the electric vehicles that enjoy governmental priority (Farkas et al., 2018)

In order to encourage the development of electric vehicles, governments implement incentives policy instruments that increase the competitiveness and popularity of these measures for consumer choice (Mačiulis, Konstantinavičiūtė, Pilinkienė, & Stundžienė, 2019).



Today the problem of integrating the environmental and economic must be important for cities (Bran et al., 2018).

If government and cities are thinking about electric cars integration and population, they must give some financial incentives. Local authorities is very important for consumers. They can communicate with electric cars buyers, consulting them about electric cars advantages (Mačiulis et al., 2018).

Due to customer's buying the electric cars and this is more advantages than disadvantages for the cities. However, at the same time the management of cities must think about new challenges (Farkas et al., 2018).

Traditional cars are cheaper in comparison to electric vehicles. Electric cars buyers need more information about advantages of these cars. In some countries infrastructure is not so good too. The above-mentioned must be important to think about the implementation of financial and non-financial electric cars promotion measures (Mačiulis et al., 2018).

Both federal and state policy makers are considering whether to retain, enlarge, or reduce the tax credits and rebates that are offered to consumers who purchase an electric vehicle (Krause et al., 2016).

Implementation of national policy may help to consumers' to buy more electric vehicle. Reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the city will not reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions globally if industry simply moves elsewhere. The energy policies is very important and must be adopted in the transport policies (Sabel et. al., 2016).

Green cars market, however environmentally imperative, economically profitable and socially essential it might be, simply cannot be developed using sheer (political) power of will (Bran et al., 2018).

It must be acknowledged that the sale of clean cars can be influenced not only by active direct measures taken by the government, but also by many other factors, such as fuel prices, car model prices, population income. Some of these indicators can also be influenced by the government, which also leads to demand for electric vehicles (Mačiulis et al., 2019).

The theoretical model illustrates that the environmental benefits of an electric vehicle arises from reduced damages relative to the gasoline vehicle it replaces. Electric vehicle subsidies may be justified due to innovation spillovers. If innovation is a public good, then markets may provide too little innovation. However, it is worth noting that electric vehicle subsidies are a "demand pull" innovation policy and hence are subject to all the limitations of demand pull policies (Holland, Mansur, Muller, & Yates, 2016).

The grants, rebates, home charging equipment will increased the need for electric cars (Windisch, 2013).

The development of the market for electric cars brings benefits related to human health and wellbeing, air quality and the environment, as well as economic growth (Sabel et al., 2016; Mačiulis et al., 2019).

In addition, electric vehicles have become simply a convenient alternative to conventional vehicles, and developments in this market are driving changing consumer needs and expectations. The advantages of electric vehicles are free parking and opportunity to the access to bus lanes (Mačiulis et al., 2018; Mačiulis et al., 2019).

## **Methodology**

The study took place – the study was conducted in 2020 based on statistics data from 2017 until 2020. The State Enterprise REGITRA is given the statistics data information.

The State Enterprise REGITRA started its activities on 7 January 2000 after its registration with the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania. The enterprise keeps the register of vehicles of the Republic of Lithuania (The State Enterprise REGITRA, 2020)

The study analysed the statistics registered in from 2017 until 2020 to M<sub>1</sub> passenger vehicles with a power source for electricity only. Based on the data of the register, the age group of natural persons, amount of income, sex, etc. are not disclosed. Therefore, these criteria were not consider in the assessment.

Class M<sub>1</sub> means a vehicle for the caring for passengers, compose not more than eight passenger seats and one driver's seat (passenger car) (The Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania).

The actual electric vehicle uses electricity as the only power source, which is charged from the electricity grid into the electric vehicle battery. A plug-in hybrid electric vehicle is a hybrid vehicle, which has an electric engine, battery and a regular internal combustion engine. Such vehicles are more universal, however, their maintenance is very complicated and pricey. Benefits, e.g. parking the vehicle in a city free of charge, also this does not apply to hybrid vehicles (The Environmental Project Management Agency, 2020).

The relative sizes of a structure indicate the distribution of the whole under consideration, especially the relative weight of the parts of that whole in the whole. The relative sizes of a structure are calculated by dividing the number of units in the whole by the number of units in the whole. The relative values of the structure are expressed in parts (coefficients) or percentages of the unit. The relative sizes of the structure are calculated to the extent that the components (parts of the whole) make up the whole in question. Adding the coefficients or percentages of the individual parts gives 1 or 100%, respectively (Gabrevičienė, 2012).

$$S \text{ structure} = \frac{\text{the part of the whole } (A_i)}{\text{the whole } A} \quad (1)$$

where  $S$  structure - the relative size of the structure,  
 $A_i$  – the part of the whole,  
 $A$  – the whole,

The relative magnitudes of the dynamics indicate the change in the phenomenon under consideration over time. They are obtained by comparing the data of the present (reporting) period of the same object with the data of the previous period. With data from the same phenomenon for more than two periods, baseline and chain ratios can be calculated. When calculating the chain dynamics, the denominator of the indicator changes, i.e. the data of each subsequent period are compared with the data of the preceding period (Gabrevičienė, 2012).

$$S \text{ dynamic chain} = \frac{q_n}{q_{n-1}} \quad (2)$$

where  $S$  dynamic chain – the chain dynamics the relative magnitude,  
 $q_n$  – current period data (subsequent),  
 $q_{n-1}$  – data of the

## Research Results

As reported by the statistical data from 2017 until 2020, a comparative analysis is performed on the number of registered from 2017 until 2020 M<sub>1</sub> class passenger cars with a power source only for natural persons.

The study findings were systematized and analysed via MS Excel. The analysis of the results used descriptive statistics (percentage distribution).

The aim was to find out the distribution of fuel types and the extent of electric cars. Thus, the trends in fuel distribution in from 2017 until 2020 are assessed. It can be stated that according to all analysed fuels, electric vehicles account for 0.31 % and petrol/electricity for 3.53 %. Comparing the type of fuel in from 2017 until 2020 - the number of electric vehicles 3.75 % more in 2018 than in 2017, and in 2019 4.61 % more than in 2018. 26.70 % in 2020 more than in 2019.

The arithmetic were achieved in the following order:

1. The values for each individual fuel for 2017-2020 shall be summed to give the total number for the selected fuel type for the selected period. General fuel vehicles are summed in a similar way.
2. The relevant fuel (diesel, petrol, etc.) and the sum of that period are then calculated according to formula 1 for the part of the total (A). Total (A) all total fuels and amount for the period 2017-2020.

Table 1-show M<sub>1</sub> class vehicles in Lithuania from 2017 until 2020. These vehicles was catalogued for the first time in Lithuania.

*Table 1 M<sub>1</sub> Class Vehicles from 2017 until 2020 in Lithuania (REGITRA, 2020)*

Year	2017		2018		2019		2020	
	New cars	Used cars	New cars	Used cars	New cars	Used cars	New cars	Used cars
<b>Diesel</b>	9004	116094	7756	124645	8229	129506	6946	93047
<b>Petrol</b>	16034	33886	21924	39346	34433	51703	24453	39830
<b>Petrol / Gaseous</b>	14	3481	14	3377	9	3958	81	2702
<b>Petrol / Electricity</b>	536	2511	2342	3320	3131	4331	7950	4142
<b>Electricity</b>	47	277	143	273	162	367	453	731
<b>Total</b>	25635	156249	32179	170961	45964	189865	39883	140452

*Source: The State Enterprise REGITRA*

Thus, it is obvious that in from 2017 until 2020, the number of electric vehicles will increase and will continue to increase. As reported by the information provided for the site of the Ministry of Transport and Communications on 2021-01-01, 2496 electric vehicles heightened by 106 compared to 2020. Thus, the general trend is increasing every year and this controlled by the measures to promote electric vehicles.

In assessing the trends of registered 2017-2020 M<sub>1</sub> class passenger cars with power source only electricity, a dynamic chain relative size was applied. Thus, according to formula 2, 2017 was q<sub>0</sub>, 2018 was q<sub>1</sub>, 2019 was q<sub>2</sub>, 2020 was q<sub>3</sub>. Further comparison of the number of new / used vehicles in 2017 with 2018. Later comparison of the number of new / used vehicles in 2018 with the results obtained in 2019, etc.

Number of registered from 2017 until 2020 M<sub>1</sub> class passenger cars with power source only in from 2017 until 2020. After the tendency of new and used electric vehicles acquisition in Lithuania in from 2017 until 2020, it can be seen that in 2017-2018 new electric vehicles increased by 12.61 % and used ones decreased by 0.25 %. The statistical data show that during 2018 -2019 new electric cars increased 2.50 %. Number of used electric cars in the same period decreased 14.88 %. Assessing the year 2019-2020, it can be seen that the number of both new and used electric cars increased, new ones by as much as 32.46 % and used ones by as much as 18.27 %. Such an increment in the number of used cars may have been determined by the incentives for the purchase of electric cars and / or the attitude of the population towards environmentally friendly vehicles.

According to a survey which was done by one of Lithuanian bank in 2020 years 43 percent. Lithuanians tend to give preference to cars with a hybrid engine. A third (33 %) would like to buy a car with a petrol engine, and two years ago, diesel cars, which were in the third place on the list two years ago, were replaced by electric cars: a quarter would choose them, 26 %. respondents. Even 40 % respondents consider the car's environmental friendliness to be a very important criterion, and such a population has increased by 10 percentage points (Mickus, 2020).

Based on the information provided on the website of the (The Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania, 2021) it can be seen that the need to purchase electric vehicles is further increasing based on the number of applications received. 2021-01-06 Promotion of the purchase of electric vehicles for natural persons 543 applications received; number of new electric cars - 142; number of used electric cars - 401; added for car destruction - 98; reserved / disbursed from the Climate Change Program - 1.48 mln. EUR (out of 5 million).

The number of new electric vehicles at the beginning of January 2021 was one less compared to the number of new electric vehicles in 2018 because of the full year. The number of used electric vehicles is 34 higher compared to the total results at the end of 2019.

The study results shows that it can be stated that the need for the purchase of M1 class cars with the power source only electricity by natural persons is increasing and the incentive programs determine this.

## **Conclusions**

1. Due to significant changes in the world, there is an increasing focus on electric vehicles. The increase in the need to purchase electric vehicles is determined by the infrastructure, charging time. Other key links between economic aspects such as car model, prices, household income, fuel economy, reliability, subsidy and tax cuts. The financial incentives is important for electric cars using increasing.
2. The study results present Lithuanian M1 class cars information. The electric cars are not as popular as diesel of petrol fuel cars but the statistics data from 2017 until 2020 show that Lithuanian M1 class the electrical car purchase is growing up. At this period was purchased 35 %. The statistical data analysis shows that new electric cars increased 50 %, used electric vehicle increased 27 %. The growing was due to Lithuanian government incentives for buying electric vehicles.

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## IMPROVEMENT OF THE SECURING A CLAIM IN LATVIAN LEGAL POLICY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

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**Abstract.** *In the framework of his scientific work, the author makes a research on the problematic aspects of the procedure of the securing a claim, including in legal policy planning documents, which play an important role in the development of the procedure of the securing a claim. Topicality and novelty of the research are reflected in the fact that until now in the legal doctrine weren't made depth and extensive researches of the role of legal policy planning documents in solving problems of the securing a claim. The aim of the research was to analyze legal policy documents regarding to the procedure of the securing a claim in order to identify plans of the public administration to improve the procedure of the securing a claim and civil procedure in general. In the present research, using the analytical, descriptive and deduction / induction method, was analyzed the normative acts and legal policy planning documents of the public administration. Results: Analyzing the legal policy planning documents related to the procedure of the securing a claim, it has been established that public administration has not planned to carry out reforms of the provision of the securing a claim, except for the planned regulation on the possibilities of the securing claim in the non-material nature claims, which, unfortunately, is still not fulfilled. Conclusions: The public administration should clearly define in legal policy documents the objectives and tools for making modern and effective civil procedure in general and the procedure of the securing a claim in particular.*

**Keywords:** *civil procedure law, government, legal policy planning documents, Ministry of Justice, public administration, securing a claim.*

### Introduction

In the framework of his scientific work, the author makes a research on the problematic aspects of the procedure of the securing a claim, including in legal policy planning documents, which play an important role in the development of the procedure of the securing a claim in particular and civil procedure in general. The research may be used as teaching aid for the students studying academic disciplines of economics, law and public administration.

### Aim, Materials and Methods

The purpose of the research is to analyze legal policy documents regarding to the procedure of the securing a claim in order to identify plans of the public



administration to improve the procedure of the securing a claim and civil procedure in general. Using analytical, descriptive and deduction/induction method, in the present research were analysed the normative acts, legal policy planning documents, Latvian Civil Procedure Law (Civilprocesa likums, 1998), etc.

### **Legal Policy Documents in the Field of Securing a Claim**

The state manages the legal development processes, using the legal policy, in order to improve the efficiency of the activity of the state's legal system. The main task of the legal policy of the state is to address current issues in order to protect the rights and legitimate interests of the subjects, the progressive, legal development of the state and improvement of its legal framework, including, in order to achieve the goals specified in the constitution and to ensure the constitutional values, including the human rights, public welfare, culture development etc.

The website of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia states that the policy planning consists of proposals and measures, developed under a certain procedure at the level of executive power, for addressing social and economic problems, for achievement of the goals and development priorities specified in political guidelines and assessment of their impact, which are included in the policy planning documents in a structured manner. The policy planning purpose is to collect information on the situation and problems in a particular sphere in a clear, structured and understandable manner, and to determine the future development of the particular sphere or solution of the identified problems. The policy planning process is a set of goal and outcome oriented measures, which determines the activities required for the implementation and supervision of the policy in Saeima, Cabinet of Ministers and all public administration institutions. The policy is developed in one or several fields, sectors or sub-sectors of politics. The policy planning and analysis process usually includes the following stages:

- 1) situation analysis;
- 2) identifying problems and potential solutions;
- 3) initial assessment of the impact;
- 4) coordination and approval of the policy planning document;
- 5) making the decision on allocation of financial resources;
- 6) policy implementation and supervision;
- 7) assessment of the impact of the results achieved by the policy.

The policy planning process takes place before the legal framework development process. When developing drafts of the legal enactments, the goals and approved solutions included in the policy planning documents shall be taken into account as well (Politikas plānošana, 2021).

Therefore, the legal policy is a set of ideas, measures, tasks, goals, programs, methods and approaches, which is implemented for the purpose of development of the legal norms and the law system. Using the legal policy, the state identifies the problem, determines the potential solutions of the problem, allocates resources for the implementation of the solutions to the identified problems, develops the legal enactment and directs it for approval in accordance with the procedure specified in the law. By such activity the state supports the progressive forms of the rights, counteracting the outdated, conservative forms and manifestations, which hinder development of the individuals and the society.

In this research, preference is given to the analysis of the legal planning documents, which concern the development of the regulations on the institution of the securing a claim, except for the judgements of the Constitutional Court, case law and collections of judicial practice, namely, the following is being analysed:

- Operational strategy of the Ministry of Justice 2018-2020 (Tieslietu ministrijas darbības stratēģija 2018-2020.gadiem, 2018).
- Guidelines for the development of insolvency policy 2016-2020. (Par Maksātnespējas politikas attīstības pamatnostādņēm 2016.–2020.gadam un to īstenošanas plānu, 2016).

When analysing the legal policy planning documents, it is possible to determine, whether the state correctly identifies the current problems of legal nature and whether it has a plan for solving of problems and whether this plan is feasible.

### **Results of the Research**

Operational strategy of the Ministry of Justice for 2018-2020 contains the following main findings related to the subject of the study:

- As the leading authority in the field of legal policy, the Ministry develops and implements the state policy in the sphere of constitutional law, administrative law, civil law, commercial law, criminal law and religious law, as well as the procedural law.
- Purpose of the civil law policy: comprehensive and stable protection of the rights and interests of the subjects of private legal relations.
- Duration of adjudication of civil matters in the courts is one of the indicators, frequently used both in national and international level reviews, since many categories of the matters allow evaluating the trends of development of court availability at a very broad spectrum – both in perception of businessmen and individuals. For this purpose, the Ministry has established a permanent working group on the Civil Procedure Law, which considers all necessary amendments to the Civil

Procedure Law on regular basis and prepares drafts for “Amendments to the Civil Procedure Law” in order to evaluate the achieved indicators of the adjudication of matters and to decide on necessity of further development directions.

- It has been established among the working group on the Civil Procedure Law and the persons applying it that in non-material claims the Civil Procedure Law lacks a comprehensive regulation of temporary protection, similar as the institute of the securing a claim in material claims. Also, in non-material claims, temporary protection may be required before or during the proceedings, therefore such regulation should be introduced to the Civil Procedure Law during implementation of the strategy.
- One of the main tasks to be performed by the Ministry of Justice, among others, is to offer new solutions for making the civil proceedings at court more efficient (Tieslietu ministrijas darbības stratēģija 2018-2020.gadiem, 2018).

When analysing the operational strategy of the Ministry of Justice 2018-2020, the authors of the work believe that the suggestion should be supported that a protection mechanism, similar to that of the securing a claim, is also needed in non-material claims in order to pre-settle disputed legal relations, prevent serious damage or arbitrary actions

It should be noted that the amendments of the law, planned by the Ministry by 2020 regarding the possibility of the securing a claim of non-material nature still have not been developed.

Guidelines on the development of insolvency policy 2016 -2020 state that:

- the following principles specified in the Insolvency Law shall be preserved and reinforced for the purpose of implementation and application of goals:
  - 1) the principle of preservation of rights - the rights of creditors acquired before the proceedings shall be considered in the process. The limitation of the creditor's rights set out in the proceedings may not exceed what is necessary to achieve the purpose of the proceedings;
  - 2) the principle of equality of creditors – creditors shall be given equal opportunities to participate in the proceedings and receive satisfaction of their claims in accordance with the obligations they have established with the debtor before the commencement of the proceedings;
- the amendments of the Insolvency law, which have entered in effect on March 1, 2015, several problems identified in the practice have been

prevented, as well as the potential for misuse of the regulations. Namely, these amendments have introduced the following changes:

- it has been determined that a court judgment, declaring the insolvency proceedings of a legal entity, shall serve as grounds for suspension of legal proceedings in material claims (regarding debt obligations), initiated against the debtor, and also shall serve as grounds for revoking claim security in accordance with the procedure stipulated by the Civil Procedure Law. In order to exclude cases when the administrator has admitted the claim of the creditor, but at the same time there are current legal proceedings regarding recovery of this debt, these changes give the right to the court to stop the proceedings, upon commencement of the insolvency proceedings, and to resume the proceedings, upon establishing a dispute over the rights;
- the issue regarding revocation of the claim security during insolvency proceedings has been solved (Par Maksātne spējas politikas attīstības pamatnostādņēm 2016.–2020. gadam un to īstenošanas plānu, 2016).

While analysing the findings of the the Insolvency Policy Development Guidelines for 2016-2020, the study author concluded that it is unreasonably believed that the issue of the revocation of the claim security during insolvency proceedings has been solved, since the current regulation does not correspond to the principle of preservation of rights specified in the Insolvency Law – the rights of the creditors acquired before the proceedings are considered during the proceedings. For example, the legal nature and duration of the notation recorded in the Land Book is determined by the Land Register Law (Zemesgrāmatu likums, 1937), and not the Civil Procedure Law. Pursuant to regulations of Section 46 of the Land Register Law, the note of the claim security is not an obstacle to further compulsory corroboration, including after the insolvency administrator has sold the property at auction. But, when acquiring such real estate at auction, the buyer shall be aware that the real estate might be adjudicated to another person, therefore, the currently applicable legal framework developed by the Ministry of Justice – to cancel all claim securities in case of the insolvency proceedings may turn out to be unlawful in some cases. At the same time the means of securing the claim, specified in the Civil Procedure Law, as recording pledge notation in the Land Book, is outdated, as it does not protect the claimant from the encumbrance or impossibility of enforcement of the judgement in case of insolvency of the debtor, declared by the court, when all previously adopted means of securing the claim have been cancelled, due to which such means of securing the claim should be excluded from the Civil Procedure Law of Latvia and replaced by court hypothec, which gives the claimant better rights towards the debtor and really protects the debtor also in the insolvency proceedings.

Therefore, the goals of the main guidelines of insolvency policy have not been achieved, although the Ministry of Justice has declared them as achieved.

## **Conclusions**

Notwithstanding the fact that this article studies only part of the legal policy planning documents and through the perspective of the institute of the securing of the claim, conclusion may be drawn that the state activity, related to the planning of the more direct policy in regard to civil proceedings in general and to modernization of the securing a claim institute in particular, is not efficient, since the goal – to reduce the duration of the legal proceedings, still has not been achieved, and there is no comprehensive plan for improvement of the legal framework of the civil proceedings.

So, for a long time no attention has been paid to the fact that the means of securing the claim, specified in the Civil Procedure Law – recording pledge notation in the Land Book – is outdated and should be excluded from the Civil Procedure Law of Latvia and replaced by court hypothec, which gives the claimant better rights towards the debtor and really protects the debtor also in the insolvency proceedings.

No attention has been paid to the fact that the current regulation, where the insolvency proceedings serve as grounds for revocation of any claim security, contradicts the principle of equality of creditors and the principle of preservation of rights, as well as the case law, namely, that the means of securing the claim, which ensure the property claim, has been referred to in Paragraph 3 of Section 138 of the Civil Procedure Law as prohibition notation (Civilprocesa likums, 1998), fails to gain the legal nature of a personal (legal obligation) corroboration, which shall be cancelled when selling the property at public auction and, when acquiring such real estate property at auction, the buyer has to be aware that the real estate property could be adjudicated to another person (Lēmums lietā Nr. SPC-27/2017, 2017).

The legal planning documents fail to pay attention to the fact that procedural deadlines in the civil proceedings are not commensurate and the duration of adjudication of the civil matters is not significantly reduced due to procedural deadlines, as it was planned by the Ministry of Justice. For example, pursuant to Paragraph 1 of Section 131 of the Civil Procedure Law of Latvia, upon receipt of a statement of claim in a court, a judge shall, within ten days take a decision to initiate proceedings or to refuse to accept the statement of claim, or to leave the statement of claim not proceeded with (Civil Procedure Law, 1998). This means that the Latvian court may adjudicate the application of the claim security even on eleventh day after receiving thereof. Such procedural deadline for adjudication

of the application of the claim security at the court is not commensurate and does not correspond to the purpose of claim security.

Notwithstanding the commitment of the Ministry of Justice to regulate the possibility of securing non-material claims in legal planning documents, this has not yet been done, leaving non-material claims without a procedural remedy to prevent possible harm or arbitrary actions during court proceedings pending a final decision.

Thus, the legal policy planning documents, which relate to civil proceedings in general and the institute of claim security separately, do not correctly identify all of the current problems of civil proceedings, the solution of which would achieve the goal - to reduce the duration of civil proceedings.

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# THE MEANING OF RELATIONSHIP QUALITY BY THE BUSINESS LEADERS: RESULTS OF A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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**Abstract.** *The aim of this research is to investigate the perception of the importance of relationship quality between the organisational leaders and their subordinates. Qualitative study methodology is used, applying the Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory as a ground for the research. The paper argues the importance of attributing the LMX to the organisational micro-foundation. Results suggest that despite of understanding of the importance of respect, trust, loyalty and other organisational assets for building effective organisational culture and competitiveness in the market, the large-size organisational leaders are not familiar with the concept of quality of relationship. Therefore, highlighting this theory and stressing the importance of relationship is particularly important in the educational process while the preparation of future leaders takes place.*

**Keywords:** *leadership, LMX, qualitative study, relationship quality.*

## Introduction

The organisational behaviour and management literature often tackles the question of heterogeneity of organisational performance, i.e. – what are the reasons behind it (Molina-Azorin, 2014). Organisational outcomes are the collective – level (organisational macro-level) phenomena, which are explained by means of firm procedures, structures, etc. (other collective variables). However, over the last decade, more attention is paid to micro-foundational or individual level aspects (Felin et al., 2012; Foss, 2009; Jacquemod, 2020). This opens up possibilities to look at the problem from interdisciplinary perspective; however, the question of how individual-level factors and interactions between the people contribute to organisational capabilities is still not studied much. Surprisingly, the leader – member exchange theory, which is specifically focusing on the quality of relationship between the leaders and followers, is still not observed in light of organisational micro-foundation (Jacquemod, 2020). The current research draws possibilities for so doing, as well as produces answers to the question of conceptualisations of Leader-member exchange (LMX) by business leaders by applying a qualitative approach (in-depths semi-structured interviews) which is a rarely used approach in management literature (Flyvbjerg,

2006). The subject of the study is the role of leader-member exchange in the organisational outcomes, as perceived by leaders of the large-size organisations. The object is the large-size organisation leaders. Altogether, the transcripts of more than 420 minutes of interview recordings took place and the thematic analysis was performed. As a result, the subcategories and categories of LMX as regarded to organisational performance in views of business leaders, were distinguished. The data collection took place during 2019. The paper introduces with the literature review to create grounds for the formulation of the research question. Methodology part briefly explains the sample and the method used for the study, followed by results and its analysis. At the end of the paper, the conclusions and implications are discussed.

## **Literature Review**

Recent organisational behaviour and leadership literature depicts more and more evidence and conceptualisations on the fact that leadership can be mal-practiced in societal and organisational reality (Kellerman, 2004; Ketz de Vries, 2009; Cleckley, 2016; Bulatova, 2016). This research is attempting to reveal the eventual reasons for it. On the micro-level, organisations consist of individuals and interactions between them. ‘Unwrapping’ the factors of the individual-level may serve as an initial point in understanding the collective-level results (Felin, et al., 2015; Jacquemod, 2020). Organisational outcomes according to micro-foundation movement scholars i.e. (Felin, 2015) is a result of actions of concrete individuals.

The role of leadership in understanding the organisational outcomes has been discussed broadly (Trevino, 2014; Ricard et al., 2017). It is suggested that a leader is a catalysator of change in the companies and the attitudes of top leaders echo throughout the organization (Ciulla, 2006; Ladkin, 2020). Interesting that according to study done by Indans (2010), about 90 000 Latvian residents have left Latvia ‘not least due to delusions in leadership and working conditions’. The present research therefore highlights the importance of the quality of relational leadership and argues its topicality for Latvian context, being not limited however to only this country as mal-practicing of leadership takes place elsewhere (Ciulla, 2006).

Leader–member exchange (LMX) theory is one of the most prominent approaches for understanding leadership (Yu, 2018), and it deals with the relationship quality between the leader and his/her subordinate, which, in turn, is understood as a two-way process based on the principle of reciprocity (Uhl-Bien et al., 2020). Leader – member exchange (LMX) theory describes how the leader and follower develop an interpersonal relationship over time as two parties influence each other (Graen & Uhl–Bien, 1995). The terms “leader-member,”



“leader-follower,” and “supervisor-subordinate or “leader – employee” and “manager-subordinate” are used interchangeably and it goes in line with LMX conceptualisation (Uhl-Bien et al., 2020). Thus, LMX being a relational leadership approach, emphasises the quality of relationships between leaders and followers.

LMX can be distinguished into high and low- quality relationship. High LMX relationships (high LMX) indicate on effective informational flow and in the basis of such exchanges there are trust, mutual respect and loyalty towards each other (Bauer and Green, 1996). Leaders and followers extend the values of mutual trust, reciprocity, respect and emotional appreciation; individuals involved in high-LMX relationships report enhanced levels of satisfaction and openness in their communication (Anand et al., 2011; Dansereau et al., 2013). Subordinates of a high-quality relationship form an “in-group” circle with their leaders. “In-group” members are given more interesting tasks to perform, they are empowered with greater possibilities to access organisational resources and are less controlled by the part of the leaders (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

In case of low quality relationship, a lower level of trust takes place (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Control is applied by the leaders towards their “outer-group” members. Low LMX subordinates demonstrate less initiative and they clearly have a disadvantaged position in terms of various job benefits and career growth. “Outer-group” subordinates have restricted access to organisational resources and are provided with less information. This eventually causes job dissatisfaction, low organizational commitment, and even an unproductive or deviant behaviour (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Hence, low LMX relationship employs just formal contracts and they are based upon tangible assets (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

Hence, low or high LMX indicate on the quality of social exchanges between the parties. Scholars (Uhl-Bien et al., 2013) pay attention that organisational performance depends on how the parties evaluate each other. If the both parties are dedicated to construct a high-quality relationship, it contributes to higher overall work efficiency (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Cogliser et al., 2009). There are studies indicating on the links between evaluation of overall organisational innovativeness and LMX (Pucetaite & Novelskaite, 2014), organisational trust and LMX (Bulatova, 2017) as well as high job commitment and high LMX (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

It was proven that high-quality relationship affect the well-being of the employees, which, in turns is argued to be crucial for organizations’ effectivity (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) and societal functioning (Bulatova, 2015). Hansen (2011) stresses the importance of studying how LMX is addressed by leaders. Current research responds to this call. It investigates how the leaders of large-size business organisations evaluate the significance of the LMX. The link between quality of dyadic relationship with organisational outcomes has been studied for

a while i.e. (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). However, further investigation of understanding LMX from the perspective of individual (Norvapalo, 2014) and societal levels (Nie & Lamsa, 2016) can still be considered (Estel et al., 2019). This paper follows Pucetaite & Lamsa (2008) and Estel with colleagues (2019) discussion and brings in light the importance of individual leaders' responsibilities in forming high quality relationship and relates it to the cultural context. Latvian business context is interesting for a study as it represents a still young capitalistic relationship because the country has experienced the transfer to a new social formation best described by Young (2003) as a period of so-called "brutal capitalism".

The following research question was put forward: How do the leaders of large-size organisations in Latvia regard the importance of quality of their relationships with subordinates? Another research question has particularly tackled the question of how do the leaders regard the matter of being evaluated by their followers?

## **Methodology**

For the purpose of the study, in-depth interviews with the large-size organisational leaders (which, following the tradition of managerial literature means top-management executives, see Yukl, 2018) took place. Large-size companies were addressed for the following reasons: firstly, such companies by employing the biggest number of people shape societal attitudes, draw the lines for economic development, have impact on values, technological development, and thus, can be considered as "the leaders of opinion" (Kooskora, 2008). Secondly, large companies are often positioned as top employers; they have easier access to innovation funds and are important players for the turnover of capital and thus, economic growth of the countries (European Commission report, 2017). It is argued therefore that large companies have a strong impact on the progress of economy, and according to Eurostatistics (2017), a company employing more than 250 staff is considered a large-size organisation.

As qualitative research tackles with the depth rather than breath of the phenomena (Yin, 2015), this does not require a big sample, usually 6 - 8 cases are recommended (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Ideally, achieving theoretical saturation by providing as much detail as possible involves selection of individuals or cases that can ensure that various shades of phenomenon are examined. Maximal variation strategy was therefore applied (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007). As to year 2019, there were 195 large-size companies (SBA, 2019), and, as a matter of fact, a thorough analysis of factors was performed to create the sample. The following categories were selected and justified by literature:

- Capital of the company: foreign capital / local capital

- Production company/ service company
- Historical (or traditional) Latvian business/ new to Latvia' s economy business
- Innovative sector/not innovative sector
- Leader gender: male - leader / female – leader
- Size of company: over 250/ over 500 employees
- Turnover of the capital: top 15 companies in high turnover/companies with comparatively low turnover
- Ethicality of industry: ethically sensitive/ethically neutral business

The semi – structured individual in-depths interviews were conducted; a total more than 420 minutes of transcripts of interviews resulted in distinguishing the themes. For confidentiality purposes the companies are not mentioned in this article. Back and forth re-reading and re-categorising them allowed further comparison of the answers and distinguishing broader categories applying the thematic analysis technique. Further, categories of behavioral practices in regards to LMX dimensions were formed.

## **Results**

Interview results in general suggest that the leaders realise the significance of their role in creation of organisational culture, climate, and organisational innovativeness. The leaders are aware of the importance of organisational trust, respect and loyalty. Specifically, trust was found to be a well-known concept, although its true meaning and understanding of its manifestation in daily life would be needed to be checked by other research techniques rather than interviews (Jacquemod, 2020). The leaders however have stressed organisational trust as an important organisational asset, gave explanations on how it can be formed and also have emphasised the role of leadership in its regards. The terms “leader-member exchange” and “relational leadership” were found to be strange and unknown concepts. The answers indicated on misunderstanding and did not show that business leaders would consider relationship quality as an important micro-level foundation for the effective functioning of their businesses. However, putting questions back and forward and discussing together what the LMX might be, fifteen behavioural practices in regards to LMX and organisational outcomes were distinguished, please see the table below.

*Table 1 Explorations of Categories Followed from the Interviews (created by the author)*

No.	Sub-category	Leaders' behaviour /theme	Citations of the interviews
1.	<i>Encouraging innovative thinking</i>	Providing support for innovative ideas and recognition of innovative solutions; Acting friendly to innovative performances; Being helpful; Providing resources (time and money) to implement ideas.	<p>“We come together to discuss a potential project, and often it is risky. The idea generator plays an important role, but others are responsible as well, the whole team is responsible, and we find money for reasonable improvements.”</p> <p>“Some ideas are rubbish, but you need to find words to encourage the innovator!”</p> <p>“We would like to demonstrate that we care for the environment, we participate in sustainability rewards; good ideas of everybody [in these regards] are welcome!”</p>
2.	<i>Stimulating knowledge diffusion, respect for mutual competences</i>	Collecting opinion before initiating the changes in organisation; Stimulating knowledge-sharing.	<p>“We all have different experience, we need to learn from each other [...], some people transfer knowledge from previous working places, [...], we need to know what happens, what is our common knowledge and analyse it.”</p> <p>“We know that there are professionals who have been working for many years, and they know exactly what the organisation is doing, and they are the real assets of the company”</p>
3.	<i>Intellectual stimulation</i>	Providing employees with intellectually challenging tasks.	<p>“People need to go to courses, conferences, they need to grow!”</p> <p>“Is hard to stimulate to learn something new, but we deliberately make rotations from time to time so that new skills are acquired by people, and it enhances communication and respect towards each other”</p>
4.	<i>Stimulating personal choice in creative decisions and enhancing responsibility</i>	Showing appreciation for good solutions; Giving subordinates autonomy to determine responsibilities of how the job should be done and situations handled.	<p>“We are trying to make it all clear, but at the same time we don't like the routine, and when it gets too clear it can harm creativity, the tasks must be clear, but it should also be a corridor for own choice.”</p> <p>“Amazingly, employees usually know and how to do the things! - sometimes procedures come later, when the decision was already found!”</p>

			“Responsibility is something people like to take, this is a true sign of loyalty, sometimes is just the art not to disturb.”
5.	<i>Providing (co-creating) a vision, motivating to innovative solutions</i>	Communicating an explicit vision on the role of innovation, providing directions for future activities	“We are exploring opportunities, we are generating ideas, we are putting efforts in development of new ideas, we often speak about it and try to motivate everybody” “Innovativeness must be connected with the overwhelming feeling of serving a big goal, we need to create it.”
6.	<i>Dividing tasks into tangible blocks –</i>		“Sometimes we don’t know how to solve something, but we sit and divide tasks in some blocks, when is easy to analyse and –later- easy to be responsible.”
7.	<i>Demonstrating trust in employee competence; Delegating (and trusting)</i>	Delegating and trusting professional skills, encouraging decision - making Making allowance for employees’ commitment when assigning tasks. checking-up on people	“If somebody wants to do things, why we need to look for external professionals - we have our own people, who know organisation, its values, know colleagues and know what is needed.” “It is not everything that should be prescribed, each day requires many decisions, and everybody must handle them!” “[organisation] should be able to function if the manager is not there, because it is essential everybody knows and is able to do the right thing, and is able to make competent decisions, which will be in the interests of the organisation and will go in line with our norms”. “I can trust the employees, and I think they can trust me”. “Before I have trusted more, but now I see it goes to a different direction, not exactly where I would like it does, shall I interfere, or not? I would like to say, to ask why is done this way, but it is not so easy, because it is another person viewpoint, and I have to respect it”
8.	<i>Creating an organisational culture</i>	Create links between people, provide possibilities for easy communication between generations and different	“We sit altogether, at the same floor, before the administration was on the 11 <sup>th</sup> floor, and of course it enhanced the differences, now we don’t want it, it created unnecessary distance!”

		<p>statuses, diverse departments and employees.</p> <p>Organising events, meetings and holding a certain atmosphere of trust during the meetings.</p>	<p>“it is important people work at the office, like this they meet others, and mix with different generations, and those can tell stories from the past, this folklore is important part of our culture.”</p> <p>“it is important to stimulate knowledge about each other, about what is going on in other departments... important to manage time for so doing, so people are not only concerned with what they are doing, and their own projects”</p>
9.	<i>Stimulating open and transparent communication</i>	<p>Minimisation of power distance and vertical relationship for overall organisational achievements, as well as correcting something, somebody’s behaviour and enhancing personal growth</p> <p>Insuring feedback flow to employees by co-workers, encouraging communication flow between the employees and direct supervisors.</p>	<p>“Young people don’t like to be told, we create a culture of people who share ideas, communicate, and raise doubts”,</p> <p>“important is that people are not scared we all share the same goals, is important we achieve them.”</p> <p>“Important is that the employees ask questions and are not obedient”.</p> <p>“Before the management was on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor, but we don’t want it any more, this keeps the distance, somebody has to go up to start to stress....”</p>
10.	<i>Giving a feedback to subordinates</i>	<p>Ensuring a concrete feedback to everybody.</p>	<p>“Sometimes you really need to be very concrete, and say exactly what you think, what needs to be improved; otherwise it can be too soft and can be misunderstood.”</p>
11.	<i>Stimulating employees to provide open feedback to management</i>	<p>Providing opportunities for feedback to administration, openness to critique</p>	<p>“Managers and leaders were scared from the feedback, but then it went better, and is healthy for our organisation”</p> <p>“If leaders are really good, they are recognised by time by others.</p> <p>“I don’t really care whether I am liked by the employees [...], but it makes me to feel great when I feel they [employees] appreciated the decision, especially on the sensitive matters”</p> <p>“Sometimes is hard to hear critique, but it is essential for growth, we try to turn it into a positive dialogue.”</p>
12.	<i>Working on organisational identity</i>		<p>“In a big organisation it is hard to create a common value, but once is done – everything goes easier, organisation sort</p>

			of cleans up from elements who do not suit here, and attracts people with similar views” “we involve full organisation”, new product is like a new child for everybody, we feel pride for it.”
13.	<i>Allowing for mistakes and recognition of moral choice decisions</i>	Addressing morally difficult cases, sensitive topics and appreciation of interest in these matters	“[A leader] has to distinguish [good and bad] intentions, and support those who try to make it better, better for all the parties and society as a whole.”
14.	<i>Control of behaviour and sanctions against inappropriate behaviour, monitoring of task assignment</i>	Providing feedback on unacceptable cases Attrition of individuals Monitoring work routines, clearness of tasks and objectivity in task distribution,	“We had to fire many people who did not realise the importance of our culture, our norms of behaviour. Unfortunately, it was nothing to do, you cannot change people”. “Sometimes people don’t have to think and to be creative, ...we could do more to help them to be creative, but out of the direct job requirements.” “constant clients are the base for our success, we encourage employees to think in these terms”
15.	<i>Role – modelling</i>	Being an example of behaviour, value transfer	“Employees see you and make a conclusion on what is important”, “you really need to pay attention to what you say, what you emphasise and what image you create” “What is discussed, how is discussed – these are the values of the leaders, which are getting spread around” “Employees see you and make a conclusion of what is important”, “leadership is an example”

Referring interview results to the LMX scale (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), fifteen leadership behaviours were distinguished and analysed in details. Interesting for example, was the category of “providing the feedback”, as it was divided into feedback to management (by lower status individuals) in the form of raising openly the questions, doubts, concerns - it was emphasized in four interviews. While another feedback was clearly turned towards employees, and it had a connotation of sanctionability. As such, it was overlapping with the category of “controlling behavior”. Organizing feedback for individual growth is clearly emphasised by Yukl (2008). Literature also suggests that feedback can also be considered as a sign of recognition and the readiness for supportability (Kaptein, 2008), knowledge sharing, and intellectual stimulation (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

Specifically, one of the leaders has stated that he *hates* obedient employees, a “communication should be clear, open, and without unnecessary boundaries”. Other comment emphasised that “communication should be open in a sense of sharing different views and without fears that something might seem silly, or somebody might seem strange; if there is a question, it has to be asked”. Reduction of power hierarchy was also mentioned in another interview – as a matter of office location, namely – “managers should not be located somewhere on the other floor and be unreachable”.

In interviews, individual achievements and individual growth were not stressed anyhow though, except for one business leader (from IT sector). The leaders were emphasising the importance of feedback, but *how* they actually recognise and evaluate the effort of the employees was not mentioned. Mostly, the feedback was connected to performance matching it to organisational goals (emphasising the importance of customer satisfaction): “We need to say how the work is done, and leaders who are able to do so, really good leaders, I remember some from my early days, they gave me good advices, and encouraged me, I am trying to do something similar”... “Good leaders remind of importance of client satisfaction.”

One more perspective of feedback was connected with being able to criticise directly: “It is important to be able to speak with all the employees, on different levels and sometimes give a very concrete feedback...”. This indicates that giving a feedback is more associated with the ability of the leader to express dissatisfaction and indicate on wrong-doings of the employees. Literature however suggests that feedback contains “rewarding for appropriate behaviours” (Foss, 2009), which was almost not addressed by the leaders here.

Another interesting aspect highlighted in interviews by the leaders who participated in this research, was “monitoring of work flow”. In the centre of discussions there was however a leader with his/her leadership skills, and not the employee with his/her potentials and needs. Recognising potentials and efforts of the employees, being proud of their professional achievements was not in the scope of discussions. One statement indirectly showed that the organisation consists of professionals, but it was not personalised, and therefore it is hard to conclude if the subordinates actually feel being appreciated.

## **Conclusions**

The concepts of “quality of relationship” and “relational leadership” are not common for business leaders. However, separately the dimensions of LMX such as mutual trust, loyalty, respect were mentioned by the leaders as important assets of organisational life. However, loyalty and trust are expected from employees



towards their employer rather than the other way round - leaders' duties and obligations towards followers.

Business leaders are aware of their role in organisational achievements and they emphasised the value of strong organisational culture, organisational innovativeness, and trust. But the role their employees play in having organisational outcomes was not so stressed. This goes in line with the arguments of the management (Kellerman, 2004; Ketz de Vries, 2009) and business ethics (Ciulla, 2006) literature that certain self-focused behaviour is observed in leadership practice.

The perception of leaders' role in creating leader-member relationship is not so clear. The answers did not indicate on leaders' concern of how they are perceived by followers. Followers' needs and expectations towards their leaders were not revealed in any of the conducted interviews. Neither the wording *Leader's caring attitude* was mentioned once. However, the difficulty of extending emotional support and empathy towards subordinates was discussed. This serves as an evidence of the actuality of the current research and addresses the call for the LMX theory popularisation in a country with still young business context.

Practical novelty of the research resulted in fifteen leadership behaviours - explanations of LMX challenges in a daily life. For instance, it was mentioned that employees should have opportunity to grow and make mistakes (to a reasonable extent). Support for experimentation and brainstorming should be given. Employees should be encouraged to speak out, not being afraid of condemning comments from colleagues or a strict power hierarchy, just to mention few.

It can be recommended to stimulate transparent communication, encouragement of voicing behaviour from the parts of subordinates. Respect to employee competences should take place; attentive attitude towards employees' feelings can be suggested as well, as it forms an emotional aspect of relationship.

Possibility to provide a feedback to management contributes to the employee's willingness to be engaged, support organisational values and readiness to support their leaders. This creates a deeper, 'emotional' quality of the leader-member relationship, thus *encouraging subordinators to provide the feedback* permits managers to make corrections of own behaviours and decisions, becoming better persons and better leaders. So, it can be suggested to the business leaders to be more open to critique and facilitate the feedback of the employees towards the management.

Educational process of business schools should highlight the importance of LMX theory; soft-skill study courses might address LMX theory from different angles. Educating society in large, the values of mutual respect and trust (they are in the core of qualitative LMX) should be addressed and illustrated by good

examples and practices of outstanding leadership by policy-makers and non – governmental organisations and state representatives.

In sum, for Latvian business environment, which is still young, some business paradigms (as quality of relationship) has to be approached and put into practice. The current study contributes to the understanding of the LMX as related to the context phenomena.

The aim of the qualitative research was to explore how the business leaders of large-size organisations in Latvia consider the importance of Leader-member exchange or relationship quality and draw some conclusions and implications for practitioners. The aim of the study is accomplished as model of fifteen leadership behaviours on how the relationship quality can be connected to organisational outcomes is proposed. Limitations of the study mainly tackles the question of the choice of the sample – only large-size organisations were in the scope as it limits the generalisability of the findings. The relationship quality can be perceived differently in small and medium-size businesses. This study is a demonstration of the work in progress, and further research needs to involve small and medium-size businesses, as well as quantitative approach can take place to study how LMX is perceived by the employees of the organisations in scope.

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## FORMING OF SOFT COMPETENCIES EDUCATIONAL PROCESS MANAGEMENT CHANGES (DISTANCE EDUCATION)

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**Abstract.** *The impetus and innovative idea for research was the rapid transformational changes in society. These changes were expressed in the experimental search activities of the development in education and other social and humanitarian sciences, which are now taking place in the world in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic and the maximum distanceization of processes, including educational ones. The authors concluded that these changes concern: teaching methods, organization and management of educational processes. In practical teaching, the authors noticed the peculiarities of soft competencies formation in distance learning. Unlike knowledge, soft competencies are formed in social interaction. It is completely different in content and forms of construction in online education than in the offline one. These changes in educational transformations and management of educational processes take place due to fundamental transformations under the influence of: scientific and technological progress, global security challenges, wide access to information, significant part of life virtualization, restructuring of the axis of the teaching paradigm, etc.*

*The main idea of the article is focused on changes of soft competencies formation as they are understood in distance learning; also it was emphasized the changes, necessary for successful teachers' work management in this area. Research methods: general scientific (analysis, synthesis, collection of information, expert opinions, forecasting and modeling), special scientific (analysis of changes in law, recommended practices, observation, authors' own practice and fixation in changes in the educational results of their students).*

**Keywords:** *applied and empirical aesthetics, competence, digital aesthetics, educational policy, management of educational processes, mixed forms of education, sustainable education.*

## **Introduction**

Mastering distance teaching imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic was challenging for many teachers. According to the UN worldwide, in the period 2020-2021, more than 1.5 billion students at various levels faced the closure of educational institutions (schools, colleges, universities etc.) due to the COVID-19 pandemic (UNESCO, 2020). And here we are talking about educational institutions of different levels. If we take the field of professional education, the number of people can be twice as high. Society was forced to respond quickly to changes, including the education system. Changes in the educational policy of all countries went in two directions: the first – changes in technology (from offline to online), the second – changes in the processes and teaching tools. After the series of lockdowns, countries are gradually returning to pre-quarantine forms of education. For this, mixed forms of learning are used (alternation of online and offline learning). We expect that such forms of education will take hold in education systems at least until the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. But this is two years of the educational process. These years should be effective for students of all educational levels. They cannot be returned.

The educational process should be continuous, students should receive educational services despite the pandemic – this was the first reaction of educational systems around the world. But for the quality of education, both: subject (hard) competence and soft competence are equally important. In the context of distance education, it turned out to be easier to form hard competencies (reliance on knowledge) than soft competencies (reliance on communication systems). The research aim of the article is: to consider the discussion issues of the soft competence formation in nowadays conditions and offer our own solutions to problems. In the study of the problem, the authors used general scientific methods (analysis, synthesis, information collection, etc.) and special scientific methods (recommended practices, observation, authors' own practice, etc.).

## **Literature Review**

Scientific researches analysis in the field of soft competencies educational process management changes by distance or mixed forms' education instruments nowadays predominantly associates with COVID-19 crises. The surge of research comes in April-June 2020. The main feature of researches is the focus on distance learning instruments during COVID-19 educational crises, for example M. Goetz draws attention to the difficulties in the work of teachers during the transition to distance learning (Goetz, 2020); S. G. Huber and C. Helm describes such digital tool "School Barometer", what was used in Germany, Austria and Switzerland

(Huber & Helm, 2020); A. Bakker and D. Wagner research the problems of COVID-19 pandemic consequences for education at the example of mathematics teaching (Bakker & Wagner, 2020). The group of researches: J. Crawford, K. Butler-Henderson, J. Rudolph, B. Malkawi, M. Glowatz, R. Burton, P.A. Magni and S. Lam studies international experience and experience of different countries in the field of distance learning (Crawford et al., 2020). Problems of online teaching in higher education have been studied in scientific and practical researches: “COVID -19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University” (Bao, 2020), “Using technology to maintain the education of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic” (Chick et al., 2020). All described are certain practices in distance learning, but especially interesting for our article were studies on changing the principles and processes in educational management during the COVID-19 pandemic (Luo, Liu, Yue, & Rosen, 2020) etc. Unfortunately, the problem of the soft competencies formation and changes in education management in connection with distance and mixed forms of education are studied a very little or not at all in these researches. So, the main literature for this paper in the focus of forming of soft competencies educational process management changes are: recommendations and practices of distance learning on COVID-19 in the world and some countries, which can be seen as basis for the analysis; official statements (speeches) of government leaders, senior officials of international organizations, international experience and experience of different countries, own practice of authors etc.

### **Methodology**

The methodology for studying the problems of forming of soft competencies educational process management changes by distance or mixed forms' education instruments in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the quarantine withdrawal period was identified as follows: methods of theoretical analysis (studying the content of pedagogical instruments and decision theory under conditions of unpredictable results), analogies (based on the patterns of human development, population groups and society), studying regulatory acts of international organizations from open official sources of information, expert opinions, forecasting and modeling, recommended practices, observation, authors' own practice.

## **Research Results**

The educational crisis of 2020 has become a challenge both for those who teach and for those who study, regardless of the level of education. The first reaction from governments around the world was to create online information platforms for learning under quarantine conditions. The UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education characterized the Geneva EiE Hub as the platform that the modern world needs. This platform should combine political and institutional influence to aims increased funding for education and resources equitable distribution. The Geneva EiE Hub is committed to acting effectively as a catalyst for long-term financial and political commitment, recognition of the most vulnerable learners, and innovative solutions to foster educational inclusion.

Nowadays, UNESCO strongly supports this initiative as an important step towards the implementation of the Education 2030 Framework for Action. This Program indicates the necessary to develop national education systems that will be more flexible and resilient in the face of natural hazards, military and other conflicts, mass and social unrest. This is very important to ensure the continuity of education in emergency, crisis, conflict, pandemic and post-crisis situations. UNESCO will work towards supporting lifelong learning in times of crisis. For this, the Organization is ready to apply all its tactical experience in planning, statistics and policy in education area.

In the context of the global crisis, UNESCO recommended such educational activities in a pandemic. First of all the most suitable and common educational tools should be selected. Programs of distance learning must be inclusive. In the conditions of distance and mixed forms of education, it is necessary to ensure all participants in the educational process confidentiality (privacy) and security data. There should be clear planning of distance and mixed form learning programs activities (short-term long-term planning). The solutions to the psychosocial problems of all educational process participants should precede the learning process and the teaching process. Technical support should be provided to teachers and parents on the use of digital education tools in distance learning. The number of educational applications and platforms used should be limited; also as it should to combine appropriate approaches. It is necessary to monitor the progress of students; for this, it is important to develop clear and understandable rules for distance learning and control. The distance learning units' length should be determined based on the self-regulation skill levels of learners. Technically and organizationally communication with all educational process participants must be provided. Communities should be formed (UNESCO and partners..., 2021).

In our opinion, the main problem is: the implementation of these recommendations helps to ensure, first of all: school (compulsory education), the continuity of educational processes in educational institutions, and organize the



lessons technically (digital processes). But the content of the competencies formation remains in the area of teachers' responsibility. As we mentioned early, in the context of distance education, the main focus comes to form hard competencies (reliance on knowledge) than soft competencies (reliance on communication systems). We see two groups of prerequisites for this: communication with the help of information technologies is different in its structure than "live communication" (the mood of the collective is not felt, the hierarchy is erased, there is no need for time frames "here and now" or they are softer, a different degree of responsibility, etc.) and different levels of technical readiness for distance learning (depending on the country, region, financial situation, previous online experience, etc.). This is equally true for teachers and students.

The first negative trends were noticed by the teachers in the autumn of 2020, when the students came back to educational institutions after a long break. Many students (especially teenagers) found it difficult to establish communication with peers and teachers (Ministry of Education..., 2020). The online form of education turned out to be more comfortable for them, but less effective in terms of readiness for life. Then the question became acute that half a year online had an irrational effect on the formation of soft competencies among students. This is not only about the fact that the students did not form and develop new soft competencies, but also lost the skills that were already formed by March 2020.

We make it clear, that with different approaches in Pedagogy to understanding the category of "soft competence", we share the point of view that these include: leadership skills; decision making skills; communication skills; thinking and problem solving skills; teamwork skills) interpersonal skills and entrepreneurship skills (Mohamad, Yee, Tee, Mukhtar, & Ahmad, 2017). In the context of success in life and work, there are skills that individuals need meet the organizational and personal goals to achieve all the factors of quality personality and worker. And the educational crisis of 2020 was primarily reflected in the formation of these competencies. If, under the conditions of quarantine, online learning remains the leading form of education, society risks getting a generation of people with poorly formed social skills.

Special attention should be paid to teaching of aesthetically oriented disciplines' peculiarities in mixed forms of education or distance education. This problematic is formed according to the contradiction of modern mainstreams: the actualization of the aestheticization of life (as a new paradigm for the development of society as an emotionally-rational form of reality mastering) and the massive going online over the past year (the general tendency to be saved after the Pandemic). It explains the increased interest as to implementation of aesthetic norms in the professional activity and daily life of every person. The trend is increasing in the educational process when it comes to professional activities and

training of specialists, for whom the aesthetic component is professionally determining (artists, choreographers, designers, musicians etc.). Today, the question of the applied and empirical aesthetics, the aesthetics of the digital space, acquires a new rethinking.

The authors have carried out the results of a study of professional competence aesthetic content through such aspects: self-presentation, demand for professional activity and specialist, perception of the results of professional activity, enjoyment of professional activity, individual style of activity formation, etc. Authors analyze the problem in the context of working with aesthetically oriented disciplines in online and offline forms, as well as in mixed forms of education.

As practicing teachers, we can state that distance learning reduces the effectiveness of the aesthetic and practical skills formation in the training of choreographers, vocalists, musicians, actors, etc. The distortion and limitation of spatial, visual and auditory perception, which are inevitable in online classes (technical resources), reduces the effectiveness of learning.

### **Conclusions and Discussion**

Nowadays, digital skills are critical important for social inclusion, social success and jobs in modern world. To realize the digitalization opportunities, governments and communities need to understand trends in social processes, including jobs and the successful worker skill. We agree that in many ways digitalization has helped humanity survive the COVID-19 crisis. We also realize that there will no longer be a return to the forms and types of education of the pre-quarantine period. On the other hand, the educational crisis of 2020 demonstrates a number of problems that we must solve now, otherwise a huge number of children around the world will not be ready to realize themselves in life.

In the context of forming of soft competencies educational process management changes by distance or mixed forms of education the main problems are:

- changing the content of communication (online communication suggests one-to-one communication, in any case, students perceive it this way);
- different levels of technical readiness for distance learning (depending on the country, region, financial situation, previous online experience, etc.);
- changes in the perception of events when you are not a participant in them (events, problems that need to be solved, on-line seem distant and unreal);

- changes in social relations "teacher-student", "student-student", "student-other students" (connections with those with whom students communicate comfortably and weakened connections with whom students communicate uncomfortably, general communication skills decrease);
- some professionally important skills cannot be fully formed online (for example, aesthetically oriented professions).

Next few years, we see the following possible ways out of the crisis:

- increase in the number and time of offline training;
- emphasis in the educational process on common group activities for the socially important competencies formation;
- measures to form approximately the same technical capabilities for all participants in the educational process;
- additional opportunities for the formation of soft competencies among students in those professions, where social and aesthetic component are critically important.

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## SERVICE QUALITY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF LATVIA

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**Abstract.** *Improvement of quality of public services is one of the important goals in the advancement of the operation of state / public administration in Latvia. The aim of the research was to evaluate the quality of customer service in the institutions of public administration in Latvia, to perform the factor analysis of the collected data.*

*The research was based on the selection of customers of public services, in total of 292 people in Riga and in Latvian regional centres in 2017-2018. The research was conducted in public institutions of Latvian regions that provide social assistance (SSIA – the State Social Insurance Agency), offer employment promotion services (SEA – the State Employment Agency); realize tax policy in the state (SRS – the State Revenue Service), implement the state environmental protection policy (MEPRD – Ministry of Environment Protection and Regional Development); provide legal aid services (DC – Daugavpils Court). The quality of services provided to the clients of corresponding institutions was evaluated. For the data collection, the service quality assessment model – the SERVQUAL instrument (Parasuraman et al., 1988) was used, as well as the analysis of the research data factors was carried out.*

*The service quality assessment revealed that the performance of public service organizations in Latvia does not meet the customers' expectations. The evaluation of service quality provided by public authorities, as well as their regular monitoring would improve the quality of services provided.*

**Keywords:** *factor analysis, public sector, service quality, SERVQUAL.*

### Introduction

One of the most important trends in the global economy today is the growing role of the service sector. This is evidenced by the increase in the level of production of services compared to the production of materials, by significant growth in the range of offered services, as well as by the increase in the number of people employed in the service sector.

This trend is especially visible in the countries with developed socioeconomic system, where the proportion of services in the GDP is currently around 70%. In Latvia, the proportion of services in the GDP according the benefit of branches reached 73.6% in 2019 (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2020). At present, the service sector is being receiving increasing attention, taking into account its role in the socioeconomic development of society. Public services designed to meet the needs of citizens have a special place in this field. The improvement of the quality of public services is one of the important goals in the advancement of the operation of state / public administration in Latvia and in the world.

Public services are a “tangible result” of the activities of public administration or local government institutions, which manifests itself in providing certain services to its customers – the society. Public services, along with the direct implementation of power and state commercial activity, are considered to be one of the ways of implementation of public functions (Katelo, Kokina, & Raščevskis, 2019).

**The aim of the research** was to evaluate the quality of customer service in public administration institutions of Latvia and to perform the factor analysis of the collected data.

The research was based on the selection of public service customers, in total 292 people in Riga and Latvia regional centres in Valmiera, Ventspils, Jelgava, and Daugavpils in 2017-2018. The research was conducted in the state institutions of Latvian regions that provide social assistance (SSIA), offer employment promotion services (SEA); implement the tax policy in the state (SRS), implement the state environmental protection policy (MEPRD); provide legal aid services (Daugavpils Court). The quality of services provided to the clients of corresponding institutions was evaluated.

The respondents were inquired at the locations of rendering public services. The respondents were introduced to the content and purpose of the poll. Before providing the data, the respondents’ anonymity was guaranteed. The research took into account ethical and legal principles to ensure that the research participants’ personal rights were not violated. In the research, a service quality assessment model – the SERVQUAL research instrument (Parasuraman et al., 1988) was used, as well as the analysis of the collected data factors was carried out. The quality of service is assessed by calculating the difference between the quality expected by the customer, and the quality that he/she receives and the quality provided. The SERVQUAL questionnaire is structured in two parts. Each part each includes 22 questions to assess customer expectations and the quality of the service received. Service quality assessment is obtained by comparing customer expectations and perceived quality values. The factor analysis is a technique of data reduction that uses the correlation between data

variables. When conducting factor analysis, it is assumed that there are some basic factors that explain the correlations or mutual relations between the observed variables (Chatfield & Collins, 1992).

### **Literature Review**

The improvement of the quality of public services is one of the most important goals in the enhancement of public administration around the world, therefore, the issues of the quality of public services have been analysed by many foreign researchers.

Quality management in the Turkish public sector has been analysed by S. Coskun (Coskun, 2002). Quality management has been on the agenda of the activities of state / public administration of Turkey since 1990. In the context of the Turkish public sector, quality management is identified not only as a governance approach and system for improving the quality of public services, but also as a tool for solving the challenges of Turkey's state administration. The results of a survey conducted in two ministries show that employees of both ministries had positive attitudes towards quality management. The majority of the respondents agreed to the necessity and usefulness of quality management in the public sector of Turkey. Most of the respondents also agreed with the definition of quality management as "a governance approach aimed at customer satisfaction through continuous improvement of the provided services and processes".

Opportunities to improve the quality of services in the public sector of Great Britain have been described by C.S. Williams and M.N.K. Saunders (Williams & Saunders, 2008). The authors proposed alternative versions for the determination of service quality that can help to improve the performance of public service providers. The authors appealed to public sector managers to create a tool for the assessment of changes in service quality and for setting down priorities.

A research about the relationship between service quality and customer behaviour in Spain has been conducted by M. Sanchez-Perez, J.C. Gazques-Abad, and R. Sanchez Fernandez (Sanchez-Perez, Gazques-Abad, & Sanchez Fernandez, 2007). The research identifies five different research directions in the study of service quality, analyses the interconnection between service quality and customer intentions. The research confirms the relationship between the five dimensions of service quality, as well as customer behaviour and intentions, provides a useful guide for the investigation of service quality by offering a scale for measuring service quality in the public sector.

A research on service quality in the public sector of Malaysia was performed by M.H. AbdRashid (AbdRashid, 2008). The research identified a

number of shortcomings in the public sector where improvements should be made. The employees of customer service were rated the lowest. The survey showed that customer service staffs had poor communication skills; they were not customer friendly, inefficient; they were not sufficiently informed about the product and the service standards to be able to qualitatively perform their task.

Quality management of public services in Finland has been studied by V. Tuomi (Tuomi, 2012). According to this research, public sector organizations do not fully implement quality control. The main problem is that organizations do not regularly evaluate the quality of services, and after the evaluation do not further develop their activities, do not improve the quality of services. There are no practical obstacles that could hinder the implementation of quality management in the public sector. Organizations should strive to apply it in their operating environment.

A research on the development and current situation of state / public administration in Poland has been carried out by S. Mazur, M. Możdzen and M. Oramus (Mazur, Możdzen, & Oramus, 2018). This publication has been produced for the European Commission with the technical assistance of the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA). The report highlights the following key areas for improvement: 1. Improving the trust in the civil service and its image. Raising public understanding of the benefits of the civil service and its role, focusing on the needs of citizens and modern means of communication. 2. Quality of management and human resources in the civil service. The systems and management standards used by the offices need to be modernized to provide more flexibility in human resource management through a long-term plan. 3. Remuneration levels and appointment restrictions in the civil service. The relatively low salaries in the civil service, combined with the appointment restrictions cause the risk that highly qualified civil servants may leave the organizations, as well as make more it difficult to attract new specialists to replace them.

The quality of public services in the cities of Egypt in comparison with Malaysia has been studied by Mona Ali (Ali, 2012). The research has revealed that customer satisfaction with the dimensions of material gain / tangibles and empathy in service quality makes the greatest contribution. The researcher has concluded that the providers of public service should be informed about the results of the research in order for them to make changes and improvements in the quality of the services provided.

The quality of public services in Taiwan has been analysed by Chih-Tung Hsiao (Chih-Tung Hsiao, 2008). The research focused on the customer-oriented service system and behaviour of service providers that is widespread in the public sector. Public sector organizations should pay more attention to staff training and skills development, so that they understand the public service.



In Latvia, the issues of service quality have been studied by several scholars. The organizational and economic possibilities of quality control have been researched by L. Melece (Melece, 2004). J. Eglītis (Eglītis, 2003) has worked on the development of a quality assurance system in the field of education. The quality assessment model for ensuring the quality of education services in rural consultation centres has been developed by G. Grīnberga-Zālīte (Grīnberga-Zālīte, 2011). The importance of the customer-oriented approach in the development of public administration in Latvia has been studied by R. Putāns (Putāns, 2016). The quality of public services in local authorities of Lithuania has been evaluated by G. Kondrotaite (Kondrotaite, 2012).

### **Methodology**

A model of service quality assessment – the SERVQUAL research instrument (Parasuraman et al., 1988) was adapted and practically tested in this research. A copy of the SERVQUAL questionnaire was obtained from the version included in the work (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The suitability of the SERVQUAL method to the process of assessment of the quality of public services was verified, at the same time experimenting with the formulation of survey questions and the valuation scale of SERVQUAL. A research model was developed, and the research questionnaire was translated into Latvian. The research model and the questionnaire were approved with a small number of customers and then modified to suit the target audience.

The research was based on a selection of public service customers in the largest cities of Latvia – Riga, Daugavpils, Jelgava, Ventspils, and Valmiera. Two hundred and ninety-two randomly selected representatives of the selection filled in the SERVQUAL questionnaire.

The questionnaire of the SERVQUAL method consisted of two parts. Each part of the questionnaire contained 22 statements about the quality of service, which formed a set of 5-dimensional criteria. The respondents had to rate each statement according to the 5-level Likert-type scale.

Part A showed the customer's expectations regarding the service quality as well as the importance of various quality criteria for the customer.

Part B displayed the assessment of the service received by the customer.

The object to be assessed in the questionnaires was service quality as a set of five quality dimensions, 22 criteria, in which:

Dimension 1 – Set of tangibles (appearance and physical facilities);

Dimension 2 – Reliability (trustfulness, accurate performance);

Dimension 3 – Responsiveness (doings and the willingness to help);

Dimension 4 – Competence (attention, credibility);

Dimension 5 – Empathy (convenient receiving of service, good communication and customer understanding).

For processing the research data, a factor analysis method was used. Factor analysis is a data reduction technique that uses correlations between data variables. When performing factor analysis, it is assumed that there are some basic factors, which explain the correlations or interrelationships between the observed variables (Chatfield & Collins, 1980). Factor analysis has been widely used by many researchers in the field of economics, marketing, sociology, and education (Nimako et al., 2012; Bollen, 1989; Doll et al., 1994; Li et al., 2013).

## **Results**

In order to provide general information about the respondents, the SPSS 22.0 – Statistics Package for the Social Sciences – was used for the analysis of the collected data. The general characteristics of the respondents include their gender, age, level of education and employment. In total, 292 respondents participated in the survey. 214 women participated in the survey, which makes 73.3%, and 78 men (26.7%), see Table 1.

*Table 1 Research Respondents by Gender*

	Frequency	%	Credibility %	Cumulative %
Women	214	73,3	73,3	73,3
Men	78	26,7	26,7	100,0
Total	292	100,0	100,0	

*Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey, 2019.*

According to age, the respondents of the research were divided into three groups: 20-40 years, 41-60 years, 60< years. There were 101 respondents aged 20-40, who made 34.6% of the total number of the respondents; the age group 41-60 was represented by 132 respondents, i.e. 45.2% of the total number of the respondents; whereas, the age group 60< included 59 respondents, who made 20.2% of the total number of the respondents, see Table 2.

The level of education of the respondents of the survey was different. The respondents participating in the research had various education backgrounds – the respondents with higher education were the majority – 165 people, respectively – 56.5% of the total number of the respondents; the respondents with secondary special education – 101 people, secondary education – 26 people, i.e. 8.9% of the total number of the respondents, see Table 3.

**Table 2 Age Distribution of the Survey Respondents**

	Frequency	%	Credibility %	Cumulative %
20-40	101	34,6	34,6	34,6
41-60	132	45,2	45,2	79,8
60<	59	20,2	20,2	100,0
Total	292	100,0	100,0	

*Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey, 2019.*

**Table 3 Level of Education of the Survey Respondents**

	Frequency	%	Credibility %	Cumulative %
Secondary education	26	8,9	8,9	8,9
Secondary special education	101	34,6	34,6	43,5
Higher professional/vocational education	165	56,5	56,5	100,0
Total	292	100,0	100,0	

*Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey, 2019.*

The research also identified the respondents' employment. 208 employees representing 71.28% of the total number, 47 pensioners/retired persons (15.96%) and 37 unemployed persons (12.77%) were involved in the research.

Further the results of the researches carried out in 2017-2018 are analysed. Their statistical analyses have revealed the following results.

The results of the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of this research are shown below, indicating a high internal consistency of the data (see Table 4).

**Table 4 Cronbach's Alpha of the Research**

<b>Dimensions of customer satisfaction</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Dimension of tangibles	0.761
Dimension of reliability	0.745
Dimension of responsiveness	0.787
Dimension of competence	0.631
Dimension of empathy	0.813

*Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey, 2019.*

According to Bryman & Bell (Bryman & Bell, 2011), Coefficient Alpha may vary in the range from 1, which shows perfect internal reliability, to 0, which, in turn, indicates the data without internal reliability. As shown in Table 4, for all measurements included in the research, the coefficient was 0.7 and

above, indicating an acceptable degree of internal confidence of the measuring tool.

The average value of evaluation of service expected by customers is 4.47. The results of the evaluation of the expected service are shown in Table 5. Comparing with the data of similar studies in Egypt and Malaysia, it must be concluded that the expectations of Latvian customers about the service are lower (see Table 5).

*Table 5 Characterization of Evaluation of Service Expected by Customers*

Dimensions of quality	Number of questionnaires		Average	Median	Mode	Average expected service in Egypt (2012)	Average expected service in Malaysia (2012)
	Credible	Lost					
Tangibles	292	0	4,1575	4,2500	5,00	6,029	4,69
Reliability	292	0	4,7301	5,0000	5,00	6,194	5,81
Responsiveness	292	0	4,6986	5,0000	5,00	6,181	4,67
Competence	292	0	4,5325	4,7500	5,00	6,217	4,81
Empathy	292	0	4,2363	4,4000	5,00	5,836	5,73
Total	292	0	4,4721	4,5909	5,00	6,091	5,142

Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey by using SPSS22.00, 2019, according to Ali, 2012.

The average evaluation value of the perceived service is 3.98. The results of the customer perceived service evaluation are shown in Table 6.

*Table 6 Characterization of Evaluation of Service Perceived by Customers*

Dimensions of quality	Number of questionnaires		Average	Median	Mode	Average perceived service in Egypt (2012)	Average perceived service in Malaysia (2012)
	Credible	Lost					
Tangibles	292	0	3,9486	4,0000	5,00	3,172	4,23
Reliability	292	0	4,0616	4,2000	5,00	3,521	5,26
Responsiveness	292	0	4,0728	4,0000	5,00	3,700	4,23
Competence	292	0	4,0146	4,0000	5,00	3,576	4,40
Empathy	292	0	3,8479	3,8000	5,00	3,124	5,30
Total	292	0	3,9860	4,0000	5,00	3,418	4,68

Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey by using SPSS22.00, 2019, according to Ali, 2012.

The lowest evaluation of the service performance in the institutions of the public sector of Latvia was awarded to the 5<sup>th</sup> quality dimension – empathy, 3.84 points on average, and the highest – to the 3<sup>rd</sup> quality dimension – responsiveness, 4.07 points on average. Comparing the data of similar studies carried out in Egypt and Malaysia, it must be concluded that the Latvian customers’ evaluation of the perceived service is average high (see Table 6).

By calculating the difference between the values of the service perceived by customers and the service expected by customers, we obtain the average quality of rendering of service, which is evaluated negatively in all quality dimensions. The quality dimensions of safety, responsiveness, competence was assessed with -0.668 points, -0.626p., - 0.518p., accordingly. A less negative assessment of quality is observed only in the dimensions of tangibles (-0.209p.), and empathy (-0.388p.) (see Table 7).

*Table 7 Average Quality of Public Services in Latvia in 2017-2018 (in points)*

Dimension of quality	Average evaluation of the service expected (E)	Average evaluation of the service received (P)	Average service quality (P-E)	Average service quality in Egypt (2012)	Average service quality in Malaysia (2012)
Tangibles	4,1575	3,9486	-0,2089	-2,857	-0,09
Security	4,7301	4,0616	-0,6685	-2,673	-0,11
Responsiveness	4,6986	4,0728	-0,6259	-2,481	-0,09
Competence	4,5325	4,0146	-0,5179	-2,641	-0,08
Empathy	4,2363	3,8479	-0,3884	-2,712	-0,09
Total	4,4721	3,9859	-0,4861	-2,672	-0,09

Source: the table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey, 2019, according to Ali, 2012.

Analysing the survey results of the customers of the surveyed public institutions, it is obvious that the most positive evaluation of the quality of the provided services has been given by the customers of DREB (Daugavpils Regional Environmental Board) (from 0.147p. to 0.424p.). The most negative assessment of the quality of provided services has been given by the customers of SEA (from -0.278p. to -0.922p.), SSIA (from -0.215p. to -0.882p.), SRS (from -0.217 to -0.892p.). Almost three times higher assessment of service quality has been received from the customers of Daugavpils Court (from -0.092p. to -0.323p.) and OCMA (Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs) (from + 0.068p. to -4555p.).

In turn, analysing the results of service quality assessment according to the place of residence of the respondents, it is evident that the residents of Latgale Region have assessed service quality less negatively (from -0.159p. to -0.409p.).

In the other analysed regional cities and Riga, service quality was assessed almost twice more negatively. In Riga, customers assessed the quality of public services in the range from -0.144p. to -0.842p., in Valmiera – in the range from -0.275p. to -0.878p., in Ventspils – from -0.444p. to -0.819p.

*Table 8 Quality Assessment of Public Services in Latvia in 2017/2018, in Terms of the Public Institutions Considered*

Dimensions of quality	Average assessment of service quality SEA	Average assessment of service quality SSIA	Average assessment of service quality DREB	Average assessment of service quality DC, NLS Nat.Land Survey	Average assessment of service quality OCMA	Average assessment of service quality SRS
Tangibles	-0,278	-0,215	0,162	-0,318	0,068	-0,215
Reliability	-0,729	-0,882	0,080	-0,332	-0,345	-0,786
Responsiveness	-0,922	-0,750	0,147	-0,323	-0,455	-0,662
Competence	-0,783	-0,680	0,221	-0,224	-0,062	-0,567
Empathy	-0,511	-0,600	0,424	-0,092	-0,055	-0,472
Average quality of service	-0,642	-0,636	0,211	-0,254	-0,174	-0,548

Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey, 2019.

In different age groups, the quality of services was assessed most negatively by customers of retirement age (from -0.169p. to -0.861p.). Respondents aged 20-40 gave a higher assessment of service quality (from -0.33p. to -0.497p.).

Analysing the obtained results according to the gender of the respondents, it is apparent that service quality was assessed less negatively by men (from 0.029p. to -0.672p.). Women have generally assessed service quality more negatively (from -0.296p. to -0.704p.). The dimension of tangibles, i.e. material benefits has been assessed less negatively.

Analysing the results of the survey according to the level of education of the respondents, it can be seen that service quality is most negatively assessed by the respondents with secondary professional education (from -0.121p. to -0.842p.). Higher evaluation has been given by the respondents with secondary education (from 0.269p. to -0.538p.).

Evaluating the results of the survey according to the employment of the respondents, it must be concluded that the most negative assessment of service quality has been reported by retired customers (from -0.35p. to -1.2p.). Higher evaluation was given by working respondents (from -0.261p. to -0.740p.) (see Table 9).

**Table 9 Evaluation of Quality of Public Services Depending on the Employment of the Respondents**

Dimensions of quality	Average assessment of service quality for employees	Average assessment of service quality for retired	Average assessment of service quality for unemployed
Tangibles	-0,610	-0,350	0,420
Reliability	-0,740	-1,10	-0,992
Responsiveness	-0,604	-1,20	-0,969
Competence	-0,502	-0,942	-0,813
Empathy	-0,460	-0,620	-0,450
Average quality of service	-0,521	-0,855	-0,644

Source: the table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey, 2019.

Comparing the evaluation of service quality reported by public service customers, service providers, and employees, it should be noted that the customers have assessed it more negatively (from -0.449p. to -0.596p.). Comparing with the data from similar researches in other European and Asian countries, it can be concluded that the performance of Latvian public sector is moderately low (see Table 10).

**Table 10 Comparison of Public Service Quality in Latvia and Other Countries**

Dimensions of quality	Average assessment of public service quality in Latvia 2017.-2018.	Average evaluation of the quality of educational services LRATC (Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre)in Latvia 2009.-2010.	Average evaluation of the quality of post-sale assistance service in Italy 1998.	Average assessment of public service quality in Egypt 2012.	Average assessment of public service quality in Malaysia 2012.
Tangibles	-0,208	-0,505	1,3	- 2,857	-0,09
Reliability	-0,668	0,367	-0,9	- 2,673	-0,11
Responsiveness	-0,625	0,937	-0,2	- 2,481	-0,09
Competence	-0,517	-0,069	-0,1	- 2,641	-0,08
Empathy	-0,388	-0,040	0,7	- 2,712	-0,09
Average quality of service	-0,486	0,138	0,160	- 2,672	-0,09

Source: the table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey, 2019, according to Grīnberga-Zālīte, 2011; according to Ali, 2012; Franceschini, 1998.

The research analyses the results obtained during the evaluation by public service customers of the quality of expected and perceived public services in Latvia. In the course of the research, it has been concluded that it is not possible to use the SERVQUAL method without applying it to the circumstances of each state/public institution considered.

The assessment of service quality has revealed that the performance of public service organizations in Latvia does not meet customer expectations. The quality of rendering the services has been assessed as negative in all dimensions of quality. Thus, the level of customer satisfaction with the performance of public services also is negative.

The results of this analysis show that the shortcomings of public service, identified in the evaluation should be eliminated. An important step in eliminating the shortcomings of service providers is the organization of regular customer surveys in order to promptly assess the quality of provided public services. The evaluation of the quality of services, provided by state / public authorities and regular monitoring thereof would improve the quality of provided services and thus also the customer satisfaction.

### **Factor Analysis of Survey Data**

Factor analysis is a data reduction technique that uses correlations between data variables. When performing factor analysis, it is assumed that there are some basic factors that explain the correlations or interrelationships between the observed variables (Chatfield & Collins, 1992). Factor analysis has been widely used by many researchers in the field of economics, marketing, sociology, and education (Nimako et al., 2012; Bollen, 1989; Doll et al., 1994; Li et al., 2002). Statistical data analysis for this research was performed following an approach similar to that used by April & Pather (April & Pather, 2008).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test helps to measure the data adequacy for the analysis. Kaiser (Kaiser, 1974) recommended the use of data, which adequacy values exceed 0.5. In this research, the data adequacy value is 0.835, which falls in the range of medium to excellent adequacy. Consequently, we may be sure that the collected data are suitable for factor analysis. After reviewing the adequacy of the data, the authors have performed the data factor analysis to assess the factors, which are important for improving the quality of public services.

The results of the factor analysis for the evaluation of the service expected by customers are provided in Table 11. Factor analysis has been performed using the method of principal component analysis (PCA). As summarized in Table 11, the cumulative value (%) of component analysis of the expected service is 60,676.



Table 11 Factors Analysis of Evaluation of the Service Expected by Customers

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9,058	41,174	41,174	9,058	41,174	41,174	6,231	28,323	28,323
2	1,805	8,202	49,376	1,805	8,202	49,376	3,728	16,945	45,268
3	1,359	6,176	55,552	1,359	6,176	55,552	1,911	8,687	53,955
4	1,127	5,124	60,676	1,127	5,124	60,676	1,479	6,721	60,676
5	,898	4,080	64,756						
6	,832	3,780	68,536						
7	,775	3,523	72,059						
8	,682	3,098	75,157						
9	,606	2,753	77,910						
10	,553	2,515	80,424						
11	,528	2,402	82,826						
12	,484	2,198	85,024						
13	,459	2,087	87,111						
14	,422	1,920	89,031						
15	,405	1,839	90,870						
16	,386	1,755	92,626						
17	,336	1,528	94,153						
18	,327	1,486	95,639						
19	,283	1,287	96,927						
20	,244	1,109	98,036						
21	,226	1,027	99,063						
22	,206	,937	100,000						

Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey by using SPSS22.00, 2019.

While performing the factor analysis by means of the method of principal component analysis, four eigenvalues have been obtained, which yield the sum of total quadratic loads was more than 1, with a percentage cumulative deviation of 60,676 in the case of evaluation of service expected by customers. The first factor explains 41.174% of the total dispersion. It should be understood that the first factor explains the relatively large amount of dispersion, while the following factors explain only a small amount of dispersion.

Table 12 shows that the evaluation data of the service expected by customers were divided into four groups according to the factors of service quality. The load of each factor was evaluated. To evaluate the results, it should be noted that a factor load, which is greater than 0.30, is considered essential, 0.40 is considered important, and 0.50 or more is considered very significant. The authors have assumed in this research that only factors with the load above

0.50 are considered significant (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014) The higher is the factor coefficient / ratio, the more important it is for the customers' expectations concerning service quality (Pallant, 2007). In fact, the minimal values of factor coefficients range from 0.429 or more in this research, and such coefficient values are considered important for performing factor analysis.

Table 12 Total Dispersion of Evaluation Data of Service Expected by Customers

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
RG_j_9	,790			
RG_j_7	,768			
RG_j_13	,734			
RG_j_8	,719			
RG_j_12	,709			
RG_j_6	,685			
RG_j_14	,682	,462		
RG_j_15	,615	,466		
RG_j_10	,611			
RG_j_11	,602			
RG_j_5	,565			
RG_j_16	,518	,460		
RG_j_4	,505			
RG_j_19		,765		
RG_j_18		,747		
RG_j_20		,726		
RG_j_17	,429	,666		
RG_j_21		,559		
RG_j_1			,797	
RG_j_2			,791	
RG_j_3			,673	
RG_j_22				,836

Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey by using, SPSS22.00, 2019.

**Factor group I**, which is considered the most important by customers when assessing the expected service quality, includes factors related to such dimensions of service quality as reliability, responsiveness, competence. This group includes factors with the coefficient from 0.79 to 0.505.

**Factor group II**, assessing the significance of factors, included the factors related to such dimension of service quality as empathy. This group includes factors with the coefficient from 0.765 to 0.559.

Assessing the significance of factors, only **Factor group III** comprises the factors related to the dimension of service quality of tangibles. This group includes factors with the coefficient from 0.797 to 0.673.

The results of factor analysis for the evaluation of customer-perceived service quality are presented in Table 13. Factor analysis was performed using the method of principal component analysis (PCA). As summarized in Table 13, the cumulative value (%) of component analysis of the perceived service is 66,966.

*Table 13 Factor Analysis of Evaluation of Customer-perceived Service*

Comp onent	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulat ive %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulat ive %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulat ive %
1	13,216	60,074	60,074	13,216	60,074	60,074	10,941	49,734	49,734
2	1,516	6,892	66,966	1,516	6,892	66,966	3,791	17,232	66,966
3	,880	4,001	70,967						
4	,681	3,097	74,065						
5	,628	2,854	76,919						
6	,554	2,516	79,435						
7	,481	2,188	81,623						
8	,424	1,929	83,552						
9	,414	1,882	85,434						
10	,390	1,771	87,205						
11	,368	1,672	88,877						
12	,331	1,503	90,380						
13	,326	1,480	91,860						
14	,285	1,297	93,157						
15	,250	1,138	94,295						
16	,243	1,104	95,399						
17	,229	1,043	96,441						
18	,200	,907	97,349						
19	,183	,830	98,179						
20	,156	,711	98,890						
21	,126	,574	99,464						
22	,118	,536	100,000						

Source: The table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey by using SPSS22.00, 2019.

The first factor explains 60.074% of the total dispersion. It should be understood that the first factor explains the relatively largest amount of dispersion, while the succeeding factors explain only a small amount of dispersion.

Table 14 shows that the evaluation data of the service perceived by customers were divided into two groups according to their importance. Each factor loading was evaluated. The authors assumed in this research that only factor loading above 0.50 are considered significant (Pal, 1986; Pal & Bagai, 1987; Hair, Anderson, & Black, 2014). The higher is the factor coefficient, the more important it is in terms of customer-perceived service quality (Pallant, 2007). In fact, the minimum values of factor coefficients ranged from 0.429 or greater in this part of the research, and such coefficient values are considered important for performing factor analysis.

*Table 14 Total Dispersion of Evaluation Data of Customer-perceived Service Quality*

	Component	
	1	2
r_j_12	,874	
r_j_14	,856	
r_j_13	,855	
r_j_7	,832	
r_j_16	,808	
r_j_15	,787	
r_j_17	,776	
r_j_9	,769	
r_j_11	,755	
r_j_10	,746	
r_j_21	,745	
r_j_8	,731	
r_j_19	,724	
r_j_20	,718	
r_j_6	,716	
r_j_18	,703	,404
r_j_5	,647	,415
r_j_4	,645	,533
r_j_22	,417	
r_j_2		,898
r_j_1		,888
r_j_3	,491	,579

*Source: the table created by the authors, statistical results of the survey by using SPSS22.00, 2019.*

**Factor group I**, which is considered the most important by customers when assessing the expected service quality, includes factors related to such dimensions of service quality as reliability, responsiveness, competence and empathy. This group included factors with a coefficient from 0.874 to 0.645.

**Factor group II**, assessing the significance of factors, included the factors related to such dimension of service quality as the set of tangibles. This group included factors with a coefficient from 0.898 to 0.579.

The comparison of the factor analysis performed for the data groups related to the evaluation of the service expected and perceived by the customers has showed that the most important dimensions of service quality for customers, the performance of which needs to be improved, are reliability, responsiveness, competence and empathy. Less important factors are those related to the dimension of tangibles.

### Conclusions

The research analyses the results obtained as a result of the evaluation by public service customers of the quality of expected and perceived public services in Latvia. In the course of this research, it has been concluded that it is not possible to use the SERVQUAL method without applying it to the circumstances of each state/ public institution researched

The service quality assessment has revealed that the performance of public service organizations in Latvia does not meet customer expectations. The quality of rendering the services is assessed as negative in all dimensions of quality. Consequently, the level of customer satisfaction with the performance of public services also is negative.

The results of this analysis demonstrate that the shortcomings of public service, identified in the evaluation, need to be reduced. An important step in reducing the shortcomings of service providers is the development of regular customer surveys in order to promptly evaluate the quality of provided public services. The evaluation of the quality of services provided by state/ public authorities and regular monitoring thereof would improve the quality of services provided and thus also the customer satisfaction.

**Factor group I**, which is considered the most important by customers when assessing the expected service quality, includes factors related to such dimensions of service quality as reliability, responsiveness, competence. This group included factors with a coefficient from 0.79 to 0.505.

**Factor group II**, according to importance, included factors related to such dimension of service quality as empathy. This group included factors with a coefficient from 0.765 to 0.559.

According to the significance of the factors, only **Factor group III** included the factors related to the dimension of service quality of tangibles. This group included factors with the coefficient from 0.797 to 0.673.

**Factor group I**, which is considered the most important by customers when assessing the expected service quality, includes factors related to such dimensions of service quality as reliability, responsiveness, competence and empathy. This group included factors with the coefficient from 0.874 to 0.645.

**Factor group II**, according to the significance of factors, included the factors related to such dimension of service quality as the set of tangibles. This group included factors with the coefficient from 0.898 to 0.579.

The comparison of the factor analysis performed for the data groups related to the evaluation of the service expected and perceived by the customers shows that the most important dimensions of service quality for customers, the performance of which needs to be improved, are reliability, responsiveness, competence and empathy. Less important factors are the factor related to the dimension of material benefit.

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# TIESĪBU PRINCIPU PIEMĒROŠANAS AKTUALITĀTES ĀRKĀRTAS SITUĀCIJAS APSTĀKĻOS

## *Actuality Application of Legal Principles During Emergency Situation*

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**Abstract.** *The objective of the research is to analyse the determining principles of the existing and possible limitations and their comprehension during the emergency situation. The tasks of the research are as follows: 1) taking into consideration the limitations and the support measures of the emergency situation identify the principles of the court, which are related to every of these cases, in order to provide the most possible precise compliance of legal solutions to the particular situation; 2) to keep up to date the principles, which are binding to the public administration's actions during the conditions of the emergency situation. Comparative method has been used for research of the basic principles. The comprehension of the general law in the jurisprudence of the Republic of Latvia's Constitutional court has been looked for using the historical method, applying these conclusions to the emergency situation. The basic principles for the determining of both the limitations and the support measures have been discussed as well as for the providing of the public administration's actions by the help of the analytical method. It has been concluded in the research that a good comprehension of the community on its rights and duties, which arises from the nature of the legal principals typical for the emergency situation, will ensure that the community will follow them more willingly and will take them into consideration more effectively. The explanation of the limitations' influence and meaning to the community takes place through both the implementation demand of the already determined limitations and, particularly separately educating the inhabitants on them. The communication of the legislator with the community has to be developed on the basis of these principles. The effect to be achieved depends on the fact how successful the educating of the community on its rights and duties will be.*

**Keywords:** *emergency situation, limitations, support measures, the principles.*

### **Ievads**

#### ***Introduction***

2020.gada 11.martā Pasaules Veselības organizācija paziņoja, ka koronavīruss ir sasniedzis globālās pandēmijas līmeni (Ūdre, 2020), Latvijā tika izsludināta ārkārtējā situācija (Rīkojums Nr. 103, rīkojums Nr. 655, 2020). Uz to principu



bāzes, kas izriet no Latvijas Republikas Satversmes, kuri aktualizējas sakarā ar ārkārtējās situācijas izraisītāju, proti, Covid-19 pandēmiju. Lai noteiktu valsts institūciju un privātpersonu tiesības un pienākumus valsts apdraudējuma novēršanai un pārvarēšanai paredzēts cilvēktiesību ierobežojuma minimizēšanas princips; sabiedrības veselības apdraudējuma mazināšana; publisku un sabiedrībai nozīmīgu pakalpojumu pieejamības ierobežošana pieļaujama tikai tādā mērā, cik tas nepieciešams sabiedrības veselības un drošības nodrošināšanai, kā arī pakalpojumu sniegšanā un saņemšanā iesaistīto personu veselībai un drošībai (Covid-19 infekcijas izplatības pārvaldības likums, 2020). Uz šo ārkārtējās situācijas principu bāzes jāīsteno atbalsts iedzīvotājiem un ierobežojumi, kas skar gan ikvienu personu, gan valsts iestāžu darbību.

Šobrīd ir pašsaprotama un par ikdienas rituālu atzīstama masku nēsāšana, fiziskā distancēšanās un cilvēku pārmērīgas pulcēšanās ierobežojumi, piemēram, komandantstundas ieviešana. Saprotams, ka, turpinoties ārkārtējai situācijai, nepieciešams grozīt normatīvajos aktos reglamentētas iedzīvotāju tiesības un pienākumus (Likumprojekta "Covid-19 infekcijas izplatības pārvaldības likums" sākotnējās ietekmes novērtējuma ziņojums (anotācija), 2020), piemēram, Covid-19 infekcijas izplatības pārvaldības likuma II nodaļā noteiktos personu ierobežojumus, lai iespējami operatīvi reaģētu uz notiekošajām izmaiņām epidemioloģiskajā situācijā. No juridiskā viedokļa tas būtu aplūkojams kā tiesiskais režīms, kurā darbojas īpaši tiesību principi.

Pētījuma mērķis ir izanalizēt ārkārtējai situācijai raksturīgākos tiesību principus, uz kuriem balstāma valsts pārvaldes darbība.

Pētījuma uzdevumi: 1) analizēt tiesību principus, kas raksturīgi valsts pārvaldes darbībai ārkārtējos apstākļos, 2) identificēt principus, ka ņemami vērā nosakot ierobežojumus, 3) aplūkot atbalsta noteikšanai svarīgākos principus.

Pētījumā analītiskā metode izmantota principu piemērošanas izpētei praksē sastopamo problēmsituāciju risināšanā. Ar vēsturiskās metodes palīdzību meklēta principu izpratnes attīstība Latvijas Republikas Satversmes tiesas praksē, attiecinot šīs atziņas uz ārkārtējiem apstākļiem. Ar analītiskās un salīdzinošās metodes palīdzību aplūkoti pamatprincipi gan ierobežojumu, gan atbalsta pasākumu noteikšanai.

Pētījumā izmantoti normatīvie akti, ar kuriem tiek noteiktas sabiedrības tiesības un pienākumi ārkārtējos apstākļos: Latvijas Republikas Satversme, Eiropas Cilvēka tiesību un pamatbrīvību aizsardzības konvencija, Covid-19 infekcijas izplatības pārvaldības likums un citi normatīvie akti. Analizētas Latvijas Republikas Satversmes tiesas atziņas.

**Valsts pārvaldes darbībai raksturīgie principi ārkārtējos apstākļos**  
***The Principles, Binding to the Public Administration's Actions during the***  
***Conditions of the Emergency Situation***

Ideja par pamatprincipu, kas izriet no demokrātiskās un tiesiskas valsts iekārtas atrodama jau Valsts pārvaldes iekārtas likuma koncepcijā (Levits, 2002). Šobrīd pašsaprotams, ka svarīgākie valsts pārvaldes principi, lai aizsargātu privātpersonu tiesības, demokrātisko valsts iekārtu, sabiedrības drošību, labklājību vai tikumību, ir iestrādāti Administratīvā procesa likumā un Valsts pārvaldes iekārtas likumā, piemēram, tiesiskuma princips, vienlīdzības princips, tiesību normu saprātīgas piemērošanas princips, patvaļas aizlieguma princips, tiesiskās paļāvības princips, likuma atrunas princips, samērīguma princips, likuma prioritātes princips, procesuālā taisnīguma princips, labas pārvaldes princips. Tomēr šie principi spiesti daļēji piekāpties ārkārtējās situācijas iespaidā. Piemēram, noteikums, ka bērēs ārtelpās atļauts pulcēties ne vairāk kā 10 cilvēkiem vienlaikus, bet ne vairāk kā no divām mājsaimniecībām. (Ministru kabineta rīkojums Nr. 719, 2020) sākotnēji tika uztverts kā kaut kas neiespējams, pat neatbilstošs minētajiem principiem.

Cilvēktiesību ievērošanas principa reāla esamība ir īpaši jutīga valsts pārvaldes attiecībās ar privātpersonām (Briede, Danovskis, & Kovaļevska, 2016). To, kāda veida un apmēra pasākumus valstī īstenot, galvenokārt ierobežo cilvēktiesības (Zariņa, 2020), kas nostiprinātas Eiropas Cilvēka tiesību un pamatbrīvību aizsardzības konvencijā, Latvijas Republikas Satversmes 1.pantā. Latvija kā demokrātiska, tiesiska, sociāli atbildīga un nacionāla valsts balstās uz cilvēka cieņu un brīvību, atzīst un aizsargā cilvēka pamattiesības, paredz, ka indivīds var paļauties uz valsts tiesisku un konsekventu rīcību, bet valstij ir jāattaisno tai dāvātā uzticēšanās.

Covid-19 pandēmijas laikā īpaši aktivizējas noziedznieki un prettiesiski izmanto cilvēku bailes, veicinot īpaši kibernetizāciju pieaugumu (Europol, 2020). Iedzīvotāji šādos apstākļos sagaida no valsts aizsardzību, tajā skaitā, informēšanu gan par drošu darbu, gan bērnu aizsardzību internetvidē. Eiropas Komisijas tiesiskuma un patērētāju ģenerāldirektorāts uzsver valdību īpašo uzdevumu aizsargāt un atbalstīt cietušos Covid -19 pandēmijas laikā. Piemēram, Īrijā uzsākta prakse, ka policisti sazinās ar personām, kas agrāk cietušas no vardarbības ģimenē, lai veiktu preventīvo aizsardzību, ja tāda būtu nepieciešama. Spānijā un Francijā ir pieredze, ka sievietes vardarbības gadījumā var meklēt palīdzību pat aptiekās (Eiropas Komisija Tiesiskuma un Patērētāju Ģenerāldirektorāts, 2021). Šādi piemēri būtu analizējami, vai tie atbilstu mūsu

apstākļiem. Sevišķi svarīgi ārkārtējos apstākļos ir nodrošināt cietušo piekļuvi informācijai, atbalstam un aizsardzībai.

No tiesiskās palāvības principa satura izlasāma ārkārtējiem apstākļiem svarīgā iezīme, lai tiesību normu adresātam tiktu nodrošinātas rīcības brīvības īstenošanas iespējas (Satversmes tiesas 2017.gada 8.marta sprieduma lietā Nr.2016-07-01, 2017). Saskaņā ar šo principu persona var paļauties uz to, ka tiesības, kas iegūtas saskaņā ar spēkā esošu tiesību aktu, noteiktā laika posmā tiks saglabātas un īstenotas, tomēr ārkārtējā situācijā - sabiedrības interesēs var tikt izmainītas. Par apšaubāmu rīcības brīvības izmantošanu uzskatāma, piemēram, policijas darbinieku rīcība, piemērojot vientuļai pensionārei 100 eiro soda naudu par došanos mājās Jaungada naktī, lai glābtu no sala ārā izlaisto kaķi (Barkāns, 2021).

No Eiropas Cilvēka tiesību un pamatbrīvību aizsardzības konvencijas 15.panta izriet, ka ārkārtēja stāvokļa gadījumā, kas apdraud nācijas dzīvi, valsts var veikt pasākumus, kas atkāpjas no saistībām, ko tā uzņēmusies šīs Konvencijas ietvaros. Tomēr nedrīkst būt atkāpju no ikviena tiesībām uz dzīvību, tām jāatbilst legītimam mērķim, kas ir sabiedrības veselība un drošība.

Ārkārtējos apstākļos īpaši svarīga sabiedrības uzticēšanās un līdzdalība. Piemēram, ir attaisnojama sabiedrības pastiprināta neiecietība pret sabiedriskās kārtības pārkāpumiem, piemēram, noziedzīgiem nodarījumiem. Tāpēc atbalstāms, ka Krimināllikumā paredzēta atbildība par ārkārtējās situācijas laikā noteikto ierobežojumu vai aizliegumu pārkāpšanu, ja nodarīts būtisks kaitējums valsts varai vai pārvaldības kārtībai vai ar likumu aizsargātām personas interesēm (Krimināllikuma 225.<sup>1</sup>pants) vai par sanitāri higiēniskās un epidemioloģiskās drošības noteikumu neievērošanu, ja šāda rīcība izraisījusi epidēmiju (Krimināllikuma 140.pants). (Krimināllikums, 1998).

Jāatzīst, ka augsts sabiedrības informētības līmenis ir priekšnoteikums, lai efektīvi reaģētu uz sociālās distancēšanās pasākumiem ārkārtējā situācijā. Šī mērķa sasniegšanai svarīgi mērķtiecīgi izmantot visas pieejamās iespējas iedzīvotāju informēšanai. Nepieciešams uzraudzīt sabiedrības uztveri, viedokļus un atsevišķu pasākumu ievērošanu (Novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic: increased transmission in the EU/EEA and the UK – sixth update 12 March 2020, 2020). Vienlaikus jāveido sistēma, kas ļautu identificēt dezinformāciju un baumas. Sabiedrībai ir jāsniedz nepārtraukta, precīza informācija no uzticamiem avotiem, turklāt - saprotamā veidā.

Tāpēc īpaši jāizceļ Valsts pārvaldes likuma 10.panta piektajā daļā (Valsts pārvaldes iekārtas likums, 2002) nostiprinātais labas pārvaldības princips, kas ietver atklātību pret privātpersonu un sabiedrību, datu aizsardzību, taisnīgu procedūru īstenošanu saprātīgā laikā un citus noteikumus. Sabiedrība

saprot, ka ārkārtējos apstākļos lēmumi jāpieņem ātri un arī to izpildei jānotiek operatīvi. Tāpēc atklātību no valsts pārvaldes ārkārtas apstākļos sabiedrība sagaida īpaši. Šim nolūkam var izmantot gan mājas lapu iespējas, gan rakstītu informāciju, piemēram, izmantojot pašvaldību laikrakstus, speciālas ziņu lapas – līdzīgi reklāmas bukletiem.

Ārkārtējos apstākļos aktualizējas starp valsts pārvaldi un sabiedrību esošās plašas mazināšana un uzticības veicināšana valsts pārvaldei (Sabiedrības izglītošana, 2021). Uzticības jautājums īpaši aktualizējas, ja ir runa par pašu svarīgāko vērtību saglabāšanu - tiesībām uz dzīvību, tiesības uz sociālo nodrošinājumu. Lai to nodrošinātu, ir nepieciešams, lai lēmumi būtu pieņemti patiesā interesē par sabiedrības tiesībām un pienākumiem. Tiesībsargs pamatoti ir aktualizējis to cilvēku, kas ilgstoši atrodas sociālās aprūpes iestādēs (piemēram, pansionātos) tiesību uz veselību un dzīvību pārkāpumus (Labklājības ministrijas un pašvaldību neizdarība noved pie dzīvības apdraudējuma cilvēkiem, kuri uzturas sociālās aprūpes centros, 2021). Pamatoti šāda situācija saistāma gan ar bezdarbību no atbildīgās ministrijas un pašvaldību puses, gan sabiedrības uzticības valsts pārvaldei graušanu kopumā.

Tātad, ārkārtējā situācija aktualizē pašas svarīgākās dzīves jomas, kas visbiežāk ir konstitucionāla ranga vērtības un to aizsardzībai jāizceļ atbilstoši tiesību principi, kas jāievēro valsts pārvaldei ārkārtas apstākļos, tie ir: tiesiskā palāvība, tiesiskā drošība, atklātība, laba valsts pārvaldība.

### **Vadošie principi nosakot ierobežojumus** *The Main Principles Determining the Limitations*

Ikvienam ir jārēķinās, ka ierobežojumi, kas noteikti ārkārtējā situācijā ir obligāti. To ievērošanu vai neievērošanu nevar izvēlēties. Tomēr, nosakot ierobežojumus, vienmēr ir jāievēro vispārējie tiesību principi, kuru mērķis ir mazināt pamattiesībām, demokrātijai un tiesiskumam nodarītu kaitējumu. Izraudzītajiem līdzekļiem jābūt nepieciešamiem leģitīmā mērķa sasniegšanai, turklāt jābūt pārliecībai par to, ka nepastāv mazāk ierobežojoši, alternatīvi līdzekļi, ar kuriem šo mērķi varētu sasniegt tādā pašā kvalitātē (Latvijas Republikas Satversmes tiesas 2020.gada 11.decembra spriedums lietā Nr.2020-26-0106, 2020). Minēto prasību sasniedzamību nodrošina ierobežojumu noteikšanai īpaši svarīgo principu identificēšana un ievērošana.

Saprotams, ka viens no augstākajiem riskiem Covid-19 izplatībai ir cilvēku pulcēšanās dažādos veidos: kultūras pasākumos, diskotēkās, klubos, sadzīviskās tikšanās reizēs. Slimību profilakses un kontroles centrs secinājis, ka cilvēki

2020.gada decembrī visvairāk inficējušies tuvos kontaktos ar ģimenes locekļiem, augsta saslimstība vērojama arī ārstniecības iestādēs un sociālās aprūpes centros. (Spodris, 2020). Tāpēc publisku un sabiedrībai nozīmīgu pakalpojumu pieejamības ierobežošana ir pieļaujama tikai tādā mērā, cik tas nepieciešams sabiedrības veselības un drošības nodrošināšanai, kā arī pakalpojumu sniegšanā un saņemšanā iesaistīto personu veselībai un drošībai (Covid-19 infekcijas izplatības pārvaldības likums, 2020).

Tāpēc līdzīgi kā lielākajā daļā pasaules valstu arī Latvijā cilvēku pulcēšanās ir ierobežota pamatojoties uz piesardzības principu. Piemēram, tirdzniecības vietām jānosaka cilvēku skaits tirdzniecības vietās saskaņā ar noteikumu vismaz 10 m<sup>2</sup> uz vienu apmeklētāju, tirdzniecības vietai ir jānodrošina apmeklētājiem pieejama informācija par cilvēku skaitu, kas var vienlaicīgi uzturēties konkrētajā vietā, lai maksimāli izslēgtu savstarpējos kontaktus. Atbalstāms Satversmes tiesas secinājums, ka pat tad, ja likumdevēja vēlme noteikt uz piesardzības principu balstītus ierobežojumus, lai novērstu potenciālo kaitējumu sabiedrībai vai tās daļai, ir pietiekami pamatota, attiecīgajiem lēmumiem jāatbilst Satversmei (Latvijas Republikas Satversmes tiesas 2020.gada 11.decembra spriedums lietā Nr.2020-26-0106, 2020). Pat ārkārtējās situācijas laikā likumdevējs nedrīkst pieņemt tādas normas, kas ir nepamatoti plašas un ierobežo arī to personu tiesības, uz kurām nemaz neattiecas ierobežojuma leģitīmais mērķis (Latvijas Republikas Satversmes tiesas 2020.gada 11.decembra spriedums lietā Nr.2020-26-0106, 2020). Tāpēc sabiedrības veselības apdraudējuma mazināšanai piesardzības pasākumi tiek noteikti un īstenoti, izvērtējot Covid-19 infekcijas izplatības draudus, riskus (Covid-19 infekcijas izplatības pārvaldības likums, 2020). Infekcijas ierobežošanas procesu varētu iedalīt vairākās procesuālās darbībās: informēšana; distancēšanās; higiēna; personu veselības stāvokļa uzraudzība (Veselības ministrijas ieteikumi Nr. IeNA/8, 2020).

Ierobežojumu ievērošanai tiek izmantots valsts piespiedu mehānisms. Balstoties uz likumu „Par ārkārtējo situāciju un izņēmuma stāvokli”, lai nodrošinātu nacionālo drošību valsts apdraudējuma gadījumā (Par ārkārtējo situāciju un izņēmuma stāvokli, likums, 2013) ir noteikta īpaša kārtība, kas ietver personu, kas pārkāpj noteikumus, sodīšanu.

2020.gadā ir iekasēti 37,77 miljoni eiro kā ieņēmumi no sodiem un sankcijām. Tas ir lielākais jebkad valsts budžetā nonākušais iekasētais soda naudas apmērs (Šteinfelde, 2021). Secināms, ka demokrātiskajā pārvaldībā ir ievērojamas nepilnības prognozējot iespējamās problēmsituācijas un to novēršanu, jo sodīšana parādās kā centrālais instruments, nevis kā galējs solis rupju pārkāpumu gadījumos, gadījumos, kad brīdinājums un izskaidrošana nav

nesusi rezultātu. Jāpiekrīt, ka noziedzības novēršanas efektivitāte ir atkarīga no policijas sadarbības ar sabiedrību. Šādu sadarbību paredz Latvijai saistošie starptautiskie tiesību akti, tā daļēji ir iestrādāta pēdējo gadu politikas plānošanas dokumentos, bet normatīvajos aktos nav iestrādāta (Feldmanis, 2016). Vidēji saprātīgs iedzīvotājs nav tendēts uz pārkāpumu izdarīšanu, izņēmumi, protams, pastāvējuši vienmēr. Tāpēc represīvo metožu izcelšana nav attaisnojama un ir aizstājama ar sadarbības principu ar iedzīvotājiem stiprināšanu.

Vienlaikus valsts pārvaldei jārēķinās, ka, no vienas puses, ir nosakāmi ierobežojumi un uzraugāma to ievērošana, no otras puses, iedzīvotājiem jābūt reālai iespējai nodrošināt ikdienas dzīves nepieciešamās vajadzības, ko var nodrošināt, iedzīvotājiem sniedzot atbalstu kritisku situāciju pārvarēšanai.

### **Atbalsta noteikšanai svarīgākie principi** *The Main Principles for Support Determining*

Sabiedrības atbalsta sistēmas izveidošana ietver: 1) sabiedrības nodrošināšanu ar pārtiku, citiem iztikas līdzekļiem pietiekamā apmērā, 2) veselības aprūpe, kas ietver medikamentu pieejamību un veselības aprūpes iespēju nodrošināšana, 3) īpašas uzmanības veltīšanu neaizsargātām personām (veci cilvēki, personas ar īpašām vajadzībām, mazi bērni). Jārēķinās, ka ar atsevišķām sabiedrības grupām, piemēram, bezpajumtniekiem, naktspatversmju klientiem, ir nepieciešami gan īpaši saziņas veidi, gan palīdzība.

Par pamatu ņemot atbalstāmo subjektu identifikāciju, atbalsta pasākumus var klasificēt šādi: pasākumi indivīdiem, pasākumi uzņēmējdarbības atbalstam, pasākumi valsts pārvaldes darbības nodrošināšanai, pasākumi mediķu atbalstam.

Attiecībā uz atbalsta pasākumiem ārkārtējās situācijas pārvarēšanai, ir divas pretējas pieejas. Pirmkārt, indivīdiem izsniegt atbalstu, balstoties uz laikā pirms ārkārtējās situācijas iemaksāto sociālās apdrošināšanas iemaksu apmēru. Piemēram, paredzēts, ka 2021.gadā pašnodarbinātas personas var saņemt dīkstāves pabalstu 70% apmērā no vidējiem ienākumiem no saimnieciskās darbības 2020. gada 3. ceturksnī, bet ne mazāk kā 500 eiro (2020. gadā – 330 eiro) un ne vairāk kā 1000 eiro par pilnu mēnesi (Ministru kabineta noteikumi Nr.709, 2020), skan labi. Tomēr prakse rāda, ka pabalsta pretendenti uzliktie pienākumi un ierobežojumi ir izsaukuši to, ka pabalsta pretendenti piesakās necerēti maz. Jo, piemēram, ja nodokļu parāds būs lielāks nekā 1000 eiro, uz pabalstu pašnodarbinātais nevar cerēt.

Gadījumā, ja tiek piešķirts dīkstāves pabalsts, persona ir tiesīga saņemt arī piemaksu 50 euro apmērā par katru apgādībā esošu bērnu vecumā līdz

24 gadiem, par kuru personai tiek piemērots iedzīvotāju ienākuma nodokļa atvieglojums. Tomēr, ja ierobežojumu dēļ personai nav tiesību uz dīkstāves pabalstu, tad nevar saņemt arī piemaksu par bērnu. Šāds ierobežojums ir pretējs bērnu vislabākajām interesēm. Latvijā līdz 2020.gada jūnija sākumam dīkstāves, bezdarbnieka palīdzības un bērnu pabalstos bija izmaksāti vien nepilni 70 miljoni eiro iepriekš solīto 700 miljonu eiro vietā (Premjers maldināpabalstos plānots izmaksāt stipri mazāk, 2020). Satversmes tiesa secinājusi, ka lai ikviens varētu dzīvot tādu dzīvi, kas atbilst cilvēka cieņai, sociālās palīdzības minimumam vajadzētu būt tādām, ka ikviens var nodrošināt sev pārtiku, apģērbu, mājokli un medicīnisko palīdzību – visu to, kas nepieciešams elementāras izdzīvošanas garantēšanai jebkuram cilvēkam, kā arī nodrošināt ikvienai personai iespējas izmantot savas tiesības uz pamatizglītību (Satversmes tiesas spriedums lietā Nr. 2019-24-03, 2019).

Otrs viedoklis, kas nav guvis atbalstu, ir ārkārtas pabalsta izsniegšana katram iedzīvotājam. Jāatzīst, ka šāda pieeja raksturīga daudzām valstīm. Piemēram, Vācijā jau 2020.gadā vairākus mēnešus bija paredzēta palīdzība ģimenēm ar bērniem, īpaši mazturīgākām ģimenēm ar aprēķinu, ka lielāko ieguvumu jutīs vecāki, kuru ienākumi gadā ir zem 65 000 eiro, turklāt papildu atbalsts paredzēts arī vecākiem, kas bērnus audzina vieni (Explained: How does Germany's Kinderbonus coronavirus payment work?, 2020). Risinājumi iedzīvotāju atbalstam var tikt saistīti arī ar konkrētu uzņēmēju izdzīvošanas atbalstu, piemēram, mērķētu iepirkuma kartiņu izsniegšana, kuras varētu atprečot pie vietējiem uzņēmējiem.

Kāda zināma apmēra pabalsta piešķiršana visiem iedzīvotājiem tiek dēvēta par 'helikoptera' naudu. Nav atbalstāms viedoklis, ka šāda rīcība būtu neracionāla, jo rau' nodrošinātu bagātos un trūcīgos ar vienādu atbalsta apmēru. (Medne, 2020). Nekas netraucē turīgajiem, piemēram, atteikties no jebkādu pabalstu saņemšana, kā, piemēram, savulaik to izdarīja Valsts prezidents Andris Bērziņš ar savu algu - to ziedojot labdarībai (Valsts prezidents savu algu ziedos Strazdumuižas internātvidusskolai, 2012). Tāpat priekšlikums ģimenēm par katru bērnu krīzes pārvarēšanas periodā ik mēnesi izmaksāt piemaksu ir visnotaļ atbalstāms, vēl jo vairāk (vispārzināms) - ministru prezidents, finanšu ministrs prezumē, ka valstij šobrīd esot tik daudz naudas kā nekad. Vispārēja atbalsta piešķiršana būtu atzīstama par iespēju paraudzīties uz problēmām ārpus ierastā, meklējot nestandarta risinājumus. Ārkārtējā situācijā pastāvošo risku izvērtēšanai ir nepieciešama inovatīvas pieejas princips un starpdisciplinārs lēmumu pieņemšanas process, kas balstīts uz vispusīgu situācijas apzināšanu. Elastīga pieeja iedzīvotāju reālās situācijas novērtēšanai un operatīvu,

pilnvērtīgu atbalsta mehānismu īstenošana ir atrodama demokrātiskuma principā, bet pāri visam ir 'jāielasa' cilvēka cieņas princips.

### **Secinājumi** **Conclusions**

1. Ārkārtējās situācijas iespaidā īpaši aktualizējas konstitucionāla ranga vērtības. To aizsardzībai jāizceļ atbilstoši tiesību principi, pēc kuriem jāvadās valsts pārvaldei ārkārtas apstākļos, tie ir: tiesiskā paļāvība, tiesiskā drošība, atklātība, laba valsts pārvaldība. Īpaši aktuāla kļūst reāla cilvēktiesību ievērošanas principa samērīga īstenošana valsts pārvaldes attiecībās ar privātpersonām.
2. Ārkārtējā situācijā darbojas samērīgi, attaisnojami ierobežojumi, kuru izpilde ir obligāta. To noteikšana balstīta uz piesardzības principu. Savukārt ierobežojumu ievērošana sagaidāma pamatojoties uz atklātības pret sabiedrību un sabiedrības iesaistīšanas principiem.
3. Pārmērīga sodīšanas principa īstenošana liecina par demokrātiskuma principa realizācijas būtiskām problēmām. Risinājums meklējams sadarbības ar sabiedrību veicināšanā, atklātībā, informācijas pieejamības attīstībā, savstarpējas uzticības vairošanā.
4. Iedzīvotāju atbalsta pasākumu īstenošanai vērojamas divas pieejas, pirmkārt, atbalsts atkarīgs no iepriekš samaksātajiem nodokļiem, otrkārt, atbalsts tiek sniegts jebkurai personai. Atbalsta pasākumu nodrošināšanas pamatprincipi balstāmi uz cilvēka cieņai atbilstoša dzīves līmeņa nodrošināšanas principu, kas būtu īstenojams kā obligāts pamatprincips demokrātiskā sabiedrībā. Lemjot par atbalsta veidiem, jāpamatojas uz starpdisciplināru, inovatīvu visaptverošu problēmu analīzi un sabiedrības intereses apmierinošu reāla rīcības modeļa izstrādi un īstenošanu. Elastīga pieeja iedzīvotāju reālās situācijas novērtēšanai, operatīvu, pilnvērtīgu atbalsta mehānismu īstenošana ir izlasāma no demokrātiskuma principa.

### **Summary**

The existing risks have to be determined precisely during the emergency situation, they have to be evaluated. Making of any decisions during the emergency situation has to be looked at as a cross - disciplinary process, where scientifically and economically based decisions are essential, but such is also the community support to these decisions, prevention activity and providing of understandable, public information to the community. Only when all these considerations work together, it is possible to achieve the expected effect. That is why



the particular legal principles, characteristic to the emergency situation have to be taken into consideration.

The principles have to be classified according to the necessity to provide the amount of private persons' rights and duties, which are linked with community health and security interests and the effective work of the state, municipalities' institutions. The social welfare principle has to be emphasised as the condition of the constitutional rank. The second basic criteria of the principles' qualification is the topical basic principles of the state institutions' work during the emergency situation. Based on the point of view of the community interests, the principles of transparency, approachability of information and prevention belong to them.

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# FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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**Abstract.** *Since the beginning of the XXI century, there have been clear modifications in the sector of higher education, when the institutions have moved near to the economic sector. These changes were primary introduced as the consecutive response to the transformation processes within the society, which should be embedded in the following construct: there was a clear move towards a more competitive and market-based system. Due to the changes in the operating environment financial sustainability and its management for the higher education institutions became one of the core elements. The main objective of the current paper is to discuss the practical application of the methodology for the management of higher education institutions based on the example of Latvian private higher education institutions. The author would like to argue that the paper contributes to the fundamental discussion of financial sustainability in the field of higher education institution management. Moreover, it has got practical implications for the management of the organizations not only in Latvia but also in other countries when efficiency and effectiveness are primary issues.*

**Keywords:** *financial sustainability, higher education institutions, management.*

## Introduction

Decision-making and management process in higher education institutions is becoming complex and problematical due to the changes in technologies, operating environment, etc. Moreover, one should consider that in the XX century the higher education sector was valued as one with a lack of strong management due to the restricted competition, while at the beginning of the XXI century there was a transfer towards a more competitive and market-based system. Due to the changes in the operating environment financial sustainability and its management for higher education institutions became one of the core elements. Similar ideas have been discussed by several researchers (Cantwell et al., 2018; Hazelkorn et al., 2018; Aithal & Kumar, 2019; Chyrva et al., 2020). The author is strongly convinced that the institutions' management providing higher education services needs to use stable methods of performance measurement and management not only to satisfy different stakeholders' requirements but also to provide financial sustainability of the organization and its competitiveness in the long run.

The purpose of the paper is to contribute to the current discussion about acceptable financial efficiency measurement suitable for allocation higher education institution's strategic goals (for the realization of strategies), as well as for performance measurement achieved by the organization, demonstrating how the Composite Financial Index can be applied and interpreted. The methodology is based on the financial ratio analysis and weighting optimization algorithm discussed in the previous works (Author, 2021). The current research paper is intended to discuss the practical application of the methodology for the management of higher education institutions based on the example of Latvian private higher education institutions.

### **Literature Review**

It is worth considering that performance measurement and management played a considerable role in the academic discussion. As it was stated previously at the beginning of the XXI century the sector of higher education institutions has moved near to the economic sector and the kind of transformation has made the researchers paying attention to the performance measurement and management aspects in the particular domain. Higgins was one of the first authors who have settled the idea of the performance measurement system for higher education institutions (Higgins, 1989). According to him effectiveness and efficiency should be considered; while the system should be based on the three elements, including the mission of the organization, strategic analysis, and planning, management information system. The discussion has been developed by further scientists, who have established a significant decision matter within the management of higher education institutions like budgeting, allocation of resources, and performance management (Ho et al., 2006). Another group of scientists (Yu et al., 2009) has developed the idea of internal factors-based performance measurement and management, while the performance measurement should be considered as a supporting sub-system of performance management.

On the one hand, the mentioned research area is rather extensive, but on the other hand, there are some aspects that are covered less but are important and worth being recognized – the author would like to underline that there is widespread research on the field of performance measurement and management of higher education institutions, while the topic of financial well-being within this debate is less covered. Having done literature analysis, it is possible to claim that the mainstream of the researchers is describing the concept of performance measurement and management in the connection with efficiency discussion – scientists are linking performance management and measurement with the question of efficiency of the organization (Agasisti & Dal Bianco, 2009; Agasisti & Johnes, 2009; Wolszczak-Derlacz & Parteka, 2011;

Wolszczak-Derlacz, 2017; Bouzouita, 2019). While the other group (less numerous in the previous years, but probably increasing in the coming periods) is speaking about a combination of both efficiency and effectiveness factors (Taylor, 2014; De Witte & López-Torres, 2017; Kretovics & Eckert, 2019; Mukhtar et al., 2020).

Another conclusion out of the literature review was the fact that the financial efficiency of the higher education institution has been addressed by a limited number of research papers, for example, Ćwiąkała–Małys and Mościbrodzka are continuing their work on the field of financial efficiency evaluation in the domain of higher education and are covering several countries within the European Union in their discussion (Ćwiąkała–Małys & Mościbrodzka, 2017). Tran and Villano are determining the divisional efficiency, as well as evaluating this efficiency concerning the overall performance of educational institutions within the Vietnamese higher education system (Tran & Villano, 2018). Günay and Dulupçu have applied data envelopment analysis to quantify the comparative financial efficiency of the universities in Turkey (Günay & Dulupçu, 2019). Mousa and Ghulam research the efficiency of institutions of higher learning in Saudi Arabia (Mousa & Ghulam, 2019). Based on the findings described above the author is seeing the need to discuss the issue in particular, while the financial performance of the organization is one of the critical factors to ensure sustainable development. The question is getting more important when the sector of higher education institutions is struggling with demographic challenges in Latvia and has to face new global threats as COVID-19 pandemics.

### **Research Methodology**

The author is using the methodology of ratio analysis in higher education developed by KPMG in cooperation with several researchers (Tahey et al., 2015), and adjusting it to the situation in Latvia. It is worth stating that some attempts to measure the financial sustainability of higher education institutions in Latvia were done by some researchers; but the author would like to renew the discussion and propose further development to the method. The reason for the renewed discussion is the fact that Mavlutova and Ziemele are covering in their paper a single organization (Mavlutova & Ziemele, 2012), while Cernostana is applying a different method (Cernostana, 2018).

It is worth considering that the further discussion is going to be about the Composite Financial Index (CFI) covering the issues of liquidity, operational results, performance of assets, and debt and capital management. The CFI should be calculated based on measures and threshold levels as described in the table above (Table 1). The sum of the ratios previously adjusted to the strength as determined by threshold levels and the weight allow calculating the CFI. It should

be underlined that the weighting of the ratios in the index represents the crucial issue and further clarification is necessary that is provided in the table below (Table 2). In order to make any strategical decisions applying the methodology described it will be necessary to collect information for 3 to 5 years and interpret the index value.

*Table 1 CFI: Explanation of Ratios and Threshold Levels*

<b>Financial Ratio for CFI</b>	<b>Threshold Level, Adjusted</b>	<b>Adjustment Reason</b>
<b>Primary Reserve Ratio</b> determined as net current assets divided by total costs and is measuring the level of financial flexibility of the organization	<b>0.25</b> – meaning that the organization to provide financial flexibility should provide around 3 months of expenses	adjusted based on Latvian expert opinion
<b>Viability Ratio</b> is an indicator of debt management and is equal to net current assets divided by long-term debt	<b>1.25</b> – average indicator within the industry	no adjustments are made
<b>Return on Net Assets</b> is a measure of economic return, indicating the trend over years and it equals to current period changes in net assets divided by total net assets multiplied by 100	<b>4%</b> as a healthy level also considering the fact the higher education institution does not only fulfill the business function, but also a social one	adjusted based on Latvian expert opinion
<b>Net Operating Revenues</b> measures the operating performance of the organization from day-to-day operations and is calculated as net unrestricted operating revenues divided by total unrestricted operating revenues multiplied by 100	<b>2.59%</b> – average indicator within the industry in Europe	adjusted based on the analysis of European educational sector public companies

*Source: created by the author based on previous research (Tahey et al., 2015) and (Author, 2021).*

*Table 2 CFI: Explanation of Weights*

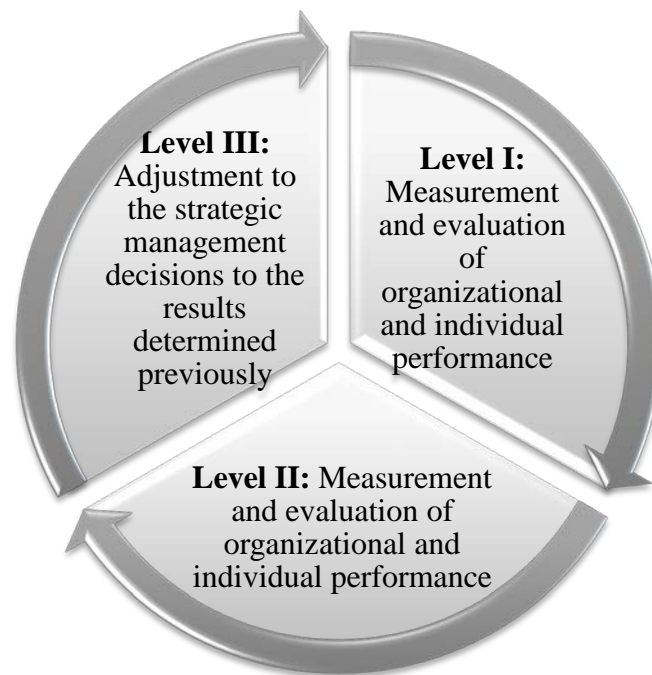
<b>Financial Ratio for CFI</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
<b>Primary Reserve Ratio</b>	20.98%	weights are determined applying weight-optimization algorithm as proposed by a group of scientists (Becker et.al., 2017) to solve the weighting issue discussed by the author in the previous paper (Author, 2021).
<b>Viability Ratio</b>	58.40%	
<b>Return on Net Assets</b>	4.69%	
<b>Net Operating Revenues</b>	15.93%	

*Source: created by the author.*

## **Results of the Research**

Based on the literature analysis the author proposes, that the process of the higher education system could be constructed using comparable methods within the producing industry, and arrives at the conclusion about the necessity of a performance management system that could be presented as a 3-level concept described below (Fig. 1), where the decisions on the one level should have an impact on the judgments on the other levels. Introduction of Level I permits establishing a performance management framework with the purpose of improving the quality of the provided services to the students, public, etc. The goal could be achieved by publishing information on the performance. Moreover, one should consider that the concept should be seen as result-oriented, therefore the accountability of both efficiency and effectiveness ratios and indicators is necessary. The concept within this level could be organized as follows: 1) to describe goals/objectives; 2) to select the number of crucial indicators; 3) to assign goals/objectives and crucial indicators to the financial planning and strategic analysis, ensuring the persistent connection between goals/objectives and allocation of limited resources. The idea within the second level could be organized as following: 1) to ensure the monitoring/evaluation of the process (including the correction of errors); 2) to perform measurement of organizational and individual performance in a timely manner; 3) to provide consecutive reporting to the shareholders and internal as well as external stakeholders. Moreover, the current concept ensures the creation of the link to the strategic management policy within the organization on the condition that it provides the modification opportunity to the strategic management decisions due to the existing evaluation of performance. Within the current discussion, particular attention should be paid to step I, including measurement and evaluation of organizational performance. Moreover, the author would like to concentrate only on the issue of the financial health of the higher education institution, while the other aspects within the performance management system should be discussed in the further analysis.





*Figure 1 Performance Management System as 3-Level Concept (created by the author)*

The latest OECD report states that public spending on higher education is moderately low in Latvia – around 0.9% of GDP in 2016 compared to 1.1% on average across the OECD countries. Moreover, this limited financial support does not reflect the increase in national wealth, which can be clearly identified by the following facts: between 2010 and 2016, Latvia’s GDP increased by 21%, while payments to the organizations providing education services fell by 24% (OECD, 2020). Consequently, the financial performance and sustainability of the higher education institution are vital factors. Additionally, in the context of the current discussion it should be mentioned that there are different financial sources that a higher education institution could use, like state financial support for some public institutions (private higher education institutions are usually excluded from this channel); revenues coming from tuition fees (public higher education institutions are enjoying an additional benefit of so-called “budget-students”, where the cash inflows are predefined); revenues from other services; private funds, etc. Consequently, the financial sustainability for private higher education institutions not benefiting (or benefits are very limited) from the government support is of particular importance as, on the one hand, they experiencing similar problems like decreasing number of students due to demographical factors in Latvia and the other Baltic States, aging of professors (even though the number of academic staff in Latvia is stable during the last couple of years), as well as competition issues getting stiffer; while, on the other hand, have to satisfy shareholders’ interests providing (or provided in the previous periods) the financial sources and

evaluating a private higher education institution as a business or investment project. Additionally, new global threats as COVID-19 pandemics are making the issue of financial stability and long-term financial health more important for both public and private institutions. It is stated that in order to avoid any long-term negative effects from COVID-19 pandemics the institutions to pay greater attention to efficiency and effectiveness together with quality and value (Estermann et al., 2020).

The author would like to argue that the application of the described methodology is allowing to assess the financial health of the organization as well as to understand the possibilities and strategic implications in the changing environment. The current research is limited to the Latvia private higher education sector, while financial results from 13 organizations were analyzed retrieving the data from Lursoft – databases of enterprises. It is worth bearing in mind that the sample for the current research is limited to the number of private higher education institutions in Latvia operating in the sector for the last 5 years from 2015 to 2019 (excluding currently non-existent organizations), while the time period chosen for analysis of trends, calculation of ratios and determination of index is limited to the period as proposed by the existing research (Tahey et al., 2015) and confirmed by industry experts in Latvia. Due to the fact that the author would like to see the overall picture and determine CFI as a benchmark value suitable for further analysis of the particular institution providing higher education services the data are analyzed on the aggregated level – calculating the average ratios for the selected sample and determining the sub-industry CFI.

As indicated in Fig.2 there is financial resource sufficiency in private higher education institutions in Latvia, so that one can state that organizations were able to maintain a sufficient level of short-term financial stability above the threshold level during the analyzed period. Moreover, the data show a positive trend implying the ability of management to overcome short-term difficulties. The viability ratio addresses the problem of debt management within the organization – it indicates the improving trend (but the median is still below the threshold level), representing that analyzed education institutions do not have adequate funding to manage the debt effectively. The tendency specifies a particular problem that should be resolved otherwise it could endanger the existence of the organizations. Return on Net Assets indicates the investment performance of the organization. It should be considered that players from the sector were engaged in the investment activities in the previous periods hoping for a positive return in the coming years. The data indicates the positive trend, but it is worth considering that the performance ratio depends on several overall economic and social factors that cannot be controlled internally so that hikes should be evaluated with caution and limited optimism. Net Operating Revenues show an encouraging trend, but the overall level is still low and indicates the

weakness of the private higher education institutions in Latvia in respect to the ability to operate within the level of the available resource.

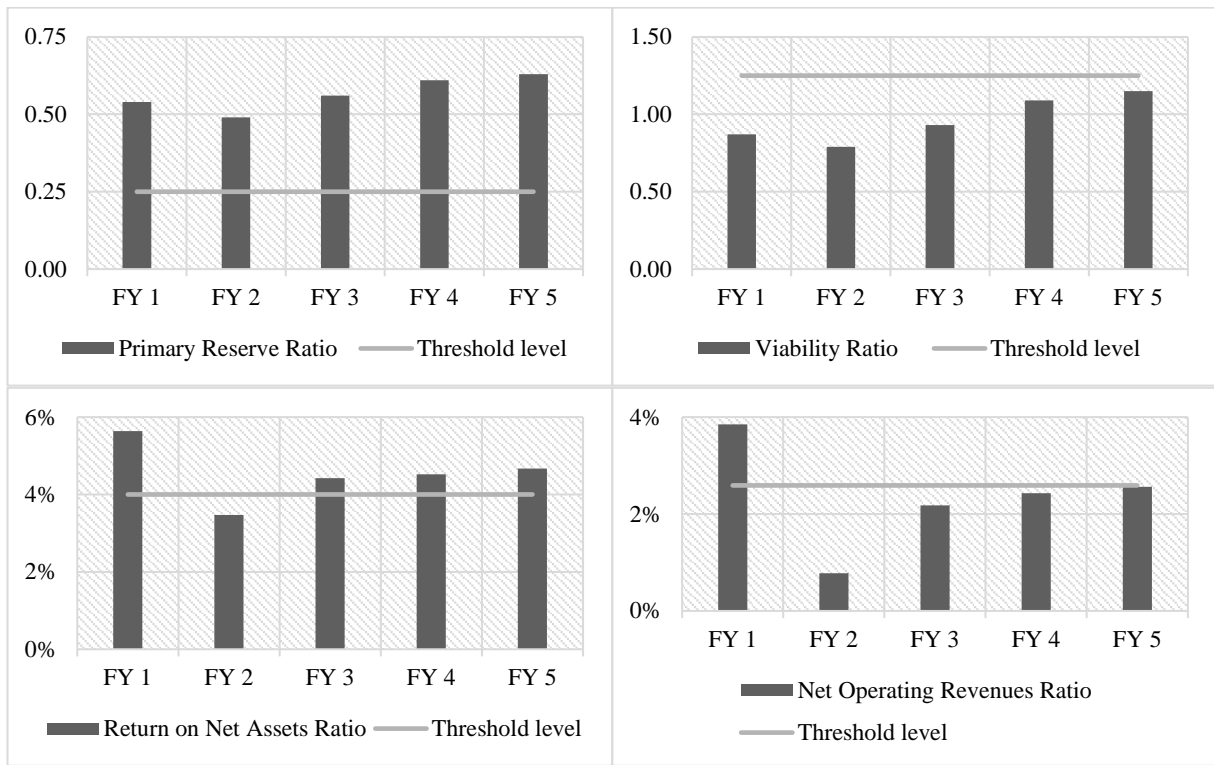


Figure 2 *Ratios and Threshold Levels* (calculated by the author)

It is worth considering that the kind of approach allows to map each ratio's assessment on a diamond diagram to demonstrate the shape of the organization's financial situation – indicating whether a considerable weakness is offset by a strength in another ratio and make a year-on-year comparison. The figure below (Fig. 3) shows that on the one hand private higher education institutions in Latvia demonstrate a particular weakness to operate within the level of the available financial resource (see levels of Net Operating Revenues (NOR)), but on the other hand, this drawback is balanced by other strength for example by resource sufficiency as determined by Primary Reserve Ratio (PRR) and ability to generate investment performance as described by Return on Net Assets Ratio (RoNA). Furthermore, it is worth underlying that in case of the absence of rare conditions, an organization would want at least the threshold level to be achieved, otherwise, this could be considered an indication of potential difficulties in the future (early warning signals). Besides, one should be able to recognize the positive signs of stabilization of financial health Latvian private higher education institutions in the last years (years 4 and 5 in the current analysis), which is less obvious otherwise.

Every ratio determined above displays the selected financial factor, further on it is divided by the strength of the factor and multiplied by the weight.

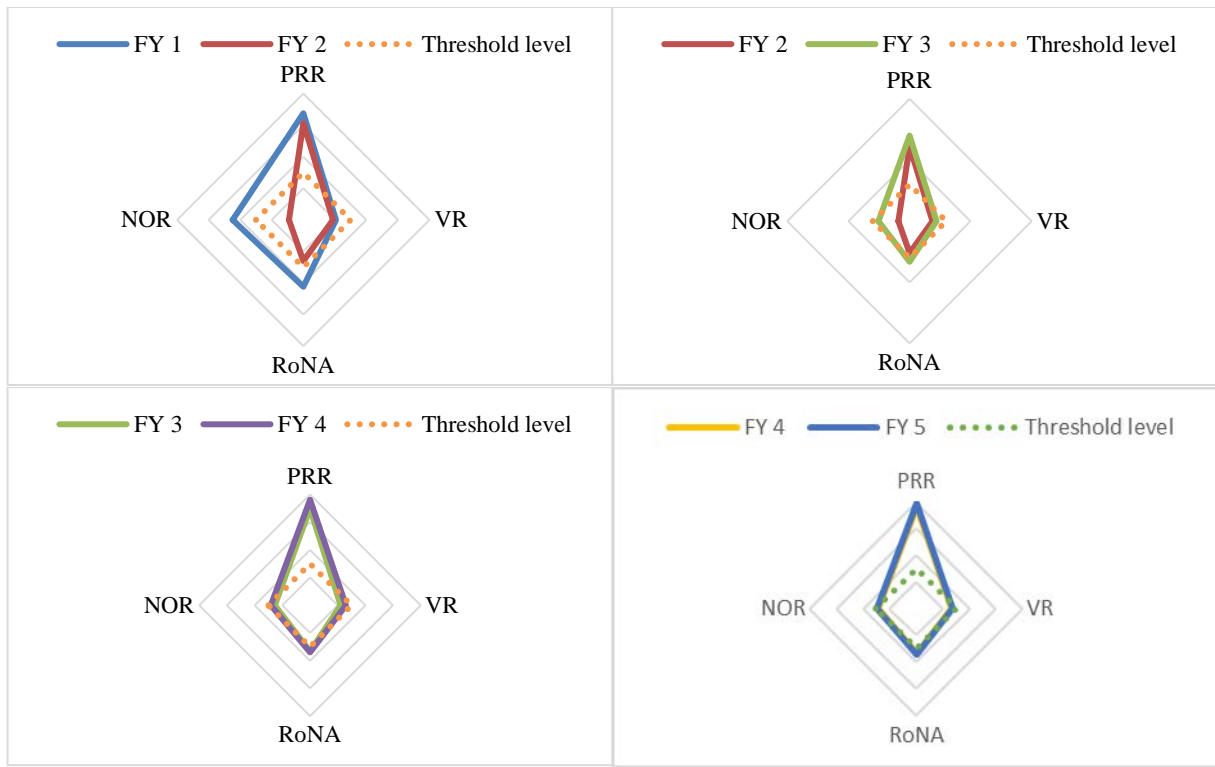
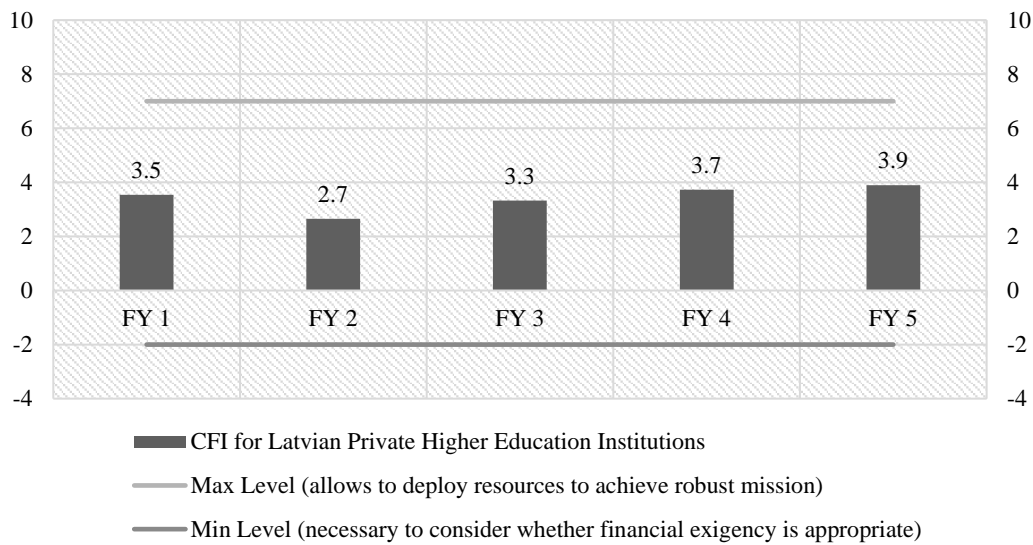


Figure 3 *Ratio Comparison* (calculated by the author)

As a result, the CFI is determined (Fig. 4) and it indicates the ability of the private higher education institution in Latvia to face the challenging business environment and the obligation to direct available financial resources to permit the transformation of the organizations to achieve their strategic purposes (the interpretation of the score is based on proposal by the American researchers (Tahey et al., 2015)).

Furthermore, the data shows a positive development trend in the previous periods that allows arguing that Latvian private higher education institutions are financially sustainable and able to compete in the challenging environment. Moreover, the calculated level of the index could be deliberated as a benchmark level and could be used for further analysis of the particular organization.



*Figure 4 CFI for Latvian Private Higher Education Institutions (calculated by the author)*

## Conclusions

Based on the performed analysis the author has arrived at the following conclusions: management of the higher education institution is nowadays becoming multifaceted and requires additional tools to assure sustainable development of the organization. The existing research is addressing the subject only to the limited range, while the question of financial efficiency within this debate is less covered. The author would like to claim that the paper contributes to the fundamental debate of evaluation and efficiency measurement tools on the field of higher education institution and allows to determine further questions for analysis and scientific discussion like the inclusion of financial efficiency measurement in the ranking models for evaluation of higher education institutions among the peer group. Performed calculations allow determining that the level of financial health within Latvian private higher education institutions is sufficient to face the challenging business environment and it indicates the necessity to direct financial resources to allow the transformation of the organizations in the future. Moreover, the calculated CFI could be deliberated as a benchmark level and could be used for the further analysis of the performance of the particular organization that would provide supporting function in the managerial decision-making approach. Similar research applying the methodology described could be performed for public higher education institutions. Additionally, it could gain particular importance in the discussion of performance-based budgeting. This issue could be discussed in the coming paper.

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# LEADERSHIP AND TEAM PERFORMANCE AS DEVELOPMENT TOOL FOR CREATING SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

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**Abstract.** *Team performance is important at work and in organizational psychology as it aims to promote human energy. The human energy is more than just a “New Age” concept, it has a substantial and predictable effect on performance and innovation in organizations. The aim of the study is to examine relations between leadership style and team performance and mediating role is played by the productive organizational energy. The study is based on literature and quantitative and qualitative research methods. A theoretical framework is assessed in the empirical study in Latvian organizations in 2019. The study was accomplished in co-operation with America company "The Energy Project" and the University of Arizona. The article reveals the model of human energy as a scientifically-based approach and transformational leadership as a development tool, which already has spread in all sectors of western societies, including educational organizations. The materials and recommendations can be used to assist organizations in identifying practices, processes and initiatives, which can have a positive impact on team performance and organizational energy. The general conclusion is that the transformation leadership lays a positive dynamic in the development of the team performance for sustainable education. The educational organizations can progress productive performance and create sustainable education in a particular manner by focusing on their human resources; considering their growth, development and well-being.*

**Keywords:** *productive team performance, sustainable education, transformational leadership.*

## Introduction

At the present stage of development of education, teachers are technology-oriented and responsible not only for teaching but also for the organization of students learning, as a result, increased stressful situations, work long hours and are tethered to work through technology. For the last decade have been extensively studied the symptoms of teacher's stress contributing to burnout (Helou & Nabhani, 2016; Jacobson, 2016). Referring to the research conducted by A. Leme and I. Maia (2015) were deduced that teachers feel depleted with little personal human energy for family or community activities; teachers' fatigue causes motivation and well-being reduction and as a result, the increasingly poor performance.



These issues together defined the problem of the study, which is to improve teacher's well-being and work-related performance. Referring to the analysis of the initial facts and the problem were highlighted the innovative topics of research: firstly, the ability to maintain personal human energy and to use it correctly for leadership at the workplace; secondly, the capacity to build new communication methods and to make use of relational energy, that should become an essential tool for managing the pedagogical process and improving productive team performance for sustainable education.

Interest in personal human energy flourished in the 1970s when H.J. Freudenberger (1975) became interested in burnout, mental fatigue, and mental distancing from work. At the beginning of 21st century, more attention is being paid to the study of positive social interactions for optimal human functioning and these lead scholars (Luthans & Avolio, 2009) to prove the influential role of the human energy on individual and organizational level. The scientists A. Carmeli and G.M. Spreitzer (2009) confirmed that the human energy as resource demonstrate positive outcomes including performance and creativity, and emphasize that one of the key roles in the successful development of team performance is occupied by leader' behaviours.

The human energy resources had influenced the birth of transformational leadership theory, and this theory used to describe the ideal situation between leaders and followers (Bass, 1998). According to S.S. Khumalo (2019), transformational leadership style views relationship development as a crucial component of the work of educational institutions. It should be noted that through the implementation of transformational leadership in education, teachers and principals can influence school members to create learning conditions that activate the natural curiosity, interest, and motivation in students (Adams, Olsen, & Ware, 2017), and, also, sustain the excellence, quality and high performance from subordinates and followers (Khumalo, 2019).

Sustainable education is currently considered a key factor in the development of the education system (Simane, 2019), in this study, the role of transformational leadership is used to prove the importance of contributing towards sustainable team performance and organizational productivity. The analysis of literature and results of empirical practice has allowed concluding that transformational leadership can become a development tool for creating sustainable education.

**The aim of the study** is to examine relations between leadership style and team performance and mediating role is played by the productive organizational energy. The research is based on literature and quantitative and qualitative research methods.

## Literature Review

The word energy derives from the Ancient Greek “ἐνέργεια” or “energeia” that’s mean 'activity, operation', which appears for the first time in the work of Aristotle in the 4th century BC, it described qualitative philosophical concept, which fuels one’s potentiality (Burn, 1978). Important to mention that in Eastern philosophy “*Qi*” (*life power or energy flow*) is a concept that is often mentioned concerning physical and mental health, but in Western philosophy and theory, it remains more unexplored. In the study, the human energy definition is used from Lexico, Oxford Dictionary (2019) with meaning as “the strength and vitality required for sustained physical or cognitive activity”.

The scientists B. Rich, J. LePine and E.R. Crawford (2010) in their study emphasized that human energy is one operative and defining characteristic of work engagement. The study of R. Ryan and C. Frederick (1997) has indeed shown a positive relationship between the human energy and vitality and well-being, also helps people regulate their behaviours and emotions in compliance with organizational or group norms and expectations.

Three kinds of human energy dimensions are discerned:

1. mental and spiritual energy (*being able to intensely focus*) (Baker, 2019);
2. physical energy (*strength, endurance, flexibility*) (Baker, 2019);
3. emotional energy/ relation energy (*being in touch with feelings and core values*) (Baker, 2019).

W.E. Baker (2019) suggested altered category labelled “*emotional*” energy to “*relational*” energy, also, has identified the powerful role that the relational human energy play in corporate behaviour. The research about the relational human energy reported that it has enclosed high-quality relationships at work, generate and sustain energetic resources, motivate people to do work well and positively associated with team performance (Baker, 2019).

The analysis of literature has allowed concluding that human energy resources had influenced the birth of transformational leadership theory. B.M. Bass (1998) described transformational leadership in terms of the impact that it has on followers, as it is created around the idea of leading by example. Transformational leadership influence follower and enable them, to generate psychological empowerment of a person as a result of interaction between a characteristic of the individual and organization environment, including the leader-follower relationship (Bass, 1998). Transformational leaders articulate a vision for the future, act as charismatic role models, set high-performance expectations, provide individualized support, and stimulate followers. In the study components of the framework for transformational leadership are specified, considered them as behaviours (Luthans & Avolio, 2009). Transformational leadership has been found to be related: *to follower performance, to job*

*satisfaction, to organisational commitment* (Schwartz, Gomez, & McCarthy, 2010).

It should be noted that the research about the school experiences of future teachers highlighted the importance to establish a close and solid relationship between the teacher and the student, which is developed through a mutual desire to communicate and cooperate in the educational institution as an exceptional component of pedagogical professional activity (Masiliauskienė & Lenkauskaitė, 2020). Transformational leadership can be used by principals and teachers, as it places a high value on creating community bonds, encourages school members to greater levels of achievement, and to expand and grow in a nurturing community. One of the strengths of the transformational leadership is that it builds on the resources of every member of the school, particularly staff, teachers and students (Khumalo, 2019). The benefits of implementation of transformational leadership: (1) *fosters a community that is committed to the goals of the school and the success of students*, (2) *provides intellectual stimulation, offers individualizes support, models best practices and value, demonstrates high-performance expectations and creates a productive teaching culture*; (3) *provides an environment that fosters the creation of new and innovative instructional techniques* (Leithwood, Tomlinson, & Genge, 1996; Adams, Olsen, & Ware, 2017).

The researchers (Eisenberg, Ignatjeva, Iliško, & Rauckiene-Michaelsso, 2018) describe transformational leadership as increasing the motivation of the team to achieve higher performance and as developing and the commitment and beliefs in the organization. The results of the study revealed that transformational leadership had a direct impact on team performance, organizational productivity and sustainability (Eisenberg et al., 2018). The implications of this study for management and organizational psychologist practitioners lies in developing organizational sustainability, by paying attention to the transformational leadership of their leaders.

The model of "Human Energy in Organizations" (HEO) is a scientifically-based approach to energizing people physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually so they can perform sustainably at their best is explained. The model consists of four interrelated components: *human energy, transformational leadership, productive team energy and productive organizational energy*. The main basic components of HEO model are the human energy and transformational leadership, consolidation of them leads to a productive team and organizational energy (Figure 1).

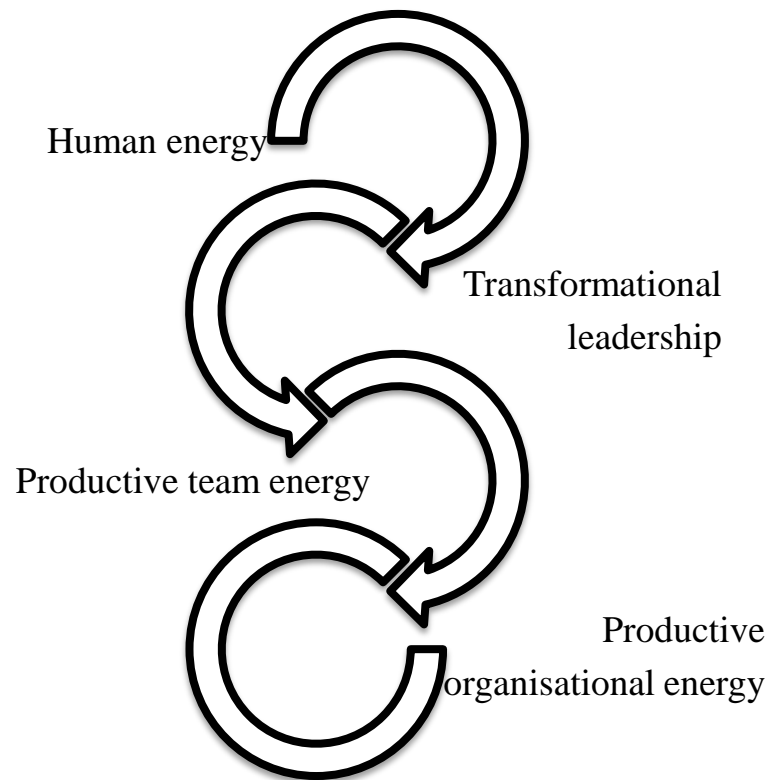


Figure 1 Model of Human Energy in Organization (developed by the author)

The researchers T. Schwartz, J. Gomez and C. McCarthy (2010) points out the great importance of productive team energy, they state that it integrates personal and relation human energy into four dimensions – *mindset*, *culture*, *structure* and *behaviour*, and it is an effective helping system for successful organizational transformation. In the summary of the HEO model are explained the last component - productive organizational energy (POE), it is described as the shared experience and demonstration of positive affect and behaviors among followers in their joint pursuit of organizationally salient objectives (Cole, Bruch, & Vogel, 2008). POE is linked to such critical organizational aspects as *well-being*, *internal effectiveness*, *organizational performance* (Kenny & Nnamdi, 2019)

### Methodology

The aim of the empirical study is to examine the effect of transformational leadership on productive organization energy and the mediating role is played by the productive organizational energy. A mediating variable or "mediator" is an integral part of a cause-and-effect relationship. It makes it easier to understand how the independent variable is

affecting the dependent variable and what is governing that relationship (Swaen, 2015).

**Research questions:** (1) Which aspects of transformational leadership relate to higher productive organisational energy and team performance? (2) How organizational energy relates to team performance? (3) Which development behaviours of transformational leadership can create and sustain productive organisation energy and team performance?

Methods of data collection: (1) questionnaire (2) observation (3) interview (4) case studies.

The population of the research consisted of 10 public and private organizations, which include 4 educational organization. Research object: leaders with 10 years' experience and their teams. The research focused on the perception of followers and leaders. The research made use of stratified sample type. For research has been examining respondents, a convenience sample, was taken from a diverse group of learners/employees of various organizations in Latvia. Respondents of this sample were females (56%) and male (44%). Most of the respondents are organizational teachers/managers in different departments (74%), employed for 0-10 years in their company (85%), work experience of 0-10 years (54%) and work experience of 10-20 years (46 %).

**Research Instrument and Measures:**

1. Leaders survey content has 4 parts: *Personal Information*, *The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)* (Rowold, 2005), *Team performance* (Sun, Xu, & Shang, 2014), *Productive Organizational Energy* (Cole, Bruch, & Vogel, 2008).
2. Followers survey content has 4 parts: *Personal Information*, *Productive Organizational Energy*, *Team Performance*; *The Subjective Vitality* (Ryan & Frederick, 1997).

## Research Results

**Research Question 1:** *Which aspects of transformational leadership relate to higher productive organizational energy and team performance?*

The research was aimed to analyse the positive impact of different leadership behaviours and factors on productive organization energy and team performance. The MLQ consisted of 7 leadership factors, with 3 different leadership behaviours. The research presents the correlation coefficients of all leadership aspects in relations to POE and team performance as evaluated by followers, to answer the first research question (Table 1).

**Table 1 The Correlation Coefficients of Leader`s Behaviours with Productive Organizational Energy and Team Performance (developed by the author)**

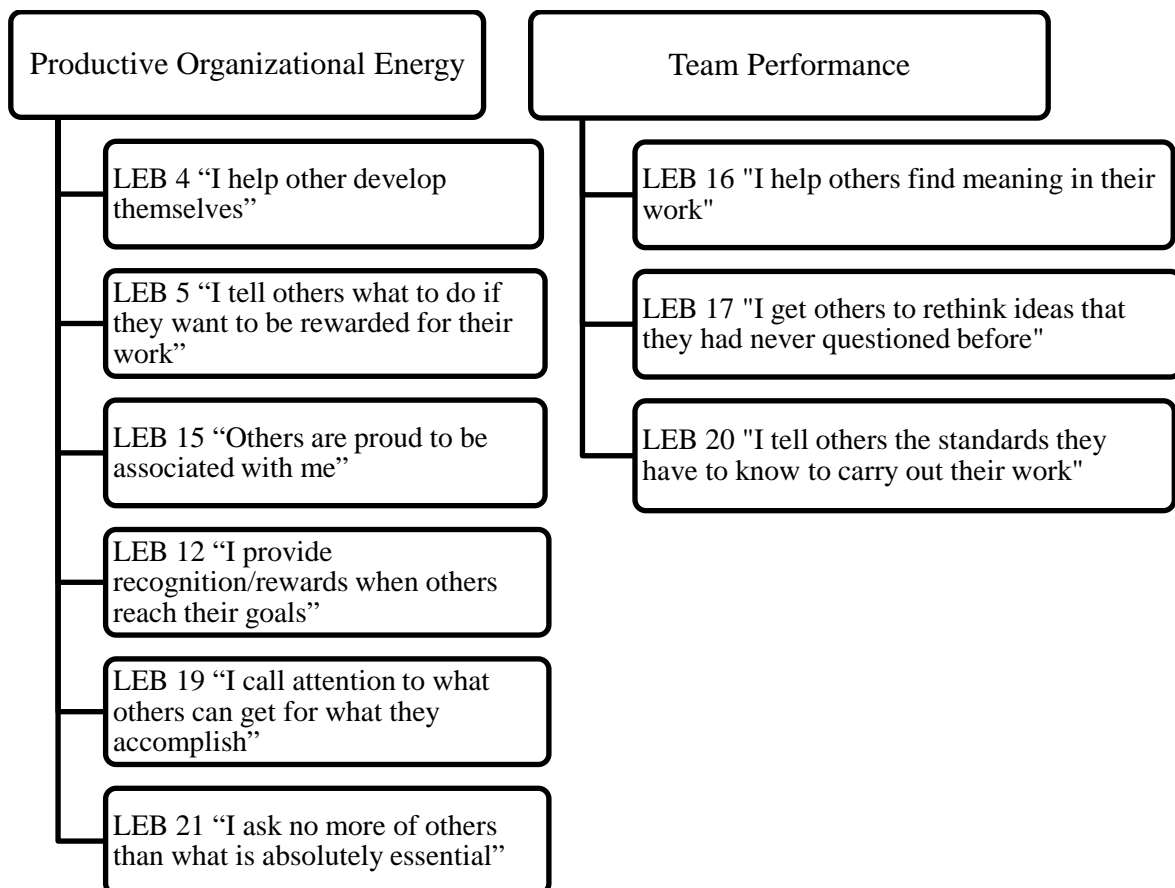
Nr.	Leadership factors	Leadership behaviours (LEB)	POE followers	Team Performance followers
1.	F:1	I make others feel good to be around me	-.12	-.06
8.	Idealised influence	Others have complete faith in me	.07	.06
15.		<b>Others are proud to be associated with me.</b>	<b>.29</b>	-.13
2.	F2:	I express with a few simple words what we could and should do	-.03	.0,8
9.	Inspirational motivation	I provide appealing images about what we can do	.15	-.13
16.		<b>I help others find meaning in their work.</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>.21</b>
3.	F3: Intellectual stimulation	<i>I enable others to think about old problems in new ways</i>	.14	-.27
10.		I provide others with new ways of looking at puzzling things.	-.13	-.09
17.		<b>I get others to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before</b>	.14	<b>.36</b>
4.	F4: Individual consideration	<b>I help others develop themselves</b>	<b>.35</b>	.07
11.		I let others know how I think they are doing.	-.04	-.11
18.		<i>I give personal attention to others who seem rejected</i>	-.24	-.19
5.	F5: Contingent reward	<b>I tell others what to do if they want to be rewarded for their work.</b>	<b>.26</b>	-.05
12.		<b>I provide recognition/rewards when others reach their goals</b>	<b>.25</b>	-.04
19.		<b>I call attention to what others can get for what they accomplish</b>	<b>.22</b>	-.01
6.	F6: Management by exception	I am satisfied when others meet agreed-upon standards	.07	.06
13.		<i>As long as things are working, I do not try to change anything.</i>	.05	-.25
20.		<b>I tell others the standards they have to know to carry out their work.</b>	-.04	<b>.21</b>
7.	F7:	I am content to let others continue working in the same ways always.	-.09	.07
14.	Laissez-faire leadership	Whatever others want to do is OK with me	-1.2	-.12
21.		<b>I ask no more of others than what is absolutely essential.</b>	<b>.21</b>	.15

According to the data, the recommended leader's behaviours related to higher POE and team performance as perceived by followers are pointed with **bold**. There is a significant positive correlation between leadership behaviours and higher POE and team performance as perceived by followers: *LEB4*  $r=0.35$ ; *LEB5*  $r=0.26$ ; *LEB12*  $r=0.25$ ; *LEB15*  $r=0.25$ ; *LEB16*  $r=0.21$ ; *LEB17*  $r=0.36$ ; *LEB19*  $r=0.22$ ; *LEB20*  $r=0.21$ ; *LEB 21*  $r=0.21$ .

In contrast, not recommended leaders' behaviours related to lower POE and team performance are those who have significant negative correlation and are pointed in *italic* in Table 1. There is significant negative correlation between behaviours *LEB3*  $r= -0,27$ ; *LEB13*  $r=-0,25$ , *LEB18*  $r=-0,24$ .

Only one leadership factor has all positive POE correlations, it is "*Contingent reward*". The contingent reward system is a motivation-based approach that is used to reward employees that meet their identified goals and provides positive reinforcement for a job well done (Whetten, Cameron, 2002).

**Research Question 2:** *How productive organizational energy relates to team performance?*



*Figure 2 Summary of Leadership Behaviours that Have Positive Impact on Productive Organization Energy and Team Performance (developed by the author)*

There is a positive correlation between POE and team performance of followers ( $r=0.710$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). It means that higher organizational energy is significantly and positively related to team performance and can be expected higher performance if higher energy is presented. Based on correlation results some leadership behaviours are related to team performance, but most of them are related to productive organization energy (Figure 2).

**Research question 3:** *Which development behaviours of transformational leadership can create and sustain productive organisation energy and team performance?*

In summary, leaders' interviews and case studies were highlighted leaders' behaviors that create and sustain productive organizational energy and increase team performance:

- to enhance motivation, morale and inspiration in the organization;
- help to connect employee's sense of identity to team performance;
- improve relation energy in the organization;
- being a role model for followers to inspire them and to raise their interest in organizational mission and vision;
- challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and improve job satisfaction;
- understanding the strengths and weaknesses of employees and all team, help to avoid burnout, fatigue and disappointed.

Leaders of organizations relate the human energy to important managerial concerns as *team performance, innovation, employee motivation and job satisfaction*.

## Conclusions

The theoretical literature analysis and the empirical research performed in this study have allowed drawing the following conclusions.

"Model of Human Energy" in the organization is important for: (1) the ability to maintain personal human energy and to use it correctly for leadership at the workplace, (2) the capacity to increase relational energy as an essential tool for managing the pedagogical process, (3) the possibility to growth productive team energy and (4) the opportunity to rise productive organizational energy.

Transformational leadership as development tool in educational institution will foster a community, provide intellectual stimulation, offer individualizes support, model best practices and value, demonstrate high-performance expectations and create a productive teaching culture, also provide an environment that foster the creation of new and innovative instructional techniques. The skills required for transformational leader need to be identified



and trained to perform them, incentives must be clarified and implemented to keep followers motivated and inspired.

The results of the empirical study demonstrate that correlation between team performance and productive organization energy of followers is significant and strong. It means that higher organizational energy is significantly and positively related to team performance and expected higher performance if higher energy is present. According to correlation results, leadership factor as "Contingent reward" has a positive impact on productive organizational energy and team performance.

The results of the study can be used to assist and help organizations in identifying practices, processes and initiatives which can have a positive impact on organizational energy and team performance.

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## MEASURING INSTABILITY OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT FLOWS IN LATVIA

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**Abstract.** *Fluctuations of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows constitute an acute research problem globally and in Latvia studies. Already before COVID19, negative flows occurred. The research aim is to investigate stability in FDI in Latvia applying theory of dynamical system to big database of 129 countries of origin of FDI covering the whole period of regained statehood. The primary methods used are standard deviation and correlation. The main research result is disclosing growing instability of FDI flows in Latvia despite joining the EU and Eurozone. Novelty consists of research methodology justification, plotting analytical table, calculation of sigma and correlations for FDI flows for the periods before and after Latvia joined the EU, and drawing conclusions.*

**Keywords:** *correlation, deals, foreign direct investment flow, instability, investors, Latvia, standard deviation.*

### Introduction

Topicality: Integration of business across the borders manifests itself in foreign direct investment (FDI) flows. Merging of theories of internationalization and location is one of the most exciting opportunities for scholars and executives. The second decade of the 21st century, however, brought the need to revise the theory of cross-border corporate mobility. The USA policy shift in favour of protectionism, Brexit, closure of state borders under COVID emergencies and a number of less crucial but very spectacular trends all over the world introduced unexpected instability and even put internationalization under question. Unprecedented decline in global FDI recently is aggravating situation of instability.

Attempts to investigate instability in FDI are few. In numerous fields of study, the component of instability within a system is generally characterized by some of the outputs or internal states changing without bounds. It is a stand of a system characterised by certain indicators. To what extent is Latvia subject to FDI instability? Is FDI instability growing? 1.05.2004 Latvia joined the European Union. This factor affected FDI flows. Answer to the above questions is a pre-condition for measures of stabilisation. Foreseeing challenges and opportunities for business at the macro and micro level paves the way to perfection.

Aim: to investigate stability in FDI in Latvia applying theory of dynamical systems approach, namely standard deviation (Sigma) calculation in representative sample of countries of origin.

Methods and results: For the first time, Sigmas are to be calculated for the total and five major FDI flows in Latvia. Growing FDI instability in Latvia can be proven for five countries of origin of the representative sample by comparing two sub-periods of the whole time span in line with the theory of dynamical systems. Correlational analysis deepens the research. The methodology can then be applied to all FDI flows. Further research directions will be substantiated

## **Literature Review**

Literature on FDI is immense. Stakeholders are worried about the current instability of flows of FDI. But attempts to investigate instability in FDI are few. Among partisans of sustainability as mainstream it is believed (Leal Filho et al., 2021) that sustainable development research suffers under global Covid-19 crisis. FDI expert stated, “Global FDI plummeted to historic lows in 2020 as Covid-19 forced investors to push the brakes on expansion plans” (Dettoni, 2021).

In the Baltics, A. Sauka has initiated FDI Index the popularity of which goes beyond foreign investors (Sauka, 2020). D. Pelēce provides macroeconomic description of FDI in Latvia (Pelēce, 2020). But as concerns FDI instability per se, no research models or calculations are present.

It means that insecurity and unsteadiness of FDI are not expressed in figures and remain only as anticipated phenomena or a number of cases.

Oxford dictionary defines instability as „the state of being unstable; lack of stability”, as well as „tendency to unpredictable behaviour or erratic changes of mood” (Oxford dictionary, 2020).

Wider understanding of instability is given by Cambridge dictionary as „uncertainty caused by the possibility of a sudden change in the present situation: political/economic instability, the instability of the euro” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020).

In the theory of dynamical systems, a state variable in a system is said to be unstable if it evolves without bounds. A system itself is said to be unstable if at least one of its state variables is unstable. In business, it creates uncertainty as opposed to the desired fastness, fixedness, security, stability, and steadiness.

C. Granger has noted that at any given time, a dynamical system has a state given by a tuple of real numbers (a vector) that can be represented by a point in an appropriate state space (a geometrical manifold) (Granger, 1994). The evolution rule of the dynamical system is a function that describes what future states follow from the current state. Often the function is deterministic, that is, for a given time interval only one future state follows from the current state. However,

some systems are stochastic, in that random events also affect the evolution of the state variables.

G. Gandolfo laid the foundations for dynamic economic theory and gave a push to its applications to a wide variety of fields, including economics (Gandolfo, 2009). Dynamical systems are a fundamental part of chaos theory, logistic map dynamics, bifurcation theory, the self-assembly process, and the edge of chaos concept.

The definition of instability by Your Dictionary as „lack of stability or balance, or a tendency towards unpredictable or erratic behaviour” (Your Dictionary, 2020) adds another shade in the notion. In FDI, unpredictable or erratic behaviour is to be avoided due to immense economic, social and political effect.

## Methodology

Electronic data capture, according to research methodologists is „a method for collecting data entered directly into a computer” (Research methodologists adphealth, 2020). It belongs to quantitative data collection tools. Registration of FDI deals by Register of enterprises of Latvian Republic secures objective selection of top five FDI flows by countries of origin in Latvia and their comparative study for the whole period of transition from commando-administrative to market economy. Thus the way is paved to plotting a set of analytical tables of basic characteristics of FDI in Latvia in total and by the five focus countries. Time series analysis, calculation of Standard deviations, or Sigmas, as well as Sigma to Average FDI by period is to give answer on the question *Is instability in FDI flows in Latvia growing?* The higher the stability of a certain donor country FDI, the closer its correlation should be with the total FDI.

Standard deviation is known to be calculated based on the mean. The distance of each data point from the mean is squared, summed and averaged to find the variance. Standard deviation is the square root of the variance.

The standard deviation is calculated using (Mathisfun, 2020) Formula 1:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \mu)^2}{n}} \quad (1)$$

where,

$\sigma$  = population standard deviation

$\sum$  = sum of...

$\mu$  = population mean

n = number of scores in sample.

Accumulation of big databases proves precondition for application of the above methodology. The most reliable statistics in FDI is made public by Lursoft. Selection of countries of origin of FDI in Latvia for the research based on biggest accumulated investments in the statutory capital and highlighted Sweden, Russia, the Netherlands, Cyprus and Lithuania. Sub-dividing the time span of all 28 years in two parts for comparison is proposed for FDI in Latvia deals statistics due to importance of joining the EU by Latvia.

If the data points are further from the mean, there is higher deviation within the data set; thus, the more spread out the data, the higher the standard deviation. Author came across no attempts in the literature to apply the theory to FDI flows.

The correlation coefficient is a statistical measure of the strength of the relationship between the relative movements of two variables. In FDI analysis the total and specific volumes of donor countries can correlate. The values range between -1.0 and 1.0.

In this research, sigma is selected to be employed as FDI instability indicator. To go deeper, relations of the sigma to average investment if measured at different time points can give more evidence of growing/decreasing instability in FDI flows. Thus followers are invited to deepen into FDI analysis by countries, time spans, industries, etc.

## **Research Results**

Author plotted a complete set of analytical tables of basic characteristics of FDI in Latvia for the total of all 129 countries and by the five focus countries with permission by Lursoft. It embraces all FDI deals in the statutory capital of enterprises from the first registrations in the Register of Enterprises of Latvian Republic in 1991 to the cut-off date of this research 31.12.2019.

*Table 1 Foreign Direct Investments in Latvia 1991-2019*

Country	Deals	Investments, EUR	Date
Sweden	703	1 104 644 375,34	05.02.1991
Russian Federation	5 879	685 863 564,09	04.03.1991
The Netherlands	439	633 703 559,86	20.03.1991
Cyprus	668	602 028 801,19	16.12.1991
Lithuania	2 682	556 702 890,55	06.03.1991
Top 5	10 371	3 582 943 191,03	
<b>All 129</b>	<b>25 947</b>	<b>6 989 117 600,77</b>	

*Source: Lursoft*

It can be observed in the table that around seven billion euro have been accumulated as FDI in Latvia in 1991-2019. The top five can be selected as a representative sample, because the top five account for above 51,2% of total FDI in Latvia by investors from 129 countries.

As already mentioned, Latvia joined the EU 1.05.2004. Since then until 2016 there were only positive yearly saldos of inflows and outflows of FDI in this country. Unfortunately, in 2016, the decline started. It was not stopped in 2017 - 2019 (see Fig.1).

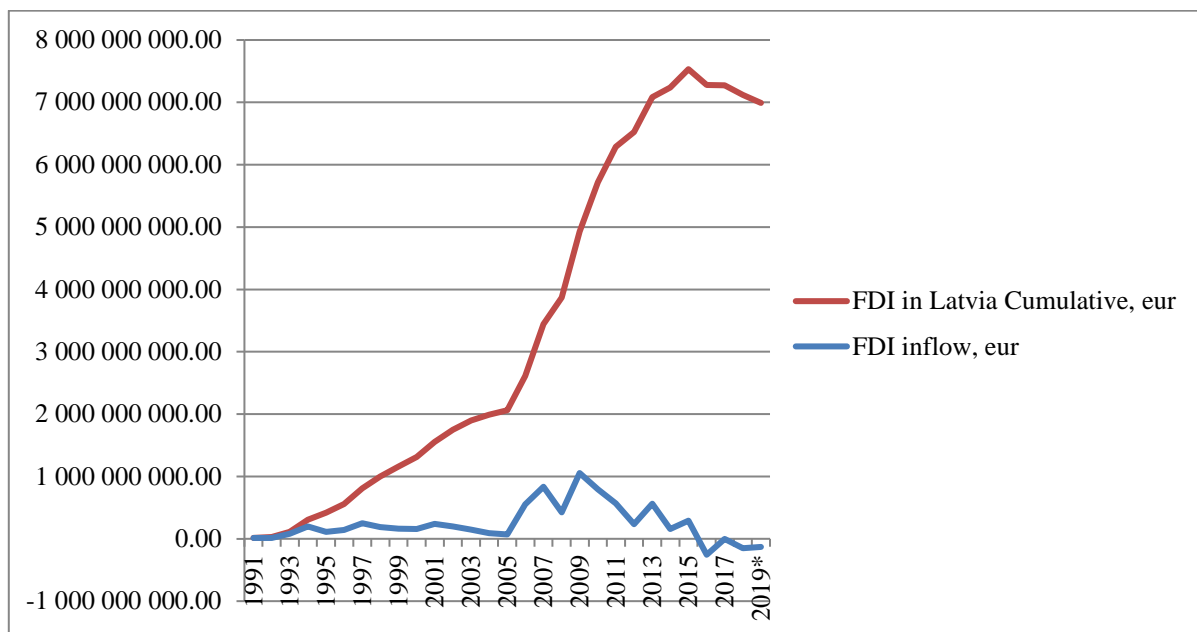


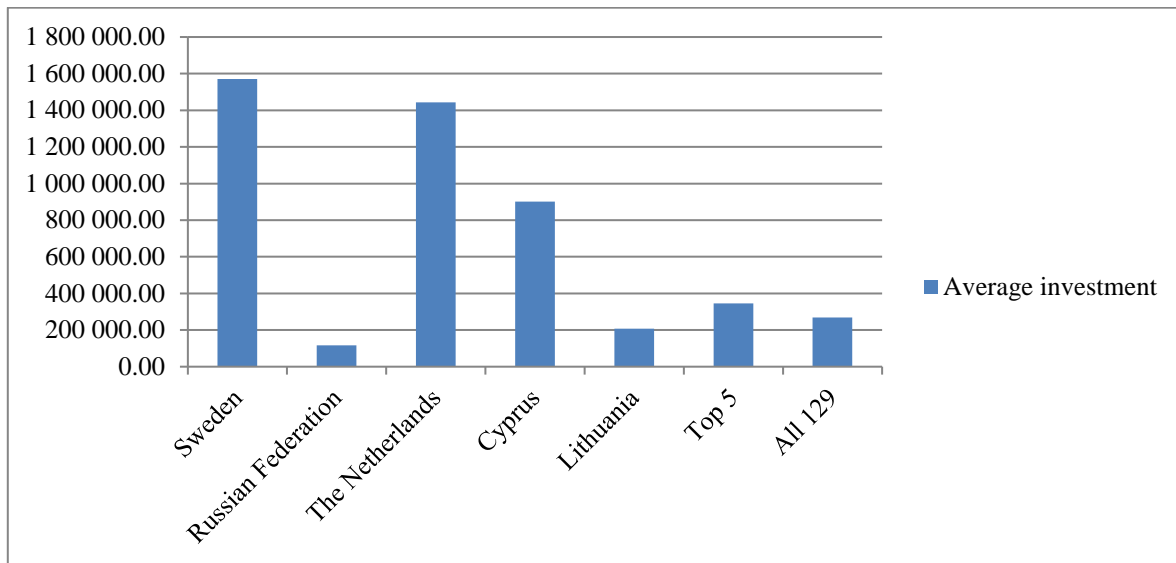
Figure 1 FDI in Latvia Cumulative and Yearly Flows, EUR (Lursoft)

It is noticeable on the linear chart that a breaking point is the year 2005 after which FDI flow jumped tenfold in two years, then decreased almost by half, from 834 mln to 425 mln euro, then more than doubled to break through 1 bln all-time record in order to fall again almost by half. It even went in the negative zone in 2016, 2017 and 2018. The cumulative figure started to decline since 2015.

For research in instability, author suggested two periods for calculation and comparison of Sigma, namely 1991-2004 and 2005-2019. It happens that the number of years is equal in the each of the two time spans (14 years).

Sigma for all 30 years is 36 282 078 482,35 euro, for the first 14 years 14 080 638 020,06 euro and for the recent 14 years 49 340 795 199,78 euro. In the recent time span (2005-2019) the monetary sigma is 3.5 times higher against the one of the previous period 1991-2004.

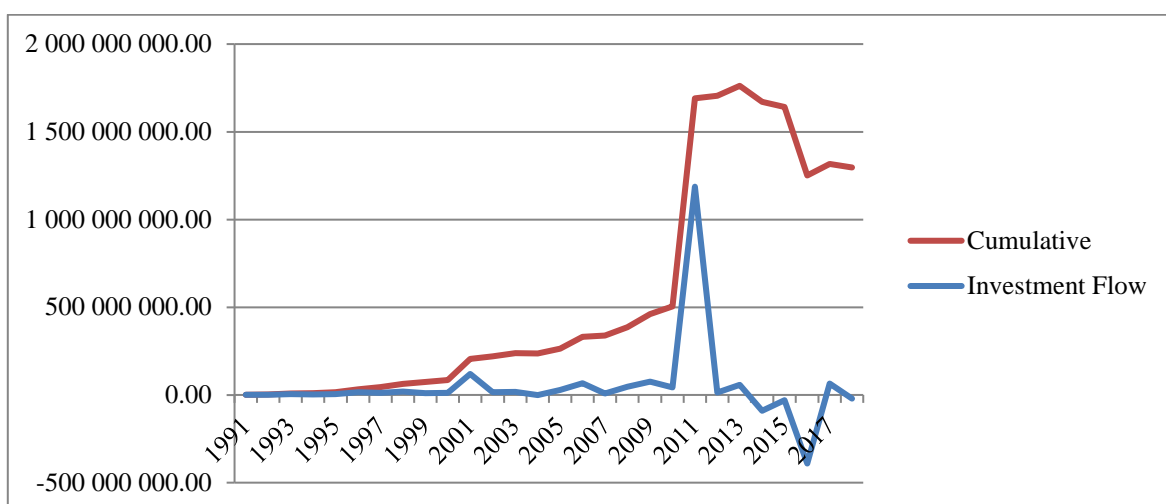
Average FDI per project was calculated by Author and analysed by countries of origin (see fig.2)



*Figure 2 Average FDI in Latvia by Country of Origin, 1991-2019, EUR (author on the basis of Lursoft)*

For the top five, the average FDI in Latvia proves 1.27 times higher against that for all 129 countries of origin (345 mln euro against 269). For Sweden, the Netherlands and Cyprus the average is higher and for Russia and Lithuania is lower. The average figures can be taken for calculation of indicators of FDI instability in the future research as the time series increase.

The FDI in Latvia statistics for each of the five selected countries of origin is analysed lower. Author plotted charts in such a way that both cumulative and yearly flows could be investigated. The first is analysis of FDI in Latvia from Sweden as the clear leader (see Fig. 3).



*Figure 3 Sweden FDI in Latvia Cumulative and Yearly Flow, EUR (Lursoft)*



Jump in 2011 by 1,187,122,679 euro was mainly caused by notable investment in Swedbank Latvia by Swedbank AB as lump sum of 942,853,584 euro registered 01.07.2011. The same year, record investment in Sodra Latvia was undertaken by Bergvik Skog AB as a sum of 41,737,241 euro registered 28.11.2011.

For FDI from Sweden in Latvia, Sigma for the whole period 239 808 034,25 euro, for the years 1991-2004 33 760 697,93 euro and for the years 2005-2019 337 455 184,96 euro.

Increase of FDI instability is evident for the leading country of origin in this research.

Following is analysis of FDI in Latvia from Russia (see Fig. 4).

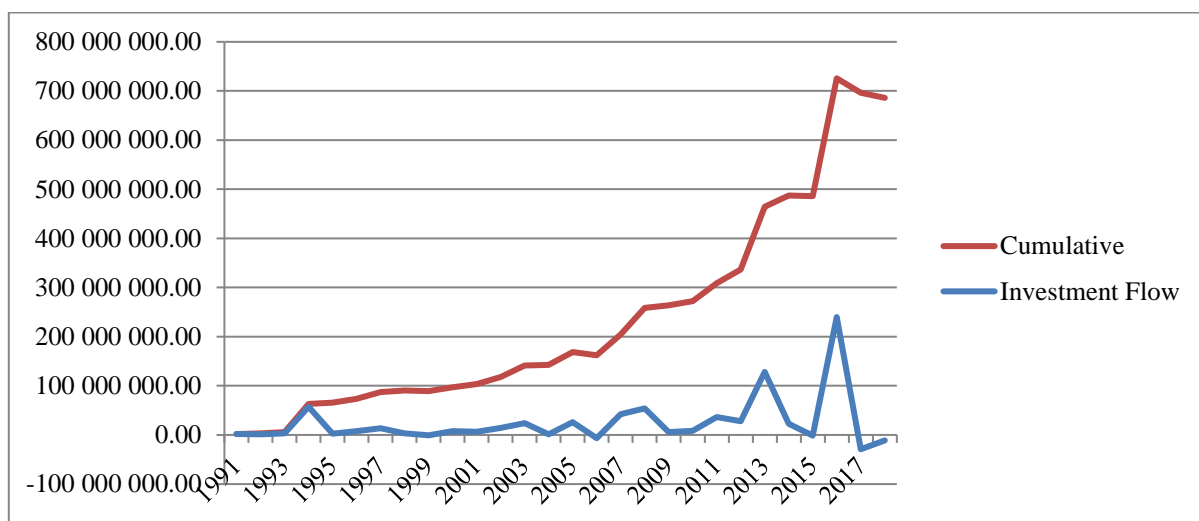


Figure 4 Russian Federation FDI in Latvia Cumulative and Yearly Flow, EUR (Lursoft)

In 2016, when the total FDI in Latvia started to diminish, JP Termināls SIA received from the investor Eclipse petroleum Limider a record sum of 160,000,008.00 euro registered 14.06.2016. Some three month earlier, Severstal Distribution SIA enjoyed investment from SEVERSTAĻ Public Joint Venture of 51,993,613.00 euro registered 16.03.2016. One more deal to mention is investment in PNB Banka AS by investor Guselnikov Grigory of 8,267,396.00 euro registered 31.12.2016.

In 2017, a record withdrawal of 29,133,138.00 euro of FDI belonging to investors from Russia was registered mainly as result of withdrawal of 24,161,690 euro 28.03.2017 and 16,641,520 euro 30.09.2017 from Signet Bank by investor Vdovin A. The withdrawal was not compensated by his investing in the same bank of 24,000,000.00 euro that occurred 04.08.2017. To mention is interplay of 40 million euro investments by investor Sternfeld V. registered 6.01.2017 and

4.08.2017 with withdrawal of the same 40 million in sudden liquidation of his enterprise in Latvia 15.12.2017.

Sigma for FDI flow from Russian Federation for the whole period 2 628 962 056 156 270 euro, for the years 1991-2004 75 708 431,74 euro and for the years 2005-2019 255 441 204,35 euro.

Increase of FDI instability is evident for the second leading country of origin in this research. Following is analysis of FDI in Latvia from the third leader the Netherlands (see Fig. 5).

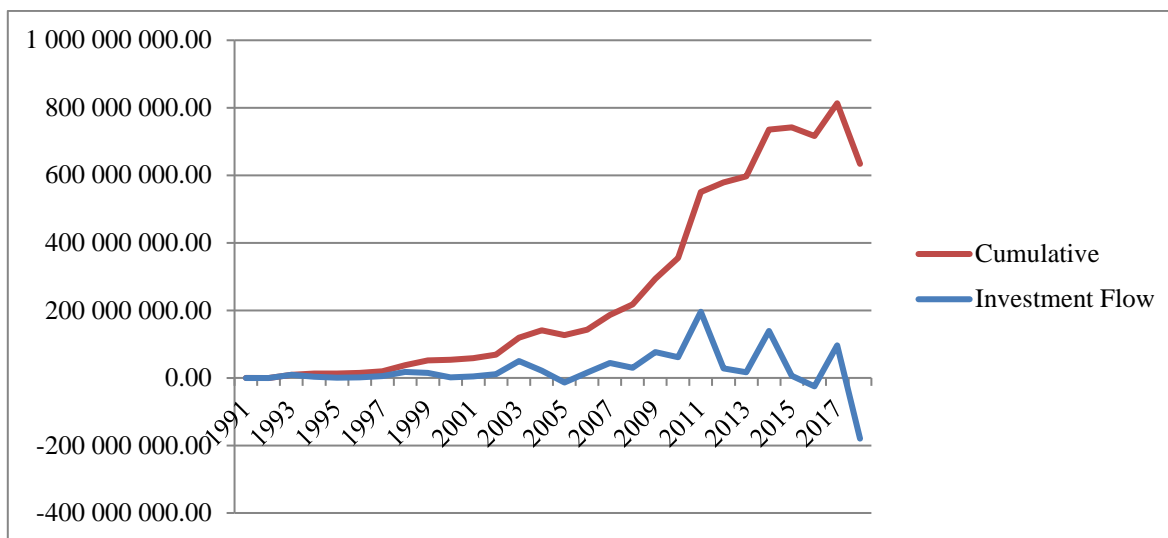


Figure 5 *The Netherlands FDI in Latvia Cumulative and Yearly Flow, EUR (Lursoft)*

In 2016 from JSC Ventspils Nafta, the record withdrawals of investments 145,271,321 euro 21.03.2016 and 61,212,895 euro was registered 10.08.2016 by Euromin Holdings (Cyprus) Limited. Despite Cyprus intermediation, the deals were registered as the Netherlands flow of FDI in Latvia.

In 2018, JSC European Lingerie Brands went through reorganisation 13.07.2018 and record withdrawal of investment by Myrtyle Ventures Limited of 39,935,000 euro was registered 13.07.2018.

For FDI from the Netherlands in Latvia, Sigma for the whole period 64 866 031,16 euro, for the years 1991-2004 16 356 254,57 euro and for the years 2005-2019 90 264 483,23 euro.

Increase of FDI instability is evident for the third country of origin in this research. Following is analysis of FDI in Latvia from Cyprus (see Fig. 6).

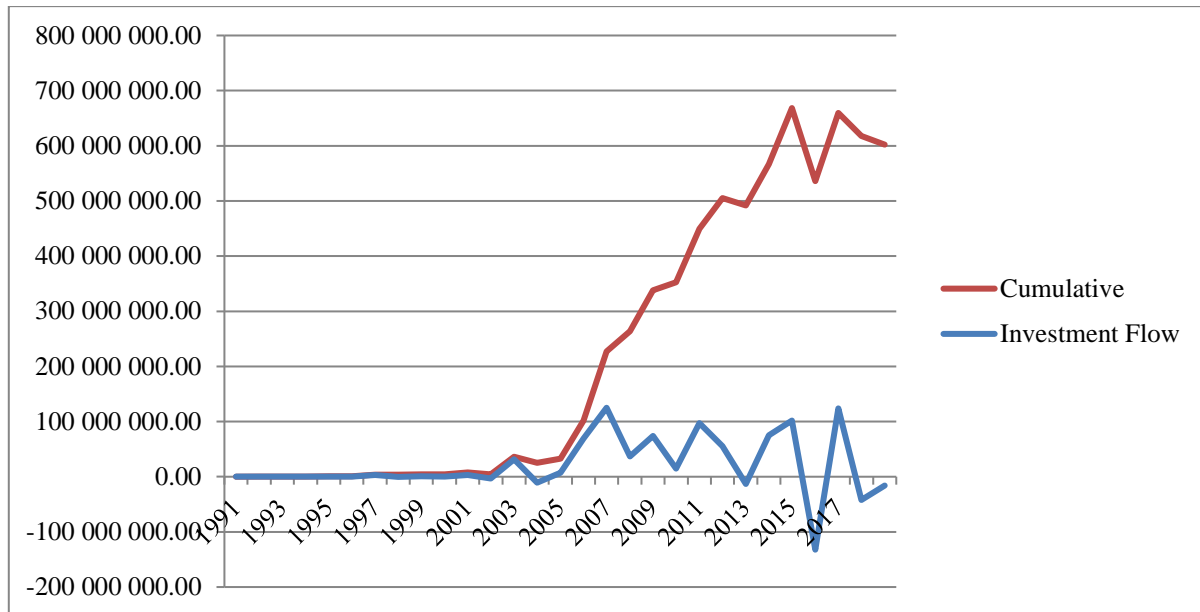


Figure 6 Cyprus FDI in Latvia Cumulative and Yearly Flow, EUR (Lursoft)

To investigate the abovementioned FDI by Euromin Holdings (Cyprus) Limited, it is notable that in 2007 "Ventspils nafta termināls", SIA received from this investor FDI of 54,759,933 euro registered 08.03.2007 as Cyprus FDI in Latvia. And next month more 19,523,358 euro was invested and registered as Cyprus FDI 01.04.2007.

Year 2007 demonstrated record increment of FDI from Cyprus in Latvia of 125,012,856.36 euro. Record withdrawals of Cyprus FDI from Latvia of 132 255 086,47 euro in 2016 are registered on the name of the same Euromin Holdings (Cyprus) Limited.

For FDI from Cyprus in Latvia, Sigma for the whole period 57 274 436,11 euro, for the years 1991-2004 Sigma is 9 089 424,27 euro and for the years 2005-2019 it is 80 486 672,37 euro.

Increase of FDI instability is evident for the fourth country of origin in this research.

Following is analysis of FDI in Latvia from Lithuania, the last in the selection (see Fig. 7).

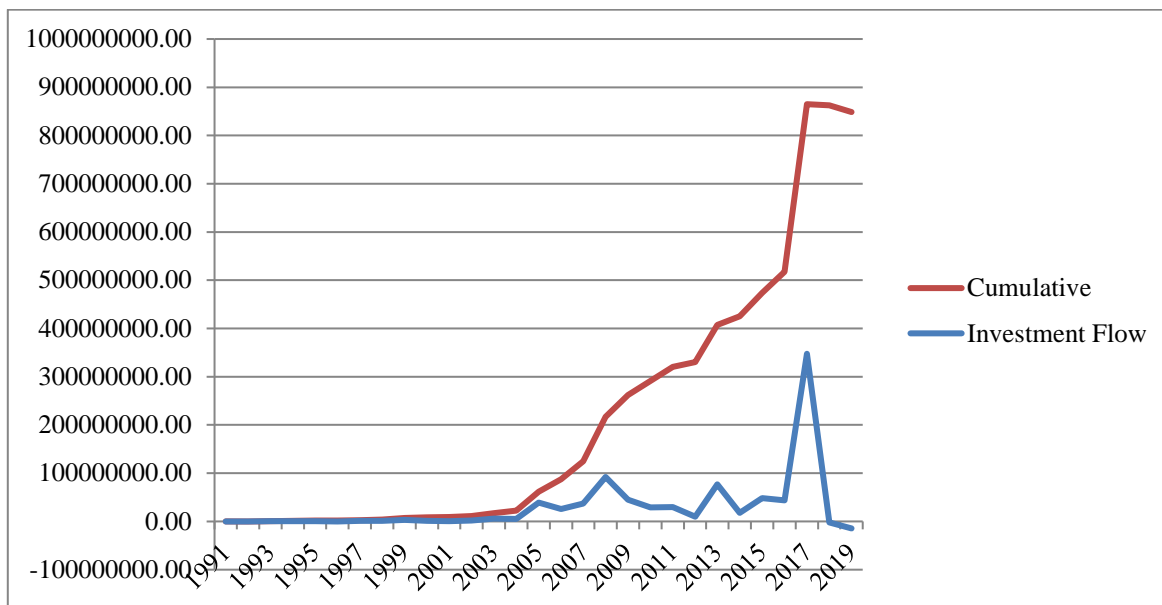


Figure 7 *Lithuania FDI in Latvia Cumulative and Yearly Flow, EUR (Lursoft)*

The case of Lithuanian DI in Latvia is unique. Among the top 5, FDI from Lithuania grew negative only once in 28 years, namely in 2018. For DI from Lithuania in Latvia, Sigma for the whole period 31 740 562,41 euro, for the years 1991-2004 Sigma is 2 455 113,16 euro and for the years 2005-2019 it is 44 820 743,23 euro.

Increase of FDI instability is evident for the last selected country of origin in this research. Following is generalisation of calculations (see Table 2).

Table 2 *Sigmas for the the Two Sub-periods for Top Five FDI Flows in Latvia, EUR*

Country of Origin	1991-2004	2005-2019	Times
Sweden	33 760 697,93	337 455 184,96	9,99
Russian Federation	20 233 929,49	68 269 533,51	3,37
The Netherlands	16 356 254,57	90 264 483,23	5,52
Cyprus	9 089 424,27	80 486 672,37	8,85
Lithuania	2 455 113,16	44 820 743,23	18,26

Source: Author on the basis of Lursoft statistics

It can be observed from the table that for all top five countries of FDI origin in Latvia in 1991-2019 Sigmas demonstrated significant growth in 2005-2019 against 1991-2004. Championing 18.26 times increase is documented for Lithuania and 9.99 times increase for Sweden. Cyprus and the Netherlands showed 8.85 times and 5.52 times increase correspondingly. FDI from Russian Federation in Latvia demonstrated the lowest increase in Sigmas, i.e. 3.37 times, which means evident increase of FDI instability.

Correlation coefficients between the total and the five top FDI volumes are presented in the following table (see table 3).

**Table 3 Correlation Coefficients between the Total and the Five Top Volumes of Accumulated FDI in Latvia 1991-2019**

Sweden	Russia	Netherlands	Cyprus	Lithuania
0,928895	0,935072	0,973621	0,980864	0,899784

Source: Author on the basis of Lursoft statistics

It can be concluded that all five are very strong correlations (above 0,899784). The strongest correlations, however, are discovered between the total volume and volumes of accumulated investments from Cyprus and the Netherlands in Latvia. They are followed by Russia, Sweden and Lithuania.

To finalise the analysis, Author singled out the years in which the FDI flow from the top five was negative (see table 4).

**Table 4 Years of Negative FDI Flows in Latvia from Top Five Countries of Origin in 1991-2019**

Country	Years of negative FDI	incl. 2018	other years
Sweden	5	1	4
Russian Federation	5	1	4
The Netherlands	3	1	2
Cyprus	6	1	5
Lithuania	1	1	0
Total	20	5	15

Source: Author on the basis of Lursoft statistics.

It can be seen in the table, that all top five donor countries suffered negative FDI flow in Latvia in 2018. Cyprus was champion with negative FDI in Latvia additionally in five years (1998, 2002, 2004, 2013, 2016) followed by Sweden (2004, 2014, 2015, 2016), Russian Federation (1999, 2006, 2015, 2017) and the Netherlands (2005, 2016). Only five years of the total 20 belonged to the first time span in the analysis, while the vast majority 15 years were in the recent time span. It is an additional argument in favour of the general evidence produced by this research, namely increase of instability of FDI in Latvia.

## Conclusions

The FDI instability in Latvia proved growing in 2005-2019 against 1991-2004. The corresponding sigmas increased in all FDI flows in focus sample of countries of origin from 3.37 to 18.26 times.

Especially dangerous was 2018 when all top five FDI flows in Latvia found themselves in the negative zone.

Correlations between the total and the volumes of FDI that arrived from the five top donor countries are very strong, with coefficients above 0,899784.

Growing instability is not to be tolerated. Measures are to be taken to diminish instability on political level and in corporate management. It is recommended to base attraction of FDI on sustainable growth model.

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## PERSONU PROFILĒŠANAS METOŽU PIELIETOJUMS PERSONĀLA VADĪBĀ

### *Application of Person Profiling Methods in Personal Management*

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**Abstract.** *The present study explores the specificity and implementation of person profiling methods applied in personal management. Conducting serious negotiations and signing contracts, selecting personnel and carrying out internal investigations – all these processes force today's managers to use law enforcement methods. The method of person profiling is becoming an indispensable tool in economy, in processes of transactions and managing personnel, selecting personnel and determining their motivation.*

*The main aim of the paper is to clarify and scientifically substantiate the necessity for the introduction of profiling as a method in personal management, secondly to determine the content of the person profiling method as a component of personnel management. In order to increase a degree of reliability of the results obtained by the applied profiling methods, the author performed an analysis and evaluation of documents, scientific, personnel management and psychological literature. Based on the analysis, conclusions on the need to implement the profiling method and the possibilities of staff evaluation will be summarized.*

*The study was conducted in the State Border Guard using scientific, pedagogical and psychological literature analysis and evaluation and document analysis research method.*

*The author brought the forward conclusion that profiling methodology allows to receive information that shows not only the organization management problems in the personnel management system, but also allows to make immediate, appropriate and adequate solutions to the management style adjustment, which will undoubtedly lead to the increased efficiency of staff and the whole organization.*

**Keywords:** *management, method, non-verbal, personal, profile, profiling, verbal.*

### **Ievads**

#### **Introduction**

Nopietnu pārrunu vadīšana un līgumu parakstīšana, personāla atlase un iekšējo izmeklēšanu veikšana – visi šie procesi šodienas vadītājiem liek izmantot tiesībsargājošo dienestu metodes. Personu profilēšanas metode kļūst par neaizstājamu palīglīdzekli ekonomikā, slēdzot darījumus un personāla vadībā, atlasot personālu un nosakot to motivāciju.

Pētījuma mērķis ir noskaidrot un zinātniski pamatot profilēšanas, kā metodes ieviešanas nepieciešamību personālvadībā, kā arī noteikt personu profilēšanas metodes saturu, kā vienu no personāla vadības sastāvdaļu. Lai paaugstinātu pielietoto profilēšanas metožu iegūto rezultātu ticamības pakāpi, autors veica dokumentu, zinātniskās, personāla vadības un psiholoģiskās literatūras analīzi un izvērtēšanu. Pamatojoties uz analīzi, tiks apkopoti secinājumi par profilēšanas metodes ieviešanas nepieciešamību un personāla vērtēšanas iespējām.

### **Literatūras apskats** *Literature Review*

Šodien jebkuras organizācijas vai arī uzņēmuma vadība sapņo par savas uzņēmējdarbības idejas ilgtspējīgu pastāvēšanu. Ilgtspējīgums tiek balstīts uz pamata vērtībām un galveno pastāvēšanas mērķi/misiju. Lai atbildētu uz mainīgās pasaules ietekmi, organizācijas mērķim, darbības praksei, kā arī biznesa stratēģijai ir pastāvīgi jāmainās. Organizācijas pastāvēšanas mērķim papildus naudas pelnīšanai ir jāsaturs daudz dziļāku pastāvēšanas jēgu un nozīmi gan organizācijas darbiniekiem, gan sabiedrībai kopumā. Lielākā daļa cilvēku, kas strādā organizācijā, papildus atalgojumam sagaida kādu jēgu no sava darba, proti piederību un nozīmi.

Darba devējam ir ļoti svarīgi novērtēt katra darbinieka profesionālas iemaņas un spējas, kā arī nodrošināt darbinieka atbilstību pieejamai darba vietai.

Savukārt, šis aspekts pieprasa motivēt darbinieku taupot resursus panākt darba kvalitāti. Jebkurā organizācijā, veicamie uzdevumi ir sadalīti starp vairākiem darbiniekiem, bet lai organizācija strādātu efektīvi, darbiniekiem ir jāsadarbojas savā starpā. Tomēr, uzdevumu sadale starp darbiniekiem nav iespējama bez konfliktsituāciju izraisīšanas. Konfliktus var izraisīt atšķirīga uzdevuma izpildes interpretācija vai ierobežotie resursi. Pārmaiņu laikā konfliktsituāciju rašanās risks organizācijās var būtiski pieaugt. Savukārt organizācijas vadītājam ir jāpanāk starp darbiniekiem produktīvu sadarbību. Tāpēc, zināšanas par cilvēka uzvedību ir svarīgs vadītāja zināšanu aspekts. Nav svarīgi cik darbinieku strādā organizācija, katram no viņiem ir savas problēmas, kā arī darbības uzlabošanas iespējas *Russell Connor* (Connor, 2009).

Pēc autora uzskata, profilēšanas metodiku personālvadībā ir iespējams pielietot:

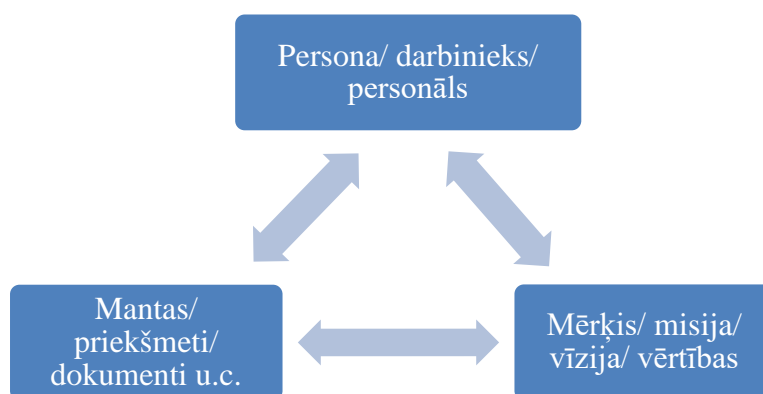
- patiesas informācijas noteikšanai;
- cilvēka psiholoģiskā portreta sastādīšanai;
- personāla atlasei sociālos tīklos.



### **Patiesas informācijas noteikšana**

Savu mērķu sasniegšanai cilvēkiem ikdienas darbā ir daudz iemeslu slēpt un sagrozīt informāciju. Iespēja savlaicīgi iegūt informāciju – ir spēja pieņemt savlaicīgus un pareizus lēmumus, nodrošināt darbības drošību un resursu aizsardzību.

Ar profilēšanas metodiku patiesas informācijas noteikšanā autors saprot personas ķermeņa valodas (Ekman, Friesen, & Scherer, 1976; Zuckerman, DePaulo, & Rosenthal, 1981; Pease, 1981), ārējā izskata, t.sk. līdzī esošo mantu/ priekšmetu/ aksesuāru/ dokumentu atbilstību pašas personas/ organizācijas izvirzītam mērķim/ misijai/ vīzijai (Madžuls, 2017).



*1.attēls. Profilēšanas metodika patiesas informācijas noteikšanai (autora veidots)*

*Figure 1 Profiling Methodology for Determining True Information (created by the author)*

Papildus patiesas informācijas noteikšanai profilēšanas metodiku ir iespējams izmantot, lai saprast organizācijas personāla apmierinātības līmeni. To var uzzināt vērtējot:

- situāciju organizācijas auto stāvvietā, kafejnīcā, birojos;
- attiecības sanāksmēs, dzimšanas dienās utt..

Personāla apmierinātības līmeni var ietekmēt vadības atšķirīga reakcija uz padotā personāla vienādiem pārkāpumiem. Darbinieki redz, ka augstākā līmeņa vadītāji deklarē vienu, bet dara ko citu. Arī darbinieku uzvedība ir svarīga, piemēram, cenšanās izmantot biroja tehniku, automašīnu personīgām vajadzībām (Lūse & Kukule, 2011).

Viena no patiesas informācijas noteikšanai visprecīzākajām analīzes metodēm ir novērošana. Par šīs metodes problemātiku var atzīmēt lielas izmaksas, laiktietlīgumu, kā arī to, ka cilvēkiem ir tendence mainīt savu uzvedību gadījumā, ja viņi zina, ka tiek novēroti (Vintiša, 2010).

Dažāda veida intervijas palīdz profilētājam iegūt nepieciešamās verbālās un neverbālās emocijas. Problemātiku veido personāla nevēlme runāt par situāciju organizācijā, kā arī personāla nevēlme kaut ko darīt/mainīt savā uzvedībā, vai pielāgoties organizācijas vērtībām.

*Russell Connor* (Connor, 2009) kurš specializējās psihometrisku testu un aptauju interpretācijā un administrēšanā, savu pieeju balsta uz ķermeņa valodu, kā sociotehniskās sistēmas (Jaques & Clement, 1994) daļu. Šīs sistēmas ietvaros, cilvēki un darbs savstarpēji ietekmējot viens otru tiek uztverti, kā viens veselums.

### ***Cilvēka psiholoģiskā portreta izstrāde***

Personas profesionalitāti nosaka personisko īpašību komplekss. Šis komplekss sastāv no personības iezīmēm (psihofizioloģisko, psiholoģisko un sociāli psiholoģisko līmeni), personai optimāliem darba organizatoriskiem apstākļiem un darba stimulēšanas sistēmu. Organizācijai aktuālo attīstītu personisko īpašību klātbūtnes noteikšana un to saistība ar darba organizatoriskiem apstākļiem prasa sarežģītu psihodiagnostisko darbu.

Ar personāla profilēšanas palīdzību var radīt cilvēka psiholoģisko portretu, jeb profilu. Sastādot profilu tiek analizēts konkrēta darbinieka intelekts, rakstura iezīmes, vadošais psiho tips, bāzes emocijas un stresa faktori, motīvi un motivētāji, vērtības un pārliecības. Var tikt prognozēta personas uzvedība organizācijai interesējošajā sfērā.

Radīto cilvēka psiholoģisko portretu organizācijās ir iespējams pielietot:

- izstrādājot amata profilu;
- izstrādājot efektīvu sistēmu darbības rezultātu novērtēšanai, nosakot vai persona der organizācijas izvirzītiem standartiem; pārbaudot persona spējas mijiedarboties ar citiem organizācijas komandas locekļiem. Pareizs personas novērtējums var atvieglot darbinieka karjeras plānošanu, jo tiek dota iespēja izvēlēties attīstības virzienu, kurā cilvēks varēs būt tikpat veiksmīgs un rezultatīvs;
- jauna darbinieka adaptācijai, nosakot darbinieka efektivitātes nosacījumus un termiņus, izvēlēties piemērotāko darbaudzinātāju. Jau sākotnēji var prognozēt, cik veiksmīgi konkrēts cilvēks var tikt pielāgots organizācijā pastāvošajam psiholoģiskajam klimatam un vadības stilam;
- veicot informācijas pārbaudi, ko kandidāts nav norādījis (piemēram, spēļu atkarība, sodāmība, lielo parādu esamība);
- sastādot sākotnējo ieteikumu par kandidāta lojalitāti, uzticamību un potenciāliem draudiem;
- nosakot personas individuālo motivētāju sistēmu un sastādot praktisku motivētāju karti.
- atvaļinot augsta ranga darbiniekus, var tikt īstenots pasākumu kopums, lai mazinātu iespējamo kaitējumu organizācijas interesēm un attīstības reputācijai.

Profilēšana ir arī ļoti noderīga, veicot organizācijas personāla sociāli psiholoģisko pētījumu.

Personāla profilēšanas rezultātā tiks iegūta personāla vadības procesam svarīga informācija, kas ietvers informāciju par:

- pašreizējo sociālo un psiholoģisko klimatu komandā, darbinieku attieksmi;
- notiekošiem acīmredzamiem un latentiem procesiem komandā, kas pozitīvi un (vai) negatīvi ietekmē profesionālās darbības efektivitāti;
- katra speciālista potenciālu, lomu un ietekmes pakāpi komandā notiekošajos procesos.

Profilēšanas laikā ir svarīgi saprast deklarētu vērtību atbilstību reālai situācijai organizācijā. Autors uzskata, ka profilēšanas metodika ļauj saņemt informāciju, kura ne tikai parāda organizācijas vadībai problemātiku personāla vadības sistēmā, bet ļauj veikt tūlītējus, atbilstošus un adekvātus risinājumus vadības stila korekcijai, kas neapšaubāmi novedīs pie personāla un visas organizācijas darba efektivitātes pieauguma.

Profilēšana ir efektīva psihodiagnostikas darba metode, kas ļauj uzreiz noteikt darbinieka psiholoģisko profilu, personiskās īpašības, motivācijas sfēras un vērtības, kā arī droši prognozēt viņa uzvedību un atklāt melus.

Cilvēka psiholoģiskā portreta izstrādei pamatā tiek izmantota psihodiagnostiskā testēšana. Testēšana ļauj īsā laikā novērtēt personības iezīmju attīstības līmeni, tās psiholoģiskās īpašības, sociāli psiholoģisko klimatu komandā, konfliktsituāciju klātbūtni. Neskatoties uz testēšanas metodes ērtību, jāatzīmē, ka šai metodei ir vairāki diezgan nopietni trūkumi, piemēram, automātisku kļūdu iespējamība; reprodūktivitāte (gatavu zināšanu standarta pielietošana); nav iespējas atklāt individualitāti; uzticamas vides trūkums; individuālas pieejas neesamība.

### ***Personāla atlase sociālos tīklos***

Personas profila, kā arī motivētāju kartes sastādīšanai mūsdienās organizācijas aktīvi var izmantot sociālos medijos pieejamu informāciju. Sociālie mediji ir arī lielisks kanāls pasīvu kandidātu uzrunāšanai. Ir jāņem vērā, ka Vispārīgā datu aizsardzības regula (Nr.2016/679) nepieļauj sociālos tīklos (piemēram, *Facebook* u.c.) fiziskas personas profilēšanu, jo īpaši, lai pieņemtu lēmumus par datu subjektu vai, lai analizētu, vai iepriekš paredzētu datu subjekta personīgās vēlmes, uzvedību un attieksmi.

Tā kā termins “profilēšana” Latvijas uzņēmējdarbībā vēl tikai paradās (atšķirībā no citām valstīm, kur pēc profilētāja pakalpojumiem ir stabils un reizēm pat liels pieprasījums), autors konstatēja, kā arī 2017.gada 23.maijā Ministru kabineta noteikumi Nr.264 „Noteikumi par Profesiju klasifikatoru, profesijai

atbilstošiem pamatuzdevumiem un kvalifikācijas pamatprasībām” šī profesija nav noteikta (Madžuls, 2019).

Papildus tam, ka Profesiju klasifikatorā nav atrunāta šī profesija, Latvijā arī nav mācību iestāžu, kuras apmāca profilētājus un kur tiek piešķirta attiecīgā kvalifikācija. Šobrīd, pastāv iespēja apgūt profilēšanas un melu atpazīšanas apmācības kursus pārsvarā Internetā, vai ārzemēs, bet pastāv varbūtība par lielu dalības maksu iegūt vien vispārējas zināšanas (t.i. tiek ieteikta literatūra, tiek analizēti videoieraksti), bet tās nebūs pilnvērtīgas apmācības (Madžuls, 2019).

Kopīgi izaicinājumi profilēšanas apmācību tirgū Latvijā un citās valstīs ir šādas:

- nav vienota profilētāja specialitātes apmācību standarta, turklāt rīkot mācību kursus par tik atbildīgu profesiju var jebkurš, un apmācāmie nav pasargāti no zemas kvalitātes zināšanu iegūšanu, kas tiek balstītas uz nedrošiem pieņēmumiem;
- docētājiem, kas tiek iesaistīti apmācībās, trūkst praktiskās pieredzes (reālo izmeklējumu). Tas ir saistīts ar salīdzinoši neseno intereses pieaugumu pret disciplīnu, kā arī to, ka ilgstoši tā atradās tikai valsts drošības struktūru atbildībā. Atpazīt neverbālas pazīmes var iemācīties piecu dienu laikā, bet ar datu interpretāciju var būt grūtības.

## **Secinājumi** *Conclusions*

Zināšanu piemērošanas prakse par cilvēkresursu profilēšanas pielietošanas jomu katru gadu pieaug, kas pēc autora domām, liecina par nepieciešamību organizāciju amatu sarakstā ieviest personāla profilētāja amatu. Amerikas Savienotajās valstīs, kā arī rietumu Eiropā, šīs jomas speciālistu pakalpojumi jau sen ir ļoti populārs produkts, Latvijas biznesa vidē – šī prakse gandrīz nepastāv, bet eksistē nepieciešamība pēc šīs jomas speciālistiem. Tā ir diezgan šaura specializācija un cilvēki, kuriem ir nepieciešamās iemaņas, tiek augsti vērtēti.

Autors secina, ka šodien normatīvajā regulējumā nav noteikti skaidri juridiskie un metodoloģiskie pamati, kas pamatotu personāla un uzņēmējdarbības profilēšanas koncepciju un tās izmantošanu organizācijās. Profilēšana netiek regulēta kā obligāts pasākums, bet visas tās procedūras, kas veic, piemēram, apsardzes darbinieki, tiesībsargājošo iestāžu amatpersonas un citi profilētāji, vienmēr prasa zināmu “psiholoģisko pieeju”, identificējot personas, kuras plāno izdarīt krāpšanas darbības, kas nozīme, ka profilēšanas teorētiskās izpratnes un praktiskās piemērošanas problemātika organizācijās ir ļoti aktuāla un prasa turpmāku tās izskatīšanu.

### Summary

The author describes necessity and possibility to use law enforcement methods such as Profiling in personnel management.

By profiling methodology in determining a true information, the author means the conformity of a person's body language, his/her appearance incl. the accompanying personal belongings / objects / accessories / documents to the goal / mission / vision of the person / organization.

Psychodiagnostic testing is basically used to develop a psychological portrait of a person. Testing in a short time allows to assess the level of personal traits, psychological characteristics, socio-psychological climate in the team, the presence of conflict situations. Despite the convenience of the test method, it should be noted that this method has several rather serious drawbacks, such as the possibility of automatic errors; reproducibility (application of ready-made knowledge standard); there is no possibility to reveal individuality; lack of a reliable environment; lack of individual approach.

Today, organizations can actively use information - available on social media to compile a person profile as well as a person motivation card. Social media is also a great channel for addressing the *passive* candidates, however, it should be noted that the General Data Protection Regulation does not allow to conduct the profiling of individual.

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## **BUSINESS'S CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AT THE POST-SOVIET AREA: FEATURES OF ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN INDUSTRY ORGANIZATION'S SOCIAL SPHERE**

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**Abstract.** *The global trend of developing the institute of social responsibility of businesses leads to the need to train specialists with new professional competences in the practical application of the concept of corporate social responsibility, taking into account the peculiarities of the social sphere of industrial organizations in the post-Soviet countries. The purpose of this study is to develop a methodical toolkit to assess the effectiveness of the management of the social sphere of industrial enterprises within the framework of the concept of corporate social responsibility. Methods of theoretical and empirical research, methodological techniques and approaches used in the analysis of the activities of enterprises by Western experts, as well as their modifications, allowing to take into account the specifics of the economic situation of the post-Soviet countries, were used as methodological tools.*

*The article discusses the methodological features of assessing the effectiveness of an industrial organizations' social sphere within the framework of applying the CSR concept at the post-Soviet space. The authors propose a system for evaluating the effectiveness and forecasting the activity of the social sphere of industrial organizations in four key areas: social, economic, organizational, and technological efficiency, which meet the main targets of the activities of such entities. The authors have developed a new system of balanced indicators that allows to assess the efficiency of the functioning of cultural and recreational facilities that are on the balance sheet of industrial organizations, focusing on the interests of various parties: both external and internal stakeholders, based on the optimal ratio of economic benefit and social result. The new CSR procedure related to the integration of social reporting with the system of key performance indicators will allow monitoring the effectiveness of the industrial organizations' social sphere by aggregated indicators within the framework of management by goals and is a powerful tool for strategic planning of their activities.*

**Keywords:** *balanced scorecard, corporate social responsibility, evaluation of the effectiveness of cultural institutions social report.*

## **Introduction**

In the context of the dynamic transformation of global socio-economic processes, the modern system of higher education is focused on updating educational programs according to the latest global tendencies. The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) of business developed abroad is only gaining momentum in the post-Soviet countries and has its own implementation features, which are currently poorly studied and not taken into account in training economic specialists, which makes it difficult to spread the concept to the territory of the former USSR countries and reduces the effectiveness of its realization. In this regard, it becomes relevant to study the specifics of the practical application of the corporate social responsibility concept in the post-Soviet space organizations and to use new knowledge in the educational process while preparing economic specialists to make their professional competencies meet modern realities.

Traditionally, the methodology and practice of determining business efficiency has been established with the emphasis on assessing the economic efficiency of an enterprise and social factors being seen as secondary, acting as additional conditions or even limitations. However, for the social sector of industrial enterprises, the task of increasing profits is not the main goal and, accordingly, cannot be the only criterion of efficiency. With regard to the social sphere of an industrial enterprise, within the framework of achieving the sustainable business development goals, the current target can be defined as "fulfilling statutory tasks with optimal costs". Accordingly, both financial and social performance indicators should be taken into account when building a common strategy for the company's development within the CSR. In these conditions, the management of enterprises is tasked with determining the dependence of the economic indicators of an enterprise on the work of the social sphere and developing a system of indicators that assess the effectiveness of managing the social sphere of industrial enterprises, which determine the relevance of this study.

## **Body of the Article**

Initially, the concept of "social sphere of an enterprise" was formed in the middle of the 20th century in the process of socialization of economic relations. The development of the social sphere of industrial enterprises was largely due to the experience of the USSR, where numerous infrastructure facilities were created for the labor collectives of enterprises, designed to meet the needs of workers in services and ensure the development of the socialist way of life.



In highly developed foreign countries (Japan, Germany, USA, Great Britain, France, etc.) with a market economy, the social sphere developed within the framework of the concept of "welfare state" and "prosperity society." By the end of the 20th century, the social content had changed in the direction of providing a number of services paid for from the company's funds, and the feasibility of keeping social facilities on the company's balance sheet had been confirmed by the relevant economic calculations. Gradually, the owner of the enterprise comes to understand that the social sphere is not a "burden" affecting the increase in the cost of the goods produced, but a complex and necessary element, allowing to increase the motivation of the employee to work, to ensure the attraction of highly qualified specialists, to increase the efficiency of production and productivity. As a result, by the beginning of the third millennium, the concept of "social sphere" had developed into a complex set of socio-economic relations between the enterprise and the employee, which provides services to the diverse needs of the employee of the enterprise (material, spiritual, social, etc.) through the creation of social services by the facilities of the social sphere in the internal environment of the enterprise or the acquisition of these services by the enterprise from third-party organizations, creating the most favorable conditions for labor activity and ultimately affecting the increase in the economic performance of the enterprise (Shvaiba, 2017).

In most countries of the world, the development of the social sphere of enterprises is under the influence of the developing institution of social responsibility of business, which directs business to solve the most pressing problems of society at the global and regional level by making any production decisions while considering social, economic and environmental consequences.

In recent years, the social responsibility of business has been implemented within the framework of the UN documents "Global Compact", "Millennium Development Goals", "UN Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with regard to Human Rights". Today the Global Compact brings together more than 10,500 businesses and about 3000 non-profit organizations from 160 countries (Global Compact Network Belarus, 2020).

The social responsibility of business in the post-Soviet space is only gaining momentum and has its own peculiarities. Industrial enterprises of post-Soviet countries (Republic of Belarus, Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, etc.) have preserved social facilities created during the administrative-command system. Unlike Western models, due to the presence of elements of the command system inherited from Soviet times, the role of the state in the formation and development of social responsibility of enterprises in the post-Soviet countries still has a decisive role. Therefore, to ensure sustainable social development, one of the most effective models of interaction between the

enterprise and the state in the social sphere is the position of "cooperation and dialogue", in which the state and the enterprise jointly determine the priorities of social policy, as well as areas where an economic entity can bear a "social burden" taking into account the interests of stakeholders.

Given the existence of large state-owned enterprises with a vast social sphere of the old type, it is necessary to more accurately characterize the concept of "social responsibility" for the countries of the former USSR:

- it is necessary to talk not only about activities beyond the legally regulated minimum, but also about the need to comply with the requirements stipulated in the laws;
- at the same time, it is necessary to present appropriate wording that allows enterprises to have clear and measurable benchmarks;
- all actions of enterprises must be in accordance with the expectations of the staff and generally accepted standards of ethics (Shvaiba, 2017).

Thus, regardless of the Western or post-Soviet development model of the CSR concept, social responsibility should become a modern style of business activity, which can have a meaningful impact on the management decision-making process, taking into account the interests of all stakeholders as well as the philosophy within which enterprises will create and develop a modern social sphere (economically justified, meeting the needs of the team and the company strategy).

Theoretical and methodological approaches to define the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) with the identification of principles and tools, as well as the directions of its implementation are presented in the works of the classics of the CSR theory M. Friedman (Freeman, 1994) and T. Levitt (Levitt, 1958). Various aspects of the socially responsible behavior of companies were considered in the works of G. Bowen (Bowen, 1953), who proposed the theory of social security of his own staff, and K. Davis (Davis, 1960), who first studied the problems of social responsibility in a management context. J. McGuire (McGuire, 1963) made a significant contribution to the development of the concept of social orientation of business, pointing out not only the economic and legal obligations of business, but also its responsibility to society. The need to harmonize CSR with the theory of corporate sustainability was proposed by L. Nancy and F. Kotler (Kotler & Nancy, 2007), R. Steuer, M. Langer, A. Conrad and A. Martinuzzi (Steurer, Langer, Konrad, & Martinuzzi, 2005), A. Carroll (Carroll, 1999), J. Post, L.E. Preston (Post, Preston, & Sachs, 2002) made a special contribution to the development of the theory of ethical business responsibility to stakeholders.

Among the authors who study in detail the issues of socially responsible behavior in the countries of the post-Soviet space, the direction of transformation of social sphere facilities, it is necessary to highlight V.F. Baynev (Bainev, 2008),

A.V. Rutskiy, I. S. Polonik (Rutskiy, 2012), D. Shvaiba (Shvaiba, 2017), etc. At the same time, the problem of assessing the effectiveness of the social sphere of industrial enterprises, both in domestic and foreign literature, is insufficiently covered. Theoretical developments in this area are reduced to a minor adaptation of the methods of foreign countries without taking into account the specifics of the functioning of the social sphere facilities of industrial organizations in the post-Soviet space, there is no guidance on their practical implementation.

To date, there is no generally accepted system of indicators for assessing the effectiveness of the social sphere of an industrial enterprise, due to a number of circumstances:

- 1) the difficulty of reasonably choosing the universal threshold values of indicators of the "normal state" of the social sphere for all enterprises, as their values may be subjective;
- 2) not all indicators of the effectiveness of the functioning of the social sphere can be quantified;
- 3) the state of the information base for objective and comprehensive monitoring of the effectiveness of the social sphere is largely determined not by the needs of the enterprise, but by its capabilities;
- 4) the calculation of indicators considered in isolation from each other does not allow to draw conclusions with a high degree of certainty about the real situation, as deviation from the norm of one or even several indicators may not always characterize the overall situation in the enterprise.

In world practice, the following methods are used to assess the effectiveness of the activities of social institutions:

- various systems of unbalanced indicators used in the framework of the method of results-based management of the social sphere;
- Balanced Scorecard (BSC);
- a management assessment model for state or municipal-funded organizations – Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- a model for assessing the effectiveness of budget institutions based on integral indicators;
- an economic-symbolic approach to assessing the effectiveness of the social sphere.

The world's most popular tool for measuring a company's performance in strategic planning is the Balanced Scorecard (BSC), which reflects the most important aspects of the business. Based on empirical research, the creators of the system, Kaplan and Norton (early 90s of the XX century), proved that successful companies in their goal systems take into account at least four perspectives: Finance, Customers, Processes and Potential (Kaplan, & Norton, 2003). Based on

the balanced scorecard concept, modern scientists identify four groups of indicators to evaluate the performance of an industrial organization, which are linked to each other by a logical cause-and-effect chain of goals and are in a certain hierarchical subordination to each other:

- traditional financial indicators;
- the company's external environment and customer relations;
- the company's internal processes (business processes);
- the company's ability to learn and grow (Krasnova, 2012).

Balanced Scorecard's logic assumes that the metrics that a company includes in such a system depend on what the company sets for itself, hence the basis of the Balanced Scorecard system is not indicators, but goals. Although the concept of the BSC is universal, the system of balanced indicators itself must adapt to specific conditions and be developed for a particular country or industry, taking into account certain business conditions and internal management practices. Consequently, the BSC should be developed separately for any business entity and area of economic activity.

Unlike the management of the economic and production indicators of an enterprise, when the efficiency of operation is assessed to a greater extent by production indicators (profitability of enterprises, labor productivity, etc.), the efficiency of the social sphere of industrial organizations, in our opinion, should be assessed by social performance taking into account other types of effect. In the works of I. Vasilkova (Vasil'kova, 2008), T.T. Fisyuk (Fisyuk & Zakharova, 2017), S.A. Mukhamedieva (Mukhamediyeva, 2011) the effectiveness of a social facility of industrial organizations is based on the segregation of the following types of effects in the economy:

- The economic effect involves the increase in productivity and the reduction of labor intensity, material consumption and cost, the growth of profit and profitability.
- The resource effect, in turn, reflects the release of resources in the enterprise: material, labor and financial.
- The technical effect is the result of the emergence of new equipment and technology, discoveries, inventions and rationalization proposals, know-how and other innovations.
- The social effect points to the increase in the material and cultural standard of living of citizens, better satisfaction of their needs for goods and services, the improvement of working conditions and safety, the decrease in the share of heavy manual labor, etc.

Having studied the system of calculating the efficiency of industrial companies, determined by the Balanced Scorecard, and the types of efficiency

generated by social facilities, we have developed a system of assessments that determine the effectiveness of the social sphere of industrial organizations.

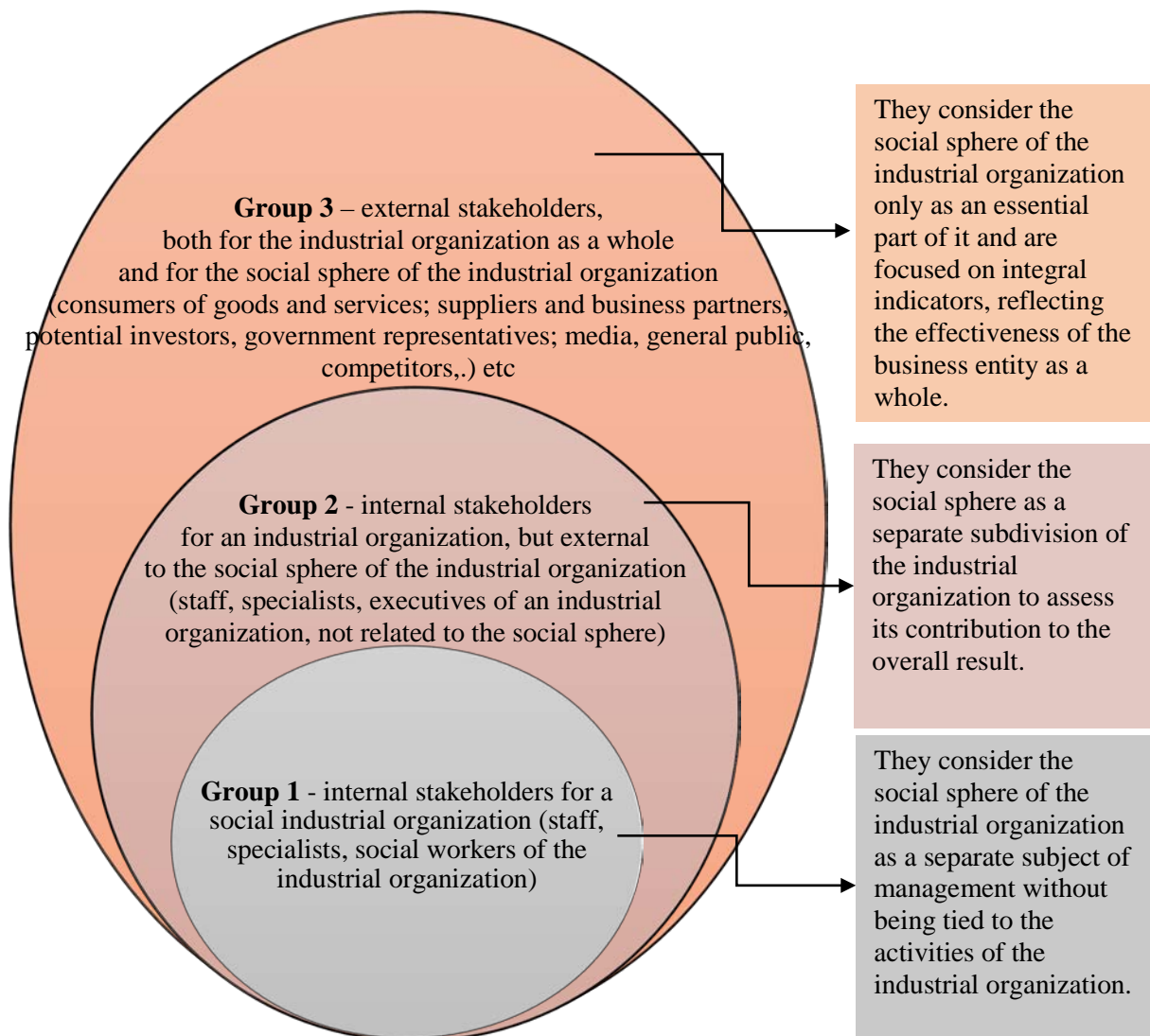
*Table 1 Comparison of Performance Indicators of an Industrial Organization and a Social Sphere of Industrial Organizations Based on the BSC (created by the authors)*

BSC, classic groups of performance indicators	The proposed system of assessments of the effectiveness of the social sphere facilities of industrial organizations
Traditional financial indicators	Assessment of cost-effectiveness: - economic efficiency indicators.
The company's external environment and customer relations	Assessment of social effectiveness: - social performance indicators
Internal processes of the company (Business Processes)	Assessment of organizational performance: - organizational performance indicators
The company's ability to learn and grow	Assessment of technological efficiency: - labor efficiency indicators - indicators of the efficiency of using the material and technical base

The theory of stakeholders, formulated by R. Freeman (Freeman, 1994), proves the need to take into account the interests of all those who are in one way or another affected by the activities of the enterprise. The social sphere of an industrial organization should be considered from three points: as a part of an industrial organization that performs common tasks with it; as a subdivision of an industrial organization that performs specific functions; as a business entity with its own goals and results.

In this regard, users of information about the effective use of the social sphere of industrial organizations should be divided into 3 groups and the interests of each when selecting indicators to assess performance should be taken into account (Figure 1).

A study of the degree of interest in social reporting by various user groups conducted by the Association of Managers showed that the most significant target audience, which is based on information about social programs and projects, is the staff of companies (Korsokova & Litovchenko, 2003). Thus, the system of indicators reflecting the effectiveness of the social sphere of an industrial organization, firstly, should take into account the interests of internal and external groups of users of the social sphere of an industrial organization, but to a greater extent reflect the interests of employees of an industrial organization, as a group that takes the most important and significant decisions for the development of the social sphere; secondly, must be balanced, i.e. interconnected by financial and non-financial indicators.



*Figure 1 Stakeholder Groups for a Social Sphere of Industrial Organization (created by the authors)*

A significant part of the total volume of the social sphere of industrial enterprises are cultural and recreational facilities. In the Republic of Belarus, for example, 4.4% of enterprises have “houses of culture” and 2.4% maintain “palaces of culture” (which are club institutions, centers of cultural and educational work); 6.8% of enterprises finance the maintenance of clubs; 2.4% have libraries (Shvaiba, 2017). Therefore, within the framework of this article we will develop a system of balanced indicators to assess the effectiveness of the social sphere of industrial organizations on the example of their cultural and recreational facilities.

From the point of view of its economic interpretation, it is advisable to consider the sphere of culture in two aspects: as an activity aimed at creating a unique creative product that can act as a commodity (paintings, music,

performances, classes in clubs, etc.); and as an activity that contributes to the formation and development of new qualities of human capital (creativity, talent, qualifications), the use of which can bring additional income in the process of creative activity. Obtaining tangible and intangible results determines the specifics of the functioning of organizations in the field of culture and leads to difficulties in assessing the effectiveness of their activities. Cultural efficiency refers to accelerating achievements in the development and augmentation of cultural values, their dissemination and communication to the population, and establishing a connection between the results obtained and the costs of communication to determine the degree of justification for expenditure.

In accordance with table 1, we will take a look at the social, economic, organizational and technological effectiveness of cultural and recreational facilities within industrial organizations grouped by different categories of users.

Let's look at the first group of indicators that assess the social efficiency of cultural organizations. Social efficiency is the alignment of the results of the cultural institution to the basic social needs and goals of society, as well as to the interests of the individual. Assessment of social efficiency is an indicator showing the ability of the institution to achieve its social and socially significant goals. In our opinion, the criteria for the efficiency of cultural organizations should be tied directly to the extent to which their statutory functions are performed.

These functions are:

- communicative - carried out through events that allow to share experience in various fields of activity (forums, festivals, seminars, exhibitions, master classes);
- educational - implemented through educational, leisure programs, such as schools for young actors, vocal development, choreographic art, club formations;
- cultural and educational - provided by the activities of creative amateur groups (deserved, folk, exemplary);
- leisure - carried out through the participation of employees and citizens in various creative, entertainment, leisure programs and projects (Fisyuk & Zakharova, 2017).

The activities of cultural organizations can be recognized as socially effective with the fullest coverage of all types of activities provided for by the charter and obtaining the most significant results in the form of an increase in attendance at events, acquisition of new customers, creation of creative products, and receiving awards at competitions. To assess the social efficiency of cultural institutions within industrial organizations, we propose to calculate and reflect in the corporate social report the following indicators, detailed by groups of stakeholders, presented in Table 2.

**Table 2 Proposed Indicators for Assessing Social Efficiency of Cultural Institutions within Industrial Organizations (created by the authors)**

Indicator	Calculation procedure	Note
<b>Group 1 of stakeholders</b>		
The total number of cultural and recreational activities held in the cultural institution in the reporting year	-	Characterizes the effectiveness of the activities of a cultural institution in organizing events
The share of socially significant cultural and recreational activities	Number of socially significant cultural and recreational activities in the cultural institution / The total number of cultural and recreational activities held in the cultural institution in the reporting year.	Shows the share of socially significant cultural and recreational activities in the total number of cultural and recreational activities held by the cultural institution
The attendance ratio (by types of social projects)	The number of people attending social projects of cultural institutions (clubs, seminars, theatrical productions, etc.) / The maximum number of people present, based on the established standards	Reflects the level of attendance at cultural institutions. Participants' standards are calculated taking into account the capacity of the premises.
The average number of people involved in clubs of a cultural institution for the reporting period	The sum of the average monthly number of people involved in the clubs of a cultural institution for all months of the reporting year / (12 * Average monthly number of clubs operating in the reporting period)	Reflects the average fullness of cultural institution clubs
The new customer acquisition rate	The number of "new" customers during the reporting period / Number of customers during the reporting period	Reflects the effectiveness of attracting new customers and "luring away" customers of competitors.
The number of creative amateur groups with honorary titles (deserved, folk, exemplary)	-	Reflects the level of professionalism of the leaders of creative amateur groups of the cultural institution
The share of competitive victories	The number of victories in competitions / Total number of participations in competitions during the reporting period	Characterizes the quality of training and participation of teams in competitions and professionalism of creative amateur groups leaders



<b>Group 2 of stakeholders</b>		
The diversity ratio	The number of activities carried out in the institution of culture / The total number of activities, according to the list of activities for an institution of culture	Shows the share of services carried out in the total number of creative activities provided by cultural institutions
The ratio of industrial organization workers' interest in the services of cultural institution (by types of activity)	The number of employees of an industrial organization who received services (by types of activity) in the cultural institution during the reporting period / The average number of employees of an industrial organization during the reporting period	It allows you to assess the share of industrial organization employees' involvement in obtaining services in the cultural institution of an industrial organization
The percentage of implementation of the plan on the social indicators brought by the industrial organization to the cultural institution (the number of cultural and recreational activities, the attendance rate of events, etc.)	Actual Value / Plan value * 100%	It shows the ability of the team to perform the tasks set by the industrial organization for sociocultural activities.
<b>Group 3 of stakeholders</b>		
The consumer satisfaction rate	Numerical score	Reflects an objective assessment of the relationship of cultural organizations with customers based on questionnaires
The communicative activity ratio	The number of events held by the cultural institution / The total number of events of national importance held by all cultural institutions of the region	Characterizes the involvement of the cultural institution in the events of the republican nature
The educational activity ratio	The number of types of educational programs implemented in the institution of culture / The total number of types of educational programs provided for cultural institutions in the country	Reflects the degree of implementation of educational programs in the institution of culture
The cultural and educational activity ratio	The number of creative amateur groups with honorary titles (deserved, folk, exemplary) / The total number of creative amateur groups with honorary titles	Shows the level of professionalism of the leaders of creative amateur groups of cultural institutions in the region

	(deserved, folk, exemplary) in the region	
The leisure activity ratio	The number of residents of the city (region), participating in cultural and recreational activities conducted by cultural institutions and in the work of amateur associations in the reporting period / The average number of residents of the city (region) in the reporting period	Allows to assess the interest of the residents of the city (region) in the services of the cultural institution

The generalized indicators of social efficiency of cultural institutions, which are studied by the third group of stakeholders (external stakeholders), determine how well (or not very well) cultural institutions implement educational, leisure, communication projects, and improve the quality of cultural and educational work in the city (region). Such indicators of a cultural institution allow stakeholders to assess the complexity of performing the functions characteristic of the statutory activities of a cultural institution and to compare various cultural institutions of a city (region) with each other. Much attention should be paid to the consumer satisfaction indicator, which will reflect an objective assessment of the relationship of cultural organizations of industrial organizations with customers. In order to determine it, it is necessary to place information about a cultural institution on a specialized platform for assessing the quality of services of such organizations and conduct a survey of consumers with a final score (for example, 1 - very dissatisfied, 5 - very satisfied). An independent assessment system is necessary to form the responsibility of organizations providing social services, and to increase the degree of customer confidence in the cultural institution, subsequently increasing sales.

Next, we will consider the following group of indicators characterizing the economic efficiency of a cultural object as part of an industrial organization, including indicators that are both related to the external environment of cultural institutions of industrial organizations and reflecting the internal processes of cultural institutions of industrial organizations.

Since cultural institutions are often organizations with a mixed form of financing (funds of large companies on the balance sheet of which they are located, and funds from their own commercial activities), it is necessary to analyze the effectiveness of both the investments of the industrial organization and the effectiveness of the work of the cultural institution itself. As a motivational goal for assessing the degree of self-financing of their own projects in cultural institutions, which are taken into account in the balance sheet of industrial organizations, one can set the required level of the ratio of types of

financing, for example, strive for the ratio of one earned ruble to one ruble of funds invested in the maintenance of a cultural institution.

As indicators of economic efficiency, reflecting the internal processes of the enterprise, we also propose to use in cultural institutions such an indicator as the share of costs per 1 man-hour, in other words, the calculation of “per capita” financing. So, for the education sector, such an indicator is calculated on the basis of the plan of the educational program and the number of students mastering it. The amount of man-hours for a cultural institution can be calculated on the basis of the schedule of classes for concert ensembles and self-sustaining ensembles and the number of people involved in these ensembles, and is the basis for determining the amount of financial support for all standard costs required, for example, when drawing up an estimate of costs for the upcoming reporting year.

To assess the economic efficiency of a cultural institution, managers of an industrial organization calculate the coefficients for the implementation of the plan according to the indicators brought by the industrial organization and set the limit figures for the possible (permissible) deviation from the plan, which, by the decision of the founder, is usually 5-10%. Within the framework of these indicators, the plan is considered fulfilled and its financing – reasonable.

The proposed indicators for assessing economic efficiency and the procedure for their calculation are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3 Proposed Indicators for Assessing the Economic Efficiency of a Cultural Institution as Part of an Industrial Organization** (created by the authors)

Indicator	Calculation procedure	Note
<b>Group 1 of stakeholders</b>		
Growth rate of the service sales	The revenue amounts for the reporting period, adjusted for the inflation index / The revenue amounts for the previous reporting period	Characterizes the level of development of the client orientation of the cultural institution
The ratio of costs per man-hour	The ratio of the actual costs of maintaining a cultural institution for the reporting period / (The number of clients engaged in clubs, visitors to events, concerts, performances, etc. * the time they spent within the walls of the institution (according to the schedule of classes, the time of cultural and entertainment events))*100 %	Determines the share of costs per 1 client, attributable to 1 hour of classes in circles (attendance of events). The indicator can be calculated separately for each department of the palace of culture, which provides revenue (the department of cultural and mass work and the department for the organization of artistic activities), if there is a separate accounting of the costs incurred in these departments

Productivity of one cultural institution employee	The revenue for the reporting period / The average number of employees of a cultural institution	Determines the amount of revenue that each employee of the cultural institution provides. The increase in this indicator is not achieved by reducing the number of staff, but by increasing the productivity of their work by investing in their skills.
Return on fixed assets	The amount of revenue of the cultural institution for the reporting period / The average annual value of fixed assets of a cultural institution	Shows how effectively the fixed assets are used in cultural institutions
Material efficiency	The amount of revenue of the cultural institution for the reporting period / Material costs of a cultural institution	Shows how effectively material resources are used in cultural institutions
<b>Group 2 of stakeholders</b>		
Payback of the cost of maintaining the cultural institution by an industrial organization	The amount of profit from the provision of services of a cultural institution for the reporting period / The amount of expenses for maintenance and operation for the reporting period	Allows you to evaluate the effectiveness of the activities of a cultural institution, taking into account the funds earned independently by the cultural institution for its maintenance
The ratio of social expenditures of an industrial organization	The amount of expenses spent on the maintenance of the cultural institution / General expenses of the industrial organization	Shows the share of social expenditures in the total expenditures of the industrial organization during the reporting period
The ratio of cultural expenditure per worker of an industrial organization	Total expenses of cultural institution / Average number of employees in an industrial organization	Determines the amount of costs on average per one employee of the company for the reporting year, which makes it possible to justify these costs for the maintenance of a cultural institution in front of the company's management in terms of the main task of the functioning of this structural unit - organizing leisure activities for employees, pensioners and their families
The percentage of the implementation of the plan brought to the cultural institution by the industrial organization (revenue, profit, costs, etc.)	Actual Value / Plan value * 100%	Shows the ability of the team to perform the tasks set by the industrial organization.

<b>Group 3 of stakeholders</b>		
The level of provision of cultural expenditures per 1 resident of the city (region), in the basic values	The amount spent on the maintenance of the cultural institution / Average number of residents of the city (region)	Reflects the amount of funds ensuring the provision of a minimum list of publicly available social services of cultural organizations. On the basis of the result of the level of provision of expenditures in the field of culture, it can be concluded whether or not the costs of cultural institution are reasonable and effective.
Average price of one visit to a paid event for the reporting year	The revenue received from events for the reporting period / Number of paid events	The indicator reflects the price segment in which the cultural institution operates

Next, we will consider the indicators designed to assess the organizational efficiency of the social sphere subject. This group of indicators makes it possible to identify the main processes that cultural organizations need to improve in order to strengthen competitive advantages and ensure the loyalty of stakeholders. The indicators in this group are based on the processes that make a major contribution to achieving targeted financial results and customer satisfaction.

Organizational efficiency studies should identify: whether the cultural institution is working according to modern personnel technologies; whether it has a clear structure – approved job descriptions, a clear form of accounting and monitoring of activities; does a computerized accounting of employees, clients; application of new innovative technologies for the convenience of customers.

Let's summarize the proposed indicators of organizational performance evaluation and the procedure for calculating them in Table 4.

*Table 4 Proposed Indicators for Assessing the Organizational Efficiency of a Cultural Institution (created by the authors)*

Indicator	Calculation procedure	Note
<b>Group 1 of stakeholders</b>		
The use of an automated accounting system	The fact of availability	Allows you to determine if a cultural institution uses the latest technologies to optimize internal business processes
The use of an automated personnel accounting system	The fact of availability	
The level of internal control of the cultural institution	Using the method of testing the internal control system	Characterizes the quality of the system of internal control in a cultural institution
Indicator of the novelty of the development of the cultural institution	The percentage of renewal of annual plans	Characterizes the degree of timely renewal of plans for the development of a cultural

	for the development of a cultural institution	institution, the inclusion of modern new methods of work
<b>Group 2 of stakeholders</b>		
Percentage of implementation of the plan brought by the industrial organization to the establishment of culture indicators on intra-organization activities	Actual Value / Plan value * 100%	Shows the ability of the team to fulfill the tasks set by the industrial organization for the cultural institution. Overfulfillment of the plan will indicate deficiencies in planning.
<b>Group 3 of stakeholders</b>		
Application of an automated billing system in the implementation of services	The fact of availability	Reveals the main processes that cultural organizations need to improve to strengthen competitive advantage and to ensure the loyalty of external stakeholders
Application of the electronic ticketing system	The fact of availability	
The share of digitized results of the activities of a cultural institution	The number of digitized results of the activities of a cultural institution / The total number of results of the activities of a cultural institution	Determines how much the latest technology is used to create an accessible environment for customers

The last set of indicators, which we will look at, is designed to assess the technological efficiency of the subject of the social sphere. Technological efficiency refers to an assessment of an organization's ability to make efficient use of resources in the process of transforming them into the result of activities, including non-profit activities. This group of indicators is a synergistic result of two main factors: labor resources and material and technical support of the cultural institution.

When analyzing the efficiency of the use of labor resources, it is necessary to assess the level of education and professional skill of personnel; staff turnover, the proportion of certified employees and continuing professional development on an ongoing basis; compare the level of wages and labor productivity of social workers with the average indicators of an industrial organization, and standards for the country as a whole. The state of the material and technical base is assessed by analyzing the use of the areas of a cultural institution buildings, the effectiveness of capital investments of an industrial organization, the technical condition of the fixed assets of a cultural institution.

Let's summarize the proposed indicators for assessing technological efficiency and the procedure for their calculation in Table 5.

**Table 5 The Proposed Indicators for Assessing Technological Efficiency of a Cultural Institution (created by the authors)**

Indicator	Calculation procedure	Note
1	2	3
<b>The indicators of the use of labor force</b>		
<b>Group 1 of stakeholders</b>		
The average number of employees of a cultural institution during the reporting period	The sum of the average monthly number of employees for all months of the reporting year / 12	Reflects the average number of employees of a cultural institution during the reporting period
The ratio of creative staff of a cultural institution	The average number of creative staff for the reporting period / The average number of employees of a cultural institution during the reporting period	Reflects the number of people engaged in creative activities in the cultural institution during the reporting period
Staff turnover rate	The number of dismissed employees of an institution who were eliminated during the reporting period for reasons of turnover (on their own will, for absenteeism, for violation of safety precautions, unauthorized leaving and other reasons) / The average number of employees of a cultural institution during the reporting period	Shows staff turnover in a cultural institution
The level of education of personnel and professional skills	Number of employees with higher education / Average number of employees of a cultural institution during the reporting period	Shows the level of professionalism of cultural institution workers
The ratio of personnel who completed training, advanced training (at least once every 5 years)	The number of staff trained (at least once every 5 years) / The average number of employees of a cultural institution during the reporting period	Shows the level of training of the creative staff of a cultural institution
Percentage of certified staff	The number of staff certified in the reporting period of a cultural institution / The average number of employees of a cultural institution	Shows the share of workers certified in the reporting year of a cultural institution

Incidence rate	The number of days of absence of employees on sick leave / Apparent total working time, in days	Characterizes the absence of workers in the workplace due to illness during the reporting period in a cultural institution
<b>Group 2 of stakeholders</b>		
The ratio of cultural institution workers in the total number of employees of an industrial organization	The average number of employees of a cultural institution during the reporting period / The average number of employees of an industrial organization	Reflects the proportion of employees associated with the functioning of a cultural institution in the total number of employees of an industrial organization
The labor productivity index of one employee of a cultural institution	The average labor productivity per one employee of a cultural institution / The average labor productivity per one employee of an industrial organization as a whole	Reflects the efficiency of using the labor resources of a cultural institution in comparison with the efficiency of using labor resources of an industrial organization
The cultural institution workers' pay index	The average monthly nominal accrued wages of employees of cultural institutions / The average monthly wages of workers in an industrial organization	Reflects the level of pay for cultural institution workers compared to those of the industrial organization as a whole
<b>Group 3 of stakeholders</b>		
The coefficient of assessment of work of employees of a cultural institution	The actual amount of work performed by a specialist, hours / The amount of work that must be performed by a specialist according to standard	An indicator that provides an assessment of the effectiveness of the work of specialists of a cultural institution
The level of remuneration of employees of a cultural institution compared to the national average	The average monthly nominal accrued wages of employees of cultural institutions / Average monthly salary of employees of cultural institutions in the country	Reflects the level of remuneration of workers of a cultural institution compared to workers of cultural institutions in the country as a whole
<b>Indicators of the use of the material and technical base</b>		
<b>Group 1 of stakeholders</b>		
The total area of the cultural institution building	According to technical documentation	Reflects the area of the cultural institution building
The utilization rate of the area of a cultural institution	The area used by the cultural institution to provide services / The total area of the cultural institution building	Shows how fully the area of the cultural institution building is used
<b>Group 2 of stakeholders</b>		
The amount of expenses for the maintenance and	Expenses for the maintenance and operation of a cultural institution	Reflects the amount of the industrial organization's expenditure on the maintenance and



operation of 1 m <sup>2</sup> of the area of a cultural institution building	building / The total area of a cultural institution building	operation of 1 m <sup>2</sup> of the area of a cultural institution building
The amount of revenue per 1 m <sup>2</sup> of the used area of a cultural institution building	The amount of revenue of a cultural institution for the reporting period / The building area used by a cultural institution for the provision of services	Shows how effectively the building is used in a cultural institution
The efficiency of capital investments in a cultural institution	The increase in income of a cultural institution due to capital investments of an industrial organization / The amount of investments of an industrial organization in a cultural institution	Reflects the efficiency of capital investments of an industrial organization in a cultural institution due to income growth
<b>Group 3 of stakeholders</b>		
The area occupancy rate per 1 m <sup>2</sup>	The maximum number of people engaged in clubs at the same time / Cultural building area used by a cultural institution to provide services	Reflects the degree of convenience of conducting collective classes for clients per 1 m <sup>2</sup>
The material and technical base depreciation rate	The amount of depreciation deductions of fixed assets in a cultural institution / The initial value of fixed assets in a cultural institution	Reflects the degree of depreciation of fixed assets in a cultural institution. Fixed assets depreciation rate standard is no more than 50%.
The material and technical base renewal rate	The cost of fixed assets put into operation during the reporting year in a cultural institution / The cost of fixed assets at the end of the reporting year in a cultural institution	Shows the degree of renewal of the material and technical base in a cultural institution, the use of new technology.

For a general assessment of the effectiveness of the activities of a cultural institution within an industrial organization in the social report, we propose to present a consolidated efficiency index based on the calculation of indices for each type of efficiency: social, economic, organizational, technological. When calculating each of the components of the consolidated efficiency index, first of all, it is necessary to establish the minimum and maximum values of the indicators that are proposed for calculation in tables 2-5, based on the standards and conditions for the activity of a cultural institution within of an industrial organization, with which the actual data will be compared.

The calculation of the consolidated efficiency index can be carried out in three stages. The first stage is to determine the social efficiency index; economic efficiency index; organizational efficiency index; the technological efficiency

index using the "index by element" according to formula 1, if the improvement in the dynamics of the analyzed indicator is expressed in its growth and formula 2, if the improvement of the analyzed indicator is expressed in its decrease:

$$I_i = \frac{F_i - \min_i}{\max_i - \min_i}, \quad (1)$$

$$I_i = \frac{\max_i - F_i}{\max_i - \min_i}, \quad (2)$$

where  $I_i$  – index for a separate indicator (coefficient);  
 $F_i$  – actual value of an indicator (the coefficient);  
 $\min_i$  – the minimum value of an indicator (coefficient);  
 $\max_i$  – the maximum value of an indicator (coefficient).

Based on the formulas (1; 2), the indicators (coefficients) of various types of performance are reduced to relative levels (normalized before averaging), which leads them to a single measurement scale.

The principle of calculating each component of the consolidated efficiency index is to assess the relative distance between its actual value and the maximum (minimum). The result for each indicator will be expressed as a value from zero to one, and the closer to one, the higher the effect.

The second step is to compare social, economic, organizational and technological efficiency indices to determine which direction is more effective. If the social efficiency index is higher, then the activities of the cultural institution are aimed at the implementation of social projects, including those with a low economic effect; if the index of economic efficiency is higher, the organization pays more attention to the efficient use of resources, etc.

The third stage is the direct calculation of the consolidated efficiency index as a generalizing indicator using the average arithmetic indices of social, economic, organizational and technological efficiency, which will record the level of efficiency of a cultural institution within an industrial organization.

This indicator can be used by the stakeholders of the 3rd group to compare the activities of different cultural organizations, included and not included in industrial organizations, operating in different conditions and performing their tasks in different ways.

## **Conclusions**

In summary, it should be noted that corporate social responsibility and voluntary social reporting, ensuring the transparency of the company's activities through its wide public coverage, are one of the important prerequisites for the functioning and financing of the social sphere of an industrial enterprise in modern business conditions, which will help the enterprise to earn the image of a socially responsible subject and position itself as a party interested in the development of human capital.

Within the framework of this study, the following tasks were solved:

1. The directions for assessing the effectiveness and forecasting the activities of the social sphere of an industrial organization when compiling CSR have been developed, based on the concept of balanced scorecard and taking into account the effects typical for the social sphere.
2. A comprehensive system of balanced indicators has been developed for drawing up a social report, which allows assessing the effectiveness of the activities of cultural institutions that are on the balance sheet of industrial organizations, which takes into account the specifics and target priorities of their functioning, as well as the interests of all groups of stakeholders.

The new CSR compilation procedure associated with the integration of social reporting with the system of key performance indicators allows to monitor the performance of the social sphere by aggregated indicators within the framework of management by goals and is a powerful tool for strategic planning of the activities of cultural institutions.

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# SPECIAL ASPECTS OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS VALUATION FOR TRAINING SPECIALISTS OF ECONOMIC MAJORS

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**Abstract.** Nowadays financial instruments market is the high-priority area of economic development in Belarus, where important place is given to creation the variety of corporate financial instruments, which requires prompt response from economic sciences. However, fundamentals of financial instruments valuation and ways of reflecting them in financial statements are complex issues that require special approach in the process of instruction economic disciplines, related to these topics. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to form systematic understanding the basics of financial instruments valuation based on the study their economic essence and the development of practical guidelines for valuation methods application. In the study have been proposed new, different from existing, questions that should be considered in the course structure when studying financial instruments by students of economic majors; have been offered practical guidelines on the ways of financial instruments valuation in the form of applied models that contribute to further understanding their economic essence, creating essentials for effective usage these instruments in future. In the study the following scientific methods were used: analysis, synthesis, generalization, induction, deduction, observation, formalization. The research is based on the provisions of IFRS, works of domestic and foreign economists, current Belarussian legislation on the considered issue.

**Keywords:** amortized cost, corporate securities, derivatives, fair value, financial instruments, valuation.

## Introduction

One of the distinctive features in current development in Belarus is the social orientation of its economic transformations in combination with the further development of market mechanisms, which implies the integration of Belarussian organizations into the world economic community. In this regard, the market of financial instruments is one of the most priority areas of economic development, which is not possible without the presence of highly qualified specialists with a sufficient level of knowledge in this field. Therefore, the course on financial instruments should contribute to deeper understanding theoretical framework of

the financial instruments market, its regulatory features and peculiarities of practical issues connected with financial instruments usage, which should have positive impact on the investment activity in Belarus.

In turn changes in the state economy require timely responses from all economic sciences that study real economic processes, both at the micro and macro levels. Information about the availability and volume of transactions with corporate securities (which in reporting standards considered as financial instruments) in the financial statements of business entities, requires, from one side, special knowledge and skills from employees to prepare and present this information array in reporting, and, from the other side, understanding of the essence and content of the reporting indicators by external users, including financial analysts, economists and public employees. Valuation and accounting treatment of corporate securities that are regarded in reporting standards as financial instruments represent a specific area of economic knowledge, which require separate approach for teaching this for students of economic majors. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to form systematic understanding the basics of financial instruments valuation based on the study their economic essence and the development of practical guidelines for valuation methods application. To do this, the following tasks will be solved:

- review the composition of corporate financial instruments (securities) and the main regulatory legal acts governing their valuation;
- separately consider the nature of derivatives and the features of their valuation in comparison with the valuation of underlying assets;
- systematize financial instruments according to possible ways for their valuation for the purpose of teaching this topic to students of economic majors, including general and specific questions for different directions.

Within the framework of this research, general scientific methods of research were used: analysis, synthesis, generalization, induction, deduction, observation. Methods of theoretical research: idealization, formalization, method of logical analysis. The research is based on the norms of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), the works of domestic and foreign economists, the current legislation of the Republics of Belarus on the topic of the study.

### **Literature Review**

In the current conditions of the formation of Belarussian financial instruments market an important place is given to the creation the variety of corporate securities in order to provide conditions for the redistribution of temporarily free funds, speed up the process of issuing borrowed capital and attract additional investment resources. Corporate financial instruments play a significant role in the mobilization of free funds for the needs of organizations, which in turn requires unification the methodology for their accounting with the

generally accepted world practice. In this regard it is necessary to form and develop students' knowledge and abilities in the field of activity in the market of financial instruments, the use of financial information in accordance with the needs of the management system, the identification of factors of the final results in business activity, innovative style of thinking. These aspects justify the relevance and practical importance of the study the economic nature of corporate securities. Based on the conducted research, it should be noted that only some authors, studying the essence of the category "securities", mention the concept of "corporate securities", but at the same time do not give their clear definition. It should be noted that nowadays the remark of Russian professor Shershenovich (1914) that "the concept of securities isn't clearly understood neither in life nor in science..." is still timely and fair. Regarding the interpretation of their essence, there are 4 approaches:

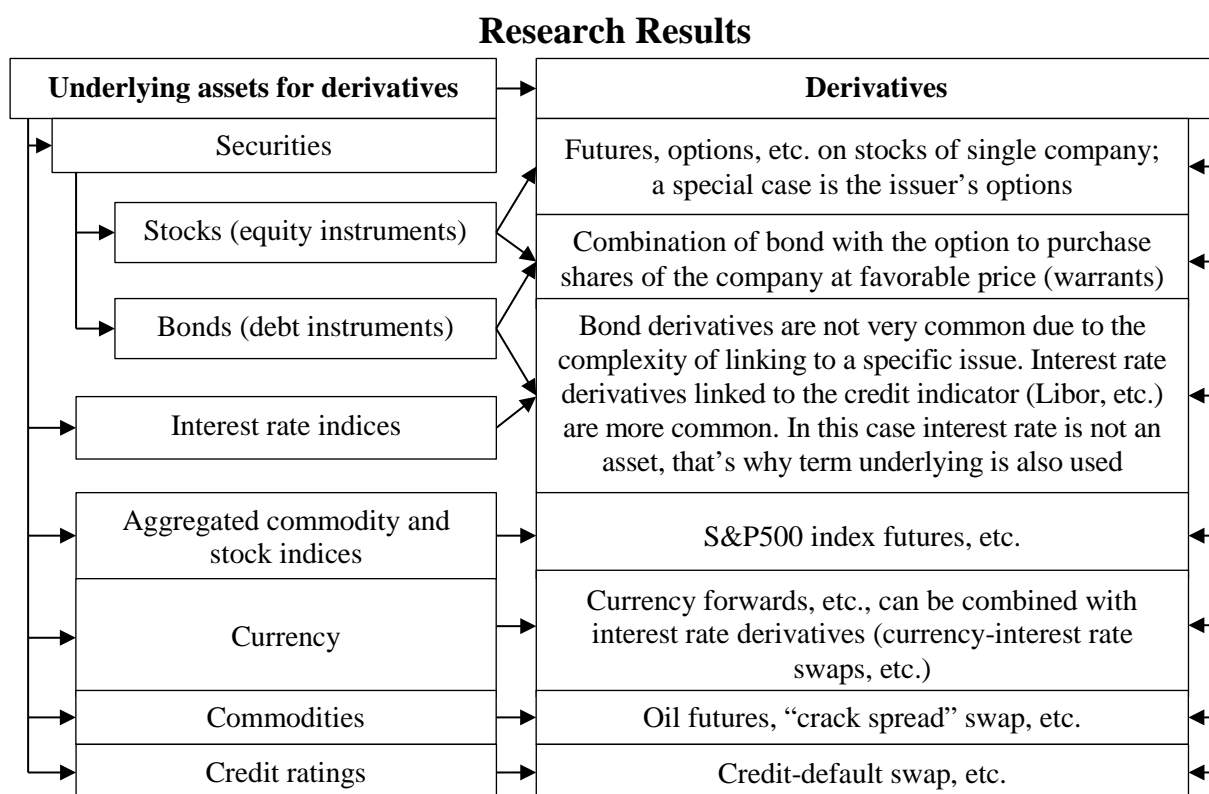
- corporate securities are securities that are issued by issuers that are not related to state and municipal management bodies (Mammanovich, 2006; Mahovikova & Selishchev & Mirzazhanov, 2010);
- corporate securities are securities issued by joint-stock companies and limited liability companies (Endovitsky & Ishkova, 2009);
- corporate securities – are securities, which are issued by companies other than banks and investment company (Sosnauwskene, 2008);
- corporate securities are securities that are issued by business entities of various organizational and legal forms of ownership, including banks, investment companies and funds (Beletskii, 2009; Kolesnikov & Torkanovsky, 1998; Kovaleva & Hisamudinov, 2008).

These approaches are unified in the following definition of corporate securities: corporate securities are securities of shared-ownership legal entities, which collectively own property (capital) and united by common professional and other interests in achieving goals that doesn't contradict the law. In turn, the following types of corporate securities can be distinguished: shares, bonds, promissory notes; if they are divided into groups, then debt, equity and derivative securities can be distinguished (Masko et al., 2020).

It should be noted that the question of whether derivatives can be classified as derivative securities remains debatable, while in training economic specialists many programs combine the use of ordinary securities and derivatives in one course. In our opinion, the key difference between these two categories is the purpose of the application: attracting financing for the issuance of securities and transferring risk for derivatives. Despite this difference, corporate securities and derivatives are grouped under the general category of financial instruments for the purposes of reporting and valuation, and the procedure for reflecting the results of transactions with these instruments is regulated by a single reporting standard: IFRS 9 "Financial Instruments" at the international level, and National Accounting Standard № 74 "Financial Instruments" for the Republic of Belarus.

The study of financial instruments, determination of their economic nature, valuation and presentation in the financial statements considered in the works of the following authors: Butler (2009) and Ramirez (2015) examine the characteristics of financial instruments, including derivatives, for the purposes of financial reporting on many examples; Rashad Abdel-Khalik (2019) focuses on the failing faithful representations connected with derivatives valuation; also there are a number of studies on the actual use and disclosure of financial instruments by various companies, for example, Birt et al. (2013) consider the financial instruments usage by Australian companies from the extractive sector; also, a number of studies consider further improving reporting standards, for example, Fargher et al. (2018) focus on possibilities for improving the valuation of equity and debt financial instruments in accordance with international standards, Holzmann & Munter (2016) according to US Accounting Standards.

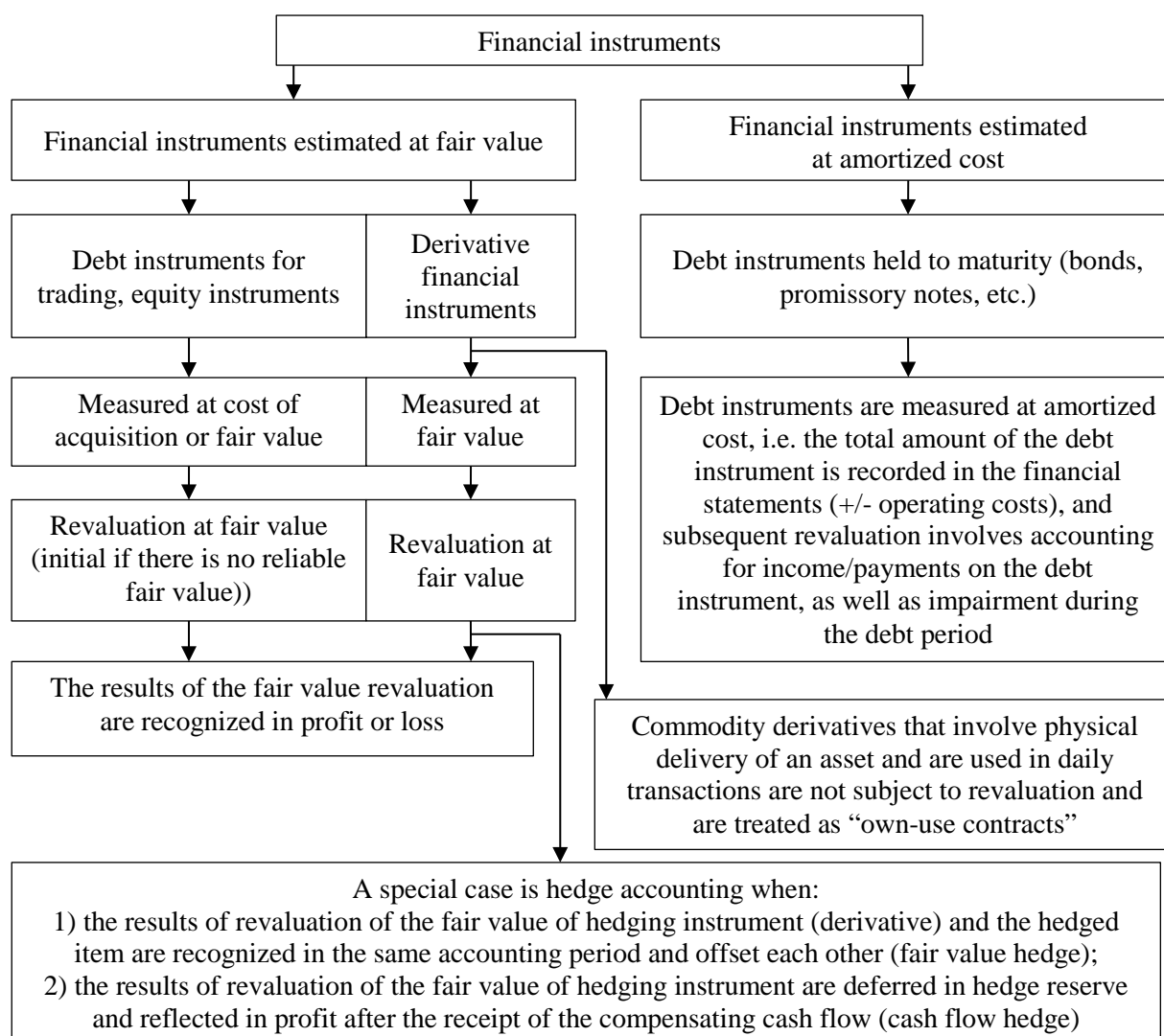
All these aspects related to the valuation of corporate securities and derivatives for the purposes of reporting complicate the process of studying this topic in the training of economic specialists, which in future causes errors, misunderstandings and unwillingness of employees to use a wide range of financial instruments to achieve the company's goals. Therefore, the specifics of the valuation of corporate securities and derivatives in accordance with the current reporting standards will be discussed further.



*Figure 1 The Ratio of Securities and Derivatives*  
 Source: own development based on Wendy et al. (2017)



For the purposes of this article, we will not dwell on the essential content of the main types of corporate securities – shares (equity instruments) and bonds (debt instruments). Also, definitions of main types of derivatives – forwards, futures, options and swaps – are widely known in international practice. We would rather focus on the issue of their interrelation. Figure 1 shows the composition of derivatives and corporate securities, reflecting their relationship.



**Figure 2 Valuation of Financial Instruments in Accounting**  
 Source: own development based on National Accounting Standard № 74  
 “Financial Instruments”

As can be seen from the information presented in figure 1, the composition of derivatives is broader than the composition of securities, while securities are the underlying assets for the corresponding groups of derivatives. The valuation of corporate securities and derivatives for reporting purposes is based on the

concept financial instruments. Financial instrument is a contract that results in financial asset for one entity and financial liability or equity instrument for another entity. The general approach to the measurement of financial instruments, including derivatives, is based on their classification as financial assets or liabilities at fair value. Some cases involve the measurement at amortized cost and application of hedge accounting, as shown in Figure 2.

The scheme presented in Figure 2 reflects to a greater extent the Belarusian accounting standard on the issue, rather than the standard IFRS 9, which covers more aspects and potential situations of the valuation of financial instruments. However, for general understanding of approaches to the valuation of financial instruments in the context of studying appropriate topic, in our opinion, this scheme may be sufficient, while specific issues can be considered as an in-depth consideration of the topic. This scheme also applies the concept of fair value, which is described in detail in appropriate standards, for example IFRS 13 “Fair value measurement”. If we briefly summarize the meaning of fair value, it shows how much security or derivative will actually worth at a given moment, if we try to sell it. Therefore, when debt instruments are held to maturity, it is allowed to apply the amortized cost measurement, which allows not to carry out the current revaluation of such instruments based on actual market conditions (at fair value). On the contrary, if debt instruments are held for trading or we deal with equity instruments or derivatives, fair value measurement and revaluation is mandatory, as it should show the users of financial statements the real value of financial instruments at reporting date. For example, if a company owns 10 shares of another company that were purchased at \$ 20 per share, and at the reporting date their value is \$ 23 per share, then it is obvious that such change in the value of the shares will increase earnings by \$ 30.

A more complex situation is related to the valuation of derivatives. Here we use the concept of notional value of derivative – this is the forward price (the price at which it will be necessary to buy/sell the underlying asset in the future), fixed in the contract, multiplied by the volume of the underlying asset; and fair value – is the monetary estimation of the impact of changes in market factors on the initially determined forward price at each time. The fair value (other than option premiums) at the time of derivative contract initiation is usually zero. Subsequently, fair value of derivative changes in accordance with fluctuations in the actual (spot) price of the underlying asset every day, as well as in accordance with other factors that affect the forward price.

In practice, for exchange-traded derivatives the change in fair value is calculated by the central counterparty by adding/writing off the variation margin to the company’s account on a daily basis. It means that changes in fair value of exchange-traded derivatives are related to real cash flows. While over-the-counter (OTC) instruments in the absence of mutual collateral collection do not assume

real cash flow until the derivative is executed (except the transfer of option premiums). However, the entity is required to independently revalue the fair value of OTC derivatives for at least all reporting dates. To illustrate these situations of derivatives valuation, have been considered two examples with the following terms (according to Ramirez, 2015).

Example 1. To protect against an increase in silver prices, ABC entered into a forward contract on February 1, 20x7 with the following conditions. Date of initiation: February 1, 20x7. Counterparties: ABC (company) and Megabank. Execution: May 31, 20x7. ABC Company receives: 10 million troy ounces of silver. ABC supplies: 45 million euros. Forward price: 4.5 euros per ounce.

Settlement procedure: Cash settlement based on the price in euros per ounce of silver, applying the prevailing euro-dollar exchange rate (EUR-USD) and the LME price (USD/oz) of US dollars per ounce as follows: Estimated amount = 10 million \* (USD/oz on the execution date)/(EUR-USD on the execution date) – EUR 45 million. If the estimated amount is positive, then ABC receives the estimated amount. If the estimated amount is negative, the ABC pays the absolute amount of the estimated amount.

Cash flows on this forward contract are structured in Figure 3.

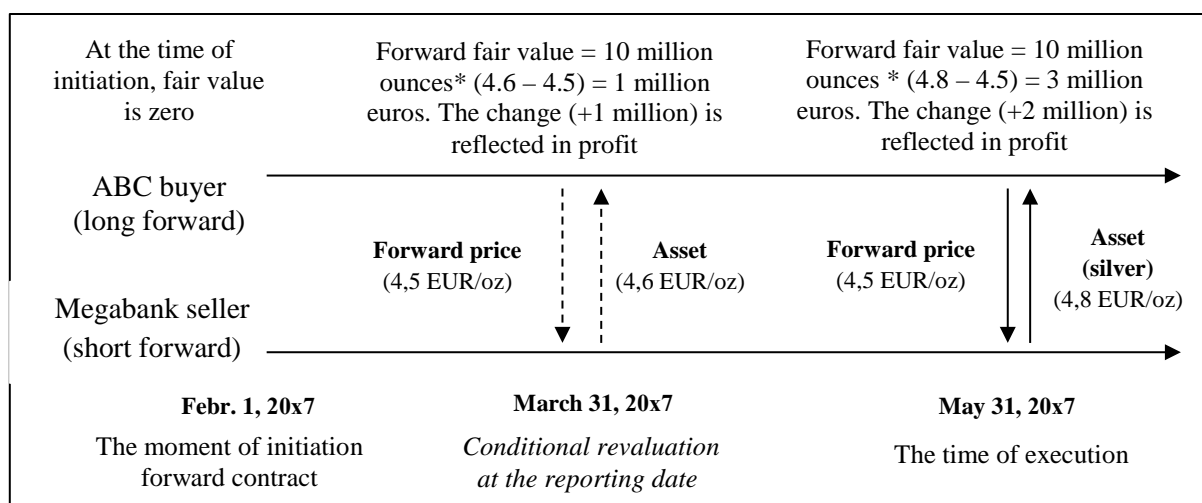
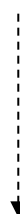
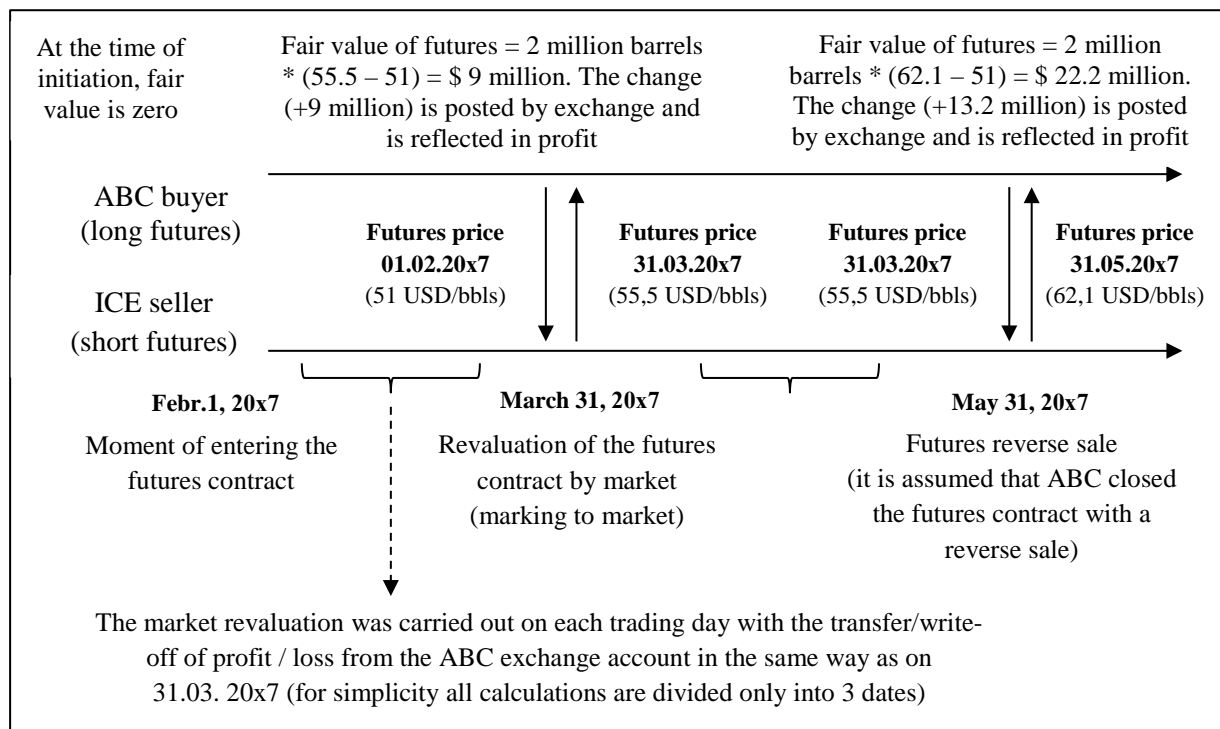


Figure 3 Cash Flow Chart for the Forward Contract for the Purchase of Silver  
Source: own development based on Ramirez (2015)

The other example is shown in Figure 4 (terms presented on the next page).



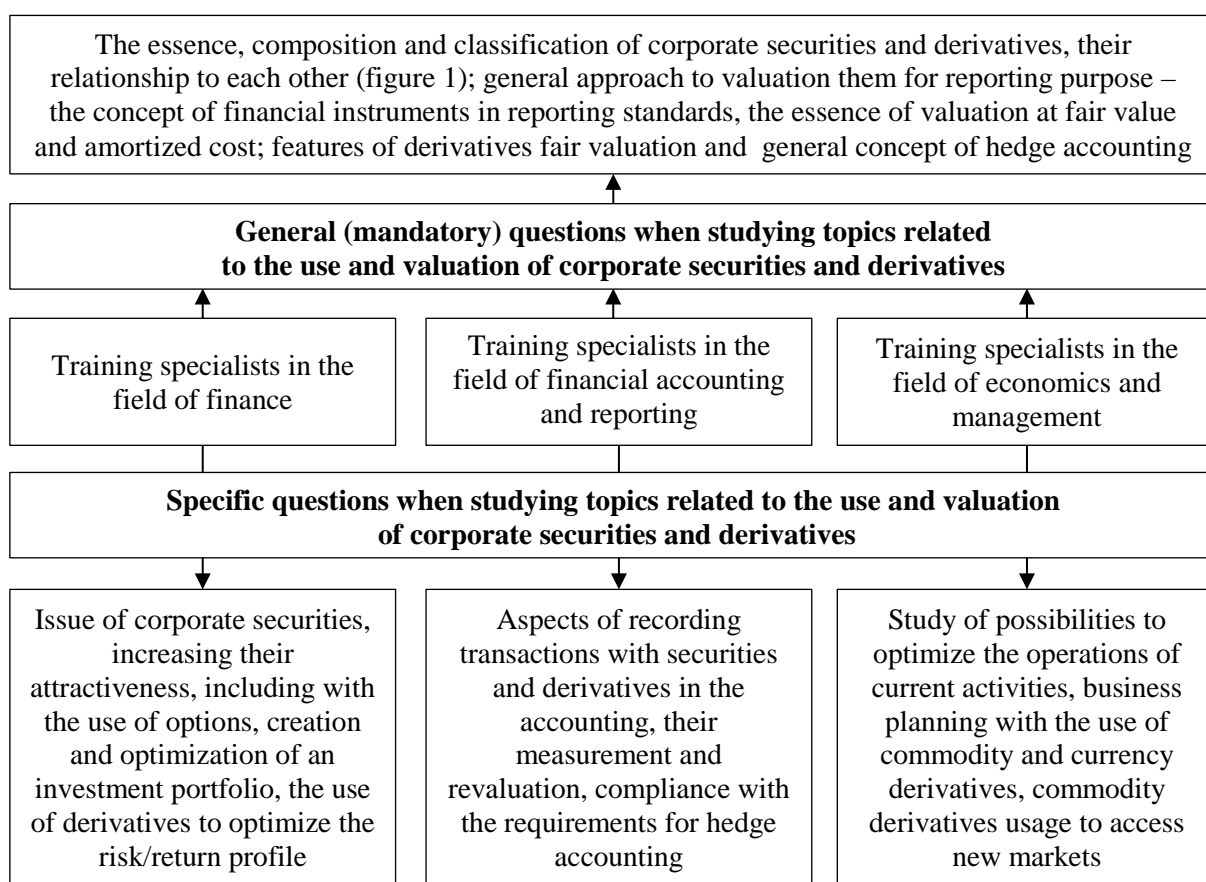


*Figure 4 Cash Flow Chart for the Oil Futures Contract*  
 Source: own development based on Ramirez (2015)

Example 2. To protect against higher oil prices, ABC has entered into a crude oil futures contract with the following conditions. Date of purchase: February 1, 20x7. Futures Exchange: The Intercontinental Exchange (ICE). Execution: June 15, 20x7. The buyer of the contract: ABC (company). Number of contracts: 2,000. Contract size: 1000 barrels of Brent crude oil. Contract price: \$ 51 per bar. Delivery month: June. Settlement: Physical delivery or cash settlement. Cash calculation based on the price of the ICE Brent Index price on the day following the last trading day of the futures contract.

As can be seen from these examples (Figure 3 and 4) fair value of derivatives differs significantly from the notional value and in addition it is constantly changing. At the same time, for exchange-traded derivatives the change in fair value is immediately apparent at the end of the day when the variation margin is posted or written off, while for OTC instruments there is no real cash flow until the moment of execution.

Taking into account the considered features of the valuation of corporate securities and derivatives, as well as the ratio of securities and derivatives discussed in figure 1, it is possible to systematize the questions that are related to the courses connected with the valuation of financial instruments depending on the direction of the particular economic major (Figure 5).



*Figure 5 General and Specific questions when Studying the Topic of Valuation Financial Instruments by Students of Economic Majors*

*Source: own development*

Taking into account these general and specific questions (Figure 5) it is possible to propose the following recommendations for teaching the topics related to securities and derivatives usage.

1. In the absence of separate course on derivatives, the first issue that needs to be considered is the ratio of the underlying assets (stocks, commodities, etc.) and the contracts derived from these assets. To reveal the essence of this relationship, it is possible to study the specification of exchange-traded stock futures, analyze the dynamics of its price and compare it with the spot price of that stock. In addition, it is possible to consider the question of why derivatives may or may not be considered securities (what are the purposes of their use, whether their value can be negative, how they are treated in legislation).

2. Information about corporate securities and derivatives usage will always be presented in the financial statements. Therefore, it is necessary to form a general understanding of the concepts of fair value and amortized cost of financial instruments. It is also advisable to consider the impact of differences in the

valuation of securities and derivatives on the reporting indicators. It is advisable to present the valuation of derivatives in the form of schemes similar to Figures 3 and 4, which allows students imagine what each of the parties pays.

3. It is also necessary to consider the nature of hedging risks using derivatives, as well as the main features of the application of hedge accounting. Here the main task is to demonstrate how the application of hedge accounting affects profit. Without hedging its volatility increases significantly due to the need to revalue the fair value of derivatives. Hedge accounting allows company to either defer the recognition of gains and losses from the revaluation of derivatives in the hedge reserve, or reflect this revaluation simultaneously with the revaluation of the hedged item, so that the gains and losses on the hedged item and the hedging instrument (derivative) mutually compensate each other.

### **Conclusions**

Thus, according to the results of the conducted research, it can be concluded that insufficient knowledge related to the valuation of corporate securities and derivatives reduces the quality and complicates the depth of understanding of the appropriate courses when training specialists of economic profile, which in future becomes one of the reasons for the reluctance of specialists to use a wide range of financial instruments to achieve high and positive results for their company. From our point of view, the formation of systematic understanding the conceptual apparatus of the valuation corporate securities and derivatives will help students gain in-depth knowledge in the field of the financial instruments market. According to the results of the study, taking into account the considered features of the valuation of financial instruments, the mandatory questions that should be presented in the course structure when studying corporate securities and derivatives by students of economic majors have been proposed. In our opinion, the specifics of the valuation of corporate securities and derivatives, their ratio for reporting purposes (based on fair value or amortized cost), as well as the nature of risk hedging using derivatives and the specifics of applying hedge accounting are issues that contribute to a deeper understanding of the economic nature of financial instruments for future specialists and create the foundation for further effective work with them.

The practical and theoretical significance of the obtained results assumes that the main provisions and recommendations of the conducted research can be used for the preparation of changes and additions to the curricula of subjects that are taught for students of economic majors, also for reflecting corporate securities and derivatives in the financial statements of entities, as methodological guidelines when conducting seminars on courses related to financial instruments, in the information work of libraries.

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# THE IMPACT OF IDEA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ON INTELLECTUAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract.** *Topicality/Problem.* Idea management systems (IMS) are manageable, systematic tools, tool kits or complex systems that helps to generate and evaluate ideas and are an important element of organizational development. Many well-known organizations (e.g. Volkswagen, Microsoft, GE Healthcare, Procter and Gamble, Boeing, Siemens, etc) are successfully applying web-based IMS. But there is no research that explores the impact of web-based IMS on intellectual resources development.

*Research aim* – to research the impact of IMS on intellectual resources development and to provide recommendations to practitioners for its broader assistance in enterprises to ensure innovation acceleration.

*Methodological approach.* The empirical research was based on 447 enterprise survey applying.

*The research results show the following results:* IMS application has resulted in a new intellectual resource, in a patents and improved innovation acceleration.

*Research limitations.* Survey research may limit the generalisability of the result, because the survey target group is commercially available web-based IMS applied enterprises.

*Originality/value.* The research based on the empirical data analysis contributes to understanding the directions and significance of IMS impact on intellectual resources development.

**Keywords:** *idea management systems, innovation acceleration, intellectual resources, patents, survey research.*

## Introduction

The development of intellectual resources for delivering innovations attracted research interests from many scholars (Chesbrough, 2006; Dahlander & Gann, 2010; Gassmann, Enkel & Chesbrough, 2010; West & Bogers, 2014;



Chesbrough, Lettl, & Ritter, 2018; Luyu, Zhu, Han, He, & Bao, 2020; Guertlerab & Sick, 2020; Zhilenkova, Budanova, Bulkhov, & Rodionov, 2019).

IMS are manageable, systematic tools, tool kits or complex systems that helps to generate and evaluate ideas and are an important element of organizational development. Many well-known organizations (e.g. Volkswagen, Microsoft, GE Healthcare, Procter and Gamble, Boeing, Siemens, etc) are successfully applying web-based IMS. But there is no research that explores the impact of web-based IMS on intellectual resources development.

There is a gap in literature to identify the role of Idea management system (IMS) to develop intellectual resources and specifically generate patents, as well to deliver innovations. Research aim – to research the impact of IMS on intellectual resources development and to provide recommendations to practitioners for its broader assistance in enterprises to ensure innovation acceleration.

To reach the aim was conducted the survey about IMS and it’s application. It should be noted that in order to reach the target audience more accurately, the authors asked IMS developers to distribute the survey to their clients. The empirical research was based on 447 enterprise survey applying.

### **Characteristics of Idea Management and Idea Management Systems**

To explore concept of IMS it is important to study also idea management, because reveals social elements of these systems (Selart & Johansen, 2011), structural process elements (Deichmann, 2012; Westerski, 2013). IM studies mainly explores these elements based on the real case studies and existing commercially available IMS has (Westerski, Dalamagas, & Iglesias, 2013; Bertetta, 2015), but also a lot of studies tries to explotre these elements by creating new IMS (Bothos, Apostoulou, & Mantzas, 2012; Lowe & Heller, 2014).

*Table 1 IM and IMS Main Characteristics (Miķelsone, Volkova, & Liela, 2019)*

IM – systematic, manageable process of idea generation, evaluation and further process continuation		
<i>IM dimensions</i>		
Idea generation (preparation, capture/gathering of ideas, retention, enhancement)	Idea evaluation (screening, selection, retention)	Further IM (further concept development with IM iterations, distribution of ideas, retention)
IMS – a tool, tool kit or complex system which provides systematic, the manageable process of idea generation, evaluation and further IM.		

The article describes only commercially available web-based IMS application and IMS impact on the performance results – focus has been selected as a narrowing point in order to better identify the sample of the study. See differences between idea management (IM) and IMS in Table 1.

The studies of the relationships between IMS and intellectual resources, IMS and patents become even more important in a fast-changing environment as it is a determinant of competitiveness for established firms to achieve a good performance in the long-term. The same applies to the studies of usage of IMS and capability to deliver innovations relationship.

Involved IMS sources could define 3 main IMS types (external, internal or mixed IMS). Main criteria for this classification is where are the obtained knowledge used in the IM internally or externally of the organisation. Internal IMS involve in IM all employees of the organisation or only some departments. External IMS - crowds, loyal clients etc. Mixed IMS provides a opportunity to involve both- internal and external idea generators and evaluators.

### **The Linkage between Intellectual Resources and Intellectual Capital**

According to O’Cass and Sok intellectual resources include intangible assets such as licences, trade marks and patents held by the enterprises (O’Cass & Sok, 2013).

In the literature, most studies explores evidence for the tight link between intellectual capital (IC) and innovation performance of an organization (European Commission, 2006; Inkinen, Kianto, Vanhala, & Ritala, 2014; Lerro, Linzalone, & Schiuma, 2014; Subramaniam & Youndt, 2005; Teece, 2007; Dumay, Rooney, & Marini, 2013). The IC concept was introduced by Galbraith (Galbraith, 1969). Edvinsson and Malone explored that IC is the set of intangible assets that the enterprise owns or has access to (Edvinsson & Malone, 1997).

Belluci et al states that IC proved itself to be a very versatile, dynamic and contemporary concept, capable to raise an increasing scholar interest year by year and to renew itself (Belluci, Marzi, Orlando, & Ciampi, 2020).

The authors of the paper agree with M. Buenechea-Elberdin (2017) that comprehending what is known about the IC and innovation relationship is significant for both academics, aiming to grasp potential research opportunities, and managers, looking for insights into how to enforce innovation in their organisations.

Warkentin states that IC emerges from the difference between the book value and the market value. So, if a firm has this mismatch that means it has a great future potential. Although it is not so clear where does it comes from? From the intelligence, [...] the collaboration between people. [...] So, how do firm create

knowledge, IC? How they grow it, foster it, leverage it, check it? (Belluci et al., 2020).

From the authors point of view, the enterprise intellectual resources become IC when they are managed strategically, e.g. supporting reaching strategic goals and implementation of generic strategies of company. Therefore, the authors have explored how different IMS application types that could be used for the intellectual resource's development as a necessary condition for development IC of organization.

### **The Role of IMS in Intellectual Resources Development**

In open innovation perspective (Chesbrough, 2003; West, Salter, Vanhaverbeke, & Chesbrough, 2014), firms attract knowledge from a wide range of external sources (Björk & Magnusson, 2009; Laursen & Salter, 2006; 2014). The external and mixed IMS are one of such importance sources. Innovation is the outcome of application of these knowledge turning them in patents or other IC (Cruz-González, López-Sáez, Navas-López, & Delgado-Verde, 2015; Doloreux, 2004; Weitzman, 1998).

According to Open innovation theory (Alexy, Bascavusoglu-Moreau, & Salter, 2016), a holistic cognitive approach should allow the company to exploit internal knowledge and use external knowledge in the dynamic environment (Giudice & Maggioni, 2014; Ferraris, Santoro, & Dezi, 2017; Santoro, Vrontis, Thrassou, & Dezi, 2018). Both internal and external IMS are significant tools to attract and manage ideas for delivering licences, trade marks and patents. On the other hand, innovation has been defined as a tool that combines knowledge in new ways (Du Plessis, 2007), highlighting the potential of the organization's knowledge to encourage development of innovations (Vaio, Palladino, Pezzi, & Kalisz, 2020). The authors point of view is that innovation is not a tool itself but rather the result of recombination of existing and new knowledge in a new ways by exploiting existing and newly attracted resources.

Innovation development is a critical source of growth and profitability (Audretsch, Coad, & Segarra, 2014) that has been traditionally associated with a firm's internal R&D activities; however, more recently, firms are increasingly drawing knowledge and technologies from external sources (Chesbrough, West, & Vanhaverbeke, 2006; Grimaldi, Greco, & Cricelli).

### **Research Methodology**

The survey was conducted on the survey platform „The QuestBack” in 2019. This survey results allowed to compile data on IMS in 8 blocks: (1) type of IMS; (2) tasks; (3) organization system; (4) adaptation and type of use; (5) IMS results;

(6) organizational effectiveness; (7) new structures; (8) problems with the use of IMS. A total of 186 elements are summarized in 8 question blocks. In this paper applied the survey block – IMS results. The questionnaire was created and distributed in English, as the dominant language of the IMS and its use in English. It should be noted that in order to reach the target audience more accurately, the authors asked IMS developers to distribute the survey to their clients. It was stated that the survey should only be sent to companies using the system in question to the person in charge of the IMS. In the author private communication with 107 IMS developers and the information published by the IMS concerned, it was concluded that the IMS employs around 70000 - 120000 companies (derived from the average number of IMS clients). Survey distributed globally. Research aim is to clarify IMS perspectives from intellectual resources development side and thus improving innovation acceleration and to draw the theoretical conclusions on choosing and applying the most appropriate IMS approach in this area.

The following hypothesis statements have been tested:

H1: IMS application has resulted in new intellectual resources.

H2: IMS application has resulted in patents.

H3: IMS application has improved innovation acceleration.

Hypothesis testing approach is based on theoretical guidelines (Moore, McCabe, Alwan, & Craig, 2016). For hypothesis testing the authors will use the proportion ( $P_i$ ) of respondents who believe that the application of particular type of IMS has resulted in new intellectual resources:

$$P_i = \frac{k_i}{n_i} \quad (1)$$

where  $k_i$  – the number of respondents who believe that the application of particular type of IMS has resulted in new intellectual resources;

$n_i$  – the number of respondents applying particular type of IMS.

Null and alternative hypothesis are defined as follows:

$$H_0: P_i - P_j \leq 0 \text{ and } H_A: P_i - P_j > 0 \quad (2)$$

As samples are simple random and independent, and  $k > 80$  &  $(n - k) > 30$ , the difference of two proportions follows an approximate normal distribution and test statistic is calculated as follows (Moore, 2016):

$$Z = \frac{P_i - P_j}{\sqrt{P_c * (1 - P_c) * (\frac{1}{n_i} + \frac{1}{n_j})}} \quad (3)$$

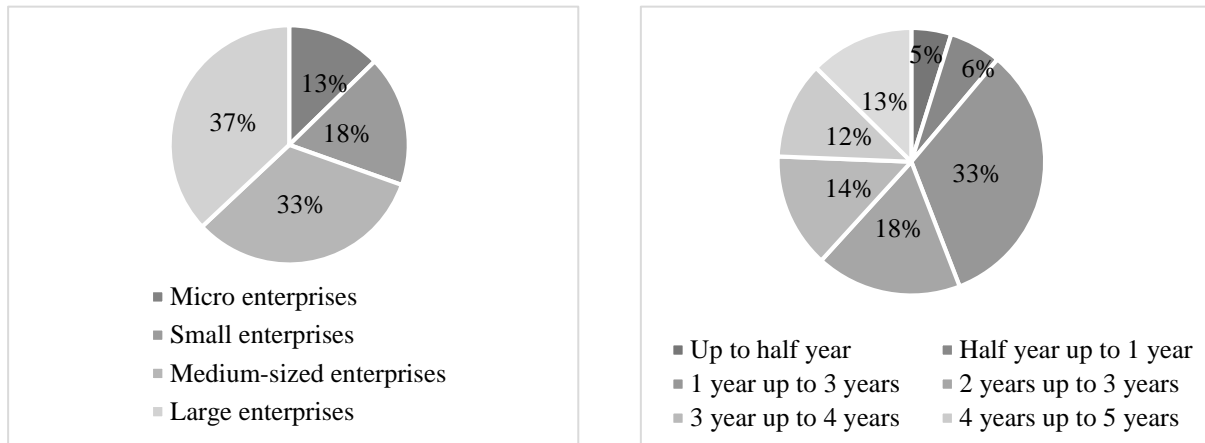
where the pooled proportion ( $P_c$ ) is calculated as follows (Moore, 2016):

$$P_c = \frac{k_i + k_j}{n_i + n_{Mj}} \quad (4)$$

Decision rule is to reject  $H_0$  in favour of  $H_A$ , if  $z$ -statistic ( $z_{stat}$ ) is larger than  $z$ -critical ( $z_\alpha$ ) values (1,645) for ( $\alpha = 0,05$ ):

$$z_{stat} > z_\alpha \quad (5)$$

In Figure 1 see the distribution of respondents.



*By enterprise size By years how long*  
 Figure 1 *Distribution of the Respondents (created by the authors)*

### Findings of Hypothesis

#### *Application of IMS types and new intellectual resources creation*

The results show the extent to which different IMS types has resulted in new intellectual resources, are summarized in the following Figure 2.

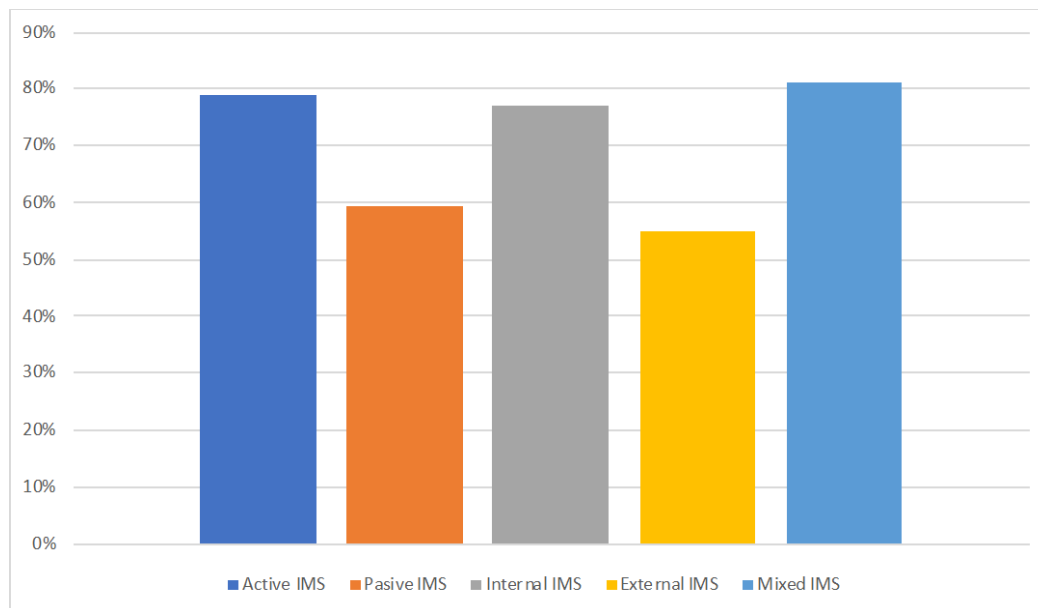


Figure 2 *Proportion of Respondents Who Believe that Application of Particular IMS Type Has Resulted in New Intellectual Resources, % (created by the authors)*

Calculated proportions of respondents who believe that applications of particular IMS type has resulted in new intellectual resources, pooled proportions as well as  $z$ -statistics and corresponding  $p$ -values are summarized in following Table 2.

**Table 2 Statistics for Hypothesis Testing about Application of Different IMS Type and New Intellectual Resources Creation (created by the authors)**

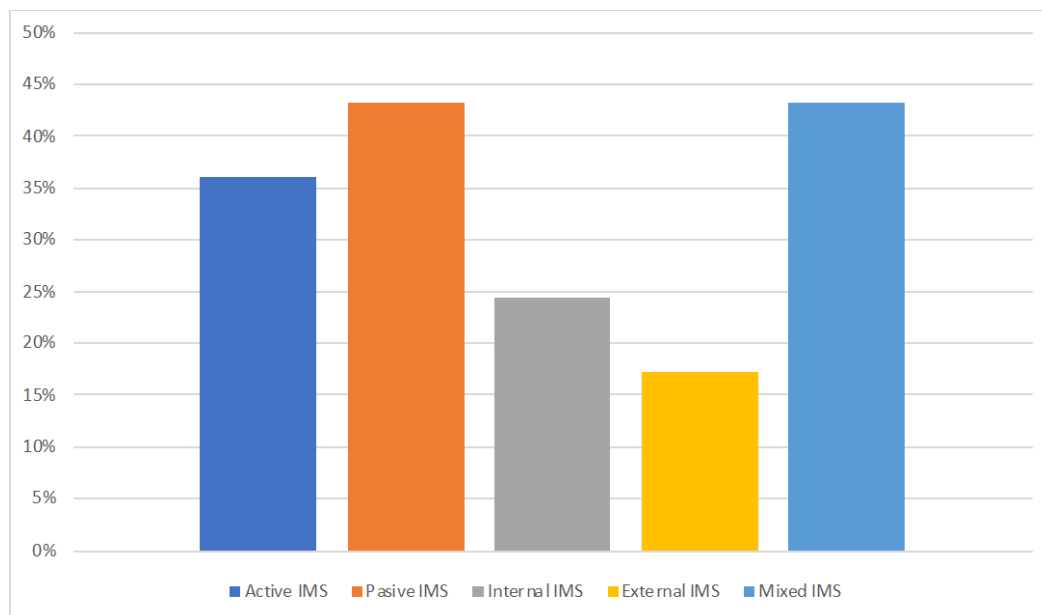
IMS type	$P_i$	IMS type	$P_i$	$P_c$	$z_{stat}$	$p$ -value
Active	0,7874	Passive	0,5946	0,7292	4,9307	<0,001
Internal	0,7679	External	0,5485	0,6659	4,8829	<0,001
Mixed	0,8101	Active	0,7874	0,7959	0,7144	0,237

As calculated z-statistics are larger than critical values for first two comparable IMS types pairs, authors would reject the corresponding null hypothesis and conclude that sample data provide strong evidence to support alternative hypothesis. Conclusions that application of active IMS has resulted in a new intellectual resource more than application of passive IMS and application of internal IMS has resulted in new intellectual resources more than application of external IMS is supported also by low  $p$ -value (<0,001).

As calculated  $z$ -statistic isn't larger than critical values for the third comparable IMS types pairs, authors can't reject the corresponding null hypothesis and conclude that sample data do not provide enough evidence to support alternative hypothesis - the difference in the proportions of respondents who believe that application of mixed IMS type has resulted in new intellectual resources more than application of active IMS type isn't statistically significant.

***Application of different IMS types and new patents***

The results show the extent to which application of different IMS types has resulted in new patents, are summarized in the following Figure 3.



**Figure 3 Proportion of Respondents Who Believe that Application of Particular IMS Type Has Resulted in New Patents, % (created by the authors)**

Calculated proportions of respondents who believe that applications of particular IMS type have turned in new patents, pooled proportions as well as  $z$ -statistics and corresponding  $p$ -values are summarized in following Table 3.

*Table 3 Statistics for Hypothesis Testing about Application of Different IMS Type and New Patents (created by the authors)*

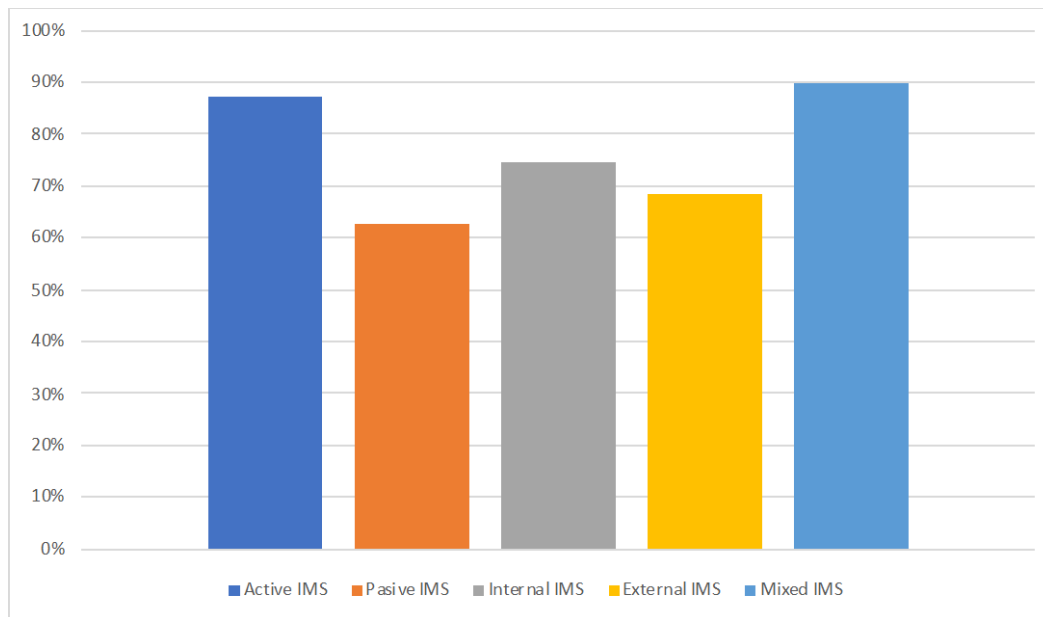
IMS type	$P_i$	IMS type	$P_j$	$P_c$	$z_{stat}$	$p$ -value
Passive	0,4324	Active	0,3598	0,3817	1,6989	0,045
Internal	0,2437	External	0,1716	0,2104	1,8547	0,032
Mixed	0,4319	Active	0,3598	0,3869	1,8758	0,030
Passive	0,4324	Mixed	0,4319	0,4321	0,0110	0,496

As calculated  $z$ -statistics are larger than critical values for first three comparable IMS types pairs, authors would reject the corresponding null hypothesis and conclude that sample data provide strong evidence to support alternative hypothesis. Conclusions that application of passive IMS has resulted in new patents more than application of active IMS, application of internal IMS has resulted in new patents more than application of external IMS and application of mixed IMS has resulted in new patents more than application of active IMS is supported also by low  $p$ -value ( $<0,045$ ).

As calculated  $z$ -statistic isn't larger than critical values for the fourth comparable IMS type pairs, authors can't reject the corresponding null hypothesis and conclude that sample data do not provide enough evidence to support alternative hypothesis - the difference in the proportions of respondents who believe that application of passive IMS type has helped to achieve goals more than application of mixed IMS type isn't statistically significant.

***Application of different IMS types and innovation acceleration improvement***

The results of the survey, which show the extent to which different types of IMS has improved innovation acceleration, are summarized in the following Figure 4.



**Figure 4 Proportion of Respondents Who Believe that Application of Particular IMS Type Has Improved Innovation Acceleration, % (created by the authors)**

Calculated proportions of respondents who believe that applications of particular IMS type has improved innovation acceleration, pooled proportions as well as z-statistics and corresponding p-values are summarized in following Table 4.

**Table 4 Statistics for Hypothesis Testing about Application of Different IMS Type and Innovation Acceleration Improvement (created by the authors)**

IMS type	$P_i$	IMS type	$P_j$	$P_c$	$z_{stat}$	p-value
Active	0,8712	Passive	0,6270	0,7974	6,9015	<0,001
Internal	0,7468	External	0,6863	0,7188	1,4105	0,079
Mixed	0,8980	Active	0,8712	0,8812	1,0485	0,147

As calculated z-statistics are larger than critical values for first comparable IMS type pairs, authors would reject the corresponding null hypothesis and conclude that sample data provide strong evidence to support alternative hypothesis. Conclusions that application of active IMS has improved innovation acceleration more than application of passive IMS is supported also by low p-value (<0,001).

As calculated z-statistic isn't larger than critical values for the second and third comparable IMS type pairs, authors can't reject the corresponding null hypothesis and conclude that sample data do not provide enough evidence to support alternative hypothesis - the difference in the proportions of respondents who believe that application of internal IMS type has improved innovation



acceleration more than application of external IMS type and application of mixed IMS type has improved innovation acceleration more than application of active IMS type isn't statistically significant.

## **Conclusions and Discussion**

The authors performed the research to identify how management mechanisms, in this case IMS, are contributing towards new intellectual resources development, including impact on generating patents and innovations.

From the authors point of view, the IMS has a complex nature. It is a management tool applied to foster delivering innovations and itself presents an intangible resource of the organization. This study offers a complementary interpretation of the relationships between the concept and theory of IMS and that new intellectual resources development, including ability to generate patents and deliver innovations based on the empirical study.

This study has several implications for enterprises as the research shows that the application of passive IMS has resulted in new patents more than application of active IMS, application of internal IMS has resulted in new patents more than application of external IMS and application of mixed IMS has resulted in new patents more than application of active IMS. The authors conclude that the application of active IMS has improved innovation acceleration more than application of passive IMS.

The authors agree with O'Cass and Sok that the intellectual resources serve as the basis to facilitate the product innovation process, so providing opportunities for achieving growth. But if they have poor intellectual resources, growth may be impacted (O'Cass & Sok, 2013).

The authors research contributes to understanding that application of IMS is a valuable source for intellectual resources development and in the case when this process is managed strategically, company could create significant advantage over competitors, also through development IC of organization.

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# ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE EASTERN AUKŠTAITIJA REGION FOR LOCAL TOURISM UNDER COVID-19 CONDITIONS

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**Abstract.** *The article discusses the attractiveness factors of the Eastern Aukštaitija region for local tourism under COVID - 19 conditions and presents the results of the research (analysis of scientific literature, questionnaire surveys and analysis of strategic documents). The aim of the research is to perform an analysis of the attractiveness of the Eastern Aukštaitija region for local tourism under COVID-19 conditions. Objectives of the research: to describe the factors of tourism region's attractiveness for local tourism; to perform an analysis of the attractiveness of the Eastern Aukštaitija region for local tourism under COVID-19 conditions. An analysis of the scientific literature showed that destination attractions define the framework within which visitors enjoy their vacations. They include all forms of natural and created (manmade) resources, culture, heritage, history, customs, architectural features, traditional artwork, cuisine, music and handicrafts that attract travellers. According to the results of the research, the choice of travels in the Eastern Aukštaitija region is mostly influenced by such factors of attractiveness of the region as natural resources, cultural resources and interesting places of interest, as well as attractiveness of the tourism destination/ region.*

**Keywords:** *attractiveness of the region, Eastern Aukštaitija region, local tourism.*

## Introduction

Relevance of the Topic. At the end of the 2019 year, the travel and tourism industry ranked almost 9 % on the world economic map. However, the pandemic COVID-19 stopped the sector instantly. The global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on tourism development. The UN WTO predicts that the number of tourists worldwide in 2020 may decrease by 20-30% - from 1.46 billion incoming tourists in 2019 to 1.02 - 1.17 billion this year. This fall could make 300 - 450 billion USD financial loss (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2020). However, the pandemic did not stop local tourism: the COVID-19 pandemic saw a tremendous increase in the importance of local tourism. The pandemic adjusted the holiday plans of many Lithuanians, but this did not reduce the desire to travel around their country. In 2019 local tourists accounted for more than half of the total tourism market in Lithuania, and

in 2020, due to the pandemic, local tourism increased by 12 % compared to 2019 (data of the National Lithuanian Tourism Promotion Agency "Travel in Lithuania", 2021). Even during a pandemic, each tourism destination / region seeks to attract more tourists and maintain economic growth and stable jobs. Eastern Aukštaitija region is one of the six priority tourism regions in Lithuania, an important region in Lithuania in terms of tourism development.

The attractiveness of the tourist region has been analyzed by a number of foreign researches, as (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981; Haathi, 1986; Lew, 1987; Middleton, 1989; Gartner, 1989; Leiper, 1990; Hu & Ritchie, 1993; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Prideaux, 2000b; Berardi, 2002; Kim & Lee, 2002; Falk, 2002; Klenosky, 2002; Dwyer, Livaic, & Mellor, 2003; Enright et al., 2004; Formica, 2002; Garau-Taberner, 2007; Vengesayi, Mavondo, & Reisinger, 2009 and others). In Lithuania, this topic was analyzed by Malinauskaitė, 2017; Labauskaitė, 2020, 2015; Jonuškienė, 2015, Andrulienė et al., 2011 and others. However, the factors of attractiveness of the tourist region in Lithuania have not been analyzed in detail, only individual researches are being conducted.

The object of the research is the attractiveness of the Eastern Aukštaitija region for local tourism under COVID-19 conditions.

The aim of the research is to perform an analysis of the attractiveness of the Eastern Aukštaitija region for local tourism under COVID-19 conditions.

Objectives of the research:

1. To describe the factors of tourism region's attractiveness for local tourism;
2. To perform an analysis of the attractiveness of the Eastern Aukštaitija region for local tourism under COVID-19 conditions.

Methodology of Research. The analysis of scientific literature sources, quantitative research - questionnaire survey method and data summarization were used in the article. In order to clarify the conditions and priorities of tourism development in the mentioned region, the analysis of documents was performed. According the specifics of the study, this method should be considered an important method of data collection. Sources of data to be collected: Law on Tourism of the Republic of Lithuania, Lithuanian Tourism Development Programme for 2014–2020, Utena Region Development 2014-2020 plan, Study of Lithuanian Tourism Potential Assessment in Determining the Maximum Tourist Attraction Areas and Priorities for Their Uses (2011), and other documents.

The survey sample. The sample size for the research was calculated according to the Schwarze formula. 102 respondents took part in the survey (according to the formula, 96 respondents are sufficient to ensure the representativeness of the survey sample). The questionnaire was processed with the Excel programme. Respondents from Vilnius (41 %), Eastern Aukštaitija

(24 %), Pajūris (15 %), Lower Nemunas (6 %), South Dzūkija (3 %) and Žemaitijos highlands (3 %) regions participated in the survey; 9 % of respondents were Lithuanian emigrants currently living in foreign countries: Germany, Great Britain, Norway, and etc.

### **The Scientific Discussion of the Attractiveness of a Tourism Region**

The attractiveness of a tourism destination is often related to the opinion of visitors about the perceived ability of the tourism destination to meet its needs. Mayo and Jarvis (1981) define the attractiveness of touristic areas as “the relative importance of individual benefits and the perceived ability of the destination to provide these individual benefits” (p. 201), i.e., places of interest, infrastructure or services, and the people who provide these services. Places of interest are more significant for the assessment of tourist attractiveness personal characteristics: age, education, financial situation, belonging to a certain social stratum, profession and current position (Berardi, 2002). According to Hu and Ritchie (1993), a tourism destination is a combination of tourism facilities and services. Gartner (1989) points to several other features of a tourism destination’s attractiveness, including historical and cultural sites, nightlife, outdoor living, the natural environment, and more.

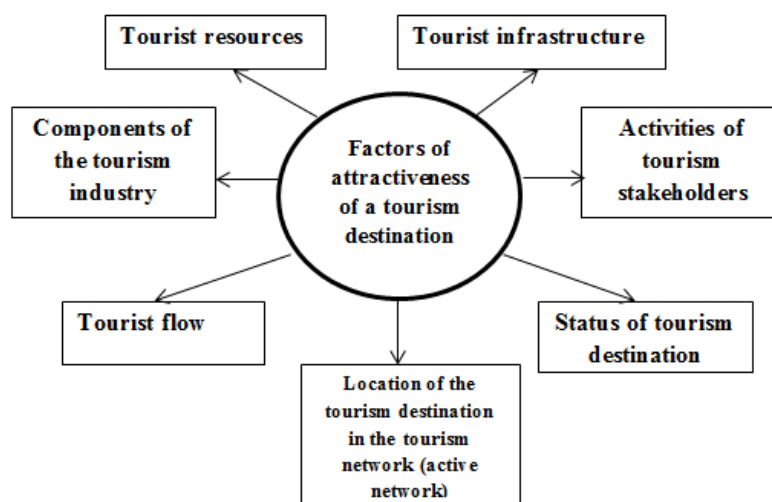
Surveys of tourists visiting Italy have found that the assessment of the tourism attractiveness of a country and its individual regions is significantly influenced by (Garau-Taberner, 2007): 1) distance to the tourist destination; 2) time; 3) travel price; 4) purpose of travel; 5) the reputation of the area between travellers and tour operators; 6) security; 7) culture (Labanauskaitė, 2020).

The tourism attractiveness of the tourism destination visited is often linked to the feelings of the visitors and the opinion of how much and how the tourism destination is able to meet their needs. The more a tourism destination meets the needs of tourists, the more often it is perceived as attractive and the more likely it is to be chosen by potential customers. Analysis of the assessment of the tourism attractiveness of the tourism destination visited and the identification of attractiveness factors contribute to strengthening the ability to create personalized value for the visitor, which in turn becomes an integral part of a competitive strategy (Enright et al., 2005). Research on the attractiveness of the tourism destination visited focuses on the needs of tourists and what attracts them to the various attractions.

Different destinations have different images and thus attract different people (Gartner, 1989; Haahti, 1986). Tourist attractions include all kinds of natural and man-made resources, culture, heritage, history, customs, architectural features, traditional works of art, cuisine, music and handicrafts that attract travellers (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2006). Entertainment is the main

criterion and motivator for choosing a place to visit, giving priority to one place to visit over others. Goeldner and Ritchie (2006) divide entertainment into five main groups: culture, nature, events, recreation and leisure. The variety of activities offered in the tourism destination visited is an important attraction when choosing a trip. The attractiveness of the tourism destination visited also depends on the ability to create infrastructure for tourists.

According to the “Study of Lithuanian Tourism Potential Assessment in Determining the Maximum Tourist Attraction Areas and Priorities for Their Use’s” (2011), the structure of tourist attractiveness of a tourism destination / region consists of: tourism resources (natural, cultural, social / human) and infrastructure; components of the tourism industry (accommodation, catering, transport, entertainment, information, management, travel, training services); tourist flow; the status of the site (resort, UNESCO World Heritage Site, etc.); image of the tourism destination; activities of tourism stakeholders; location of the tourism destination in the tourism network. Figure 1 shows the structure of the tourism destination attractiveness factors.



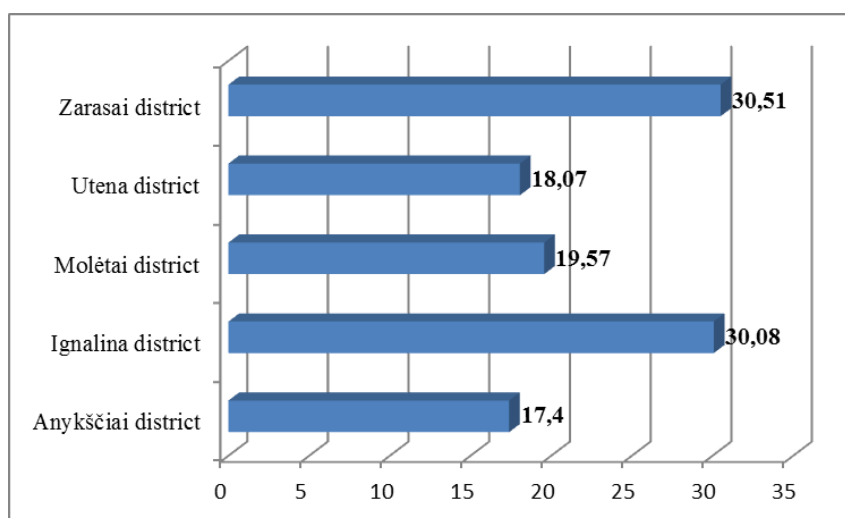
*Figure 1 Structure of Tourism Destination Attractiveness Factors*  
(composed by the author according Andrulienė et al., 2011)

Eastern Aukštaitija region is one of the priority tourism development regions identified in Lithuanian Tourism Development Programme for 2014-2020. The region has the largest number of rural tourism homesteads in Lithuania - according to statistical data of 2017, 168 rural tourism homesteads or 25% of all Lithuanian rural tourism homesteads operated here, 3 resort areas (Anykščiai, Zarasai and Ignalina) and 1002 lakes. The region of Eastern Aukštaitija is distinguished by the abundance of state protected areas - protected areas cover an area of 147345.73 ha (20.46% of the region's territory). The largest areas in the



region are occupied by state parks, the following types of tourism are being developed: cognitive cultural tourism; leisure; rural; health tourism, ecotourism.

According to the “Study of Lithuanian Tourism Potential Assessment in Determining the Maximum Tourist Attraction Areas and Priorities for Their Uses (2011), the results of comprehensive assessment of attractiveness of Eastern Aukštaitija region districts are distributed as follows: Anykščiai district is evaluated by 8.68 points, Ignalina district - by 21.03 points, Molėtai district - 12.37 points, Utena district - 9.82 points and Zarasai district - 21.98 points (for comparison, the highest score in assessing Lithuanian districts is 50.26 and the lowest score - 3.81).



*Figure 2 Overall Results of the Cumulative Assessment of the Attractiveness of the Districts of the Eastern Aukštaitija Region, Points (composed by the author according “Study of Lithuanian Tourism Potential Assessment in Determining the Maximum Tourist Attraction Areas and Priorities for Their Uses, 2011)*

Overall summary results of the evaluation of tourism services and infrastructure (catering, accommodation, communication, tourism information, travel organization services, tourist flows, staff, tourism infrastructure objects); tourism resources, picturesque landscape, environmental quality, cultural objects); status criteria (resort area, resort, protected areas, UNESCO World Cultural Heritage) are distributed in the following order: Anykščiai district is evaluated with 17.40 points, Ignalina district - with 30.08 points, Molėtai district - with 19.57 points, Utena district - with 18.07 and Zarasai district - 30.51 points (for comparison, the highest score in the evaluation of Lithuanian districts is 80.44 and the lowest score - 6.32). The overall results of the cumulative assessment are presented in Figure 2.

## **Analysis of the Research of the Attractiveness of the Eastern Aukštaitija Region for Local Tourism in the Conditions of COVID-19**

**Methodology of Research.** The method of quantitative research chosen for the research is a questionnaire survey, surveying tourists traveling around Lithuania. The methodology of quantitative research is based on a positivist (normative) paradigm that explains social reality from an objectivist point of view. The survey was conducted from December 2020 to January 2021, by placing the questionnaire on the survey portal [www.apklausa.lt](http://www.apklausa.lt) and distributing the questionnaire among the representatives of other Lithuanian regions. The sample size for the study was calculated according to the Schwarz formula. The questionnaire consisted of 25 questions. 102 respondents from Vilnius (41 %), Eastern Aukštaitija (24 %), Pajūris (15 %), Lower Nemunas (6 %), South Dzūkija (3 %) and Žemaitija highland (3 %) regions participated in the survey. (According to the formula, 96 respondents are sufficient to ensure the representativeness of the survey sample); 9 % respondents - emigrants from Lithuania, currently living in foreign countries: Germany, Great Britain and Norway, and etc.

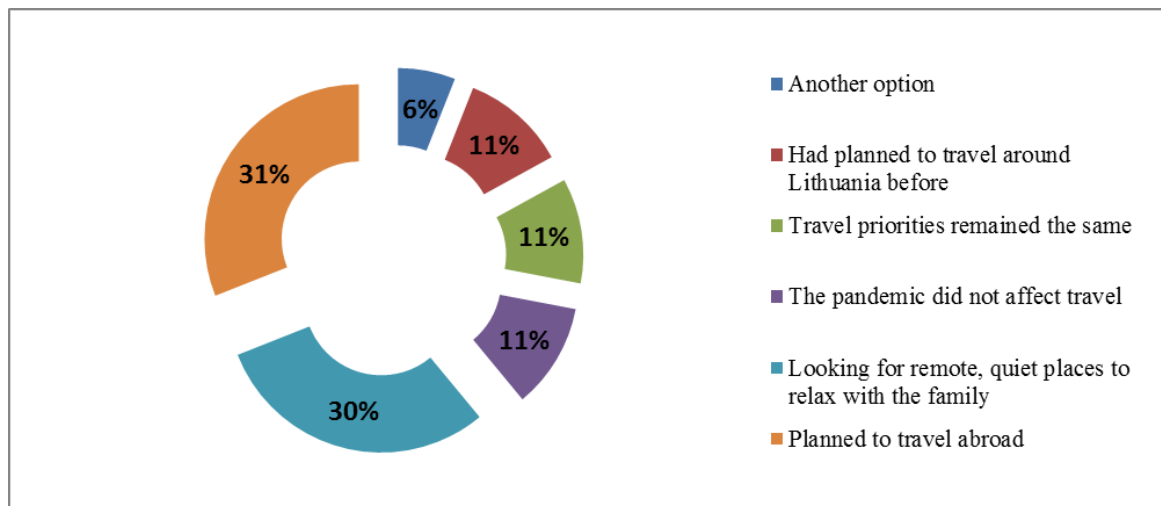
**Research results.** According to the survey data, all surveyed respondents like to travel. Respondents most often travel for cognitive (28 %), recreational (23 %), entertaining (19 %) and other purposes. Decision-making when planning trips is mostly determined by the recommendations of friends, colleagues and acquaintances (31 %), the Internet (29 %), social networks (17 %), and 8 % each - information and other sources of information found in the media and tourism information centres (TICs). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, a slightly higher share of respondents travelled to Lithuania (47 %), 44 % of the respondents travelled to foreign countries, every tenth respondent travelled to both Lithuania and foreign countries.

The majority of the respondents (84 %) organize trips to Lithuania independently, 12 % applies to travel companies, and 6 % respondents behave differently. 35 % respondents choose short, 1- 3 day trips, 29 % choose trips of 7 days and longer, 27 % - medium-term – 4 - 6 days of travel, 9 % - journeys of various durations, depending on the purpose of the journey. A significant number of tourists travel on holiday time (38 %), one in three travels as soon as they find free time, and one in five travels on weekends. 15 % respondents plan trips spontaneously, 9 % - a month before, and seven out of ten respondents behave differently depending on the purpose and circumstances of the trip. 41 % the travel time of the respondents is irrelevant, but four out of ten respondents travel during the summer and two out of ten travel during the autumn.

The vast majority of respondents (71 %) travel with family members, 3 percent traveling alone, 12 % respondents travel with friends and the same number of respondents travel differently depending on the situation. Slightly more than

half of the respondents (53 %) travel by car, 35 % prefers an airplane, 3% respondents travel by bus and 9 % choose a variety of vehicles when traveling. Exactly half of the respondents (50 %) choose a hotel for overnight trips, 15 % - guest house, 9 % - rural tourism homestead, 6 % - camping, and 21 % the respondents stay overnight with friends and relatives, rent an apartment or flats, etc.

65 % of respondents classified themselves as comfortable to travel and spend the night, 24 % - who like to spend time in nature, respectively 6 % of travellers - tend to save, often choose free entertainment and like to buy travel packages, more often than others traveling with friends or a group of tours (In 2018, a survey was conducted by order of the State Tourism Department, in which 6 types of local tourists were distinguished for the first time. Using statistical methods, according to the different motivations and habits of tourism in Lithuania to travel in their country, the researchers ranked the following types of tourists: entertainers, "all inclusive", "peace with family", "nature lovers", "where everyone is" and "quality seekers"). When choosing trips around Lithuania, respondents find natural resources the most attractive (32 %), respectively 18 % - cultural resources and good ratio for money and quality find the most attractive, 14 % choose trips due to the attractiveness of the tourism destination / region, 10 % of respondents - for events and 8 % - due to high quality of service.

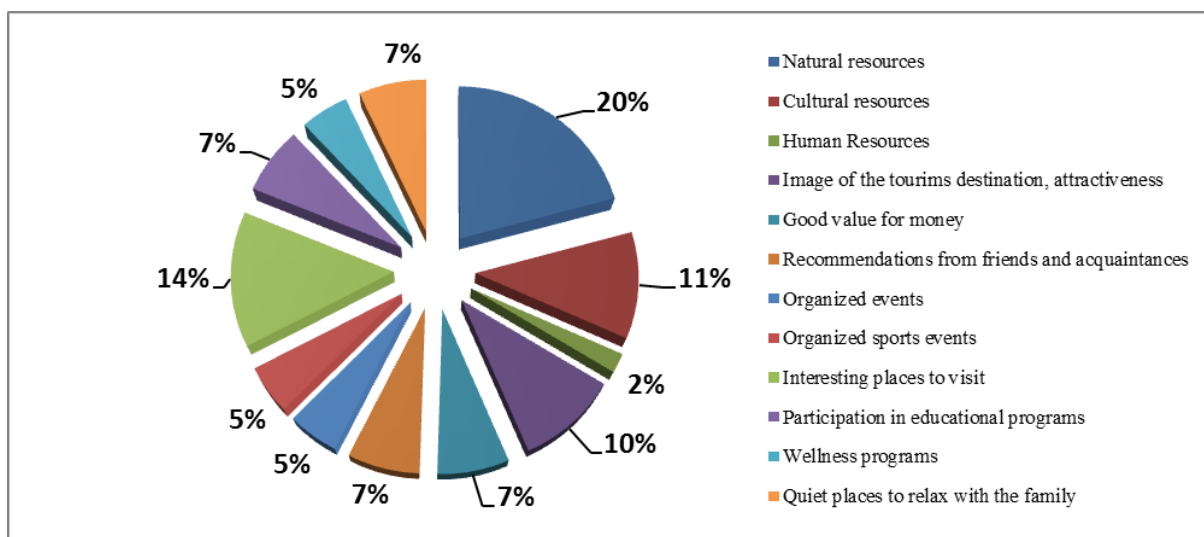


*Figure 3 Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Respondents' Travel Plans  
(composed by the author according research results)*

The COVID-19 pandemic adjusted travellers plans: 31 % respondents planned to travel abroad, but had to travel around Lithuania, three out of ten respondents, planning a trip, are looking for remote, quiet places to relax with their family during a pandemic, 22 % respondents were not affected by the

pandemic; their travel priorities remained the same, 11 % of respondents had previously planned to travel to Lithuania, 6 % planned trips to foreign countries, but due to the pandemic it was necessary to choose the countries neighbouring Lithuania - Estonia, Latvia (see Figure 3).

The majority of respondents (91%) have visited the Eastern Aukštaitija region earlier. Respondents' choice of trips when choosing trips in this region is most influenced by natural resources (lake region, Aukštaitija National Park, regional parks, forests, protected areas, beautiful landscape, etc.) - 21 %; interesting places of interest (Tree Crown Trail in Anykščiai, observation circle in Zarasai, narrow - gauge railway museum in Anykščiai, observation towers in various places in the region, etc.) - 14 %; cultural resources (churches, museums (Brewery Museum; Horse Museum; Vytautas Valiušis Ceramics Museum)), mills (Šlyninka mill in Zarasai, etc.), manors (Vasaknai manor, etc.) – 11 %; image of the tourism destination / region, attractiveness - 10%; a quiet place to relax with the family – 7 %; participation in educational programs (bread baking education (Anykščiai, Zarasai districts); painting on glass, education “Aukštaičiai dishes - for the table of kings” (Molėtai district); branch baking education (Ignalina district) – 7 %; recommendations from friends and acquaintances, good price-quality ratio – 7 %; participation in health programs (SPA, massages, etc.), sports events (rallies, moto crosses, etc.) and other events (event "Black Moon", events on the island of lake Zarasas, various celebrations, exhibitions, festivals, etc.) - respectively 5 %, human resources (high quality of service) – 1 % (See Figure 4).



*Figure 4 Factors Influencing Travel Choice in the Eastern Aukštaitija Region (composed by the author according research results)*

Such research results only confirm the analysis of scientific literature sources and documents: all forms of natural and created (manmade) resources, culture,

heritage, history, traditional artwork, cuisine, music and handicrafts attract travellers and make the tourism destination more attractive. 97 % respondents would recommend Eastern Aukštaitija region as a travel destination for their friends and acquaintances. 83% respondents would plan their trips to the Eastern Aukštaitija region and not during a pandemic.

86 % women and 14 % men participated in the survey. By age groups, the distribution of respondents was as follows: 31 % belonged to the 26-35 age group, 26 % - 56-65; 23 % - 36-45; 14 % - 46-55 and 6 % - for 18-25 age groups. 46 % of the respondents were employees of enterprises, 31% - civil servants, 6 % - students, 3 % - housewives, 3 % work in an unskilled job, the rest have their own business, are freelance.

## **Conclusions**

1. An analysis of the scientific literature showed that destination attractions define the framework within which visitors enjoy their vacations. They include all forms of natural and created (manmade) resources, culture, heritage, history, customs, architectural features, traditional artwork, cuisine, music and handicrafts that attract travellers.
2. When choosing trips around Lithuania, respondents find natural and cultural resources the most attractive, in second place - good ratio for money and quality, respectively choose trips due to the attractiveness of the tourism destination / region and etc. The choice of trips in the Eastern Aukštaitija region in the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic is mostly influenced by natural resources – 21%; interesting places to visit - 14 %; cultural resources - 11 %; image of the tourism destination / region, attractiveness - 10 %; quiet places to relax with family, participation in educational programs, recommendations from friends and acquaintances, good value for money - 7 % each - participation in health programs, sports events and other events - 5 % each, human resources) – 1 %.

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# **BANKS AND FINTECH: IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION ON COMPETENCES MANAGEMENT IN LATVIA**

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***Abstract. Purpose:** To explore information and communication technologies (ICT) impact on competences management in the financial sector in Latvia.*

***Methodology:** Focus group discussion with leading financial sector experts in the Latvia.*

***Findings:** There is a mismatch between academically provided competences and what is expected by the financial sector representatives within Latvia.*

***Originality/value:** Empirical research on what kind of competences are important in the financial sector at present and in the future. Contribute to the current literature by researching on how resulting competencies from the focus group compare to the academically provided competences for potential financial sector employees. By exploring received responses to the questions from this research, it can help policymakers, financial sector and academical representatives to stay agile to the arising changes of supplied and demanded competencies in the financial sector.*

***Keywords:** Competences Management, Financial Sector, Financial Technologies (Fintech), Latvia, information and communication technologies, ICT.*

## **Introduction**

For this research project, the financial sector refers to the classic financial sector, which consists of commercial enterprises and mixed financial holding companies of credit institutions sector, insurance sector and investment services sector, irrespective of whether these companies are located in one or more countries. In addition to the unconventional financial sector, FinTech, the financial sector covers a very diverse profile of financial services start-up companies that have emerged over the past decade as a growing segment. The operational capacity of these companies is the result of the increasing emergence of new business niches, which in turn are related to the digital ecosystem phenomenon that characterizes the ultimate customer operating conditions in the

digital environment. This indicates that exploring synergies between the financial sector and ICT is essential. The financial sector's operating environment changes dynamically as a result of the digitalization process. Such changes lead to the development of new industries, the transformation of existing industries, radical changes in management processes, transformation and formation of new business models, altered relationships between customers and other stakeholders, as well as significantly affect other characteristics of the financial sector. These changes also significantly impact the availability of financial products and the scale of customer reach, new service niches, and new financial services, and financial intermediation service start-up companies are emerging, which in many cases for specific client segments even replace the previously used services and providers.

The financial sector of Latvia faces these changes and a variety of challenges: (1) the rapid emergence of technology-based start-up companies in the financial sector, and the activity of these companies substantially changes the conditions of competition in the financial sector and requires the development of new competencies for operating in the digital environment; (2) the rapid refusal to service customer transactions originating from the CIS countries using the status of a foreign registered company. Furthermore, this study is also important on a national level, because the view of the relatively large share of the financial sector in the economy as of today, as well as other aspects – including the number of employed in Latvia, which have experience in the financial sector, the share of graduates in higher education programs in social sciences disciplines, etc., provide a rational reason for research-based discussions about the financial sector as a niche in the Latvian economy while emphasizing the sustainability dimension of such a specialization.

Both global and regional changes make it necessary to raise the issue of the competencies required to address a range of issues important for the long-term competitiveness of the financial sector. For example, the global management consulting firm McKinsey describes the change in the financial intermediation sector through the bank's RoE prism, offering two scenarios. The first of these is that banks will be able to retain a significant degree of dominance in the market for traditional and also newly established financial intermediation services. The second scenario envisages that banks will "give up" their positions to new entrants, specializing in challenging digital technology adaptation to meet both traditional and unprecedented needs of financial customers. In McKinsey's view, in the first case (referred to as a "new reality" by the consulting firms) the global return on bank assets will even increase from 8.6% in 2016 to 9.3% in 2025, while in the second case ("the worst-case scenario") it will fall to 5.2%. Appreciation of the changing situation requires noting the place of deployment of financial intermediary institutions as a factor. To characterize this, McKinsey analysts suggest analyzing the real and expected future changes in the value of financial



intermediation service providers (international financial groups) due to the decrease in the relevance of their direct geographic presence.

According to data from the Ministry of Economics of Latvia, the investment volume in fast-growing technology companies in the Baltic States has already reached 518 million EUR by 2018. Extensive development opportunities are also one of the reasons why the "Law on Aid for Start-up Companies" was created and adopted in Latvia. Various global examples show that technology companies can create alternative offers to traditional industries. This often involves access to large data arrays based on new technologies and a more flexible internal environment and working methods that are often not feasible for traditional and experienced market players. However, the successful use of new technologies requires not only technologies themselves, but also industry and product knowledge to refer them to consumer targeted solutions and products.

The relevance and necessity of such field and topic research is largely determined by the set of practical challenges facing both financial policy creators and regulators of different levels and scales, companies from different financial services industries, and financial education product developers. Within the framework of this project, it is planned to look for research-based answers to questions that would allow policymakers, companies, and academic institutions to make rational decisions thus understanding competencies that are and will be important in the financial sector.

Based on the scientific and practical actuality paper authors have defined the research aim: to conduct a focus group of experts in Latvia financial sectors to explore ICT impact on competences management in the financial sectors Latvia. The methodology used within this research is a focus group discussion with the leading financial sector experts in the Latvia.

### **Theoretical Aspects of Competences in the Financial Sector**

One of the main topics extensively reviewed in academic literature is a shift of contemporary companies to knowledge-intensive business models, which are rapidly growing together with the knowledge-based economy (Lu et al., 2011), where companies decrease levels of bureaucracy, simplify administrative processes, reshape the core of the business and all of this results in new competency demands (Kansal & Sandeep, 2018).

During the past decade, competency management has come to the foreground driven by an increasing scientific interest in the topic (Wickramasinghe & De Zoyza, 2011; Kansal & Singhal, 2018).

The authors of this research have noted that there exist different competency definitions offered in various academic studies. Competency is extensively defined as a performance aspect for the combination of skills, knowledge,

expertise, values, social and methodical abilities, ambitions and attitudes that are used by individuals for personal growth to perform specific tasks effectively in line with values and goals of the organization (Kansal & Singhal, 2018; Colomo et al., 2013; Bohlouli et al., 2017).

Wickramasinghe and De Zoyza (2011) point out that competencies contain individual level and organizational level aspects; therefore, both levels will be discussed separately, although individual level competencies are linked to organizational level competency. The authors define organizational level competency as a set of assets, processes, routines, and a combination of competencies from multiple individuals that provide effective process performance, competitive capabilities, and sustainable advantage in comparison to other organizations. Literature sources are intermixing terms “competence” and “competency” quite often. The authors of this research specify that the term "competence" describes a performance aspect for the required set of skills so that necessary tasks may be performed effectively, but "competency" is related to the behavioural characteristic of an individual. Kansal and Singhal (2018) argue that proper competency results in incompetence. Wickramasinghe and De Zoyza (2011) define that “competence” is the reached standard of performance, but “competency” describes the behaviour and set of characteristics by which "competence" is reached. The authors clarify these terms more specifically through their plural meaning and state that "competences" describe the effective consolidated set of skills, knowledge, and abilities, while "competencies" mean effective performance behaviours.

Colomo et al., (2013) argue that competencies can be classified as generic and technical, where technical competencies can be linked directly to specific job positions, activities, functions or tasks with specific skills and knowledge. Generic competencies are not linked to any specific activity or function but helps individuals improve holistic process performance and better adapt to changes.

Wickramasinghe and De Zoyza (2011) state that individual-level competencies can be split into input and output competencies. Knowledge, attitudes, skills, and technical knowledge are considered to be inputs, but competency presentation to share results of exceeded work standards is regarded as outputs. Bohlouli et al., (2017) agree with Wickramasinghe and De Zoyza (2011) and supplement the above individual level competencies aspect by a statement that self-direction is a crucial component in the individual set of competencies, especially when an individual is facing specific challenges, previously imperceptible situations, job roles or goals. Kansal and Singhal (2018) state that competencies can be trained and measured due to their behavioural nature. The authors point out that trained and measured competencies result in ineffective job performance.

Based on the definitions collected from literature sources, the authors of this research put forward a proposal to define individual competency and organizational level competency. Individual competency is a set of ambition, skills, knowledge, and characteristics a self-driven individual uses and can train to achieve personal effectiveness. Organizational level competence is a set of ambitions, skills, knowledge, and characteristics owned by a company through employees, which measures and predicts employee effectiveness to achieve organizational goals.

The authors of this article argue that models of competences management in technology and knowledge-intensive companies acquire their own specific and special features in the digital era, which distinguish them from previous approaches. In academic literature, such a distinction is described by comparing the traditional, qualifications-based, and workers-oriented management model. The traditional model means that recruitment, training, and development of employees takes place by focusing on positions and their tasks. Such a model is not based on the assessment and development of talents. The qualification-based model is geared toward education and qualifications. On the other hand, the worker-oriented model contributes to focusing on personal characteristics and abilities in recruiting workers, in addition to education and qualifications. This could lead to better conditions for creating a higher operational efficiency of the organization for different competencies (Baran et al., 2014).

It is challenging to use traditional human capital metric practices in today's structure, especially given the dynamics of organizations (Chrysler-Fox et al., 2014; Dewangen et al., 2014).

An important focus is to link the dimension of human capital and the investment needed to build it, transforming it into a strategic and budget planning and control KPIs (Zupančič, 2018). However, it should be recognized that the management of competences through the investment dimension requires a qualitative extension of an efficient structure of competences, which in practical terms also means the ability not to overpay for acquiring skills that are sufficiently exclusive and costly and which, under certain conditions, can lead to higher added value, but in another situation, can also not to be used.

The competence management model must be based on the objectives, values, strategic and tactical tasks of the organization, the culture of the organization and the expected style of work, to achieve the degree of organization competence (such as consolidated performance at the level of the organization, as determined by the knowledge, skills, talents, attitudes of the individuals involved in it), which presupposes the organization to be able implement their strategies and tasks. In the context of business challenges, this means ensuring competitiveness and sustainability (Brits et al., 2014; Baran et al., 2014).

## **Research Methodology**

Main research method for data collection: focus group discussion. Data analysis method: a thematic analysis. Focus group plan was divided into 3 main parts:

Part 1 – Introduction:

- 1) purpose of study and appointment;
- 2) accomplishments in the field (conferences, articles);
- 3) introduction of participants in the discussion.

Part 2 – World Cafe (15 min):

- 1) Table 1 “Banks”/ Table 2 “Fintech”: What competencies are currently relevant in the financial sector? What could they possibly be in the future?
- 2) Table 3 “Universities (Academical)”: What competencies do academic institutions offer to future professionals in the financial sector? What competencies does it intend to offer?

The Focus group was divided into three main parts: banks, fintech, and universities. Main criteria of moderators: academically involved in BA School of Business and Finance internal grant research about financial competences. Criteria for focus group representatives at least 5 years of practical or academic experience in the field.

Focus group (World café) participants and grouping:

World café (Bank representatives - table I)

Moderator: Andris Nātriņš, BA School of Business and Finance

Representatives:

- CDO, Swedbank Latvia (acting in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Sweden)
- Data base and integration team lead, SEB Bank (Latvia)
- CEO, Luminor Group, Asset Management unity (Latvia)
- Head of Risk Center, SEB Banka (Latvia)

World café (FinTech representative – table II)

Moderator: Didzis Rūītis, BA School of Business and Finance

Representatives:

- IT lead, Twino (Latvia, Poland, Denmark etc.)
- CEO, Monea (Latvia)
- Head of Product, Mintos (Latvia and 33 countries)
- Business Analysis Manager, 4 Finance (Latvia, Riga Technical university)

World café (University (Academical) representatives – table III)

Moderator: Elina Mikelsons, BA School of Business and Finance

Representatives:

- Rector, BA School of Business and Finance

- Professor (Faculty, IT department), Riga Technical university
- Study programme director, BA School of Business and Finance
- Researcher (postdoctoral), BA School of Business and Finance

Part 3 – Classic discussion: the moderator identified the message and outlined the main conclusion from the previous researches, then detailed discussion. The entire discussions audio is recorded. Additionally, there are developed discussion question pages where representatives of the focus group can make the main notes about their opinion about the questions.

## **Findings**

World Cafe Table I. (Banking perspective) – in terms of competencies demand, banks are traditional financial institutions subject to stricter regulation. In banking, risk, customer service/front-office, product and service development, back-office and ICT support functions can be distinguished. At present, reaching a customer has become complicated, you have to adapt to the way people “live” in the digital environment. Relevant competencies must be acquired. The development of a product or service is currently taking place in micro-service groups, where there are professionals with different competencies that are needed to create these products. Back office and ICT common competencies in banks and fintech: greater importance for general competencies such as communication skills (empathy) and design thinking. These competencies are required for all positions in the bank. ICT skills and knowledge are important and required in more or less all positions, the degree or level of competence on average - 3.5 out of 5 points. In risk positions and product-service development positions - 4 out of 5 points. For ICT, of course, the highest level of competence is required. ICT requires algorithmic thinking, mathematics, statistics (especially in risk management). Key Competencies - data analysis, with the growing role of big data analysis competencies. Back-office – automation and machine learning solutions are topical. The specific characteristics of the bank – a lot of conditions, requirements are different and less flexible, which is an additional burden. Banks have a complex system architecture and requirements to adapt their processes more to it.

World Café Table II. (Fintech perspective) – in terms of the impact of technology on competency management in the financial sector, the main focus is on the product or a solution, its development and promotion without a sufficient set of competencies. At the management level - equal understanding of all steps in technological development. It relates not only to the ability to work with ICT tools or platforms but also to the ability to estimate time and money, as well as the ability to evaluate the technology as a whole and its benefits. For example, an understanding of available marketing solutions is important in the field of digital

marketing. If skills are mentioned, they must provide the ability to define the requirements for the technological solutions for ICT departments or ICT-led projects. There must be mutual interdisciplinary communication between departments. In today's fintech companies, business analytics, as well as project management competencies, are critical. Topical questions about the current data protection regulations (GDPR), including anti – money laundering (AML).

World Café Table III. (Academical perspective) – in terms of the offer of competencies, the offer of higher education for modern and future-oriented educational products that may be in demand in the FSP sector:

1. Application design and smart logistics in all management programs.
2. Knowledge of the most current ICT trends and opportunities in both management and financial study programs.
3. Web application programming, ICT security, financial flow, security analysis, virtual team management, technology development monitoring and planning - in ICT programs that prepare specialists for Financial sector companies.

On the inherent changes in the Financial sector: traditional financial institutions and fintech.

A characteristic feature of the Financial sector: prioritization of user experience – broad knowledge of the customer's behavior and perception is an important competence in implementing processes in the key business functions of companies, namely, product development, sales and risk management. The topicality of the banking sector is the changing of the banking business model from closed to Open Banking. In terms of the customer service: banks can serve not only own products but also products of partners or even competitors. As a result, the bank's structure and process management are changing and it is important to understand what a bank is and what is infrastructure. Also, what is part of the products and what is part of the sale or distribution. In the past, it could all be easily counted as one cumulative result. In this case we have to calculate each part separately because each part can be replaced by another component.

ICT platforms of companies in the Financial sector, which were built in a different reality with risk assessment, building partnerships with product integration rather than building the products themselves. Speed and *meet the customer needs* is a priority in the Financial sector. Security is important, but just as important is what the digital environment offers – speed and convenience. Priorities change directly from the customer's perspective. Nowadays, financial services can be offered by a technology company, which makes the service easier and more convenient.

The biggest change in the financial sector is that services are becoming more affordable and accessible. Customers are being approached more precisely. The driving force behind it – cloud services. Financial literacy is higher for the

population because there are different banks and the customer is forced to evaluate which offerings and services fit them the best. Technologies will use this opportunity to serve customers who historically have had insufficient access to financial services (under-served).

The banking industry does not provide sufficiently good services, so new ideas have emerged. Existing players are forced to think differently than before. Some see it as an opportunity, others as a threat. Development requires new types of settlement or new business models and results in a product that is followed by regulation.

All processes that are standardizable are subject to digitization. Banking services are standardized and replicable. The technology is expected to be used in both external and internal financial corporate processes, including regulatory enforcement.

### **About Business Models, Their Classification**

Fintech companies have introduced new features in their business modelling approaches in the Financial sector. The segments of the business model have become narrower, the basic model is based on one service and it is expanded in various ways and also supplemented with new services. For example, Financial sector participants can start a business with payment cards and accounts, but then find their niche in the market with modified services and additional product offerings.

P2P Investment (Twino, Mintos) is a relatively narrow niche that has recently emerged. The goal – to segment one business model, on one side an investor on the other side a borrower. The model aims to bring them together with the help of a platform. The Financial sector in Latvia is interesting, creating good preconditions to try other services, such as online lending, without P2P investment (a platform to create an opportunity for one part of customers to invest in targeted investments for another group of platform clients – borrowers).

When creating a business model, each has to find what they are best at, and what are the best elements to start with, given that the others will fail. Once your niche is found, it needs to be scaled. Then you need to find partners. When looking ahead, it looks like there will be no single prominent leader in the Financial sector, but more of coexistence for both global and regional platforms. The trend at the moment is that from a customers' perspective, customers will not look for and/or use a single product separately (as is the case when people turn to different platforms for different solutions). When using Google's platform to travel, the user is promptly offered booking.com and insurance as well as a bank. The range of core products for banks is expected to be relatively small. Basic business models for banks value vs valuation business model, how to consistently offer

value and create loyalty and a reliable model so that there are no surprises in the future.

If in the banking sector, we will live in categories of resident and non-resident banks for some time to come, then the boundaries will start to disappear, because the customer can use the services in non-banks. Fintech platforms, registered in Latvia, operating globally. When assessing the differences in business models in the Financial sector, it can be concluded that the banks are focused on the customer, but fintech - on the product.

The focus group revealed a possible difference in the wording of the situation regarding the typical features of business models of banks and fintech companies. In response to the question whether a company can build a team with a strong core, or whether a company is stronger if it can attract people from outside in the form of projects, fintech companies have an approach in practice: with rapid growth, one team will not be able to use existing technology in which they are strong because there will be other needs. Therefore, attract new teams with new solutions. After that, team interaction is important.

### **Technologies for Implementation of Business Models and Goals in the Financial Sector**

The most common approach of Latvian fintech companies to the selection and use of technologies for product development – it is best if the technological solutions have to be created by themselves to be able to tailor it to their needs. Once a technology has been purchased, it cannot be changed. Therefore, it is more characteristic of the Fintech industry that the company develops its systems so that they can later be applied to the appropriate product type. A deciding factor is a person who knows what and how to work with any type of technology.

P2P investment companies use, for example, JAVA Technology (Twino) to create their applications. "Improve it" with available technologies, but the basic or core platform is formed by the company itself. Everything is built on an internally created platform, including using other services and solutions to save time. There must be a core platform capable of communicating with all other micro-services. The basic module of a P2P is the Credit scoring module. Calculation in which - the more complete this module is, the more it is possible to apply it to the customers. The platform must be scalable and adaptable as needed, due to the changing needs and the demand.



## **Banks in the Financial Sector**

The challenge for banks in the current situation is how to transform existing monolithic ICT systems to be compatible with possible extensions that can be developed in an open-source architecture and can be better adapted to ensure cooperation, including through the micro-service development architecture. In the future, banks will not be drivers of innovation, as they will have to take too many innovation risks. The topicality of open banking is related to this.

In Banks, new approaches require that every employee in the company fully knows the product by heart, not only in their department but also be able to generate new ideas for innovation and demand. Employee responsibility involves engaging in banking processes, as well as the ability to break down processes into smaller steps to create a quality product or service.

Fintech companies create their applications that run online and can be widely used. Technologies and platforms will be successful and support the business model if they are designed to improve and adapt quality in the future, as each company has its policy and needs to be taken into account. Platforms must be able to work with the company's microservices.

### **Technological Expertise in Financial Sector Companies**

For Fintech industry companies: Given that they focus on self-developed solutions and adaptations, it is important to develop in-house appropriate and higher-level technological competencies that directly and effectively serve business development tasks, following the chosen strategy and business model.

### **Business Models, Competences and Competitiveness in the Financial Sector**

The focus group participants emphasized the specificities arising from how technologies are disseminated, enabled and developed. How it manifests itself in the demand, application and also dynamics of competencies. In addition, both in terms of the overall set of competencies and in the form of aggregated organizational competencies, which create the preconditions for certain capabilities of a particular company to achieve a certain level of performance.

In the financial services sector, there is currently a tendency for technological innovations to create new competencies, replacing the old ones, which means that there is a greater focus on technology knowledge than on business analytics. At the same time, it cannot be said that skills and knowledge of other processes, such as those related to risk management, the financial market and the like, are not needed, as the nature of banking and financial services remains the same.

When it comes to ICT development, we also need to think about potential consumers, because in the 21st century, everything is rapidly being modified and integrated. As a result, people are sometimes unable to accept and understand innovative products. Consequently, the product must be designed in such a way that technological innovations do not place an additional burden on their uptake.

At present, companies in the financial sector expect more from employees than was previously required. The knowledge gained in higher education institutions is not sufficient today. A significant shortcoming - study programs are not based on technologies and their acquisition.

It is important for Fintech companies that a person can apply all the acquired theoretical knowledge in practice and can become a project manager or promoter in their field. However, currently, no such specialization can be found in higher education institutions. Project management involves understanding how small details are created in each industry. It is very difficult to create an educational program using abstract concepts.

How to develop competence in the study process:

- In the study process it is necessary to look at several products, both in the development stages and in practice, and analyse them as examples. Only in this way it is possible to understand what is being used more.
- Concerning project management, it is necessary to develop product management knowledge, which in turn includes the ability to weigh what it consists of. Only then can we talk about ICT skills.

On the readiness of ICT students to easily integrate into professional processes:

- there is a lack of understanding of the development process in project processes, as they typically take place in companies in the financial sector. More knowledge is needed in several areas to make project implementation more effective.
- Fintech companies expect that ICT graduates will not only be excellent programmers but will have additional knowledge related to other competencies.
- One of the main things that change with the growth of fintech - the new approach means that every employee in the company knows their product by heart, without sorting departments. This is important for quickly building micro-service project teams. It is important to know each other in the team and everyone knows the product, so that as a team together you can lead the whole project equally.
- At the moment, an important competence for Financial sector companies is understanding what systems need to be business-friendly.

It is important to be able to solve problems more quickly if they arise, as this affects the speed at which a solution can be found.

- Added value for an ICT specialist - to know business processes, the ability to get into a team as soon as possible and be a team player rather than an executor.
- Greater added value if students had more flexibility and an understanding of the basics (universal soldiers).
- The golden middle way in the content of ICT study programs, so as not to have too many deep details, such as not to teach network architecture.
- “The programmer emerging from higher education is not ready to work and is prepared to concentrate in a specific area.” (ICT specialists' readiness to fully integrate formal education into the working environment). A lot of resources should be invested on the part of the company to do this. In other areas, such as project management, business analytics, the situation is better.

### **Future Financial Sector Competencies Needs**

- Demand for competencies from the perspective of leading experts in the financial sector: In the Financial sector, project management skills are expected to be the most important in the future.
- Project management approaches such as agile must be well mastered. In building ICT competencies, it is important to focus less on specific programming languages and focus more on the process, design thinking.
- Understanding business processes will be just as important for IT professionals as technological knowledge; programming languages can be learned, and their range also changes.
- An understanding of the system architecture and its design is essential for IT specialists. The regulatory area and related competencies are also important.

The technology companies can create alternative offers to traditional industries. This often involves access to large data arrays based on new technologies and a more flexible internal environment and working methods that are often not feasible for traditional and experienced market players. The successful use of new technologies requires not only technologies themselves, but also industry and product knowledge to refer them to consumer targeted solutions and products.

The labour market expects the same person's knowledge related to ICT, financial analytics, human psychology (understanding of behavioural patterns),

etc. spheres. It is also important for a person to be able to work together in a team. It is important to prepare future employees of financial sector companies, particularly in the fintech industries, to realize certain roles that are useful in the development of technology-based products within micro-services architecture. Employees with deep knowledge of IT must also have business awareness and knowledge of financial products, but if their basic knowledge is business-related, there must be higher than mid-level IT knowledge and understanding of the ICT development dimension. All teams must have good collaborative capabilities and skills to operate in the agile development structure, implementing the product or process development and maintenance.

A characteristic feature of the Financial sector: prioritization of user experience. Broad knowledge of the customer's behaviour and perception is an important competence in implementing processes in the key business functions of companies (product development, sales, risk management etc.). The most significant changes are in the banking business model, which include not only products of this bank but also partners (other financial institutions). As a result, the bank's structure, products, process, HR management are changing.

There is a mismatch between academically provided competences and what is expected by the financial sector representatives within the Latvia.

## **Conclusions**

The experts' views in the discussion make it possible to extend the insight into technology usage considerations in the banking industry and fintech counterparts, sometimes opposing the lessons argued in academic publications. It is also the task of qualitative study methods (expert focus groups). This, in the authors' view, is important in choosing future research directions.

The authors agree with Gomber et al., (2018), that financial-services sector companies, including banks, have traditionally been more representative of the intensity of technology deployment than other service sectors. Similarly, the authors agree with Li et al., (2017), Shulte et al., (2017), Gomber et al., (2018), the financial sector is being challenged by firms that combine finance and technology that create customer-oriented innovation, while traditional companies are experiencing the process and changing the business model. However, the expert opinion points out that there is a clear understanding of how the overall situation in the financial services sector changes, how value chains change in terms of technology, how banks can adapt to these changes, like companies from other financial industries. According to the authors, the experts' views suggest that owning one of the industries in itself does not mean better or worse positions. At the moment, we can make sure that banks are able to successfully integrate elements specific to digital innovation ecosystems, to incorporate into change by

losing exclusivity in traditional positions, but by gaining natural benefits, including based on the experience of smart skills management, within the new framework.

The investigation of competence management models is an up-to-date topic in both academic and practical contexts. This applies to the greatest extent to the competences management of financial sector undertakings, particularly take into account, that competence and competence management has not been sufficiently studied concerning this sector. The relevance and necessity of such field and topic research is largely determined by the set of practical challenges facing both financial policy creators and regulators of different levels and scales, companies from different financial services industries, and academical institutions.

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# IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT MATURITY MODEL TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF ACTIVITY OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENTS

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**Abstract.** *In the conditions of growing demands of society to the government, project activities cover not only traditional industries, but also the sphere of public administration. Critically important for the success of organization is the team (rather than individual) level of knowledge, skills of staff, and a certain maturity of the organization as a whole in the field of project management. However, the project activities of local self-governments cannot be considered effective or fully compliant with the modern requirements. The level of project competence of management teams of many territorial communities is still not sufficient for the implementation of tasks and functions, the production of relevant project ideas and their successful implementation. The aim of the research is to describe of project management maturity model for its implementation into the activities of the local self-governments from the positions of effectiveness of project management. The entry of the local self-government to a high level of project management maturity will reduce the negative impact of the human factor, systematically focus activities on meeting the needs of the community on a project basis, improve the quality of project management processes, and reduce unproductive costs. Methods used – analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, logical generalization and comparison.*

**Keywords:** *local self-government, management maturity level, maturity models, project competence, project management maturity model.*

## Introduction

The territorial authorities organization and local self-government decentralization reform is reasonably called one of the most successful reforms in Ukraine since 2014. Its effectiveness resulted from a synergy of efforts taken by public authorities and citizens, secured by the organizational and financial participation of international partners of the country. Its support among the population today is the Ukrainian national trend, which is evidenced by many sociological studies. The main achievements of the reform are the increase of capability of the joint territorial communities (territorial communities) to

develop their territories, to create modern educational, medical, transport, housing and utilities infrastructure, to provide residents with quality and affordable services. Capable communities possessing tools, opportunities and resources to ensure complete (sustainable) local development are the foundation of a strong state.

In the conditions of growing demands of society to the government, which require the search and implementation of effective mechanisms for resolving contradictions between private and public interests, public and government opinion, individual and managerial approaches to solving urgent problems, the project activities cover not only traditional spheres of production but also the sphere of public administration. After all, the implementation of public policy is carried out through the targeted intervention of public authorities and local self-government bodies in the existing social practice. Such intervention is aimed at changing the behaviour of social groups (target groups) that caused the problem and can take place not only in the format of development and adoption of regulatory instruments but also in the form of programs or projects.

The analysis of the international experience of project activities shows that in many developed countries of the world the important tasks set before the local self-government bodies include the direction of activities to the search extra-budgetary alternative sources of financing and establishing cooperation with the international funds, programs and grants, active participation in project competitions and their successful implementation, an effective problem solving through project management. This requires adaptation and formalization of project management processes with the consideration of the specific nature of the activity of the local self-government bodies, the introduction of appropriate project management tools, the formation and development of project competencies of local managers. In project management to assess the organizations' development level in the field of project activities are used the project maturity models.

The aim of the research is to describe of project management maturity model for its implementation into the activities of the local self-governments from the positions of effectiveness of project management. Formation of an approach to project management maturity level assessment of local governments is possible on the basis of generalization of existing of project maturity models and taking into account the specific features of activities of self-government bodies.

The research used general scientific and special methods, in particular: analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, logical generalization and comparison.



## **Main Text**

The use of projects as a tool for the implementation of strategic goals to develop territorial communities allows to attract additional resources (funds from the state budget allocated for the development of territorial communities and grants allocated by other financial institutions and investors for the execution of the projects, selected on a competitive basis) and carry out a series of projects for the implementation of strategic initiatives.

However, the project activities of local self-government bodies cannot be considered effective or such that fully meet the present-day requirements. The level of project competence of management teams of many territorial communities is still not sufficient for the implementation of the assigned tasks and functions, the production of relevant project ideas and their successful implementation.

In particular, the selection of the projects by the State Fund for Regional Development on a competitive basis for the implementation of the government grant to develop the joint territorial communities infrastructure in Ukraine provides evidence of the poor quality of projects, which has been repeatedly emphasized by experts at various levels. This situation is also caused by the problems of methodological support of project activities in local self-government bodies.

Business experience confirms that the level of team's (but not individual) knowledge and personnel skills, in other words, a kind of the entire organizational maturity in the sphere of project management is critically important for the success of a market organization. A long time ago, business structures have realized the dependence of their market success on the ability of the staff to develop and implement projects. Specialized project maturity models have emerged. With the help of such models it is possible to assess the organization overall development level in the field of project activities to identify the ways for its further improvement (Ushakova & Sharov, 2018); reveal strengths and weaknesses, explore the level of quality of performance, management and control over corresponding processes, assess the degree of readiness of local self-government body for the effective management of its activity and development based on a project approach (Bezuhlyi & Sharov, 2015).

The project management maturity models are a set of parameters that correspond to a specific stage of the project development of any organization (Dziubina, 2010). They formalize the scheme and conditions with a help of which the company will methodically and purposefully achieve the excellence in project management (Malinina, 2011).

The concept of project management maturity has been actively developing since 2001 (Cooke-Davies, Schlichter, & Bredillet, 2001). In their works K. Grant and J. Pennypacker speak about 30 models of organizational maturity in various aspects (Grant & Pennypacker, 2006), new models of project management maturity continue to appear. Among them are simple and very complex models. They differ in appraisal ratios of the current state of the organization in the field of project management and the number of levels of project maturity. However, these models have many common features, in particular, the step-by-step concept of transition from a lower level of the project management maturity processes to a higher one. The above-mentioned concept provides for continuous improvement of the project management system and the project management maturity models include the knowledge of such management tools. They take into account the transfer of the best experience and staff development, are focused on the optimization of business processes, as well as the formation of a common methodology for project management development.

The following are the most common organizational project maturity assessment models in international practice:

– Project Management Maturity Model (PMMM/PM3) was developed in 2002 by H. Kerzner. The model focuses on the development stage of project management practices and consists of five levels: level 1 – Common Language (Initial Process), 2 – Common Processes (Repeatable Process), 3 – Singular Methodology (Defined Process), 4 – Benchmarking (Managed Process), 5 – Continuous Improvement (Optimized Process). PM3 contains the characteristics of each maturity level, describes possible risks and measures, necessary to transfer from lower level to higher one (Kerzner, 2003). The model provides for a quantitative assessment of definite values with further identification of conformity between the sum of gained scores and definite maturity level in the project management.

– Organizational Project Management Maturity Model (OPMMM/OPM3) is the international standard, developed in 2003 by the Project Management Institute (PMI). It includes the base of the best practices, structured according to three management objects (project, program, project portfolio). OPM3 consists of the following interconnected elements: knowledge and experience related to the project management (best practices), which characterize the appropriate levels of organizational maturity; the mechanism of assessing the organizational maturity level; the ways to increase the organizational maturity level.

This model is aimed to provide a continuous assessment of maturity in two main dimensions. One of them includes the management objects and organizational mechanisms and another – the maturity levels (Standardize, Measure, Control and Continuous Improvement). On the one hand, OPM3

allows to evaluate the project management maturity level of own organization, and on the other hand, to use the base of the best practices as a guide to define the current level and assure the further development (PMI, 2013).

– Portfolio, Programme and Project Management Maturity Model (P3M3) was developed in 2003 by the UK Department of State for Trade Policy, first of all, to improve the index of state sector organizations (OGC, 2010). Model is based on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the organization in seven process areas: management control, benefits management, financial management, stakeholder management, risk management, organizational management and resource management.

P3M3 is complex and consists of three models: Portfolio Management Maturity Model (PfM3); Program Management Maturity Model (PgM3) and Project Management Maturity Model (PjM3). The organization independently chooses one or more of them depending on its own needs. Besides, each of these three models identifies 5 maturity levels: the initial process, the reproducible process, the defined process, the managed process, and the optimized process. Each maturity level consists of several attributes. Special attributes refer to specific process areas, general attributes (planning, information management, training and development) are the same for everyone. P3M3 provides that the transition to a new maturity level is possible only with direct participation in the development of organizational project management.

– IPMA Delta® Model (Project Excellence Model) was developed in 2009 by the International Project Management Association (IPMA). This model is based on international requirements to the competence of specialists (key performers – project managers, programs and portfolios, project participants, stakeholders, administrators, etc), projects (the focus of the assessment is on results, methods, tools) and organizations (assessment of the organizational competence in managing projects). IPMA Delta® define 5 maturity levels: Initial (level 1), Defined (level 2), Standardized (level 3), Managed (level 4), Optimized (level 5) (Bushuyev & Wagner 2014; IPMA, 2015).

The studies (Backlund, Choroner, & Sundqvist, 2014; PMI, 2018; PMI, 2020) show that organizations with a high project management maturity level complete projects more successfully and efficiently. In low-maturity organizations only 39% of projects get done on time; 46% are completed on budget; 56% meet the original intent or business purpose.

Most companies operating in the fields of IT and mass media have a high project management maturity level. However, the manufacturing companies or enterprises dealing with various activities in the public sector quite often have the lowest project maturity levels. It does not always depend on the share of the project component in the portfolio structure of the organizational activity.

The importance of assessing the maturity level and effective project management organization, in general, is emphasized, for example, by the published data of Hewlett Packard, AT&T, IBM, Boeing, GM. They give evidence of the fact that following are the direct results of the implementation and improvement of project management processes:

- reduction by 30-65% of the project product receipt time;
- reduction by 35-75% of defects and spoilage in the course of project implementation;
- reduction of engineering corrections and changes in projects by 45-68%;
- increase by 6% of the average profit indicator;
- the increase of investment profitability up to 20% (Degtyarev, 2015).

To local self-government bodies, project development activities to make the best use of available resources and attract external resources are very important. Therefore, it is advisable to apply maturity models to them from the standpoint of effective project management. However, it is necessary to take into account the peculiarities of the project activities of local self-government bodies, the innovative component of local development projects and local managers' level of readiness to use the project management methodological support properly.

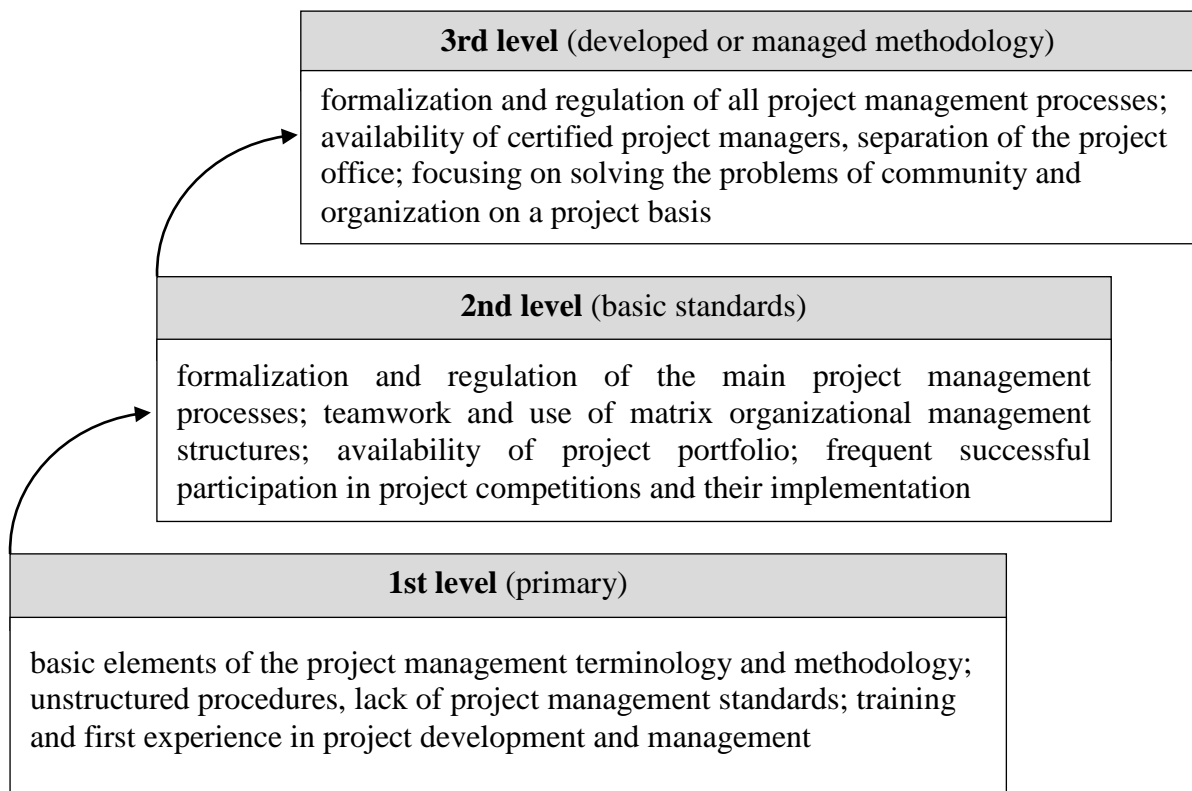
Many local self-government bodies are only instilling their project culture. This is confirmed, in particular, by the participants of the annual distance learning course called "Local Development Projects Management" on the platform of the Community of Practice: Sustainable Development (Spilnota praktyk, 2020). The course was initiated for the first time in 2012. On average, about half of the participants, taking the course in 2016-2020 indicated in the entrance questionnaire that they had no experience in project activities, 25% – developed projects before, 4% of participants – managed projects. At the same time, the pace of implementation of the project approach in the activities of local self-government bodies is extremely high.

While forming an approach to assessing the current situation in the field of project activities of local self-government bodies, D. Bezhlyi and Yu. Sharov suggest taking into account the degree of awareness of the action performed and the competence of staff related to project management. It includes:

- unconscious incompetence (a person does not know how to work properly, but does not even understand it);
- conscious incompetence (a person begins to understand that the work is performed without proper competence, the need for training is formed);

- conscious competence (a person realizes that there is a field of activity that he or she understands / knows how to do and tries to act according to the rules);
- conscious competence (getting into a situation, a person suddenly finds out that he or she understands / knows how to do what he or she has not done before;
- regular practice of correct actions brings a person to a level of professionalism when you no longer need to think about individual operations and their sequence, many actions are performed automatically, and – correctly) (Bezuhlyi & Sharov, 2015).

Taking into account this, as well as the state of methodological support of the project activity, at this stage a three-level model can be applied, with certain criteria for assigning the local self-government body to an appropriate level (Fig.1). The entry of the local self-government body to a high level of project maturity allows to reduce the negative impact of the human factor and, in a consistent manner, focus activities on meeting the needs of the territorial community on a project basis.



*Figure 1 Maturity Model of Local Self-government  
(suggested by the author)*

The first level of the local self-government body maturity model (primary) is characterized by the fact that the project competencies of management staff are almost absent. The success and quality of project activities are mainly determined by individual knowledge and skills of the staff members (accidental success is possible, which is based on empirical knowledge of individual projects).

The second level (basic standards) is determined by the fact that the main processes are formalized by national regulatory documents and regulated by job descriptions. Teamwork and matrix control schemes are used. The staff members of the local self-government body generally use basic project management knowledge and skills, but this is not always done competently and systematically enough (procedures for developing and managing certain projects may sometimes deviate from the adopted basic standards). At the same time, the preparation of complex projects often requires the involvement of external consultants.

The third level of the model (developed or level of managed methodology) is the highest maturity level and it is characterized by formalization and regulation of all major project management processes, professional mastery of project management terminology and methodology, regular and effective use of teamwork, proper documentation and archiving of project activities, presence of certified project managers and the separation of the project office (either real or virtual), continuous further training of the staff members of the local self-government body, regular victories in various project competitions, obtaining grant funding. This level is characterized by continuous improvement and approximation to project-oriented activities.

## **Conclusions**

Consequently, the introduction of the maturity model provides an opportunity for the institution to choose an adequate strategy for processes improvement in the relevant field, helps to create a methodological basis for the improvement of the overall activity. Assessing the project management maturity level of a local self-government body (primary level, level of basic standards or level of managed methodology) allows determining the degree of its readiness for effective management of activity and development based on the project approach. The entry of the local self-government body to a high level of project maturity will reduce the negative impact of the human factor, systematically focus activities on meeting the needs of the community on a project basis, improve the quality of project management processes, and reduce unproductive costs, etc.

Professional development and staff training are important factors in the success of this process.

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# HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY DURING COVID-19 CRISIS: REVIEW OF THE CURRENT SITUATION AND SUSTAINABLE POST-CRISIS RESPONSE

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**Abstract.** *This study, titled “Hospitality Industry During COVID-19 Crisis: Review of the Current Situation and Sustainable Post-Crisis Response”, is a review of published studies, assessing the current research efforts in the hospitality industry that was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic, as well as possible sustainable crisis management solutions. In response to the crisis, caused by virus outbreak and followed by the travel bans, many hotels were forced to close their doors temporarily or even forever. Such a deep crisis in the hospitality industry resulted in many problems, especially social problems among the employees of the industry. The study has utilised secondary research methodology to conduct a literature review; qualitative content analysis has been applied to the selected academic pieces of literature, journal articles, published researches and thesis papers, government reports, case studies, UNWTO monthly reports. The results revealed approaches and the most popular research directions, as well as possible crisis management solutions and strategies. The findings are highlighting the challenges in tourisms and hospitality industry in the wake of ongoing pandemic; the study lists possible post-crisis sustainable strategic solutions, as well as directions for the future research efforts.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19, crisis, hospitality industry, management, sustainability.

## Introduction

The year 2020 became the “new normal” for all people around the globe, the reason for it is known as COVID-19 pandemic. On December 8, 2019, the government of Wuhan, China, has declared that health authorities were discovering and reporting on dozens of novel virus cases, identified as coronavirus (Bakar & Rosbi, 2020). Since that time, COVID-19, a new strain of SARS - SARS-CoV, has developed into a global pandemic and has spread across many countries.

The global hospitality industry has never been affected by a virus outbreak of such a size in past 30 years (Nkengasong, 2020). Despite of positive changes in the environmental field, other aspects such as economic and social problems

now are a major issue for hospitality industry establishments and employees (United Nations, 2020). As public health concerns started to escalate in March 2020 and many borders were closed, travel bans and other national and international restrictions implemented. As a result, hotels have lost revenues, in October 2020 the number of nights spent by at various accommodation establishments was 49 thousand, which is a decrease of 82.8% (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2020). Due to this, compared with the year 2019 number of unemployed started to growth rapidly (State Employment Agency Republic of Latvia, 2020). Despite the recovery between May and August, the tourism related turnover in September was only at a level of around 72% of February. The strongest declines between September and February were recorded in Portugal (-89.1%), in Sweden (-80.9%), in Spain (-77.2%), and in Latvia (-77.0%) (Eurostat, 2020). According to projections from March 2020, the travel and tourism sector in Germany is expected to be the most affected in Europe by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, with an estimated 1.6 million jobs at risk (Statista, 2020). Statistics of World Travel & Tourism Council show that tourism industry generates 10.3% of global GDP, that is equal to 7.35 trillion EUR. Back in 2019 tourism industry created 330 million jobs, 1 in 10 jobs around the world. The latest survey illustrates that 142.6 million of people lost their job, and GDP decreased for 3 billion EUR in 2020 (WTTC, 2020).

## **Methodology**

This study reviews published literature in order to assess the current research efforts investigating the tourism and hospitality industry in the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The study aims to measure the negative impact and to collect the ideas to address the negative consequences of COVID-19 in the hospitality industry by conducting qualitative content analysis. This study has utilised secondary research method to conduct literature review – academic pieces of literature, journal articles, published researches or thesis papers, government reports, case studies, UNWTO monthly reports. Data collection method was utilised to find and review relevant published papers from the year 2020, keywords were defined in order to facilitate systematic review - *COVID-19, hospitality industry, response, sustainability*. Google Scholar was used as database search source. A number of keywords were used to search for the relevant literature and more than 120 articles that contain the keywords were found, however, after screening and filtering the relevant results and estimating the available resources, exclusions were made to the following sources that are not open access, not in English language, not peer-reviewed, newspaper articles, commentaries, web-page entries, blogs viewpoints, presentations. 10 articles were selected for the inclusion (see Table 1), as the open access resources are rather

scarce and the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing and is rather novel, many of the researches are still on the way.

### Literature Review

Hospitality industry blossoms on the international and national visitations and considerable effort and resources are being placed into attraction of the visitors, but due to the ongoing global pandemic, travel restrictions and other limitations are being imposed across the hospitality and tourism industry. These travel bans, border closures, additional limitations, room reservation and event cancellations, quarantine and self-isolation requirements and fear of virus spread and infection, have placed extreme difficulties and challenges on tourism and hospitality sectors (Gössling et al., 2020).

*Table 1 Characteristics of the Relevant Studies (created by the authors)*

Title and Authors	Segment of Industry	Geographic Location	Approach
“Social Sustainability in COVID-19 Crisis: The Case of the Hotel Industry”; Beka Katsadze; Daniel Milojevic (2020).	Accommodation Sector	Global	Exploratory study, thesis
“Hospitality and tourism industry amid COVID-19 pandemic: Perspectives on challenges and learnings from India”; Vikrant Kaushal, Sidharth Srivastava (2020).	Tourism and hospitality industry	India	Review
“The Hospitality Industry in the Face of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Current Topics and Research Methods”; Mohammad Reza Davahli, Waldemar Karwowski, Sevil Sonmez, Yorghos Apostolopoulos (2020).	Hospitality Industry	Global	Review
“COVID-19: The effects of job insecurity on the job engagement and turnover intent of deluxe hotel employees and the moderating role of generational characteristics”; Hyo Sun Jung, Yoon Sik Jung, Hye Hyun Yoon (2020).	Accommodation Sector	South Korea	Exploratory study, survey
“The COVID-19 Crisis and Sustainability in the Hospitality Industry”, Jones, Peter; Comfort, Daphne (2020).	Hospitality Industry	Global	Review
“Strategic Management in the Hotel Industry: Proposed Strategic Practices to Recover from COVID-19 Global Crisis”; Dimitrios, B., Christos, P., Ioannis, R., & Vasiliadis, L. (2020).	Accommodation sector	Global	Review

“Strategic responses of the hotel sector to COVID-19: Toward a refined pandemic crisis management framework”; Dung Lea, Giang Phi (2020).	Accommodation sector	Global	Review
“Crisis Management Practices in Tourism SMEs During the COVID-19 Pandemic”; Marko Kukanja, Tanja Planinc, and Marijana Sikošek (2020).	Tourism and Hospitality Industry	Slovenia	Exploratory study, survey
“COVID-19 and China’s Hotel Industry: Impacts, a Disaster Management Framework, and Post-Pandemic Agenda”; Fei Haoa, Qu Xiaob, Kaye Chonc (2020).	Accommodation sector	China	Review

Many recent studies have been focused on COVID-19 crisis in the hospitality industry and only some of them reviewed the problems of sustainability and possible post-crisis responses. The purpose of this review is to assess previously conducted researches specific to the crisis, sustainability and how they have reviewed strategic solutions for the hospitality industry. Researchers conducted their studies to assess relationship between tourism and hospitality industry and sustainable crisis responses and have proposed various crisis response frameworks and strategies (Jones & Comfort, 2020).

COVID-19 pandemic outbreak has forced many businesses to close, leading to an unprecedented disruption of commerce in most industry sectors. Retailers and brands face many short-term challenges, such as those related to health and safety, the supply chain, the workforce, cash flow, consumer demand, sales, and marketing (Dounthu & Gustaffson, 2020). New virus has been described by Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, as *"a crisis like no other"* (World Economic Forum, 2020). COVID-19 crisis has not only provided a range of major challenges for the hospitality industry, but it has also showcased some environmental causes that needs to be addressed and may be crucial for the transitional process to a more sustainable future. The crisis has also showcased some of the inherent contradictions and complexities within the concept of sustainable development in the hospitality industry, and has suggested some radical solutions to the sustainability challenges and responses (Katsadze & Milojevic, 2020).

According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), “sustainability” is a term, which is usually used as “sustainable development” (Choy, Chong, & Verma, 2015). Sustainable development aims to achieve the optimal resources usage in such a way, that it serves and benefits the society, as well as guarantees the rights of the future generations and addresses all the areas within the mentioned societies, might it be water, food, health, services, income, education, awareness, good governance, etc. and is a crucial requirement

to cope the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic and the following crisis (Al Eid & Arnout, 2020). The concept of sustainable development is frequently described by the triple bottom line model (see Figure 1) and recognizes three measurements: social, economic and environmental. In this case, sustainability is achieved when all aspects are fulfilled at one time (GRI, 2006).

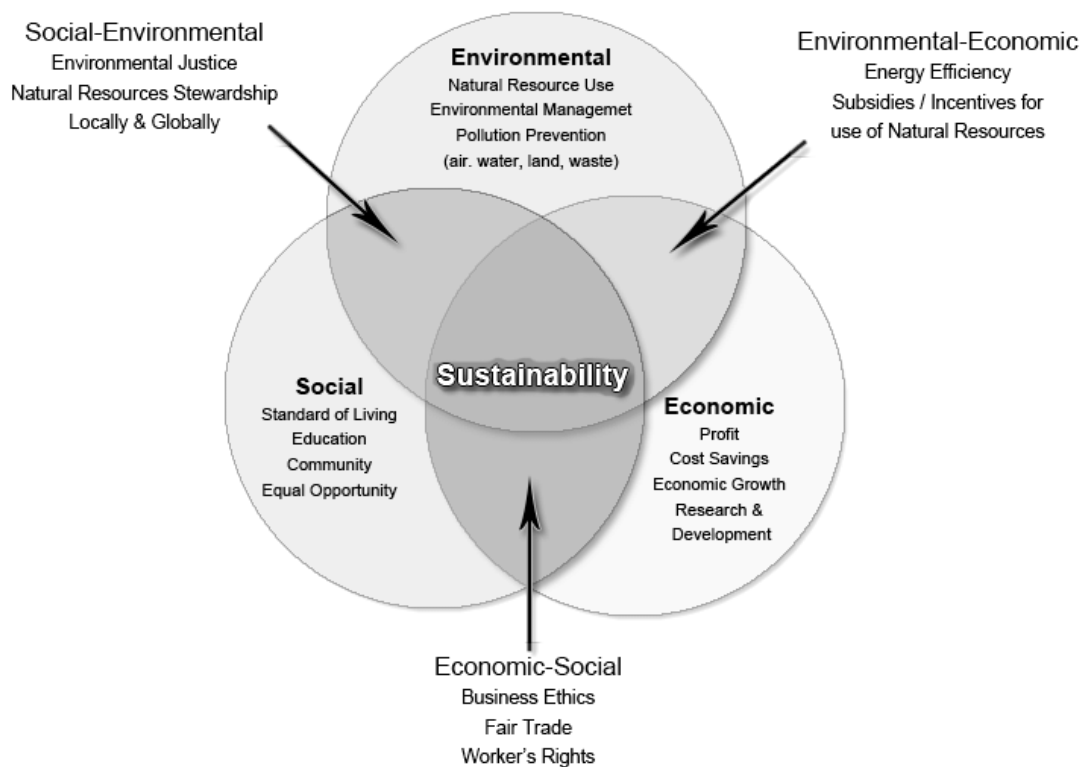


Figure 1 **Triple Bottom Line** (Source: Sustainability Assessment and Reporting for the University of Michigan's, 2002, p.8)

COVID-19 crisis has showcased an array of required environmental improvements, including marked reductions in pollution levels and greenhouse gas emissions, following the closure of many power generation plants and factories, rapid decrease in the number of domestic and international arrivals and the travel restrictions on the movement of people in cars and similar vehicles (Jones & Comfort, 2020). According to scholars, COVID-19 made a positive impact on environments, however, two others aspects are affected negatively. Social factor became the most important part of sustainability, as now, during pandemic, such social aspects as health and safety are number one priority. Due to virus spread became a huge crisis, previously conducted surveys describe the significance of crisis management within organizations (Dounthu & Gustaffson, 2020). Virus spread was unknown crisis type, and how analyses show- there were

not good predictions and qualitative plans for resolving problems. When the crisis hit, companies were mainly focused on business and money, and only, when significance of stakeholders started to grow- organizations understood, why culture of company and its people are important. Corporate social sustainability has been viewed of an increased importance within the corporate field, and many of the leading companies in the hospitality industry have developed sustainability programmes aimed to address governance issues and to design them into their business strategies, as well as environmental, social and economic factors. All of society is affected and it has led to dramatic changes in how businesses act and consumers behave (Katsadze & Milojevic, 2020).

Hospitality industry was one of significant markets in the World, until society was forced to face a COVID-19 pandemic spread. The historical growth of tourism sharply declined and accommodation sector became the most affected, since that “sustainability” became an initial basis of hospitality industry in terms of economy and society. Companies, that integrated sustainability practices and methods of transparency to their stakeholders into their business operations prior to the COVID-19 outbreak have put even stronger focus on it now, during the crisis (Dounthu & Gustaffson, 2020).

Nowadays, social sustainability gains more popularity, because instead of preserving only natural wealth and economic stability, social aspect encourages society happiness, equality and well-being (Caradonna, 2014). According to Western Australia Council of Social Services (WACOSS), “*Social sustainability occurs when the formal and informal processes; systems; structures; and relationships actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and livable communities. Socially sustainable communities are equitable, diverse, connected and democratic and provide a good quality of life*” (WACOSS, 2003).

James et al. (2015) emphasize and also measure the successful social sustainability development of the organization using 12 factors: 1) *Social equity*; 2) *Livability*; 3) *Community development*; 4) *Social capital*; 5) *Human rights*; 6) *Labour rights*; 7) *Place making*; 8) *Social responsibility*; 9) *Social justice cultural*; 10) *Cultural competence*; 11) *Community resilience* and 12) *Human adaption*. All previously mentioned factors consider, that all activities taken by social sustainability development are claimed for human well-being, in terms of company, for stakeholders. The main theory applicable here is “Creating Shared Value” (CSV) model, which suggests social responsibility as a core value of the company. In the offered model Kramer & Porter (2011) illustrate three main approaches for companies to create CSV: 1) Perception of needs, products, and customers. Approach is responsible for meeting societal needs through products, and serving unserved or underserved customers; 2) Redefining productivity in the value chain by utilizing resources, energy, suppliers, logistics,

and employees differently; 3) Improvement of local and regional business environment. Improving skills, the supplier base, the regulatory environment, and the supporting institutions that affect the business (Kramer & Porter, 2011).

The impacts of the current COVID-19 pandemic will be more pronounced and longer lasting in the hospitality industry impacting all pillars of suitability, especially in the wake of absence of immediate vaccine to create immunity in the majority of the population. This is critical for the tourism and hospitality sector because of the perpetuity exhibited by the outbreak (Kaushal & Srivastava, 2020). The effects are going to remain for a longer duration and sectors that thrive on social contacts such as tourism and hospitality need to embrace for tumultuous times ahead. Kaushal and Srivastava (2020) are noting that negative effects of pandemic on tourism and hospitality in India are growing within the whole sector and are resulting in unemployment rates. The potential job loss in tourism and hospitality has been estimated at 38 million, which is 70% of the tourism industry employees (Radhakrishna, 2020). The same authors, Kaushal and Srivastava (2020), have evaluated some critical reflections from the industry experts on latent redundancy of employees in the accommodation sector, where the experts have voice an opinion that post COVID-19, hospitality organisations will surely consolidate their business models based on the loss handled and market conditions for the future; workforce reduction is a high possibility.

Davahli et al. (2020) in their systematic review of the published literature on COVID-19 consequences for the hospitality industry; the included articles focused on the impact of the pandemic on the hospitality industry, including hospitality employee's issues, loss of job positions, revenue negative growth, the spread of COVID-19 in the hospitality industry, dramatically falling market demand, perspectives of the recovery for the industry, safety and health issues, traveller's behaviour and patterns, as well as changing preferences and habits of customers. Altogether, 50 papers were reviewed in this study, where the authors have reviewed the characterization and description of the hospitality industry in COVID-19 crisis time and identified the methodologies that were utilised to reserach the impact of global pandemic on the hospitality industry. The reviewed papers were systemized and assessed thoroughly, and the authors have identified the main research directions and topics as follows (from the most popular to the least) - recovery of the hospitality industry; market demand; revenue loss; the health and safety / COVID-19 spreading in the industry; loss of the jobs; job insecurity issues; changing customer travelling behaviours; social costs and impacts of COVID-19 pandemic (Davahli et al., 2020).

Employment issues in the hospitality industry during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis on the U.S. labour market were assessed and the study concluded that about 13 million employees lost their job positions from March 14 to 28, 2020 (Cajner et al., 2020). The same study revealed that the service and tourism

industries were amongst those the most heavily impacted, and the negative impact is much greater than the one experienced during the years of the Great Recession of the 1930s, when about 9 million employment positions were lost (in comparison to 13 million due to COVID-19 pandemic).

Qiu et al. (2020) in their study have assessed the social costs, customer preferences and changing travel behaviours, survey-based method was utilised and the researchers concluded that the most of the country residents are willing to suffer negative economic impacts if the health risks are reduced, but this willingness differs based on respondents' age and income levels. The study investigated how residents of three Chinese urban destinations would react to travel and other restrictions, as well as social costs during COVID-19 pandemic.

Another study focused on conducting a survey amongst 45 small hospitality businesses, to assess the resilience and to address main concerns in regards of the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors attempted to study the processes how hospitality small business enterprises are handling the limitation and disruptions in their day-to-day operations. Content analysis have been performed and the results showcased theoretical owners-managers' actions and alternatives, when confronted with the COVID-19 pandemic, nine theoretical dimensions were highlighted (Duarte Alonso et al., 2020). Another survey assessed COVID-19 pandemic impact on the traveller behaviour changing patterns and the authors has concluded that it had significantly amended the customer decision making process, whether to travel next year or in foreseeable future. The authors reported that respondents have displayed high levels of concern about accommodation facilities health and safety, hygiene of recreational sites and public vehicles; altogether health and safety concerns are playing a significant role in the customer decision making process during COVID-19 pandemic times (Nazneen et al., 2020). Market demand decrease (18%), revenue loss (16%) and an overall recovery of the industry (19%) were among the top research topics of the reviewed papers in this study (Davahli et al., 2020).

Job insecurity was assessed in another paper, namely the perception of deluxe hotel employees in South Korea. The authors have sent 400 copies of questionnaires to 8 five-star hotels out of 22 located in Seoul, in an attempt to assess the significance of COVID-19 impact on employees' engagement and hotels' revenue losses. The findings have highlighted that job insecurity caused by COVID-19 pandemic has negative impact on employees and their engagement, that can result in negatively affecting already catastrophically low revenues (Jung et al., 2020). Karatepe et al. (2020) have concluded that job insecurity has a direct negative impact on the engagement and motivation levels of employees and greatly hinders social sustainability aspects and well-being of employees, both physical and psychological aspects. Previously numerous studies that addressed job insecurity aspects were conducted, but only very few addressed this issue in



the wake of global COVID-19 pandemic. The authors were amongst the first ones to conduct empirical study to assess the significance of job insecurity negative effects on employees' engagement during COVID-19 pandemic (Jung et al., 2020).

#### *Recovery management plans*

Jones and Comfort (2020) carried out a study that reflected on some of the changes in the correlation between sustainability and the hospitality industry during COVID-19 pandemic. In the paper the authors reviewed the origins of the crisis, assessed the role of the hospitality industry in economic and social aspects. It was suggested that changes in the environment of the hospitality enterprise and their connection to the COVID-19 virus spread have been overlooked by the researchers' community and should be studied more extensively. It was recommended that sustainable development plans should further on include the research of the emergence of infectious diseases and action planning (Di Marco et al., 2020).

Corporate social responsibility has become an important business aspect for many hospitality companies, many hospitality companies have developed their corporate sustainability programmes (Jones et al., 2014). The main focus of the hospitality industry enterprises is to adapt their international corporate sustainability policies to local legislation and values, and COVID-19 has provided some opportunities, as well as some challenges for that (Ertuna et al., 2019). COVID-19 pandemic will have serious consequences for the hospitality industry, traditional business models, financial markets and capital availability. Marketing campaigns designed to promote hospitality enterprises and to attract revenues, might be favoured over environmental and social sustainability issues that have been an integral part of corporate sustainability programmes. COVID-19 crisis shows the need to be better prepared for the challenges that might arise with future pandemic or similar crises and to better assess the failure to arrange such preparations (Jones & Comfort, 2020). Bell et al. (2018) reviewed strategic management processes in the hospitality industry and attempted to assess crisis recovery management strategies that might help hotels to respond effectively to the ongoing crisis. The authors have presented strategic management actions: 1) promotion of a safety umbrella; 2) use of technology and innovation; 3) satisfaction of the stakeholder's needs and empowerment of guests' relationships 4) financial pillow.

In some particular cases, the expense per one reservation may grow up to 50% due to additional COVID-19 health and safety measures, including additional shifts, specific cleaning materials, operating less than 50% of the capacity, and leaving hotel rooms unoccupied for several days between the customers (Sigala, 2020). The hospitality enterprises should count on financial expenses and be ready to respond to any suspicious case of illness, moreover, the

hospitality enterprises should develop internal policies and protocols on how to handle suspicious cases and eliminate potential risk to the employees, hence improving social sustainability aspects and well-being of the employees (Armstrong et al., 2020). Moreover, to protect employees, all hospitality enterprises should embrace contactless technology for the majority of internal processes, smart kiosks can be installed around the premises to eliminate touchpoints and possible contaminated surfaces (Dehler, 2020). Safety of employees and other stakeholders should be the main strategic priority, additional attention to the cutting edge technology should be paid, guest relationships strengthened, needs satisfied; thus the hospitality industry enterprises will be able to create a "financial pillow" to recover from the crisis effects and withstand the possible second or third wave of COVID- 19 pandemic (Bell et al., 2018).

Dung and Giang (2020) in their study have reviewed 219 articles and publications collected through various media outlets and have attempted to map out "strategic responses" for the accommodation sector as well as highlighted the challenges to address during COVID-19 global pandemic. Strategic framework of hotel pandemic crisis management was suggested, that consists of five phases – *Phase 1: Pre-event and early symptom; Phase 2: Emergency; Phase 3: Crisis; Phase 4: Recovery; Phase 5: Resolutions.*

Domestic traveling will quickly bounce back and will be the main focus for accommodation sector to recover, when the spread of the virus will slow down, the number of positive cases will drop and the authorities will loosen travel restrictions (Oliver, 2020). Recovery process and strategies are targeting domestic travellers mainly, as international travel restrictions will be in effect for longer period of time. The hotels should adapt digital technologies, as digitalization reduces the physical contact and infection risk (Maaty, 2020). It was suggested that after the crisis the whole system may not return to a previous condition, as parts of the system are likely to have changed irrevocably. The challenges may arise, such as finding ways to maintain the "human touch" of the service and finding new balance with automation (Rivera, 2020); deployment of companion robots to mitigate guests' frustration and feeling of loneliness and isolations for quarantine time (Henkel et al., 2020). Health-oriented tourism and wellness and spa hotel might be of the customer preferences after the end of the pandemic due to their slow tourism nature and comforting ambience (Wen et al., 2020). The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic maybe severe enough and a proportion of hospitality industry's SMEs will not restart their operations, as they will not have sufficient resources to do so, thus providing opportunities for larger individual and chain hotels to take over (Crouch et al., 2020).

Hao at al. (2020) in their exploratory study have reviewed the overall negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic on China's hospitality industry and accommodation services. The authors have also proposed management

framework to address the pandemic consequences with principles, methods, stages and strategies. China was the very first country to be hit with COVID-19 and it negatively impacted the hospitality industry. The situation can be salvaged with a crisis management plan and effective disaster management strategies that hospitality industry enterprises can utilise to minimize risks and to facilitate the recovery process (Ritchie & Jiang, 2019). Depending on the crisis type, appropriate methods should be used, as the disaster management strategies are related to the nature of the disaster (Hall, 2010). The proposed solutions and phases mostly addressing the financial consequences of the pandemic, the strategies to recover business revenues, adapt new customer-centric service techniques and technology, as well as attract investments for the industry revival. Sustainability aspect is majorly overlooked in this study.

Kukanja et al. (2020) in their study reviewed 574 online questionnaires, that were filled in by small and medium enterprises' (SME) managers and in order to attempt to design a framework for crisis management in the related enterprises affected by COVID-19 pandemic. The authors concluded that the main focus of the SME's should be cost control, employees, employee's perception of the organization values, as well as sustainable customer-centred marketing practices.

Crisis is defined as: "*a significant threat to operations that can have negative consequences if not handled properly*" (Coombs, 2007). The consequences caused by crisis were defined by Bundy et al. as devastating and are determined as follows: "*an event perceived by managers and stakeholders as highly salient, unexpected, and potentially disruptive can threaten an organization's goals and have profound implications for its relationships with stakeholders.*" As a result, the outcome can be loss of brand value and reputation, problems within financial strength and employee's perception about the company (Bundy et al., 2017). In this case, effective crisis management handles all the threats sequentially. The primary concern in a crisis has to be public safety, only than reputation and financial concerns are considered to be improved (Coombs, 2007).

Sustainable crisis management plays a crucial role in restoring hospitality industry establishments in crisis, including improvement of guests' confidence, reducing crisis' impact on tourism and enhancing security (Beirman, 2003). In the tourism industry crises raise from various reasons, in terms of internal sources, crisis may be caused by internal problems within organization, when the reasons lead to external origins, crisis can be affected by natural disasters, political instabilities and terrorism, virus spreads, financial crises and etc. (Henderson, 2007). As a process, crisis management can be divided into three phases: pre-crisis, crisis response, and post-crisis (Faulkner, 2001). The *tri-part view (Pre-crisis; Crisis response and Post-crisis)* to crisis management theory is a basis for this part of chapter, where, based on chronological framework of crisis will be discussed best practices noticed by scholars.

### *Pre-Crisis*

Pre-Crisis or Prevention and Preparation stage involves reducing known internal and external risks that could lead to a crisis. Quick decision-making process is crucial point when dealing with the crisis, when the company decides how to manage situation, the main task is developing a flexible and fast internal organizational plan- evaluate and organize work within business structure, culture and society. Bundy et al. highlight the importance of identifying the first signs of the crisis to avoid a large impact and find important keep positive stakeholders' relationships towards company (Bundy et al., 2017). Coombs (2007) document that organizations are better able to handle crises when they have a Crisis Management Plan (CMP). The only disadvantage of CMP in the hospitality industry is informal and not-written strategy. Due to CMP is not documented in many hospitality industry' companies when the crisis appears- businesses suffer more (Henderson, 2007).

### *Crisis Response*

According to Coombs (2007) crisis response strategy is divided into two parts according to field that should be repaired: initial crisis response and reputation repair. Initial crisis response stands for quick, accurate and consistent actions, when crisis occurs. Mainly all previously mentioned steps are handled by "crisis leaders", that take responsibility to lead organization during all stages. Powerful leaders make quicker decisions and reduce probability of organizations failure (James et al., 2011). The worst enemy for organization during crisis is time, in this case accuracy is important in terms of public relations. The time pressures and to not mislead society by making mistakes all information should be checked and be accurate (Faulkner, 2001). Crisis managers should express sympathy for victims of the crisis. Suffered might have lost their money, become ill or were injured by crisis in a different way. The studies have found that reputational experience of company is less damaged when company express concern about stakeholders and make public safety number one priority (Coombs & Holladay, 1996).

### *Post-crisis*

Post-crisis phase is a stage, when company returns to business as usual, and mainly focus operations on learning of new policies and changes. In this case, crisis should be taken into consideration as a challenge and opportunity, but not as a problem (Faulkner, 2001). Crisis management efforts should be evaluated and improved. As a part of CMP, that might be prepared before crisis hits, some practices should be discussed. Coombs (2007) recommends to deliver all information about company' future, that was promised, to stakeholders as soon as possible. According to the crisis management theories, post-crisis period is regarded as a time for learning (Coombs & Laufer, 2018), a time for analysing the outcomes of the crisis situations and the effectiveness of the measures undertaken.

Standard operating procedures and processes in the hotel industry are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the government restrictions, hospitality industry organizations should find new sustainable solutions to continue their operations under the present conditions.

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

The papers included in this study reviewed different aspects of COVID-19 impact on tourism and hospitality industry, as well as possible sustainable crisis responses and solutions. The topics addressed in the papers were as follows: 1) revenue loss and market demands 2) health and safety issues 3) unemployment rates in the hospitality industry 4) job insecurity, hospitality workers' issues, loss of jobs 5) COVID-19 spreading patterns in the industry 6) sustainability in COVID-19 crisis 7) crisis and corporate sustainability 8) strategic management and crisis management plans.

The studies reviewed used predominantly secondary research data and can be qualified as reviews or exploratory studies, different aspects of COVID-19 were addressed, sustainability included. The studies that used primary data mostly utilized the survey and questionnaire research model and attempted to get an insightful perspective on the pandemic impact and negative effects on hospitality industry enterprises, by collecting the opinions of industry professionals and performing additional content analysis. Analysing questionnaire data and "conducting surveys" is the most popular primary data methods according to the studies reviewed. This approach also was used to measure social and behavioural aspects of the hospitality industry response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the majority of the papers has assessed pandemic's negative impact on tourism and hospitality industry, noting the rapid decrease in international arrival numbers, government limitations and catastrophic revenue losses, very few has addressed the sustainability issues and assessed the sustainable recovery strategic solutions and sustainable responses. The reviewed crisis management plans and mechanisms are mostly of theoretical background, however COVID-19 is a very real and ongoing pandemic (Iyer & Jarvis, 2019). COVID-19 crisis can be used to develop a better crisis management strategy and to achieve a greater sustainability; this is the time to lean for this opportunity and redesign the tourism and hospitality industry landscape to make it more equitable and sustainable for the future (Benjamin et al., 2020). The World Travel and Tourism Council (2020) has stressed the economic importance of tourism and hospitality industries, emphasising the health and safety of all involved stakeholders, urging to develop efficiently sustainable crisis management solutions.

As it has been noted the aspect of COVID-19 spreading patterns in tourism and hospitality has been the most popular research topic, setting the tone for the

whole research effort direction. Many studies concluded that financial surviving and resuming the operation are the main goals of many tourism and hospitality industry enterprises, while sustainability and especially social sustainability, should be addressed more carefully and extensively. The studies have shown that the new reality is expected to be permanent, as the travel behaviours, preferences of customers have been modified and social costs have been assessed and compared. More specifically, the hotels should develop new operating standards and protocols that would promote sustainable practices, both guests' and employees' health and safety, enhance travellers' confidence and minimise risks. The current ongoing pandemic should be used as the learning experience, to develop appropriate crisis management solutions.

In an overnight the pandemic of COVID-19 has confronted the hospitality industry. Travellers have changed their behaviour and have become very conscious about their travelling and hotel choices, and the time, when they will return back to previous habits, at the moment, is not predictable, if ever. Not only guests, but as well employees changed their mindsets, some of them are working at the moment, when some lost their jobs, and, as a result, it created distrustful relationship between the hospitality industry employers and employees. The previous successes of management in forging the relationship between management and employees is now erased or severely damaged due to massive job losses in the sector, and the confidence in the prosperous future of hospitality industry is lost. While the tourism and hospitality industry are no strangers to natural disasters or similar crises, the global COVID-19 pandemic has taken it to a new level, especially the sustainability issues. The companies do not have the opportunity to reallocate customers or guests, employees or any other stakeholders to alternative properties or locations, as it is a global pandemic and no such opportunities are present.

Finally, practical, operational and strategic implications in regards of developing a better crisis management framework are difficult to draw, given the fact that the pandemic is still ongoing and the tourism and hospitality industry is facing uncertain future. Pandemic is expected to be unpredictable; operations are no going to get back to normal as it was before t, industry needs to readjust itself to the new normal. Tourism and hospitality industry organizations should pay additional attention to suitability issues and developing the proper solutions, guidelines and crisis management framework, thus multiplying the social capital, as it does have enormous potential not only to highlight the importance of sustainability factors, but also benefits cooperation and collective action. The lack or insufficient number of studies on suitability during the COVID-19 pandemic should be covered by the researchers, where they should focus on more timely and efficient solutions, rather than theorizing about possible benefits of certain

strategic approaches, involving more sustainable approaches on all possible levels of involved stakeholders – individuals, businesses and authorities.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

Several limitations can be outlined when conducting a literature review. The first limitation would be the time constraints and limited resources when searching and identifying relevant literature to review. Another limitation would be the number of available open-access resources and using a limited number of search databases for literature discovery. The lack of the empirical data and evidences can be mentioned as a limitation as well, thus the discussion in this study is based on other researches' opinions and findings, peer reviewed articles, commentaries and other literature. COVID-19 pandemic is an ongoing event and is very unpredictable, thus theoretical and practical implications of this study can be viewed as uncertain. Many studies are on the way and will definitely contribute to a broader scope and understanding of the problem, to designing better crisis responses and management strategies. With more evidence-based studies the researchers' community will provide better common ground for all hospitality industry stakeholders to find better solutions and pandemic coping mechanisms. This study cannot be viewed as exhaustive and comprehensive, as the nature of the review is interpretive and subjective, and can be viewed in alternative ways by the other researchers. Altogether, the study provides a sufficient overview of the theoretical, strategic and research implications of the crisis management and sustainability issues in COVID-19 pandemic time in the hospitality industry. The future studies can utilise more evidence-based approach and conduct an empirical investigation on the impact of the pandemic, sustainability issues and possible technology integration as a post-crisis coping mechanism to enhance customers' experience, engagement, exceed satisfaction and improve loyalty, as well as to ensure full health and safety and 'new reality' standard operating procedures and protocols. Addressing the mentioned limitations and conducting empirical investigation will improve understanding of ongoing global pandemic and will improve the possible scenarios and outcomes.

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## NEED FOR VALUE EDUCATION AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

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**Abstract.** *For a peaceful world and society, it is essential for cultures to be developed and transformed through common values, and value education is one of the main ways to do that since core values are formed from an early age. But when society is going through a radical transformation process as it is in the case of Latvia, it is difficult to avoid anomie when different and conflicting ideas, memories and norms exist in society.*

*The aim of the research is to explore and analyse the tendencies of the main values in the society of Latvia across different age groups, to see how the situation has developed and what are the main values that need to be stressed through value education in the ongoing educational reform process. To reach the aim of the research, a literature review as well as the analysis of the European Social Survey (2008 and 2018) data was conducted.*

*The research results show some shift in values of the society in Latvia mainly due to priorities of younger generation in the period from 2008 to 2018: universal values have replaced self-direction values as the third most common value in the society of Latvia. In the case of younger generations value perception is indefinite. Partly this is due to the lack of focus on values in our education system since the restoration of independence. There is a need to strengthen the motivational values connected with conformity, self-direction, stimulation and universalism (tolerance) through value education. It is desirable to highlight the values of achievement such as creativity and desire to succeed, as they are essential for the knowledge society and stimulate motivation for entrepreneurship.*

**Keywords:** *achievement values, anomie, education for citizenship, generation gap, Schwarz value module, value education.*

### Introduction

Currently the Latvian education system is undergoing reforms through the programme School2030 (González, 2019). It is important to look at the situation regarding common values in the society in order to see the appropriateness of these reforms. An in-depth understanding of the society's value orientation reveals the causal links that exist between human attitudes and actions and allows for a

more precise formulation of public policy goals and the choice of appropriate means to achieve them (Zobena, 2018).

The aim of the research is to identify dominant values in the society of Latvia by analysing the European Social Survey (hereafter ESS) data (2018 and 2008) in accordance with Schwarz motivational value module, as well as the School2030, the EU and UNESCO outlined common values. In that way, the researchers were able to describe the value hierarchy and tendencies (in the 10-year period) in the Latvian society and identify the differences among age groups, as well as to clarify which values need to be more emphasized through value education in Latvia to prepare people for a life in the knowledge society, to be creative and ready to take risk and start new entrepreneurial activity.

To reach the aim of the research, a literature review and the analysis of the ESS (2018, 2008) data was conducted.

### **Literature Review**

The definition of values states that these are the principles that help a person decide what is right and wrong, what is important to them, and how to act in various situations. Values are basic and fundamental beliefs that guide or motivate attitudes or actions (Cambridge Dictionary, homepage) (Mintz, 2018).

Famous researcher Shalom Schwarz looks at basic values by describing their central motivational goal and combines these values in two orthogonal dimensions. “(1) Self-enhancement vs self-transcendence dimension juxtaposes power and achievement to universalism and benevolence. The dimension demonstrates whether values motivate individuals to pursue their self-interest or to be concerned for the welfare and interests of others. (2) Openness to change vs conservation dimension juxtaposes self-direction and stimulation to security, conformity and tradition. In the former case, values motivate to independent action, thought and feeling and readiness for a new experience; in the latter case, self-restriction, order and resistance to change are stressed. Hedonism shares elements of both openness and self-enhancement” (Zobena, 2018).

Turkish researcher Türkkahraman (Akdeniz University) has a rather normative approach to teaching values. He considers that increasing the gap between the ways of thinking and behaviour of an ideal society and the actual world can be an indicator and an ignition for a number of social problems. Therefore, it is important that the values of the real world and the ideal world should be overlapped (Türkkahraman, 2014). When identification with community values does not accrue, anomie can be detected in society. Anomie creates a sense of chaos and danger, contributing to the atomization of society, the spread of feelings of disorientation, helplessness and meaninglessness in

individuals, and makes it difficult for society to function. The risk of anomie is traditionally high in transition societies like Latvia (Zobena, 2018).

The importance of common values has been acknowledged not only at the national level through the reform project “School2030” (hereafter - School2030), but at the European Union (hereafter – EU) and global level through global networks such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereafter – UNESCO) as well. The EU was founded on such values as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, tolerance, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights of people belonging to minorities (Article 2 of the Treaty on the EU) (Veugelers, Groot, & Stolk, 2017; EU, 2012; EP, homepage). In addition, UNESCO represents values and attitudes such as justice, equality, inclusion, respect for human rights, solidarity, cultural diversity, democratic principles, values of care and respect for ourselves, others and our environment, creativity, innovation, commitment to peace and sustainable development, social justice, tolerance, empathy, etc. (Dutt, 2009; UNESCO, 2013; UNESCO, 2015; UNESCO, homepage).

The importance of value education has driven European schools to introduce subjects such as Education for Citizenship. By 2017 this subject was already part of the national curriculum in the EU countries. Within UNESCO programmes, such projects as Citizenship Education (Iberdrola, homepage) and Associated Schools Project Network (Latvia has been a member of this network since early 1990’s) have been established (UNESCO, homepage).

At the national level, the reform project “School2030” has been carried out since the end of 2016. The aim of the project is modernization of the educational process so that it could promote the learners’ understanding, responsible attitude and behaviour corresponding to the following values: life, human dignity, freedom, family, marriage, work, nature, culture, the Latvian language and the Latvian State. The virtues that allow testifying and implementing these values are: responsibility, diligence, courage, honesty, wisdom, kindness, compassion, moderation, self-control, solidarity, justice and tolerance (González, 2019; School2030, homepage).

Baiba Martinsone (University of Latvia) emphasizes that values are strengthened when both knowledge about them and application of them are combined. Values need to be cultivated and fostered amongst people, in particular amongst newcomers in society, and value education is one of the main ways to do that (Iberdrola, homepage) (Laganovskis, 2019).

The value education concept is about the education process that instils moral standards to create more civil and democratic societies. The education systems thus hold an important role in cultivating these common values (Veugelers, Groot, & Stolk, 2017). As social psychologist Ģirts Dimdiņš (University of Latvia) stated: “Only public education at all levels can be a lasting solution.

Starting with a school where a social norm is created: being socially and politically active is good and commendable. People brought up in this way will create a demand for both modern politics and socially active literature” (Domuzimes, 2017).

The restoration of Latvian independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in the radical change of values and producing a certain moral vacuum in the society. Only around the turn of the millennium and with Latvia joining the EU (2004), the question of the moral values the country should function on became topical (González, 2019). Therefor the assumption of the authors is that there is a slow speed of changes in the area of value perception in the society of Latvia.

The value education content in Latvia is based on the values specified in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights (Laganovskis, 2019). The recent “Guidelines for virtue education in Latvian schools” define the main directions for character and virtue education of learners at schools (González, 2019). The approach different states take towards teaching of common values can vary. Studies show that teaching of common values can be incorporated in the curriculum in different ways (Veugelers, Groot, & Stolk, 2017):

- as a separate subject, for example, moral or value education, or citizenship education;
- as part of other subjects, such as history, geography, social sciences and religion/world view studies, as well as arts, biology and languages; and
- in cross-curricular activities, like projects both in and out of school.

In Latvia the values and virtues that need to be acquired by students in the new curriculum are included in practically all fields of study and are fixed in the educational standard (Laganovskis, 2019). However, due to the current educational reforms, teachers are overloaded with new information and they rarely have the necessary time and support for implementing character and virtue education at school (González, 2019).

The society value background is of great importance for the implementation of policies in all areas. The collective monograph “Lost in Freedom: Anomy in Contemporary Latvia” summarizes the main findings of the research project “Value Orientations and Reproduction of Society”, carried out within the framework of State Research Program “Innovative and Sustainable Development: Latvia’s post-crisis experience in a global context”. This project was implemented at the Advanced Social and Political Research Institute, University of Latvia Faculty of Social Sciences from 2014 to 2018. The research findings show that there is an extensive manifestation of alienation and anomy in Latvia. The authors emphasize that it is the lack of norms, clear convictions, as well as long-term goals

and vision that can be considered as the most problematic aspects characterizing the Latvian society. They identify the social fragmentation of the society and note that young people feel more socially and culturally alienated, while older people feel more politically alienated (Zobena, 2018).

Researchers Ritma Rungule and Silva Seņkane (Rīga Stradins University) in the article "Values of Latvians Across Socio-Demographic Groups" discuss the values using the data collected by the World Values Survey (WVS), the European Values Study (EVS) and the ESS (2014), and the opinion poll agency SKDS data (2015). The researchers summarised that security and benevolence were the dominant motivational values among Latvians in 2014. Universalism outranked self-direction as the third most important value from 2008 (until 2014). Conformity and traditions gained in importance while achievement value became less pronounced. The least diffused motivational values were the ones of stimulation, hedonism and power. Thus, self-transcendence dominated over self-enhancement, and conservation dominated over openness to change values in Latvia in 2014. That means that people in Latvia associated themselves more with collectivism rather than individualism, and unselfishness dominated over selfishness values. But at the same time the researchers outline that a generational gap can be detected. The researchers conclude that "positive correlation with age was found for the following motivational values: security, conformity, tradition, benevolence and universalism; their corresponding mean indexes increase with age. The motivational values related to self-enhancement, -stimulation, hedonism, achievement, and power correlate negatively with age. These indexes are decreasing in the older age group" (Rungule & Seņkāne, 2018).

### **Methodology**

To analyse values in Latvia, the ESS results of year 2008 and 2018 were used in the current report. The ESS uses the methodology developed by Shalom Schwarz (described in section – Literature review). In the survey, respondents were asked to evaluate 21 statements connected to the motivational values by rating the degree of similarity of each characteristic (6-point scale: 1 – very much like me; 2 – like me; 3 – somewhat like me; 4 – a little like me; 5 – not like me; 6 – not like me at all) (Schwartz, 2014).

Since the previous research in Latvia did not concentrate much on value perception tendencies in different age groups, the researchers decided to carry out in-depth research precisely in this area to see how value perception differs between age groups. Two main age groups were selected – respondents in the age group 15/16-24 and 65+, and data were filtered accordingly using SPSS Statistics. Within the ESS 1980 respondents were surveyed in 2008, 270 of which were in the age group 15-24 and 427 were in the age group 65+, while in 2018 918



respondents were surveyed (43 in the age group 16-24 and 323 in the age group 65+). Using the ESS data, the researchers were able to analyse which of the values are more present in the Latvian society, what are the tendencies in the 10-year period, and how these values meet the common values defined by the School2030, UNESCO and the EU. Since the School2030, UNESCO and the EU values are more coordinated with the following motivational values (Schwartz, 2014): achievement (wisdom, diligence), stimulation (courage); self-direction (freedom, creativity, innovation); universalism (justice, equality, respect for human rights, cultural diversity, respect for ourselves, others and our environment, commitment to peace and sustainable development, social justice, tolerance, human dignity, life); benevolence (solidarity, empathy, family, marriage, responsibility, honesty, kindness, compassion); conformity (moderation, composure, diligence); security (the rule of law), these were the motivational values that were outlined in the research.

Since researchers Ritma Rungule and Silva Senkane in their study used the EES results of year 2014 (the data is not available in the ESS homepage right now), the results and conclusions of this study were also used to analyse the tendencies of value perception in the Latvian society in the period from 2008 to 2018.

To see how the values of the society in Latvia have changed over time, also a literature review of the relevant previous research was carried out.

## **Results and Discussion**

**UNIVERSALISM.** Universal values can be considered as highly common in the Latvian society. Only the question about understanding different people raises concerns since less than a half of the respondents in the youngest age group considered it very important or important to them (chose answers “very much like me” or “like me”). A decrease can be observed in the numbers from the older generation to the younger one: 66.4% in age group 65+, 55.9% in age group 25-64 and only 44.2% in the age group 16-24. However, compared to 2008 data there has been an increase of importance in this statement by 8.9 p.p. The importance of this value has increased in all age groups, but mostly in the age group 65+ – plus 9.6 p.p. (25-64 – plus 5.9 p.p.; 16-24 – plus 4.9 p.p.). You can see data about self-identification of Latvian population with S. Schwartz defined motivational values in 2008 and 2018 by age groups in Table 1.

Taking care of the environment and nature was outlined as the most important value in the Latvian society in 2018 (77.8% of the respondents in 2008 chose answers “very much like me” or “like me”), and this might be due to the fact that the environmental topic was very popular during that time, especially among the youth, due to beginning of the movement Fridays For Future (Greta

Thunberg) (Fridays for future, homepage). In the period from 2008 to 2018, environmental values became more important to respondents - 8.1 p.p increase. This increase was mainly due to the answers of the youngest (plus 15.3 p.p. in the age group 16-24) and the oldest respondents (plus 9.6 p.p. in the age group 65+).

The only universal value that lost its position was equality – if in 2008 61.2% of the respondents chose answers “very much like me” or “like me” regarding the statement representing this value, then in 2018 only 55.5% did. The importance of this value has decreased in all age groups, but mainly in 65+ group by 13.6 p.p. (25-64 – minus 4.4 p.p.; 16-24 – minus 2.1 p.p.).

**BENEVOLENCE.** Benevolence values were common among all age groups in the Latvian society in 2018. More than half of the respondents (56,5%) in Latvia answered that it is important to help people and care for others' well-being. Unexpectedly, these answers were the most popular among the younger generation (65.1%) and the older age group (61%). The data show that for the youngest respondents this value has become more important (plus 17.3 p.p in the age group 16-24), while for older respondents the importance has decreased (minus 4.1 p.p. in the age group 25-64, and minus 2 p.p. in the age group 65+).

There has been a little decrease (minus 2.4 p.p.) in the importance of the statement “Important to be loyal to friends and devoted to people close”, if in 2008 77.1% of respondents evaluated it as important or very important to them, then in 2018 the percentage was 74.7%. A considerable decrease of importance regarding this statement has been among the youngest age groups– minus 14.6 p.p., while, for example, in the age group 65+ this value has become more important (plus 4.3 p.p.).

**SELF DIRECTION.** Rather unexpected were the close figures concerning person's autonomy for different age groups in 2018. For the majority of respondents (72.8%) it is important to make their own decisions and be free. The positions of the younger group and the older group were almost identical (76.7% & 76.5%). If we look at the data of 2008, we can see that the importance has decreased by 5.7 p.p.

However, the situation is considerably worse when it comes to respondents' attitudes towards producing new ideas and being creative – only 43% identified themselves with this position in 2018, and the percentage has dropped from 50.1% in 2008 (minus 7.1 p.p.). The decline is the highest among the youngest group– minus 12.4 p.p. A good and hopeful indication is that the majority of the age group 16-24 (53.5%) respondents still supported such approach in 2018.

**STIMULATION.** Stimulation values have relatively weak positions in the Latvian society, especially among older people. When we compare the situation in 2008 with the situation in 2018, we can see that these values have become less important in the 10-year period. The importance of the stimulation statement has decreased by 4.2 p.p. in the case of trying new and different things (from 49,8%

in 2008 to 45.6% in 2018) and by 9.6 p.p. in the case of seeking adventures and having an exciting life (from 28.6% in 2008 to 19% in 2018). The biggest decrease can be observed in the age group 16-24 – minus 19 p.p. and minus 13.3 p.p., while in the age group 65+ we can observe an increase by 18.8 p.p. and 1.5 p.p.

**ACHIEVEMENTS.** Achievement values are weakly expressed among respondents in Latvia, and in the 10-year period the importance of these values has decreased. Only 29.5% answered that it was very important/ important to them to be successful and have achievements that people recognize, 34.8% of the respondents considered important to show their abilities and be admired in 2018. Although the importance of these statements decreased with age, still these values were not common in any age group. The situation has considerably worsened since 2008, especially when we look at the data of the youngest age group– if in 2008 76,3% of the respondents thought that it was important to be successful and have achievements that people recognize, then in 2018 only 32.9% of the respondents in the age group 16/15-24 did (minus 43.4 p.p.). When it comes to the statement “Important to show abilities and be admired”, the decrease has been 38.4%. In all the other age groups, the decrease has not been so enormous, but it has accrued as well – in the age group 25-64 – 28.5 p.p. and 21.8 p.p., and in the age group 65+ minus 12.6 p.p. and minus 5.5 p.p. Such a sharp decrease in the importance of achievement value requires special investigation and is very unfavourable for the sustainability and future of our society. The assumptions of the authors is as following: a large share of those people with an active position who were used to relying on themselves chose emigration and fulfilled their dreams in other countries.

**CONFORMITY.** Conformity values have relatively moderate positions in the Latvian society, especially among younger people: 42.7% of all the respondents considered that it was important to behave properly (16-24 –27.9%; 25-64 – 37.3%; 65+ - 53.9%), and 32.1% of the respondents considered that it was important to do what is told and follow rules (16-24 –13.9%; 25-64 – 26.6%; 65+ – 43.6%). While in the 10-year period the average attitude towards the statement “Important to do what is told and follow rules” practically has not changed (decrease 0.2 p.p.), the importance of it has considerably decreased within the youngest age group – minus 19.5 p.p. However, behaving properly has become less important for all age groups. The biggest decrease can be observed in the age group 25-64 – minus 13.8 p.p., while in the age group 16-24 it was minus 5.8 p.p. and in the age group 65+ - minus 9.3 p.p.

**SECURITY.** The position “Important that the government is strong and ensures safety” was the forth in the top list for all the respondents (72.5%) demonstrating an increase with the ageing. The same tendency appeared in the position “Important to live in secure and safe surroundings” (65.1%). But considerably fewer respondents in the youngest age group considered it important

or very important to them– 39.5% for the age group 16-24, 60.7% for the age group 25-64, and 76.2% for those aged 65+. Comparing the situation with 2008, we can see a decrease in the importance in both positions. The position “Important that government is strong and ensures safety” has decreased by 9.6 p.p. on average (age group 16-24 – minus 10.3 p.p., age group 25-64 – minus 15.5 p.p., and age group 65+ - minus 7 p.p.), while the position “Important to live in secure and safe surroundings” has decreased by 13 p.p (age group 16-24 – minus 24.5 p.p., age group 25-64 – minus 17.9 p.p., and age group 65+ - minus 8.3 p.p). A decrease in both statements can be observed in all age groups, but for the oldest age group it has changed the least.

*Table 1 Self-identification of Latvian Population with S. Schwartz Defined Motivational Values in 2008 and 2018 by Age Groups (the share of respondents (in %) that chose answers “very much like me” and “like me” (ESS, 2008; ESS, 2018)*

Value questions	Average answer 2008	Average answer 2018	2008		2018		Motivational value
			16-24	65+	16-24	65+	
Important to care for nature and environment	69.7	77.8	54.5	77.4	69.8	87	Universalism
Important to be loyal to friends and devoted to close people	77.1	74.7	77.4	79.1	62.8	82.1	Benevolence.
Important to make own decisions and be free	78.5	72.8	79.3	72.2	76.7	76.5	Self-direction
Important that government is strong and ensures safety	82.1	72.5	68.5	89.9	58.2	82.9	Security
Important to live in secure and safe surroundings	78.1	65.1	64	84.5	39.5	76.2	Security
Important to understand different people	50.2	59.1	39.3	57	44.2	66.6	Universalism

Important to help people and care for others' well-being	57.4	56.5	47.8	63	65.1	61	Benevolence.
Important that people are treated equally and have equal opportunities	61.2	55.5	55.6	71.8	53.5	58.2	Universalism
Important to produce new ideas and be creative	50.1	43	65.9	36.3	53.5	37.8	Self-direction
Important to behave properly	51.6	42.7	33.7	63.2	27.9	53.9	Conformity
Important to do what is told and follow rules	32.3	32.1	33.4	42.8	13.9	43.6	Conformity
Important to be successful and that have achievements that people recognise	56.8	29.5	76.3	39.8	32.9	27.2	Achievement
Important to show abilities and be admired	48.3	28	66.3	32.4	27.9	26.9	Achievement

Source: *European Social Survey data of year 2008 and 2018.*

The ESS data of 2018 show that based on Schwarz value identification module the following motivational values can be viewed as common: 1) security, 2) benevolence, 3) universalism, 4) self-direction and 5) tradition. In 2008, the following value hierarchy was actual in the society: 1) security, 2) benevolence, 3) self-direction, 4) universalism, 5) tradition and 6) achievement. In 2018, self-transcendence values dominated over self-enhancement values and conservation values dominated over openness to change values. The data show that since 2014 the top three values have remained unchanged thus approving the thesis of slow speed of changes in this area (Rungule & Seņkāne, 2018).

Looking at the ESS data (2018) through the age perspective, we can see that for the youngest age group (16-24) the motivational values such as 1) self-direction, 2) benevolence, 3) universalism and 4) stimulation can be viewed as common, since the majority of the respondents considered them as very important or important. In the case of younger people, self-transcendence values dominate over self-enhancement values, and openness to change values dominate over conservation values. Comparing the situation with the data from 2008, we can notice some changes. The most common values in 2008 were 1) self-direction, 2) achievement, 3) hedonism, 4) stimulation, 5) security, 6) benevolence and 7) power. In 2008, self-enhancement values dominated over self-transcendence values and openness to change values dominated over conservation values.

In the age group 65+, the following motivational values can be outlined as the most common in 2018: 1) security, 2) benevolence; 3) universalism; 4) tradition and 5) self-direction. At this age group, self-transcendence values dominated over self-enhancement values, and conservation values strongly dominated over openness to change values. The same tendency accrued in 2008 as well, but conformity values back then were the 6<sup>th</sup> most common value.

The results show that younger people outline less values as important or very important to them – only eight statements were highly common for the youngest age group, while for age group 25-64 – nine, and for age group 65+ – 12 statements in 2018. However, in 2008 15 statements were evaluated as very important or important by the age group 15-24 (16 by the age group 25-64; 12 by the age group 65+). On the one hand, such different figures in the youngest age group just indicate that the process of learning values takes place throughout person's life, but, on the other hand, it can be the indicator of anomia and alienation of common values.

The greatest generation gap in 2018 can be observed when we look at the motivational values of 1) tradition; 2) security; 3) conformity; 4) power; 5) stimulation. Similarly, as Rungule and Senkane concluded in 2014, the ESS data (2018) showed that tradition, security and conformity values are much more important to the oldest age group, while stimulation and achievement values are more important to younger respondents (Rungule & Senkane, 2018).

Since 2008 the generation gap has increased the most when it comes to the importance of following rules (conformity – plus 20.3 p.p. in 2018), importance of being loyal to friends and devoted to close people (benevolence – plus 17.6 p.p.), importance of getting respect from others (power – plus 17.2 p.p.) importance of living in secure and safe surroundings (security – plus 16.2 p.p.), importance of showing abilities and being admired (achievement – plus 15.4 p.p) and importance of being successful and have achievements that people recognize (achievement – plus 10.5 p.p.). The generation gap has decreased the most when it comes to importance of seeking fun and things that give pleasure (hedonism –

minus 24.4 p.p.), importance of seeking adventures and having an exciting life (stimulation – minus 14.8 p.p.), importance of producing new ideas and being creative (self-direction – minus 13.9 p.p.), importance of the fact that people are treated equally and have equal opportunities (universalism – minus 11,5 p.p.). Both decreases and increases of the gaps have mainly happened due to the fact that these values have become less important to the younger people. This can be viewed as an indicator that younger people have rather unstable and undeveloped value system, and the situation has worsened since 2008.

As we can see, the data analysis show some changes in value perception in the Latvian society over the 10-year period, and there are many reasons for that, such as the financial crisis of 2008 and changes in communication patters due to the arrival of new smart devices and the popularity of social networks, etc.

## **Conclusions**

There are different ways of teaching values and all of them are valid, but the best way would be to strengthen both knowledge and application of them. For the value education to become an integral part of sustainable education, we need to talk more about it as well as about its importance.

In general, the research results show that altogether there has been some shift in the motivation values in the Latvian society from 2008 to 2018. Still self-transcendence values dominate over self-enhancement values and conservation values dominate over openness to change values, but compared to 2008 the leading motivational value hierarchy has changed from 1) security, 2) benevolence and 3) self-direction in 2008 to 1) security, 2) benevolence and 3) universalism in 2014 and 2018. Understanding, appreciation and protection for the welfare of all people and, especially, for nature has become more important for people of Latvia, while self-direction values have become less important.

Biggest changes in value perception can be observed within the youngest age group (15/16-24) results. In the period from 2008 to 2018, the younger generation has become more concerned for the welfare and interests of others than pursuing their self-interests. In 2008, self-enhancement dominated over self-transcendence values, but in 2018 self-transcendence values became more important to the youth. The leading motivational value hierarchy has changed from 1) self-direction, 2) achievement, 3) hedonism in 2008, to 1) self-direction, 2) benevolence, 3) universalism in 2018. Such significant changes were not observed in other age groups.

Within the youngest age group, openness to change values dominate over conservation values. However, a smaller number of values were evaluated as important or very important by the youngest age group in 2018 – a trend of alienation from the common values can be observed.

During the period from 2008 to 2018, there has been a significant decrease in the importance of values connected with achievement and power, but also the statements regarding security, benevolence, stimulation, conformity, self-direction and equality (universalism) were rated as less important in 2018 than in 2008. Only the values of tolerance and respect for the nature (universalism), as well as the value of being modest and not drawing attention (tradition) has increased its importance among respondents in Latvia.

Despite their importance at the national and at the international level, values that are connected with achievements, self-direction (creativity), conformity, stimulation, universalism (tolerance – understanding different people) and security are not considered as very important among the respondents of the youngest age group, and the situation has become worse since 2008. Therefore, value education should put more emphasis on these values. However, a special emphasis should be placed on self-direction and achievement values, such as creativity and desire for success, since they are not common in the society of Latvia and they have become considerably weaker in the 10-year period, especially among the youngsters. These values are essential for the knowledge society and can stimulate entrepreneurship.

In 2018, anomie can still be detected in the Latvian society. The greatest generation gap can be observed when we look at the motivational values of 1) tradition, 2) security, 3) conformity, 4) power, 5) stimulation and 6) achievement. Over the 10-year period, the generation gap has decreased when it comes to statements connected to values of creativity (self-direction), equality (universalism) and stimulation, but it has happened due to the fact that these values have become less important to younger respondents.

Almost all motivational values have undergone a decrease of importance among the society, especially youth, and this has increased insecurity and uncertainty. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the isolation, it has also shown that we depend on and need each other.

Further research is needed in the area of value perception, especially among the youngest members the society.

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# **E-PLATFORMS FOR UNIVERSITY-BASED ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT**

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**Abstract.** *As economic co-ordination becomes increasingly globalized the key interactions among firms in specific industry clusters become regionalized. University-based entrepreneurial ecosystems are believed to be a compromise to foster entrepreneurship and economic development in a regional context. The modern university-based entrepreneurial ecosystems are mainly based on informational flows and e-platforms. However, the process of how the ecosystems come into being, how university-based ecosystems can be nurtured has not been researched enough at present. This article contributes to the field by recommending a framework enabling this process through the development of e-platforms as a regional development model.*

*The network theory perspective is used as an analytical approach to determine how the mechanism works in the entrepreneurial ecosystem and how it contributes to regional competitive advantage through knowledge transfer and innovation. An in-depth interview method with a semi-structured questionnaire, a literature review, and a statistical analysis are used as research methods. The study context is the Vitebsk region, which is located in the northern part of Belarus.*

**Keywords:** *e-platforms, regional development, regional innovation system, regional policy, university-based entrepreneurial ecosystem.*

## **Introduction**

The role of entrepreneurs has been recognized to be of great significance in accelerating the pace of growth of economic development of any country. Entrepreneurship is seen as one of the basic skills that individuals need to succeed in a highly competitive and innovative society. One of the impacts that entrepreneurship can have on education is high levels of student motivation and engagement it can trigger, leading to deeper learning (Lackéus, 2015). However, the potential of entrepreneurial education has not been fully realized in Belarus. One of the reasons is the lack of an entrepreneurial ecosystem (EE) which has led to a gap between universities and private businesses.

University teachers, who live in low entrepreneurial culture regions do not have any business experience or stable relationships with local entrepreneurs.

Accordingly, they have no idea what skills and competencies for entrepreneurship activity are necessary or how to develop tools and techniques for such skills and competencies among undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate students and how to identify region-specific entrepreneurship opportunities and challenges.

The research problem of the current study is to conceptualize university-based EE building in a specific territory using the system of e-platforms. Based on the research problem, the current research aims at further developing the theoretical understanding of e-platforms' role in EE functioning and applying the proposed algorithm of EE development using the system of e-platforms in the context of the Vitebsk region (Belarus).

We present a case study of the Vitebsk region (Belarus), which encompasses a number of activities and programs implemented over the past 3 years and connected with entrepreneurial networking. By analyzing these programs we provide some tangible examples as to how different regional actors and e-platforms can be better embedded within regional EE, and how key players in the system such as higher education institutions can assist the development of EEs at the regional level.

The paper is structured as follows. The first section discusses the origins and definitions of the EE concept and related concepts, role of universities and e-platforms in enabling EE concept implementation and models of e-platforms development. The next section presents the results of the research projects in the case of the Vitebsk region (Belarus) to approve the hypothesis about the role of universities and e-platforms in enabling EE concept implementation and to demonstrate the suggested model of e-platforms development.

## **Literature Review**

A new way of looking at business in biological and ecological terms was offered by James E. Moore in 1993. He adopted the biological concept of an ecosystem to business development theory. He used the term 'ecosystem' as a biological counterpart and suggested that 'a company be viewed not as a member of a single industry but as a part of a business ecosystem that crosses a variety of industries', and 'gradually moves from a random collection of elements to a more structured community' (Moore, 1993, p.76). As Edward J. Malecki shows, the entrepreneurial ecosystem concept has become dominant since 2016, alternative concepts, such as a system of entrepreneurship and infrastructure for entrepreneurship, continue to be used but remain less prevalent (Malecki, 2018).

The entrepreneurial ecosystem approach bridges the innovation system approach and entrepreneurship studies (O'Connor et al., 2018). It relates to such concepts as industrial clusters, industrial districts, learning regions, and the triple

helix model of industry, government, and university interactions (Stam, 2015). All such systems have the following characteristics: a collection of elements; interactions between the elements; and a purpose or function. Daniel Isenberg names the entrepreneurial ecosystems approach as a 'pre-condition' for the successful development of cluster strategies, innovation systems, knowledge economy or national competitiveness policies (Isenberg, 2011).

Industrial clusters 'refer to the tight connections that bind certain firms and industries together in various aspects of common behavior, e.g., geographic location, sources of innovation, shared suppliers and factors of production, and so forth' (Bergman, Edward, 2020, p.2). Industrial districts are one type of a cluster, which are characterized by groups of co-located small- and medium-sized companies operating in light manufacturing sectors of the economy (Porter & Ketels, 2009). Marta Götz and Barbara Jankowska showed that the mechanisms and functionalities provided by clusters well aligned with the features of Industry 4.0, industrial Internet and the integrated industry. And, as they concluded, implementation of the concept of Industry 4.0 is transforming clusters into 'territorially unlimited and neutral to the location of the cooperation platform' (Götz & Jankowska, 2018, p.388).

A large subset of research focuses on universities as the central actors or hubs of EE (Malecki, 2018). EEs usually come out in locations with place-specific assets, and universities are among such assets (Carvahlo, 2017). As the case of Lahti region (Finland) showed, the knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in the region is an effective environment for practice-based innovation formed by universities and other research units (Harmaakorpi, 2020). The most changed part of the innovation environment is the structural development of the university system, which enables better use of research knowledge for the platforms and start-ups in the region (Harmaakorpi, 2020).

There are several models of entrepreneurial ecosystems. Daniel Isenberg identifies six domains within the system: a conducive culture, enabling policies and leadership, availability of appropriate finance, quality human capital, venture friendly markets for products, and a range of institutional supports (Isenberg, 2011, 13). Johannes Ulrich Bramann added a seventh condition – ICT infrastructure (Bramann, 2017). World Economic Forum lists eight following pillars of an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Additional ecosystem elements are education & training; and major universities as catalysts (World Economic Forum, 2014). Thus, the entrepreneurial ecosystem model most fully can be represented from eight elements (pillars), listed by World Economic Forum, and the ninth element (condition) – ICT infrastructure.

The network theory perspective is employed as an analytical approach to determine the working of the mechanism within an entrepreneurial ecosystem that

subsequently affects a region's competitiveness (Purbasari, Wijaya, & Rahayu, 2018). The main network effects are improving companies' competitiveness in inter-firm networks and growth in business performance with increasing network size. The main condition for network effects is trust among network members and strong information technology support to collaborate successfully (Miczyska-Kowalska & Slonimska, 2020).

Platforms promote users' and customers' participation in the innovation process and reshape business functions and operations. Digital platforms (e-platforms, ICT-based platforms) are becoming a prominent technological and business model for collaborative innovation (De Falco, Renzi, Orlando, & Cucari, 2017). E-platforms are an organizational form made up of a technological architecture and governance mechanisms for managing autonomous complementors (Saadatmand, Lindgren, & Schultze, 2019).

According to Paolo Spagnoletti, Andrea Resca & Gwanhoo Lee, digital platforms should support three types of social interaction: information sharing, collaboration, and collective action (Spagnoletti, Resca, & Lee, 2015). Such a concept is adaptable for EEs development. First, it is necessary to create e-platform resource available to all, and allow free participation. It can stimulate different potential actors of the entrepreneur ecosystem in a region to communicate and build trust. Then actors can follow rules and engage in collaborative open innovation activities that require substantial group coordination. At the third stage, digital platforms can support collective action-centered online communities. They should engage trusted members of small and tightly coupled communities in the exchange of information and provide coordination mechanisms.

Interorganizational systems (IOSs) are information and communication technology-based systems that transcend legal enterprise boundaries (Kumar & Dissel, 1996). Kuldeep Kumar & Han G. van Dissel suggest a three-part typology for IOSs: pooled information resource IOSs; networked IOSs; and value/supply-chain IOSs in correspondence with the three types of interorganizational interdependence.

The first type, pooled information resource IOSs, is an inter-organizational sharing of common IT resources. Typical IT resources shared in a pooled fashion include common databases, common communication networks, and common applications (Kumar, & Dissel, 1996). At the initial stage of EEs development, it is generally necessary to have shared access to information to organise cooperation between its participants and form a project portfolio. To implement such tasks, it is enough to create a cluster website, for example.

The second type, networked IOSs, operationalize and implement reciprocal interdependencies between organizations. They typically represent joint ventures between various partners, each partner providing a different specific advantage.

They could involve using desk-top/screen-sharing technologies, CAD/CASE data interchange and repositories, discussion databases, synchronous and asynchronous time/place computer-based systems for supporting collaborative work, and the integration of these technologies with video-conferencing (Kumar, & Dissel, 1996). After the problem of trust-building among different EEs actors is solved, there is an opportunity to organize joint innovation projects for this, it is necessary to organize open innovation platforms. After the problem of trust-building among different EEs actors is solved, there is an opportunity to organize joint innovation projects based on open innovation platforms. Living Labs (LLs) are an effective type of open innovation platforms. LLs are defined as user-centred, open innovation ecosystems based on systematic user co-creation approach, integrating research and innovation processes in real-life communities and settings (European Network of Living Labs, 2021).

The third type of IOS, value/supply-chain IOS, supports customer-supplier relationships and occurs as a consequence of these relationships along the value/supply chain. The primary motives behind these collaborations are the reduction of uncertainties in the supply chain, thereby gaining cost, cycle time, and quality advantages over competing supply chains in the industry (Kumar & Dissel, 1996).

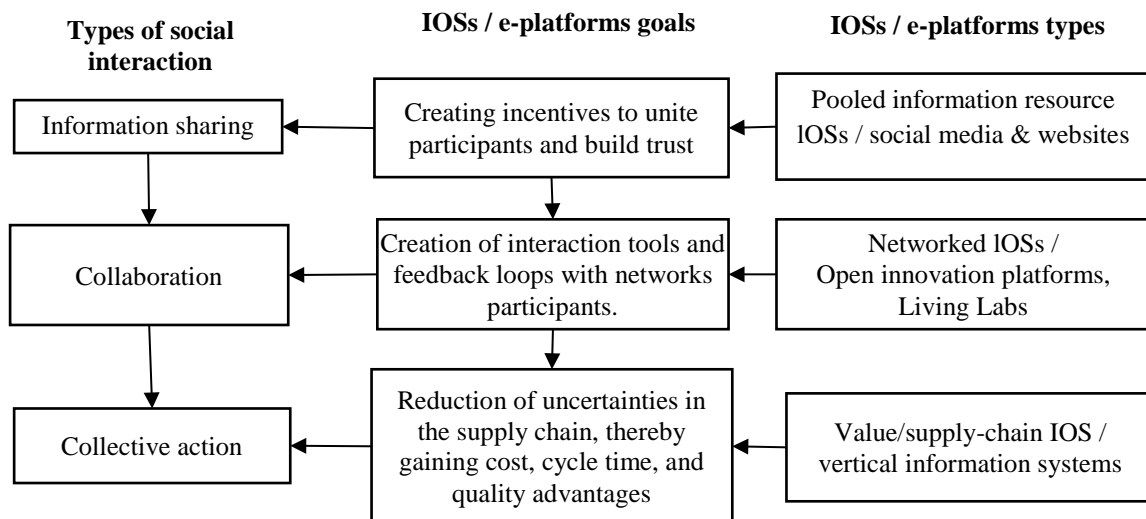
As the number of cluster members increases due to the inclusion of small businesses that produce and sell final products, the relevance of the formation of integrated supply chains and the need for the development of a MIS supply chain is growing.

Thus on the literature review results, it may be concluded that e-platforms and IOSs play an important role in entrepreneurial ecosystems development. Universities are the most active actors of entrepreneurial ecosystems, and they can contribute a lot to e-platforms / IOSs development. To facilitate entrepreneurial ecosystems improvement, a model of e-platforms / IOSs development is proposed, that is shown in figure 1.

The hypothesis about universities and e-platforms' role in EEs development has been analyzed in 2018-2020 while carrying out two research projects in the Vitebsk Region (Belarus). Both studies were conducted with the participation of the author.

The first study was carried out in 2018-2019 as a part of the international technical assistance project "Development of the October Economic Forum", registered in the database of international technical assistance projects and programs of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Belarus on July 20, 2016, under No 2/16/000810. The project goal was to increase Belarusian non-governmental organizations' (NGOs') potential in promoting responsible economic policies at local and national levels. Some questions were included in

the questionnaire about the role of networking and business-cooperation in SME activity (Slonimska, Yasheva, & Dubko, 2019).



*Figure 1 A Model of E-platforms / IOSs Development (created by the author)*

The second study was carried out in 2019 as a part of the research on the topic ‘Scientific substantiation of sustainable development of JSC ‘Naftan’ within the Novopolotsk Innovative and Industrial Petrochemical Cluster’. One of the goals of the project was to develop the e-platform concept for the Novopolotsk Innovative and Industrial Petrochemical Cluster (NIIPC).

## Methodology

The SME leaders survey was conducted using in-depth interviews (21 respondents) and the method of a structured questionnaire survey (400 respondents). The indicated sample size allowed us to obtain results with a reliability of 95% and an accuracy of no less than  $\pm 5\%$ .

The selection of respondents for a structured questionnaire was carried out by random sampling from the list of enterprises located in the national business directory on goods and services “Business Belarus 2018”, stratified by the number of SMEs in districts and cities of the Vitebsk region. The planned sample structure was partially changed due to the refusal of individual respondents to participate in the survey.

The in-depth interviews were conducted in July–August 2018, whereas the questionnaire survey was conducted in February–August 2019. Respondents interviewed by in-depth interviews were leaders of SMEs located in six settlements of the Vitebsk region.



## **Research Results**

A survey of entrepreneurs in the Vitebsk region made it possible to assess the level of interaction between entrepreneurs themselves and to assess their willingness to cooperate with local government bodies, universities, and other regional stakeholders to estimate the EE development perspective.

According to the survey results, about 20% of the respondents do not consider it useful to cooperate with other enterprises to develop their own businesses. About half of the respondents believe that they need cooperation with partners, and they need to develop various forms of cooperation. However, the survey did not identify any formal networks of SMEs in the region.

The attitude of entrepreneurs towards unions and associations, as shown by the survey, varies significantly. All the surveyed members of the Association of Employers and Entrepreneurs of the Vitebsk region consider membership in the organization beneficial for their business development. Most of nonmembers showed negative attitude to membership in associations and unions of entrepreneurs.

It should be noted that none of the respondents were aware of entrepreneurship development councils created by the local government. It allows us to conclude that the regional business is poorly informed about the local government activities and that there is a low level of trust to these official structures. However, the revitalization of these structures and their transformation into a full-fledged dialogue platform with the expansion of business representatives' powers can be an important tool for developing a dialogue between entrepreneurs and local authorities to solve some local problems or to address them to a higher authority.

According to the respondents, the problems hindering the development of SME cooperation in the Vitebsk region are lack of information about potential partners (noted by 76.8% respondents), low level of trust between entrepreneurs (76%), and lack of infrastructure and services for the support of business community cooperation (61%).

A questionnaire survey of entrepreneurs of the Vitebsk region showed that most of them agree with the need to create e-platforms for communication between entrepreneurs themselves and for communication of entrepreneurs with representatives of local authorities (62.3% and 62.9%, respectively).

Thus, the study confirms our hypothesis that, at the first stage of the EE idea advancement, it is necessary to develop e-platforms in the region that allow obtaining information about potential partners, forming interest groups, and building trust in the process of communication.

As a result of public comment, it has been proposed to implement an e-platform in the form of a public-private partnership platform (PPP-platform). It is assumed that a PPP-platform would operate as a space for engaging stakeholders and identifying partnerships. Every regional business must be registered and represented on the platform. This would resolve the issue of lack of information about potential partners. Communication between SME managers on the platform and discussion of common issues would enable the building of trust. It is suggested that SME managers will have an opportunity to communicate with representatives of regional authorities and other stakeholders on how to improve the business environment and how to develop the regional economy focusing on new ideas (Maczyńska-Kowalska & Slonimska, 2020, p.56).

At the same time, it is proposed to develop university-based e-platforms for every regional cluster. The concept of the e-platform on the base of Polotsk State University was developed with the participation of the author as a part of the research on the topic ‘Scientific substantiation of sustainable development of JSC’ Naftan’ within the NIIPC’. The e-platform development plan includes three stages: 1) the development and implementation of the NIIPC association’ website for information resources sharing, including common databases, common communication networks and common applications (IOS pool); 2) development of a horizontal network for organizing innovation activities based on the concept of open innovation (network IOS); 3) development of integrated supply chains along the value chain (OIS supply chain). The second stage of the development of the network interaction platform will be implemented after the increase in the number of members of the NIIPC association, the formation of a portfolio of projects and an increase in site traffic indicators. The third stage will be implemented after SMEs, which produce and sell final products, joined the cluster.

The e-platform as NIIPC website (<https://ipnnk.by/>) was created in 2020. The project was funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland under the Polish Development Cooperation Program. The additional functional blocks of the e-platform according to the e-platform development plan will be added during the cluster project development.

Table 1 summarizes NIIPC stakeholders needs and represents the related e-platform functions.

**Table 1 Interests and Needs of ICNIC Stakeholders and Related E-platform Functions**  
(created by the author)

Stakeholders	Interests and needs	Functional blocks of the e-platform
The governing body of the Association	Dissemination of information about ICNIC activities	News & Articles
	Organization of cooperation and coordination of activities of Association members, providing them with information, methodological, organizational, consulting and other assistance	Registration of participants with different statuses Q&A
	Projects organization in the interests of ICNIC	Holding a competition to form a consortium for the implementation of approved projects
Association members	Problem solving, development and implementation of new processes, goods and services	Database for formulation of problems to be solved
R&D organizations	Receiving orders for research and development	Placing an application for participation in a project related to solving a specific problem Forum for registered members Database of innovative projects with information about their status
R&D investors	Making a profit as a result of financing innovative projects	Database of innovative projects with information about their status

## Conclusions and Discussion

It is assumed that the PPP-platform and university-based e-platforms of regional clusters will interact in the future, implementing joint projects based on the concept of open innovation and will contribute to the formation of an EE in the Vitebsk region. Projects in the field of implementation of Industry 4.0 and Chemistry 4.0 concepts can be the most productive.

Development of cooperation projects in the region of the petrochemical cluster and clusters of other industries, for which the petrochemical industry supplies raw materials (pharmaceutical cluster, light industry cluster, packaging for food cluster) may become a good prospect for SMEs development.

However, there are social and economic risks that can be a hurdle the implementation of a favorable scenario for the EE development in the Vitebsk region.

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# PATĒRĒTĀJA PIEREDZE KĀ STUDENTU LOJALITĀTI VEIDOJOŠS FAKTORS AUGSTĀKAJĀ IZGLĪTĪBĀ

## *Consumer Experience as a Factor of Student Loyalty in Higher Education*

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**Abstract.** *Intensive competition in contemporary education market makes higher educational institutions choose market focused strategy in order to make their offer outstand their other competitors. Defining the factors of experience development, their impact on satisfaction and loyalty of foreign students would help higher educational institutions to create positive experience for foreign students that would later, thanks to this experience, can become loyal and spread positive information about the higher educational institution. Research of these factors is especially topical for Latvia because one of the main directions for development of the state educational system is integration in international educational system.*

*The objective of research is to study the impact of experience developing factors on forming satisfaction and loyalty in higher education. Survey has been used as a research method, questionnaire covered foreign students in Latvia. Data analysis has been conducted with frequency analysis, calculations of central tendency indicators, correlation analysis and path analysis. As a result, it was found that satisfaction with higher educational institution was mainly formed with its capability to fulfil its obvious functions, that is provide qualitative education corresponding with expectations of foreign students. The analysis of impact of general satisfaction with higher educational institution on loyalty demonstrated very strong positive influence: the higher the satisfaction, the more likely foreign students would consider studies in particular higher educational institution to be useful for other foreign students and advise it.*

**Keywords:** *experience, foreign students, higher education, loyalty, satisfaction.*

### **Ievads**

#### **Introduction**

Intensīvā konkurence mūsdienu augstākās izglītības tirgū liek augstskolām izvēlēties uz tirgu orientētu stratēģiju, lai izceltu savu piedāvājumu pārējo konkurentu vidū. Tomēr ir maz pētījumu par to, no kā veidojas ārvalstu studentu pieredze, iegūstot augstāko izglītību Latvijas augstskolās, kādi faktori ietekmē ārvalstu studentu lojalitāti augstskolai. Pieredzi veidojošo faktoru noskaidrošana,

to ietekme uz ārvalstu studentu apmierinātību un lojalitāti ļaus augstskolām izveidot pozitīvu pieredzi ārvalstu studentiem, kuri vēlāk, pateicoties šai pieredzei, var izplatīt labvēlīgu informāciju par augstskolu. Šo faktoru padziļināta izpēte jo īpaši aktuāla ir apstākļos, kad Latvijas augstākās izglītības jomas viens no galvenajiem attīstības ceļiem ir iesaiste starptautiskajā izglītības sistēmā.

Ārvalstu studentu pieredzei ir būtiska nozīme Latvijas augstskolu darbībā, un ir svarīgi saprast, kā veidojas ārvalstu studentu pieredze, kādi ir tās būtiskākie faktori, un kā studentos veidojas pieredzes vērtība. To ietekmē virkne dažādu faktoru, un viens un tas pats mārketinga komunikācijas līdzeklis var tikt uztverts atšķirīgi. Taču, ja ārvalstu studenti pieredzi augstākās izglītības gūšanas laikā novērtē augstu, tad var veidoties dažādi pozitīvie efekti, tostarp lielāka apmierinātība un augstāka lojalitāte augstskolai.

*Pētījuma mērķis:* izpētīt patērētāju pieredzi veidojošo faktoru ietekmi uz apmierinātības un lojalitātes veidošanu augstākajā izglītībā.

*Pētījuma metodes:* kā pētniecības metode izmantota aptauja – anketēti Latvijā studējošie ārvalstu studenti, respondentu izvēle veikta, pielietojot nevarbūtīgo izlašu – pieejamības un sniega bumbas – tehnikas. Datu analīzei izmantotas biežumu jeb frekvenču analīze, centrālās tendences mēru aprēķināšana, korelāciju analīze, taku analīze.

### **Pieredzes, apmierinātības un lojalitātes veidošanās kopsakarības** *Correlation between the Formation of Experience, Satisfaction and Loyalty*

Zinātniskajā literatūrā liela uzmanība ir veltīta patērētāju uzvedībai, viņu pieredzes uztverei, kā arī pieredzes ietekmei uz apmierinātību un lojalitāti zīmolam. Pieredze pakalpojumu jomā tika atzīta kā svarīgākais patērētāju uzvedības faktors, un, kas ir ļoti būtiski, arī apmierinātības/neapmierinātības teorijas faktors (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009). Pains un Gilmors norāda, ka patērētāja pieredze kļūst par svarīgāko faktoru, jo pieprasījums pēc precēm un pakalpojumiem arvien pieaug (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Tāpēc vispirms ir nepieciešams aplūkot patērētāja pieredzes jēdziena būtību.

Termins „patērētāja pieredze”, kura pamatā ir Svinjarda pētījumi par tirdzniecības vidi (par klientu noskaņojumu, iesaistīšanu un, galvenais, nodomiem par pirkumu) radās un attīstījās kā dominējošs termins pieredzes mārketinga literatūrā (Swinyard, 1993). Patērētāja pieredzi definē kā „kognitīvo, afektīvo, emocionālo, sociālo un fizisko atbildi pārdevējam (pārdevēja darbībām)” (Verhoef et al., 2009, p.32). Pētnieki (Gentile, Spiller, & Noci, 2007) fokusējās uz patērētāja pieredzes definēšanu: „patērētāja pieredze rodas no mijiedarbības starp patērētāju un produktu situāciju kopas, uzņēmumu, organizācijas daļu, izprovocējot patērētāja reakciju. Šī pieredze ir ļoti personīga un paredz patērētāja iesaistīšanos dažādos līmeņos (racionālajā, emocionālajā, māņu, fiziskajā un

garīgajā)”. Atsaucoties uz vārdnīcās publicētajām definīcijām, Palmers secināja, ka pastāv divi skatījumi uz patērētāju pieredzes konceptu: 1) kognitīvā definīcija, proti, zināšanu vai iemaņu akumulēšana caur dalību pasākumā/notikumā; un 2) afektīvā definīcija, proti, emocijas izjušana vai iesaistīšanās pasākumā/notikumā (Palmer, 2010). Šīs atziņas ir aktuālas šī pētījuma ietvaros, jo ārvalstu studentu pieredze tiek veidota visos iepriekšminētajos līmeņos. Svarīgi izprast daudzveidīgus specifiskus patērētāju pieredzes veidus, ko izmanto dažādos pakalpojumos, kā arī augstākās izglītības pakalpojumu jomā, un iesaistīt tos izcilās patērētāju (ārvalstu studentu) pieredzes radīšanā un piedāvāšanā.

Efektīva komunikācija starp organizāciju un tās klientiem sekmē labāku attiecību veidošanu un rezultātā pozitīvi ietekmē viņu lojalitāti (Ndubisi, 2007). Ar terminu lojalitāte saprot „dziļu apņemšanos mērķtiecīgi veikt atkārtotus pirkumus vai popularizēt mīļoto produktu/pakalpojumu nākotnē, šādi sekmējot tā paša zīmola vai zīmolu grupas produktu atkārtotos pirkumus, neskatoties uz situācijas ietekmi un mārketinga aktivitātēm, kuru mērķis ir rosināt pārslēgšanos uz citu zīmolu” (Oliver, 1999, p.34). Lojalitāte nenozīmē tikai atkārtoto pirkumu veikšanu, tas ir plašāks koncepts, kuram ir divas dimensijas – uzvedība (atkārtoti pirkumi) un attieksme (pieķeršanās, pozitīvā attieksme), turklāt viens no galvenajiem lojalitāti sekmējošiem faktoriem ir klientu apmierinātība un tās sasniegšanai būtiska loma pieder komunikācijai visos uzņēmuma-klienta mijiedarbības posmos (Foscht et al., 2009; Kaur, Sharma & Mahajan, 2012; Leverin & Liljander, 2006).

Lojālie klienti rekomendē zīmolu/uzņēmumu citiem patērētājiem, izplata pozitīvus ieteikumus tirgdarbībai, kā arī bieži vien ir gatavi maksāt vairāk par produktu/pakalpojumu (Lima & Fernandes, 2015; Rai & Srivatsava, 2014; Wu & Ai, 2016). Bīrlis un Marins ir atzīmējuši, ka tās definīcijas, kas skaidro patērētāju lojalitāti tikai kā atkārtoto pirkumu veikšanas darbību, ir nepilnīgas, jo lojalitāte ir jāsaista ar emocionālo saikni ar produktu vai zīmolu, un emocijas, kā jau norādīts iepriekš, ir viens no pieredzes mārketinga elementiem (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Neaizmirstama patērētāju pieredze ir viens no galvenajiem faktoriem, kas veicina lojalitāti uzņēmējdarbības konkurences apstākļos (Wahyuningtyas, Achmad, & Zainul, 2017).

Pētījumā (Douglas, McClelland, & Davies, 2008) akcentēts, ka lojālie klienti rīkojas kā zīmola/uzņēmuma “reklāmas” aģenti, izplatot informāciju par savu pieredzi, ieteicot zīmolu/uzņēmumu u.tml. Tas ir nozīmīgi augstākās izglītības jomā, jo lojalitāte var izpausties augstākā līmeņa programmas imatrikulēšanā tajā pašā iestādē, ko students jau pabeidzis, dažādu papildu pakalpojumu izmantošanā augstākās izglītības iestādē (ko viņš varētu potenciāli izmantot citur), kā arī šīs iestādes rekomendēšana saviem draugiem, radiem un citiem apkārtējiem. Pētījumā (Wahyono & Nurjanah, 2020) ir pierādīts, ka pieredzes mārketingam ir pozitīva un nozīmīga ietekme uz klientu lojalitāti. Tas nozīmē, ka jo labāk



uzņēmums izmanto pieredzes mārketingu, jo augstāks klientu lojalitātes līmenis.

Empīriskajos pētījumos (Araci, Bulut, & Kocak, 2017) bija pierādīts, ka lojalitāte ir saistāma ar klientu apmierinātību. Pētījumā Antons norāda, ka apmierinātība tiek skaidrota kā stāvoklis, kuram raksturīga indivīda vajadzību, vēlmju un gaidu izpilde vai pārsniegšana produkta/pakalpojuma iegādes, patēriņa rezultātā, un kas sekmē atkārtotus pirkumus un lojālo attieksmi (Anton, 1996). Fornels norādīja, ka lojalitāte ir apmierinātības funkcija, lojālie klienti ne vienmēr ir apmierināti, bet apmierinātiem klientiem ir visas izredzes kļūt par lojāliem (Fornell, 1992). Bitners skatījās uz lojalitāti kā uz procesu, tā beigās apmierinātība ietekmē kvalitātes uztveri, kas var izraisīt lojalitāti un vēlmi rīkoties konkrētā veidā (Bitner, 1990). Tiek uzskatīts (Bolton, Kannan, & Bramlett, 2000; Hume, Mort, Liesch, & Winzar, 2006), ka lojalitātes programmas un patērētāju apmierinātība veidojas no pozitīvas pieredzes, ko klients gūst, saņemot pakalpojumu.

Šī pētījuma ietvaros ir īpaši svarīgi aplūkot lojalitātes izveides iespējas augstākajā izglītībā. Pētnieks (Guilbault, 2018) norāda, ka ir ļoti svarīgi uztvert studentus kā patērētājus. Ārvalstu studentu rekomendācijas citiem studentiem, atgriežoties savā valstī, ir viens no valsts/augstskolas popularizēšanas un virzīšanas veidiem starptautiskajā augstākās izglītības tirgū, jo lojālie klienti iesaistās labvēlīgas informācijas izplatīšanā.

### ***Empīriskā pētījuma metodoloģija*** ***Methodology of the Empirical Research***

Empīriskā pētījuma pamatdati tika iegūti, organizējot ārvalstu studentu aptauju, kā rīku izmantojot anketēšanu – proti, respondenti paši aizpildīja papīra formāta anketas, intervētājiem klāt neesot un nenolasot anketas jautājumus. Respondentu atlasei tika pielietotas nevarbūtīgo izlašu – pieejamības un sniega bumbas – tehnikas. Pavisam tika saņemtas 674 analīzei derīgas anketas.

Ārvalstu studentu aptauja notikusi divos posmos: 2018. gada novembrī un decembrī un 2019. gada aprīlī un maijā, pavisam prasot četrus mēnešus. 2020. gadā pētījums netika turpināts COVID 19 pandēmijas dēļ. Analīzei izvēlētas sešas augstskolas, vadoties pēc to reitinga un ārvalstu studentu skaita, kā arī atrašanās vietas (Rīga, Latvijas galvaspilsēta). Rezultātā tika izvēlētas Latvijas Universitāte, Rīgas Tehniskā universitāte, Biznesa augstskola Turība, Rīgas Stradiņa universitāte, RISEBA un Baltijas Starptautiskā akadēmija.

Datu analīzei izmantotas biežumu jeb frekvenču analīze, centrālās tendences mēru aprēķināšana, korelāciju analīze, taku analīze. Ārvalstu studentu aptaujas datu analīzei tika izmantota Stata 13 programma, kas nodrošina gan pamata (piemēram, krustojumu tabulas, korelācijas, regresijas), gan daudzdimensiju (piemēram, taku analīze) metožu izmantošanu. Balstoties uz raksta teorētiskajā

sadaļā analizēto zinātnisko literatūru un līdz šim veiktajiem pētījumiem, tika izvirzītas pētījuma hipotēzes un izstrādāta empīriskā shēma to pārbaudei. Šī shēma parāda saistību starp apmierinātību ar sešiem augstskolas aspektiem (ārvalstu studentu pieredzi veidojošajiem faktoriem), apmierinātību un lojalitāti.

Pētījumā vispirms tika noteikti ārvalstu studentu pieredzi veidojošie faktori attiecībā pret augstskolu, un pēc tam tika formulēta hipotēžu grupa, kura satur pieņēmumus par faktoriem, kas atbilst apmierinātības aspektiem. Šīs grupas hipotēzes tiek apzīmētas, izmantojot prefiksu H (piemēram, HA4 – 4. hipotēze par apmierinātību ar kādu augstskolas aspektu). Hipotēžu grupa tika formulēta, izvirzot pieņēmumus par to, kādi apmierinātības aspekti ietekmē kopējo apmierinātību ar augstskolu, un kā kopējā apmierinātība ietekmē lojalitāti.

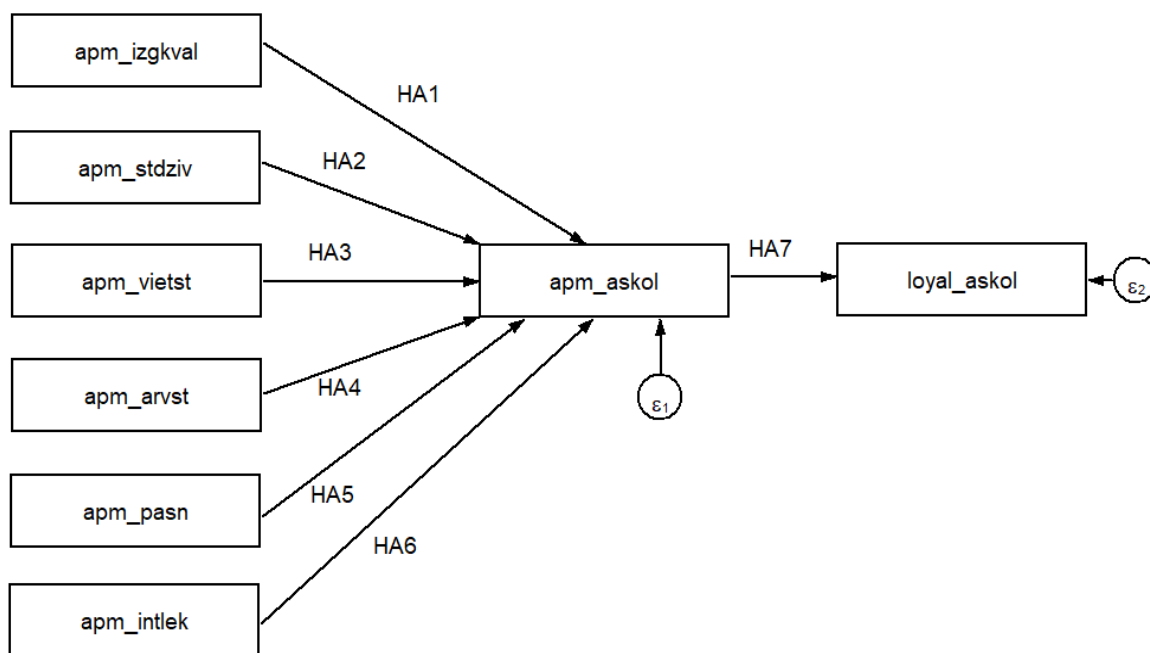
### **Pētījuma rezultāti**

#### ***Research Results***

Augstskolas līmenī tika atklāts, ka pie svarīgākajiem ārvalstu studentu pieredzi veidojošajiem faktoriem pieder izglītības kvalitāte, interesanta studentu dzīve, labas attiecības ar vietējiem studentiem, labas attiecības ar citiem ārvalstu studentiem, labas attiecības ar pasniedzējiem un lekcijas interaktīvā formā.

Līdz ar to tiek izvirzītas šādas hipotēzes par apmierinātību un lojalitāti attiecībā pret augstskolu:

- HA1: Jo augstāka ir apmierinātība ar izglītības kvalitāti, jo lielāka ir kopējā apmierinātība ar augstskolu.
- HA2: Jo augstāka ir apmierinātība ar studentu dzīvi (sociālajiem pasākumiem), jo lielāka ir kopējā apmierinātība ar augstskolu.
- HA3: Jo labākas ir attiecības ar vietējiem studentiem, jo lielāka ir kopējā apmierinātība ar augstskolu.
- HA4: Jo labākas ir attiecības ar citiem ārvalstu studentiem, jo lielāka ir kopējā apmierinātība ar augstskolu.
- HA5: Jo labākas ir attiecības ar pasniedzējiem, jo lielāka ir kopējā apmierinātība ar augstskolu.
- HA6: Jo labāk patika lekcijas interaktīvā formā, jo lielāka ir kopējā apmierinātība ar augstskolu.
- HA7: Jo augstāka kopējā apmierinātība ar augstskolu, jo augstāka ir vispārīgā lojalitāte tai.



1.attēls. Hipotēžu grafiskā shēma – apmierinātība un lojalitāte attiecībā pret augstskolu (autoreis veidots attēls)

Figure 1 Graphical Scheme of Hypotheses – Satisfaction and Loyalty towards the Higher Education Institution (scheme made by the author)

Nākamajā solī ir nepieciešams pārbaudīt, kā piekrišana noteiktiem apgalvojumiem par augstskolu ietekmē respondentu – ārvalstu studentu kopējo apmierinātību ar to, kā arī to, vai un kā šī apmierinātība ietekmē lojalitāti izvēlētajai augstskolai. Tiek izvirzīta hipotēze, ka pozitīvāki vērtējumi šādos faktoros – apmierinātība ar izglītības kvalitāti, interesanta studentu dzīve, attiecības ar vietējiem studentiem, attiecības ar citiem ārvalstu, attiecības ar pasniedzējiem un interaktīvo lekciju novērtējums pozitīvi ietekmēs kopējo apmierinātību ar studijām Latvijā, kuru reprezentē piekrišanas pakāpe apgalvojumam “Esmu apmierināts ar studijām augstskolā”. Savukārt kopējai apmierinātībai būtu pozitīvi jāietekmē vispārīgā lojalitāte augstskolai, kura veidojas no divu jautājumu apkopotā indeksa: “Studijas šajā augstskolā var būt lietderīgas citiem ārvalstu studentiem” un “Es ieteiktu izvēlēties šo augstskolu augstākās izglītības iegūšanai”. Lojalitātes indekss augstskolai tika veidots, summējot atbilžu variantu rangus atbilstošajos jautājumos, un summu dalot ar indeksā iekļauto jautājumu skaitu.

Sākumā tika aplūkots vērtību sadalījums un centrālās tendences kopējai apmierinātībai ar augstskolu un lojalitātei tai.

Lielākā daļa respondentu norāda, ka viņi drīzāk vai noteikti ir apmierināti ar augstskolu. Respondentu skaits, kas pilnībā piekrīt šim apgalvojumam, vairāk nekā sešās reizēs pārsniedz īpatsvaru, kuri nemaz nav apmierināti.

*1.tabula. Ārvalstu studentu apmierinātība ar studijām augstskolā (aptaujas dati)*  
**Table 1 Satisfaction of Foreign Students with Studies at the Higher Education Institution**  
*(survey data)*

<b>Apmierinātības vērtību sadalījums</b>	<b>Rezultāts</b>
Nemaz nepiekrīt	5,34%
Drīzāk nepiekrīt	14,05%
Drīzāk piekrīt	39,39%
Pilnībā piekrīt	41,22%
Vidējais rangs	3,16 (no 4)
Standartnovirze	0,86
N	655

*2.tabula. Ārvalstu studentu lojalitāte augstskolai (aptaujas dati)*  
**Table 2 Loyalty of Foreign Students towards the Higher Education Institution** *(survey data)*

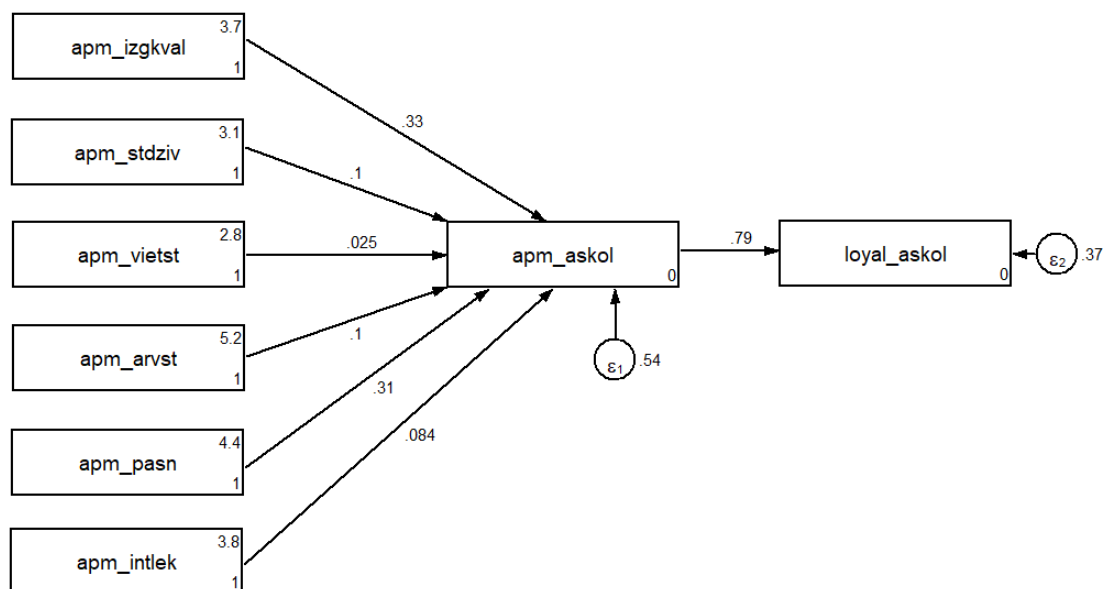
<b>Lojalitātes vērtību sadalījums</b>	<b>Rezultāts</b>
1 (zemākais iespējamais)	3,21%
1,5	4,57%
2	7,78%
2,5	8,80%
3	26,40%
3,5	19,80%
4	29,44%
Vidējais	3,14
Standartnovirze	0,81
N	591

Kā redzams no lojalitātes vērtību sadalījuma, modālā vērtība ir 4 (augstākā iespējamā lojalitāte), kuru uzrāda vairāk nekā 30% respondentu, tai pašā laikā vidējais rangs tai ir 3,14 ar samērā nelielu standartnovirzi.

Nākamajā solī ar taku analīzes palīdzību jānoskaidro, kādas sakarības pastāv starp atsevišķiem apmierinātības aspektiem, kopējo apmierinātību un lojalitāti izvēlētajai augstskolai. Taču sākumā jānorāda mainīgie, kuri tiek iekļauti apmierinātības un lojalitātes izpētē augstskolas līmenī, atspoguļojot to nosaukumus datu masīvā, atbilstošos anketas jautājumus un mērījumu līmeņus ar atbilžu variantiem.

3.tabula. Mainīgie taku analizē – ārvalstu studentu lojalitāte augstskolai (aptaujas dati)  
 Table 3 The Variables in the Path Analysis – Loyalty of Foreign Students towards the Higher Education Institution (survey data)

Mainīgā nosaukums datu masīvā	Atbilstošais anketas jautājums, atšifrējums	Atbilžu skala
apm_izgkval	Mani apmierina izglītības kvalitāte	4 rangi – no 1 (nepiekrītu) līdz 4 (pilnīgi piekrītu)
apm_stdziv	Augstskolā ir interesanta studentu dzīve	
apm_vietst	Attiecības ar vietējiem studentiem augstskolā ir labas	
apm_arvst	Attiecības ar citiem ārvalstu studentiem ir labas	
apm_pasn	Augstskolā ir labas attiecības ar pasniedzējiem	
apm_intlek	Man patika lekcijas interaktīvā formā	
apm_askol	Esmu apmierināts ar studijām augstskolā	
loyal_askol	autoreis veidots summēts indekss, kas sastāv no jautājumiem “Studijas šajā augstskolā var būt lietderīgas citiem ārvalstu studentiem” un “Es ieteiktu izvēlēties šo augstskolu augstākās izglītības iegūšanai”	7 rangi ar 0,5 soli (1, 1,5, 2, 2,5, 3, 3,5 un 4; jo lielāks skaitlis, jo augstāka lojalitāte)



2.attēls. Taku analīzes rezultāti apmierinātības un lojalitātes sakarībai augstskolas līmenī (autoreis veidota tabula)

Figure 2 The Results of Path Analysis for the Correlation between Satisfaction and Loyalty at the Higher Education Institution Level (scheme made by the author)

2.attēlā redzams, kuri faktori visvairāk ietekmē kopējo apmierinātību ar augstskolu (apm\_askol). Būtībā ietekmīgākie ir divi: labas attiecības ar

pasniedzējiem (apm\_pasn ar standartizētu regresijas koeficientu 0,31) un labā izglītības kvalitāte (apm\_izgkval ar koeficientu 0,33). Pārējiem četriem koeficientiem, kas atspoguļo viedokļus par studentu dzīvi (apm\_stdziv, 0,1), attiecībām ar vietējiem studentiem (apm\_vietst, 0,025), attiecībām ar pārējiem ārvalstu studentiem (apm\_arvst, 0,1) un lekcijām interaktīvā formā (apm\_intlek, 0,084) ir krietni mazākas vērtības, kas norāda uz izteikti vājām sakarībām un attiecīgo faktoru ietekmes nebūtiskumu.

No šiem rezultātiem secināms, ka apmierinātību ar augstskolu veido galvenokārt tās spēja nodrošināt tās acīmredzamo pamatfunkciju, proti, sniegt kvalitatīvu, ārvalstu studentu ekspektācijām atbilstošu izglītību, kamēr “netiešie” labumi, kuriem arī būtu jāpiedalās kopiespaids veidošanā par augstskolu un studijām, viņu skatījumā nav tik nozīmīgi. Arī, aplūkojot kopējās apmierinātības ar augstskolu ietekmi uz lojalitāti tai, vērojama ļoti stipra un pozitīva ietekme (koeficienta vērtība 0,79): jo augstāka apmierinātība, jo drīzāk ārvalstu students uzskatīs, ka studijas konkrētā augstskolā var būt noderīgas arī citiem studentiem no ārzemēm, un šo augstskolu viņiem arī ieteiktu. No visa izklāstītā secināms, ka kopējā apmierinātība ar augstskolu, kuru galvenokārt veido apmierinātība ar izglītības kvalitāti un labas attiecības ar akadēmisko personālu, veicina lojālu attieksmi pret konkrētu augstskolu, kas izpaužas kā gatavība to ieteikt kā augstākās izglītības iegūšanas vietu.

### **Secinājumi** *Conclusions*

Augstskolas līmenī tika atlasīti seši apmierinātības aspekti jeb indikatori, par katru izvirzot hipotēzi par pozitīvu sakarību ar kopējo apmierinātību ar studijām augstskolā. Ciešas un pozitīvas sakarības ar kopējo apmierinātību ar studijām augstskolā uzrādīja izglītības kvalitāte ( $r=0,33$ ) un apmierinātība ar komunikāciju ar pasniedzējiem (0,31), tādējādi apstiprinot HA1 un HA5 hipotēzes. Studentu dzīvei un attiecībām ar ārvalstu studentiem regresijas koeficientu vērtība bija 0,1, kas tomēr ir pārāk vāja sakarība, lai uzskatītu šos faktoros par noteicošiem kopīgās apmierinātības veidošanā. Vēl zemākas vērtības ir lekcijām interaktīvā formā un attiecībām ar vietējiem studentiem, kas noved pie secinājuma, ka šie faktori nav tie, kas pamatā veido apmierinātību un caur to arī lojalitāti izvēlētajai augstskolai. Hipotēzes HA2, HA3, HA4 un HA6 nav apstiprinājušās šajā pētījumā. Tai pašā laikā konstatēta ļoti cieša sakarība starp kopējo apmierinātību ar augstskolu un lojalitāti tai, tādējādi apstiprinās hipotēze HA7. Jo augstāka apmierinātība, jo lielākas izredzes, ka students ieteiks studēt šajā augstskolā arī citiem un nodos tālāk savu pozitīvo pieredzi ar to.

Augstskolas līmenī ārvalstu studentu pieredzi lielākoties veido izglītības saturu veidojošie faktori – tās kvalitāte ( $r=0,33$ ) un labas attiecības ar

pasniedzējiem kā zināšanu un prasmju nodošanas un akumulēšanas veicējiem ( $r=0,31$ ); pārējo faktoru ietekme, lai arī ir pozitīva, ir ievērojami vājāka. Šie divi aspekti arī veido kopējo apmierinātību ar augstskolu, kura savukārt pārlicinoši konvertējas lojalitātē tai ( $r=0,79$ ). Protams, zinot, no kā veidojas ārvalstu studentu pieredze, kādi faktori to ietekmē, organizējot mācību procesu, piedāvājot dažādus pasākumus, nav iespējams garantēt, ka visu studentu pieredze būs vienāda, jo to ietekmē daudzi faktori (augstskola, kurā mācās students, attiecības ar kolēģiem un citiem cilvēkiem augstskolā un ārpus tās, iepriekšēja pieredze, psiholoģiskais stāvoklis u.c.). Ir būtiski veikt pētījumus par pieredzi veidojošajiem faktoriem konkrētajā mērķa grupā, lai noskaidrotu, kā to var ietekmēt, kā var izveidot pozitīvu pieredzi ārvalstu studentiem, kuri vēlāk, pateicoties šai pieredzei, var kļūt lojāli, kā arī izplatīt pozitīvu informāciju par valsti un augstskolu ieteikumu formā.

### Summary

Consumer experience and its constituent factors are an important factor of the consumer behaviour. It is relevant in the field of higher education, as it enables not only to determine the factors that shape the experience of international students, but also allows to study the impact of these factors on forming loyalty towards the chosen higher education institution. During the research six aspects or indicators of satisfaction were selected, a close correlation was found between the overall satisfaction with the university and loyalty towards it. The research results present that the satisfaction with a higher education institution is mainly formed by its ability to provide quality education that meets the expectation of foreign students, while the “indirect” benefits, which should also contribute to the overall impression of higher education institution and studies overall, are less important. Observing the impact of the overall satisfaction with higher education institution on loyalty, a very strong and positive impact could be detected: the higher the satisfaction, the more likely a foreign student will consider that the studies at the particular higher education institution might be useful to other students from abroad, thus recommending it to them.

Based on the abovementioned, it could be concluded that the overall satisfaction with the higher education institution, that mainly consists of satisfaction with the quality of education and good relationships with the academic staff, promotes a loyal attitude towards a particular higher education institution that manifests through the readiness to recommend it as a place where to obtain higher education.

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# PIEREDZES MĀRKETINGA INTERNETA VIETNĒS NOVĒRTĒJUMS ĀRVALSTU STUDENTU PIESAISTĒ LATVIJAS AUGSTSKOLĀS

## *Evaluation of Experiential Marketing Website for Attracting Foreign Students to Latvian Higher Educational Institutions*

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**Abstract.** Today experience marketing is attracting greater attention of researchers and practitioners, considering it an innovative approach to be used by companies and brands for development and retainment of their competitive advantage. This experience can develop online or as a result of offline activities. It is widely thought that many marketing instruments can be used in experiential marketing as long as they guarantee high engagement of consumers. The main instruments for sales promotion include mobile content and exclusive online content. Under the following topic, these can be special groups in social networks, mobile applications, websites of higher educational institutions etc. Unfortunately, there is a lack of research on consumer experience and its management in higher education, especially about education obtained abroad, as well as the usage of experiential marketing for attracting foreign students to Latvian higher educational institutions. These factors explain the importance and rationale of the chosen topic.

The aim of the research is to evaluate the contents, availability and usage of foreign students' interactive communication websites for attracting foreign students in Latvia in experiential marketing context. Method of research: content analysis of foreign students' groups in social networks, websites and social network profiles of higher education institutions. In general, it can be concluded that the number of interactive online groups for foreign students in Latvia was insignificant, mainly the groups were inactive, the members of these groups provided negative comments or reacted openly to different publications. However, it is important to admit that personal publications received more "likes" and comments indicating the necessity of building a personal dialogue with students on websites.

**Keywords:** content analysis of students' online publications, experiential marketing, foreign students, higher educational institutions.

## **Ievads** ***Introduction***

Pētnieki un praktiķi mūsdienās pieredzes mārketingu atzīst par inovatīvu pieeju, ko uzņēmumi un zīmoli var izmantot klientu gaidu apmierināšanai, kā arī konkurētspējīgās priekšrocības veidošanai un saglabāšanai. Pieredzes mārketinga rada pievienotu vērtību uzņēmumam un nodrošina vairākas priekšrocības: diferencēšanu no konkurentiem, attiecību veidošanu ar visiem klientiem, jaunu klientu piesaistīšanu un saiknes nostiprināšanu ar esošajiem klientiem, sekmējot viņu lojalitāti. Kompānijas ar savu specifisko ziņojumu vēlas sasniegt esošos vai potenciālos lietotājus no atbilstošas mērķauditorijas.

Diemžēl trūkst pētījumu par patērētāju pieredzi un tās vadību augstākās izglītības jomā, jo īpaši saistībā ar ārzemēs iegūto izglītību, kā arī par pieredzes mārketinga lietojumu ārvalstu studentu piesaistē Latvijas augstskolās. Sociālajos tīklos ir izveidotas daudzas dažādas grupas, kas domātas tieši ārvalstu studentiem, bet tajā pašā laikā ir maz pētītas ārvalstu studentus interesējošas tēmas. Publikāciju saturs atkārtojas, ārvalstu studenti šajās vietnēs maz iesaistās dialogā. Interaktīva komunikācija, ko piedāvā pieredzes mārketinga, ir ļoti vērtīga. Tas arī nosaka izvēlētajās tēmās aktualitāti un svarīgumu.

Pētījuma mērķis ir novērtēt ārvalstu studentu interaktīvās komunikācijas interneta vietņu Latvijā saturu, pieejamību un lietojumu ārvalstu studentu piesaistē pieredzes mārketinga kontekstā. Kā pētījuma metode ir izmantota ārvalstu studentu grupu un augstskolu vietņu sociālajā tīklā Facebook satura analīze (kontentanalīze).

Ārvalstu studenti iegūst jaunu pieredzi, atrodoties svešatnē un studējot augstskolā. Svarīgi apzināties, kādā veidā ārvalstu studenti meklē un iegūst informāciju par valsti un augstskolu, kurā viņi vēlas studēt, kā pieredzi veidojošie faktori ir atspoguļoti dažādās interneta vietnēs, kā var izmantot pieredzes mārketingu tiešsaistē, lai piesaistītu ārvalstu studentus studijām Latvijas augstskolās.

### **Pieredzes mārketinga būtība un izmantošanas iespējas ārvalstu studentu piesaistē** ***The Essence of Experiential Marketing and Its Usability in Attraction of Foreign Students***

Pieredzes mārketinga parasti tiek plaši definēts kā jebkāda veida uz klientu vērsta mārketinga aktivitāte, kas rada saikni ar patērētāju. Pamatojoties uz šo viedokli, pieredzi var panākt ar produktu, iepakojumu, komunikāciju, mijiedarbību veikalā, pārdošanas attiecībām, pasākumiem u.c. Šāda pieredze var rasties gan tiešsaistes, gan bezsaistes aktivitāšu rezultātā (Schmitt, 2011).

Tiek uzskatīts, ka pieredzes mārketingā var izmantot daudzus mārketinga instrumentus, ja vien tie nodrošina augstu patērētāju iesaistīšanās pakāpi, nosaucot kā vienu no galvenajiem ekskluzīvu tiešsaistes saturu.

Par vienu no pieredzes mārketinga koncepcijas pamatlicējiem uzskatāms profesors B. Šmits, kurš periodā no 1999. līdz 2015. gadam publicējis vairāk par desmit darbiem, kas veltīti pieredzes mārketingam, patērētāju pārdzīvojumiem un jūtām. B. Šmits atzīmēja, ka pieredzes mārketinga specifika izpaužas uzņēmumu mērķtiecīgajā darbā patērētājam nepieciešamo pieredzes veidošanā ar mērķi formēt iespaidu no produkta ekspluatācijas dažādiem aspektiem. Liela loma tika piešķirta racionālo un emocionālo aspektu pētīšanai patērētāju uzvedībā, kā arī produkta koptēla veidošanai, pateicoties daudzveidīgu iespaidu radīšanai. Atšķirībā no tradicionālā mārketinga, pieredzes mārketingā klients tiek skatīts kā emocionālā būtne, nevis tikai kā racionālists (Williams, 2006).

B. Šmits (Schmitt, 1999) piedāvā novērtēt patērētāju pārdzīvojumus (PP) dažādos aspektos, izmantojot vienkāršu skalu, kas ļauj uzzināt, vai konkrētais PP (logotips, reklāmas materiāls, tirdzniecības telpa, tīmekļa vietne) palīdz stratēģisko empīrisko moduļu (*strategic experiential modules – SEM*) jeb sajūtu, jūtu, pārdomu, darbības un atbilstības izpētei. Lī, Hsiao un Jangs rakstīja (Lee, Hsiao, & Yang, 2011), ka pieredzes mārketinga apzīmē neizmirstamas atmiņas vai pieredzi, kas var dziļi iesakņoties cilvēka prātā. Vidijs (Widdis, 2001) raksta par to, ka mārketinga kampaņām jāstimulē klientu jūtas un „jāievieš dzīvība” zīmolos. No patērētājiem savukārt ir gaidāma atbildes reakcija uz šiem stimuliem. Vairākās definīcijās (You-Ming, 2010; Yuan & Wu, 2008; Pine & Gilmore, 1998) akcents tiek likts uz emocionālo, nevis kognitīvo pusi.

Vairāki autori (Smilansky, 2017; Baron, Harris, & Hilton, 2009) savās definīcijās uzsver komunikācijas būtisku lomu pieredzes radīšanā, piemēram, Smilanska (Smilansky, 2017) pieredzes mārketingu saista ar divvirzienu komunikāciju, arī Jū-Mings (You-Ming, 2010) uz pieredzes mārketingu skatās kā uz komunikācijas metodi. Turklāt uzņēmumi vēlas, lai patērētāji gan saņemtu ziņojumus no konkrēta zīmola, gan iesaistītos komunikācijā ar to, aicinot arī savus draugus un citus cilvēkus (Smilansky, 2017). Galvenais pieredzes mārketinga mērķis ir izveidot attiecības ar klientiem vairākos līmeņos (Maghnati, Ling, & Nasermodeli, 2012). Pieredzes mārketinga kļūst par mūsdienu mārketinga koncepciju, radot patērētājiem spilgtākas un ilgstošākas atmiņas, jūtas, baudu, ietekmējot viņu iesaistīšanos pakāpi, ieinteresētību, lojalitāti. Pieredzes mārketinga pasākumi nodrošina zīmoliem platformu, lai kopīgi izveidotu saturu ar klientiem un tādējādi iesaistot tos izplatīt zīmola vērtības (Koivisto, & Mattila, 2018).

Lanjērs un Hemptons, (Lanier & Hampton, 2009) diskutē par to, ka, izprotot pieredzes mārketinga stratēģisko loģiku, var izprast, kas tieši veido neizmirstamu klientu pieredzi un kā to labāk veicināt. Mūsdienu uzņēmumi, tai

skaitā arī augstskolas, kļūst arvien aktīvāki interneta lietotāji, jo šis kanāls nodrošina daudzas priekšrocības, piemēram, interaktīvas komunikācijas izveides iespējas, dialoga iesaistīšanos ar patērētājiem, atgriezeniskās saites attīstīšanas iespējas u.tml. Tafese (Tafesse, 2016) piedāvā pieredzes veidošanas modeli mijiedarbībai ar patērētājiem zīmola sociālajos tīklos. Viņš uzskata, ka zīmola vietnes sociālajos tīklos, kas izmanto multimediju un interaktīvās iespējas, lai veicinātu holistisku zīmola uztveri, var piesaistīt vairāk patērētāju. Šādas zīmola vietnes var labāk apmierināt patērētāju vajadzības un radīt pozitīvas atsauksmes.

Līdz ar to komunikācijas satura izpēte augstskolu vietnēs un īpašu grupu sociālajos tīklos pieredzes mārketinga ietvaros ir aktuāla. To analīze ļauj saprast, vai augstskolu komunikācija ar studentiem, tai skaitā ārvalstu, ir aktīva, vai komunikācijas saturs ir aktuāls esošajiem un potenciālajiem studentiem, vai ir izmantotas interaktīvas iespējas, lai piesaistītu uzmanību augstskolai.

### **Empīriskā pētījuma metodoloģija** *Methodology of the Empirical Research*

Empīriskā pētījuma pamatdati tika iegūti, veicot komunikācijas satura, pieejamības un aktivitātes izpēti augstskolu vietnēs un īpašajās grupās sociālajā tīklā *Facebook*. *Facebook* tika izvēlēts tāpēc, ka pēc pētījuma aģentūras *Gemius* datiem tas ir viens no populārākajiem tīkliem arī Latvijas lietotāju vidū, tas iekļauts sociālo tīklu TOP3 ar 693 000 lietotājiem 2020. gada novembrī.

Analīzei izvēlētas četras augstskolas, vadoties pēc to reitinga un ārvalstu studentu skaita, kā arī atrašanās vietas (Rīga, Latvijas galvaspilsēta) – Latvijas Universitāte (turpmāk LU), Rīgas Tehniskā universitāte (turpmāk RTU), Biznesa augstskola Turība (turpmāk BAT) un Rīgas Stradiņa universitāte (turpmāk RSU). Satura, pieejamības un aktivitātes analīze tika veikta LU, RTU, BAT un RSU *Facebook* pamatvietnēm, kā arī vietnei *International Relations RTU* (turpmāk *International RTU*, iepriekš bija *RTU Global*). Pētījuma ietvaros tika analizētas arī sociālā tīkla *Facebook* īpašās grupas, kuras domātas apmaiņas programmu studentiem un ārvalstu studentiem, kuri studē, studē vai plāno studēt Latvijas augstskolās. Analīzes mērķis bijis noskaidros komunikācijas saturu un lietotāju aktivitāti.

*Facebook* vietņu analīze tika veikta 2021. gada janvārī, aptverot 2020. gada aktivitātes (01.01.–31.12.2020.). Datu analīzei izmantota programmatūra *Popsters*, kas ļauj novērtēt “patīk” (*like*) atzīmju skaitu, apkopot atsauksmes, noskaidrot, vai to vidū bija arī ārvalstu studentu atsauksmes, kā arī kādas ziņas bija publicētas un kāds bijis pierakstījušos lietotāju skaits.

Meklēšanas atslēgvārdi bija “Erasmus Latvia” un “Erasmus Riga” (kopā bija atainoti 58 rezultāti), kā arī “Study in Latvia” un “International students in Latvia”, “International students in Riga”, “Foreign students in Latvia” (85

rezultāti). Daļa no grupām nebija funkcionējošas (vairāk nekā puse), kā arī pieteikums dalībai grupā tika atteikts 30 grupās, daļa no meklēšanas rezultātiem (kopumā vairāk nekā 40) bija tikai daļēji atbilstoši (piemēram, ne tikai par Latviju, bet arī par visu Eiropu vai arī vispār ne par Latviju, bet meklēšanas rezultātos bija atainota). No analīzes izslēgtas grupas, kurās dalībnieku skaits mazāks par 10, un kur nebija publikāciju gada laikā. Rezultātā tika analizēta 21 grupa Erasmus studentiem un 11 grupas ārvalstu studentiem.

### **Pētījuma rezultāti**

#### ***Research Results***

Atbilstoši analīzes rezultātiem, analizēto vietņu vidū lielākais sekotāju skaits bija LU (22 377) un mazākais *International RTU* vietnei (2 180), jo tas fokusēts tieši uz ārvalstu studentiem. “Patīk” atzīmju ziņā līdere bija RSU, tai bija arī lielākais dalīšanās (*share*) skaits. Kopējais publikācijas skaits pētītajām vietnēm bija no 116 (*International RTU*) līdz 660 (LU). Vērtējot vidējos rādītājus, jāatzīmē, ka lielākais vidējais “patīk” atzīmju skaits bija RSU (81), kuram sekoja BAT (50), savukārt lielākais vidējais dalīšanās skaits bija RSU (25), pārējiem rezultāts bija ievērojami mazāks. Lielākais vidējais komentāru skaits konstatēts BAT (7), kamēr pārējiem rezultāti bija līdz 2.

Objektīvāku vērtējumu komunikācijai *Facebook* sniedz tādi rādītāji kā iesaistīšanās koeficients dienā (ER jeb *Engagement rate*), kurš ataino lietotāju reakciju, iesaistīšanās koeficients publikācijai (ERpost jeb *Engagement rate post*), pievilcības līmenis, kas atspoguļo “patīk” zīmju skaitu uz sekotāju skaitu (LR jeb *Love rate*) un komentāru skaits uz sekotāju kopskaitu (TR jeb *Talk rate*). Iesaistīšanās koeficients dienā ataino lietotāju reakciju, un augstākais rezultāts bija BAT (0.613%), tai sekoja RSU (0.495%) un RTU pamatvietne (0.436%), savukārt atsevišķām publikācijām šis rādītājs bijis augstāks *International RTU* (0.625%). Proti, neskatoties uz salīdzinoši nelielu publikāciju skaitu un sekotāju skaitu šajā vietnē, vērtējot atsevišķu publikāciju dalījuma, šajā vietnē sekotāju aktivitāte bija lielāka, tomēr vidēji dienā – zemāka visu citu vietņu vidū. Augstāki atsevišķu publikāciju ER rādītāji bija arī RSU un BAT. *Love rate* raksturo pievilcības līmeni, ko atspoguļo “patīk” zīmju skaits attiecībā pret sekotāju skaitu, un šis rādītājs visaugstākais bija *International RTU*, jeb tas saturs, ko ievietoja šajā vietnē, patika sekotājiem labāk, un tie bija aktīvāki “patīk” zīmju ielikšanā. Salīdzinoši augsti rādītāji bija arī BAT un RSU. *Talk Rate* raksturo komentāru skaitu pret sekotāju kopskaitu, un visām vietnēm šis rādītājs bijis diezgan zems, citu vidū labāks rezultāts bija BAT, kur sekotāji bijuši aktīvāki komentāru rakstīšanā, jeb labprāt iesaistījās dialogā.

1. tabula. LU, RTU, RSU, BAT Facebook vietņu analīze, 2020 (autoru veidota tabula)  
Table 1 Analysis of UL, RTU, RSU, BUT Facebook Pages, 2020 (authors-created table)

Kritērijs	Mērv.	LU	International RTU	RTU pamatlapa	RSU	BAT
“Patīk” atzīmes	Gab.	15995	1383	18686	2543 7	20128
Dalīšanās	Gab.	5211	159	7176	7802	4652
Komentāri	Gab.	1537	39	714	404	2664
Publikācijas	Gab.	660	116	584	313	403
Sekotāji	Gab.	22377	2180	16763	1866 0	12235
Vidējais dalīšanās skaits	Gab.	8	1	12	25	12
Vidējais “patīk” atzīmju skaits	Gab.	24	12	32	81	50
Vidējais komentāru skaits	Gab.	2	0	1	1	7
ER ( <i>Engagement rate</i> )	%	0.279	0.208	0.436	0.495	0.613
ERpost ( <i>Engagement rate post</i> )	%	0.154	0.625	0.271	0.576	0.557
LR ( <i>Love rate</i> )	%	0.108	0.547	0.191	0.436	0.408
TR ( <i>Talk rate</i> )	%	0.010	0.015	0.007	0.007	0.054

Aplūkojot # (*hashtag* jeb latviski tēmturu) lietošanu, jāatzīmē, ka šajā jomā aktīvāka bija LU, tās plašāk lietotie tēmturi bija #*latvijasuniversitate*, #*luadventeskalendars*, #*zinatnelatvijai*, #*lu*, #*ziemassvētki*. Pārējās vietnēs # izmantošana bija salīdzinoši maza, piemēram, LU kopumā izmantoja 243 tēmturus, BAT – 187, bet pārējie mazāk par 35. Salīdzinot ar citām vietnēm, tēmturus vismazāk izmantoja RSU – tikai astoņas reizes. Tēmturu izmantošana ir būtiska apmeklētāju piesaistīšanai vietnei, kā arī palīdz lietotājiem labāk orientēties piedāvātajā saturā, sameklējot sev interesējošo informāciju.

Visu analizēto vietņu galvenās sadaļas bija līdzīgas – informācija, video un foto materiāli, pasākumi un lietotāju publikācijas. Visas augstskolas aktīvi izmantoja vizuālo informāciju – fotogrāfijas, infografiku, video. Salīdzinoši maz izmantoja tiešo reklāmu, proti, bija atsevišķas publikācijas tuvu augstskolu uzņemšanas termiņam, bet pamatā informācija bija vairāk saistāma ar sabiedrisko attiecību aktivitātēm. Bija satopama arī izglītojoša un izklaidējoša rakstura informācija, padarot saturu daudzveidīgāku. Vērtējot sekotāju aktivitāti pēc publikāciju tēmām, jāatzīmē, ka lielāko interesi izraisīja konkursi, publikācijas par iestāšanos augstskolā, atsevišķu nozaru un konkrētas universitātes ziņas.

Satura analīze atklāja, ka LU savā *Facebook* vietnē publicēja ziņas par pieejamām programmām, iestāšanās nosacījumiem, pasākumiem, studentu sasniegumiem, nozares un universitātes jaunumus, apsveikumus akadēmiskajam personālam un studentiem, aicinājumus piedalīties aptaujās u.tml. Pēc atsauksmju

analīzes (*Facebook* vietnē ir atsevišķa sadaļa “atsauksmes”) secināts, ka bija atsauksmes arī no ārvalstu studentiem. Pārsvarā tajos tiek prasīts detalizētāk izstāstīt par studijām Latvijā, bet bija arī atsauksmes ar pateicību. Kā pozitīvas pieredzes faktoros studenti atzīmēja draudzīgus ārvalstu studentus, labu universitātes vidi, jauku akadēmisko personālu. Pēc atsauksmēm vidējais vērtējums šai augstskolai bija 4.4 no 5.

Veicot RTU aktivitāšu izpēti sociālajā tīklā *Facebook*, tika secināts, ka šai augstskolai ir gan sava pamatvietne, gan arī speciāla vietne ārvalstu studentiem *International RTU*, kurā ārvalstu students var atrast daudz lietderīgas informācijas (turklāt augstskolai ir arī atsevišķa interneta mājaslapa, kas ir domāta tieši ārzemju mērķauditorijai). Abu *Facebook* vietņu analīze ļāva secināt, ka *International RTU* ir mazāks sekotāju un publikāciju skaits, bet tai ir arī šaurāka mērķauditorija, turklāt nav atsevišķas “atsauksmju” sadaļas. Publikācijas ir vairākās valodās. RTU *Facebook* pamatvietnē publikāciju tēmas bija ļoti daudzveidīgas, līdzīgi kā LU, un arī *International RTU* bija līdzīgi aptvertas tēmas, tomēr ar fokusu uz ārzemju studentiem. RTU pamatvietnē ir paredzēta sadaļa atsauksmēm un arī sadaļa ar vakancēm. Atsauksmju analīze ļāva secināt, ka tajā bija arī ārvalstu studentu atsauksmes, to skaits bija mazāks, salīdzinājumā ar LU, tomēr visas atsauksmes bija pozitīvas. Potenciālie studenti uzdeva jautājumus augstskolai komentāros, taču atbilžu praktiski nebija, līdzīgi kā LU vietnē. Pēc atsauksmēm RTU vērtējums bija 4.5 no 5.

RSU *Facebook* vietnē, līdzīgi kā RTU, bija izvietoti arī darba sludinājumi. Līdzīgi kā citām augstskolām, arī RSU bija maz izmantota reklāma, pārsvarā bija publicēti jaunumi un informācija par pasākumiem, bija arī informācija, kas nav tieši saistīta ar studiju procesu, piemēram, izklaidējoša vai izglītojoša rakstura publikācijas (piemēram, videoreceptes). Atšķirībā no citu augstskolu *Facebook* vietnēm, RSU bija arī sadaļa *Instagram*, kas tieši sasaista *Facebook* vietni ar *Instagram* vietni, šādi palielinot publikāciju mērķauditoriju. Ārzemju studentu atsauksmes šajā vietnē netika konstatētas, nebija arī atsevišķas sadaļas “atsauksmēm”.

BAT *Facebook* vietnē bija visvairāk sadaļu, jo papildus tām sadaļām, kas bija visām analizētajām augstskolām, bija arī *Iconosquare* (analītiskais rīks), atsauksmju lapa, grupas. Satura ziņā bija vairāk publikāciju par ārvalstu studentiem šajā augstskolā, viņu pieredzi, gan arī publikācijas līdzīgi kā citu augstskolu vietnēs – par mācību procesu, pasākumiem, nozares un universitātes ziņas, apsveikumi, kopumā izglītojošs un arī izklaidējošs saturs. Salīdzinājumā ar citām vietnēm BAT vairāk izmantoja videomateriālus un vairāk reklamēja savas programmas/kursus. Atsauksmju ziņā BAT ieguva 4.8 no 5 ballēm, kas pārējo augstskolu vidū bija augstākais rezultāts. Bija arī ārvalstu studentu atsauksmes, jautājumi par iestāšanos, turklāt BAT personāls uz atsevišķiem jautājumiem atbildēja, kā arī izrādīja pateicību par atsauksmēm.



Piecu pētīto *Facebook* vietņu vidū sociālā tīkla lietotājiem saistošāku pieredzi spēja piedāvāt BAT, par ko liecina augstāki ER, LR un TR rādītāji, tomēr šai vietnei salīdzinājumā ar citu (lielāku) augstskolu vietnēm bijis mazāks sekotāju skaits. Turklāt šī augstskola aktīvāk atbildēja uz lietotāju komentāriem, iesaistoties dialogā. Ne vienmēr liels sekotāju un publikāciju skaits nozīmē arī labāku sekotāju iesaistīšanas līmeni un aktivitāti, tāpēc ir būtiski izvēlēties lietotāju interesēm atbilstošu informāciju. RSU vietnē noteikti trūkst atsauksmju sadaļas, kamēr pārējām augstskolām (RTU, LU) noteikti būtu jāreaģē uz atsauksmēm un jautājumiem, radot atgriezenisko saiti. Par pozitīvu aspektu jāatzīmē LU aktīvāka tēmturu izmantošana.

Apkopojot ārvalstu studentu grupu kontentanalīzes datus, jāsecina, maksimālais dalībnieku skaits bija 4 804 un minimālais 61 dalībnieks. 2. tabulā atspoguļota to grupu kontentanalīze, kuru dalībnieku skaits ir virs 400. Neviena no grupām, kas bija ietvertas analīzē, nedemonstrēja lielu aktivitāti. Tikai divās grupās dalībnieku iesaistīšanos varēja vērtēt kā vidēju, ar iesaistīšanos šajā gadījumā saprot publikāciju atbalstu ar “patīk” atzīmi, atbildes un/vai komentārus, kā arī dalīšanos ar publikācijām (*share*). Pārsvārā publikācijas bija par dzīvokļu īri vai nekustamā īpašuma uzņēmumu reklāmas. Šādu publikāciju autori bija grupas administratori, Latvijas (Rīgas) iedzīvotāji, un tikai dažkārt ārvalstu studenti. Novērots, ka grupu administratori centās daudzveidot informāciju ar pasākumu kalendāra ievietošanu, tie bija gan pasākumi Erasmus studentiem, gan vienkārši pilsētā notiekoši pasākumi. Šāda veida publikācijas ieguva 0-2 “patīk” atzīmes, un komentāru nebija. Arī personiskajām publikācijām, ko ievietoja grupas dalībnieki, bija vāja atgriezeniskā saite. Šādu publikāciju tēmas bija savu pakalpojumu reklāma, aptauja, rekomendāciju lūgums, studentu, kas runā konkrētā valodā, meklēšana. Diemžēl arī tik liels dalībnieku skaits negarantēja aktīvu dalību grupā un labu atgriezenisko saiti.

2. tabula. *Facebook grupu ārvalstu studentiem Latvijā kontentanalīze, 2020*

(autoru veidota tabula)

Table 2 *The Content Analysis of Facebook Groups for Foreign Students in Latvia, 2020*

(authors-created table)

Nosaukums	Izveides gads	Dalībnieku skaits	Publikāciju tēmas	Iesaistīšanās līmenis grupā ( <i>like</i> jeb patīk + komentāri)
<i>Katrin helper for international Erasmus students in Riga</i>	2017	482	Pasākumi; dzīvokļu īre; aptauja; darba piedāvājumi; informācija par tūrisma u.c. ievērojamām vietām; videoblogeru publikācijas par dažādām tēmām	Zems (1-5 patīk, 0-2 komentāri)

<i>Erasmus Riga</i>	2013	1 587	Pasākumi; īres sludinājumi; studentu jautājumi; informācija par Rīgu; brīvprātīgo meklēšana	Zems (0-3 patīk, 0-2 komentāri)
<i>Erasmus Riga 2020</i>	2020	1 871	Aicinājumi ceļot kopā; dzīvokļu īre; pasākumi; valodu kursi	Zems (0-4 patīk, 0-2 komentāri vai atbildes uz rekomendācijām)
<i>Erasmus and internship in Riga 2020</i>	2020	954	Dzīvokļu īre; aptauja; pasākumi; videopamācības; informācija par ceļojumiem	Zems (0-5 patīk, 0 komentāri)
<i>Study &amp; Life in Latvia</i>	2019	4 804	Informācija par studijām; par palīdzības sniegšanu studentiem iestāšanai augstskolā; valodas mācības; informācija par prakses iespējām; lietotāju jautājumi par darbu, studijām, dzīvi Rīgā	Zems (0-10 patīk; 0-8 komentāri)
<i>Study in Latvia for Asian students</i>	2019	727	Informācija par studijām; par palīdzības sniegšanu studentiem iestāšanai augstskolā; arī par studijām citās valstīs ES	Zems (0-4 patīk, 0-4 komentāri)
<i>ICafe Riga (international students)</i>	2009	1169	Informācija par pasākumiem; aptaujas; aicinājumi ceļot	Vidējs (4-35 patīk, 0-3 komentāri)
<i>Sri Lankan students Latvia</i>	2016	1449	Informācija par pasākumiem; dzīvokļu īre; sveicieni dzimšanas dienā un augstskolas pabeigšanā; studentu jautājumi par darbu, studijām, dzīvi Latvijā; par iestāšanās procesu; ēdienu piegādes reklāma	Vidējs (13-46 patīk, 0-18 komentāri)

Sakarā ar Covid-19 pandēmiju un tās ietekmi uz mācību procesa organizēšanu klātienē 2020. gadā bija lielāks esošo un topošo studentu jautājumu skaits par iestāšanās procesu, vīzas saņemšanas iespējām, ceļojumu ierobežojumiem.

### **Secinājumi** **Conclusions**

2020. gadu iezīmēja Covid-19 pandēmija, kuras rezultātā bija ierobežotas klātienē mācības Latvijas augstskolās, un tas būtiski ietekmēja arī ārzemju studentu iestāšanās procesu. Tā rezultātā Latvijas augstskolu komunikācija tiešsaistē, tai skaitā arī *Facebook*, ieguva vēl lielāku nozīmi, kļūstot par vienu no pamatkanāliem saskarsmei ar esošajiem un potenciālajiem reflektantiem. Piecu pētīto Latvijas augstskolu *Facebook* vietņu vidū sociālo tīklu lietotājiem saistošāku pieredzi spēja piedāvāt BAT, par ko liecina augstāki ER, LR un TR

rādītāji. Tomēr šai vietnei salīdzinājumā ar citu (lielāku) augstskolu vietnēm bija mazāks sekotāju skaits. Turklāt šī augstskola aktīvāk atbildēja uz lietotāju komentāriem, iesaistoties dialogā.

Ne vienmēr liels sekotāju un publikāciju skaits nozīmē arī labāku sekotāju iesaistīšanās līmeni un aktivitāti, tāpēc ir būtiski izvēlēties lietotāju interesēm atbilstošu informāciju. RSU vietnē noteikti trūkst atsauksmju sadaļas, kamēr pārējām augstskolām (RTU, LU) noteikti būtu jāreaģē uz atsauksmēm un jautājumiem, radot atgriezenisko saiti. Kā pozitīvu aspektu jāatzīmē LU aktīvāka tēmturu izmantošana, pārējām augstskolām arī būtu jāievieš šī prakse katrā publikācijā. Visām augstskolām ieteicams plašāk reklamēt savu piedāvājumu ārvalstu studentiem, pielietojot pieredzes mārketinga instrumentus ārvalstu studentu piesaistei Latvijas augstskolās.

Kopumā ārvalstu studentu *Facebook* grupu analīze parādīja, ka Latvijā šādu grupu skaits ir neliels, pārsvarā tās nebija aktīvas, to dalībnieki nelabvēlīgi komentēja vai atklāti reaģēja uz dažāda satura publikācijām. Tomēr jāatzīmē, ka personiskākas publikācijas ieguva vairāk “patīk” atzīmju un komentāru, liecinot par nepieciešamību veidot personiskāku dialogu ar studentiem sociālajos tīklos.

### Summary

The year of 2020 has been marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, in the result of which full-time on-site studies at Latvian higher education institutions were restricted, and it also significantly affected the enrolment process of foreign students. As a result – online communication of Latvian higher education institutions gained more importance, thus becoming one of the main communication channels with existing and potential applicants.

During the research of *Facebook* sites of five Latvian higher education institutions', BUT offered a more attractive experience for social network users, as evidenced by higher rate of *Engagement rate*, *Love rate* and *Talk rate* indicators. However, this site had a smaller number of followers than the site of (bigger) higher education institutions. Yet, this higher education institution was more active in responding to user comments by engaging in a dialogue. The more active use of *hashtags* at the University of Latvia should be noted as a positive aspect, while other higher education institutions should also introduce this practice in every publication.

Overall, the analysis of Facebook groups for foreign students, that the number of such groups in Latvia is small, and mostly those weren't active, as their participants unfavourably commented or openly reacted to publications of various content. However, it should be noted, that more personal publications received more “like” marks and comments, indicating the need for a more personal dialogue with students on social networks. Many experiential marketing tools can be used for communication on social networks, as they ensure a high degree of consumer involvement through interactive communication opportunities, direct dialogue with consumers, feedback cultivating opportunities.

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## REINSTATING FUNCTIONALISM IN THE FIGURATIONAL APPROACH TO ORGANIZATIONS

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**Abstract.** *Over the past two decades, there have been attempts to apply ideas from figurational sociology founded by Norbert Elias in research of different aspects of organizational life. The central contributions are derived from his theory of the civilizing process and the principles of process sociology. While this research mostly is relevant for contemporary organization theory, many contributions tend to emphasize Elias's relational approach to the neglect of his functionalism, which underlies the whole corpus of Elias's works. Rediscovery of Elias's functionalism opens up the way for a fruitful reinterpretation of the central concept of his sociology, figuration, and enables to find new ways of combining figurational sociology with more familiar approaches to organization theory, in particular, with contingency theory. This helps to identify the factor of technology in the theory of the civilizing process and place it in the context of the concepts of figurational sociology such as interdependence, power and subjectivity, which enhances the analytical strength of figurational approach to organizations. The paper discusses some applications of figurational sociology to date and points to new directions in the study of organizations with the use of the conceptual tools of figurational approach.*

**Keywords:** *civilizing process, figuration, functionalism, interdependence, organization, relationism, technology.*

### Introduction

In the field of organization studies there has been increase of interest in the works of Norbert Elias and attempts to apply his theories to the study of various types of organizations. Elias's most widely known work is the theory of the civilizing process, the study of the change of *habitus* in societies of Western Europe (Elias, 2000). On the level of theoretical reflection he elaborated the concepts of figuration, *habitus*, power, processual relationships between individuals and society, and his approach came to be known as figurational sociology. The term 'figuration' was derived from a more commonly used term configuration, and in fact he sometimes used this latter word in his writings as well. Figurations are defined as "networks of interdependent human beings, with shifting asymmetrical power balances" (Mennell, 1998, p.252). Elias applied the concept of figuration to the study of state formation in France and in his research

of the court of the French king, but he argued that all social formations, such as families, schools, towns, bureaucracies and social strata are *figurations*, the webs of human interdependencies (Elias, 1978, p.15).

Elias did not study specifically modern organizations, but organization and management scholars have applied Elias's approach to study organizations as figurations. In his works Elias has weaved a complex web of ideas around the concept of figuration. Thus, he argued that certain forms of interdependencies are conducive for development of particular forms of *habitus* (social personality structure, psychic make-up), that sociogenesis is connected with psychogenesis. This aspect of Elias's works attracted attention of organization scholars in order to better understand the formation of organizational subjectivity in the rapidly changing world. As organizational forms are changing, how does that impact on behavior, self-regulation, attitudes and identities of those involved in them? This is a question with practical implications for managers of all kinds of organizations, including educational institutions. Elias's theories can help to address this issue.

In a recent publication Robert van Krieken has provided an overview of contributions of figural research of organizations and advocated for the development of process-figural theory in organization studies (van Krieken, 2018). This research demonstrates the fruitful use of the works of Elias for the study of organizations and management. For example, Elias's concept of power balance has been useful for the study of power relationships within and between organizations. Elias's conception of social change as partly unplanned process has been used in the study of organizational change, implementation of strategies and dynamics of organizational fields (Dopson, 2001). His refined conceptualization of the relationships between individuals and society furnish organization researchers with better tools to understand the relationships between agency and structure and the processes of organizational learning (Connolly & Dolan, 2012; Stacey, 2003). Figural approach to organizations may be seen as an alternative to institutionalism, actor-network theory, Foucauldian conceptions and technically oriented management systems.

This literature, however, raises concern about the accuracy of interpretation of the works of Elias. Some authors have characterized Elias's approach as relational (van Krieken, 2018; Connolly, 2016; Stacey, 2007; Kaspersen & Gabriel, 2008). While it is true that Elias used relational categories in his research, considering his work as representing 'relationism' leads to misunderstanding of his sociology and distortions in application of his works to organizations. Unbiased reading of his books and essays makes it clear that Elias followed functionalist mode of reasoning and in fact used the concept of function frequently throughout all his major publications. But his functionalism is processual and compatible with conflict theory, which makes it different from structural functionalism. This article critiques abstract relationism as a way of interpretation

of Elias's sociology and with the reference to his works shows that functionalism was cognate to his mode of thinking. It argues that the 'discovery' of Elias's functionalism can be helpful in the application of his theories to the field of organizations. Reinstating functionalism in the applications of Elias's sociology to organizations can stimulate dialogue between figurational and more 'traditional' approaches to organizations and introduce technology in figurational sociology. Taking account of technology is topical for figurational approach because it is evident that technology nowadays is a significant trigger of social change.

### **The Issue of Relationism**

There is a ground to see relational thinking in Elias's sociology. He often emphasized the fundamental directedness of human beings towards each other, which finds expression in human psychology, social interdependence and even in anatomic build-up. He continuously criticized the over-individualized image of human beings as autonomous actors opposed to groups and society, – an image which is still widespread in social sciences. He called it a *homo clausus* view of the humans, and counterposed to that his *homines aperti* conception of human beings. Humans, he pointed out, develop their identities in the process of interaction; their goals, their interests arise in relations with other people and gratifications which people seek are derived from the social intercourse and in relations with other humans. A child can become an adult only through relationships of the child with the grownups surrounding him. The very process of individualization is the social process, as Elias has stressed, and is determined and made possible by certain configurations of the social structure. The psychical make-up, the human *habitus*, is formed in figurations. These figurations are in the process of change, the process of historical development; and, likewise, the human subjectivity, the forms of self-control, the ways of experiencing and expressing of emotions also have histories.

Such approach allowed Elias to put forward his theory of the civilizing process. The main contention in Elias's book "*The Civilizing Process*" is that the forms of behaviour, the psychic make-up, the personality structures of the people in Western Europe (as he studied this process mainly on the case of France) have changed from the medieval ages to early modern and modern times. These changes, from more coarse to more refined, "civilized" behaviour took place in conjunction with the changes of the figurations. Increase of power of the central ruler and gradual pacification of the territory of the French kingdom led to the development of a stronger, more stable, and all-around self-control of the upper strata, and later among common people. Increase of economic interdependence, economic transactions, development of markets compelled people to develop

foresight and calculating ability. These links discovered by Elias are of interest to the study of organizations. Organizations themselves represent various forms of interdependencies, which undergo rapid changes in contemporary world. There may be expected and in fact are observed changes in identities, forms of conduct, self-control and expression of employees brought about by organizational transformations.

In explaining the process of macrosocial change in France from early middle ages to the age of absolutism Elias focused attention on the relations between the king, the nobility and bourgeois groups. These social actors were interdependent, but toward absolutism the dependence of nobility and bourgeoisie on the king rose and the king used that increased dependence on him to strengthen his power. The same players – the king, the nobility and bourgeoisie were in his study of court society, but here he focused more on the inner relationships among the king and courtiers. These relationships were characterized by both cooperation and competition and covert or open power struggles. Elias, observing these figural macrohistorical processes from a highly abstract and detached point of view, compared them with a ‘dance’ (Elias, 2000, p.482).

Abstract relationism is reflected in applications to organization studies and management in peculiar conceptions of organizations. Ralph Stacey argues against the conception of organization as a system or as a whole. Many people, says Stacey, reify organization, talking about it as a thing or a living system, an organism; they anthropomorphise organizations, ascribing to them purpose and direction (Stacey, 2005, p.478; Stacey, 2007, p.298). But organizations do not exist as things, they are imagined. The more adequate way to think about organizations, according to Stacey, is in terms of communicative interaction. The social exists in the patterned processes of interaction: “it is these patterns of communicative interaction, this activity of communication that I take to be the experience of organization. For me, then, organizations are temporal processes, the ongoing action of communication which is both cooperative and competitive...” (Stacey, 2005, p.479). In order to overcome thinking in terms of reified entities, one has to conceptualize organizations in terms of temporal processes: “Organizations are then understood as processes of human relating and it is in the simultaneously cooperative-consensual and conflictual-competitive relating between people that they perpetually construct their future together in the present” (Stacey 2007, p.299).

Dutch management scholar Willem Mastebroek argues that with the help of sociology of Norbert Elias it is possible to overcome excessive complexity and look beneath the stream of fashionable conceptualizations in management and to arrive at the fundamental categories which underlie all theories of organizations; these categories, in Mastebroek’s view, are interdependence/steering and autonomy (Mastebroek, 2002a, p.187; 2002b, p.206). By looking through the



historical development of managerial techniques is it possible to see certain trends, specifically, that, in course of centuries, one can discern the shift from greater steering and discipline towards more autonomy and self-organization. These trends may be observed in different spheres, for example in the army and military tactics and business enterprises. Modern organizational designs took centuries to evolve and crucial precondition for that was the process of development of higher levels of self-discipline, which took many generations to internalize (Mastenbroek, 2002b, p.217). Mastenbroek argues that “organizations are to be viewed from a dynamic relational perspective” (Mastenbroek, 2002a, p.185). He puts forward the following definition: “An organization is a continually changing network of relations” (Mastenbroek, 2002b, p.205).

The problem with these and similar accounts is one-sided way in which the works of Elias have been interpreted and applied to conceptualize organizations. It is simplified and insufficient to see organizations just as networks of relations or as processes of human relating. Elias in fact objected to the attempts to trace his sociological work to philosophical relationism and was critical to ‘relationism’ as a ‘formalistic category’ (Elias in: Kilminster & Wouters, 1995, p.101). He indeed, as Kilminster and Wouters have noted, was a synthesizer, concerned with being sensitive to the complexity of the real social world he studied (Kilminster & Wouters, 1995, p. 83).

### **Processual Functionalism**

Elias argued against reifying conceptions of society and social formations, which picture society or institutions as things, objectified and dehumanized entities (Elias, 1978, p.16). Instead, he suggested that social scientists should think of people as mutually oriented, directed towards each other and linked into networks through various kinds of interdependencies. Elias considered the concept of human interdependence to be the most fundamental for the sociology that he developed. But there are different kinds of interdependencies in humans societies, humans are linked with each other in most diverse ways (Elias, 1978, p.15). Some bonds are affective and personal, other bonds are impersonal, such as occupational specialization or integration into states (Elias, 1978, p.175). Humans are interdependent with each other because people have needs for each other in order to survive and in order to sustain their social identity. Individuals fulfill certain “functions” for each other, that is, regularized activities in the service of others. In “*The Society of Individuals*” Elias used explicitly functionalist language, where he defined society as a “network of the functions which people have for each other” (Elias, 1991, p.16).

He considered it to be a sign of scientific approach to move from the concept of action to the concept of function because the latter expresses a more detached

way of thinking about social reality (Elias, 1978, p.56). Elias did not completely reject the idea of social functions which are performed for society. But he considered that the way the term 'function' is used in structural functionalism is limiting, because it is problematic to speak of societies as closed systems with fixed boundaries, and because a social scientist has to take into account functions performed by a certain actor not just toward the 'system' but also toward the members of the social unit (Elias, 1978, p.12). The concept of the system is static, and Elias preferred to talk about functional interdependencies as *processes*. Functional nexuses of interdependent people are dynamic and changing because of arising new needs and because people are interdependent both through cooperation and competition. Competitive relationships and power struggles within figurations make the outcomes of their interactions unpredictable. The concept of *figuration* has to be reinterpreted in such a way as to point to the functional underpinning of the idea of interdependence. It can be defined as a nexus of functionally interdependent human beings with the shifting power balances.

The concept of interdependence has been widely employed in the figural studies of organizations. But the term is used in a not very definite way. It is not quite clear what is to be counted as interdependence, and what kinds of interdependencies there exist. Thus, British sociologist Tim Newton asks, whether Elias is right to argue that there is a strong correlation between complex interdependencies and a disciplined subjectivity. He argues that one can mention exceptions: "Most individuals are engaged in highly complex economic interdependency webs, yet are blissfully unaware or unconcerned at their predicament. For instance, I will probably never meet the people who grew the cotton that I wear, or the banana that I eat" (Newton, 2001, p.488). The question, however, is whether these examples really constitute interdependence. It may be argued that producers and consumers of banana in current economic conditions are very loosely coupled, or minimally interdependent. From the perspective of international relations that would be merely the case of exchange, not interdependence (Keohane & Nye, 2001).

There is a need for figural sociology to develop a typology of interdependencies, which is a complex task; but it is possible to approach this problem with the use of contingency theory developed in research of organizations. In contingency theory there are distinguished three degrees of interdependence: pooled, sequential and reciprocal. Pooled is the weakest form, the actors involved are dependent on each other only as contributors to the final product they are making. In sequential interdependence the actors are dependent on others for the time and stage of their contribution in the process of production. In reciprocal interdependence actors' actions and decisions are simultaneously dependent on each other (Scott & Davis, 2016, p.127). The crucial component in

contingency theory is technology. Technology furthermore is characterized by higher or lower complexity, and by higher or lower degree of predictability. The principal finding of the contingency theory is that characteristics of technology affect organization structure. For example, if the company works with unit production, then it is likely that technology is not specialized and organization structure is organic. If organization deals with the standardized production, it uses more specialized technology and the organization structure is more formalized. Higher levels of unpredictability are associated with lower standardization, but higher levels of interdependence with greater managerial oversight. There are different ways how to characterize technology and several versions of contingency theory put forward by such authors as Thompson, Perrow and Galbraith (Hatch, 2018); but the point is that technological processes, the kinds of methods and instruments of work are employed in production affect what kinds of interdependencies there will be in the organization and what kind of management style there will be more appropriate. Technologies in fact do influence the structure of social relationships, the forms of interdependencies and the way people conduct themselves.

### **Technology and Figural Research of Organizations**

One of the problems of strictly relational social theory is the conception of causality (Emirbayer, 1997, p.307). There is a danger of circularity in relational thinking. Thus, Stacey, arguing from the relational point of view, puts it in the following way: „Interacting individuals are forming the patterns of their interaction, the social, while at the same time they are being formed as individuals by their patterns of interaction” (Stacey, 2007, p.295). Such „paradoxical” or „dialectical” theory of causality may not be satisfactory for empirically oriented social research and for those seeking more analytical accounts of social change. In many places throughout his works Elias was ambiguous with respect to the issue of causality, but in general he was in favour of multicausal explanations (Elias, 1978).

In his historical account of the changes in Western Europe Elias pointed to the fact that advances in *production and transportation technologies*, long before the industrial era, had led to greater connectivity and interdependence among different geographic areas in Europe (Elias, 2000, p.225). Technological improvements in agriculture have led to the growth of population which induced further division of labour, development of artisanry, occupational specialization and the growth of the cities. These changes gave rise to the markets and monetary exchange, which played an important role in Elias’s explanation of the development of the state as a centralized monopoly on taxation and violence. His account on the centralization of the state of France in high middle ages can be

interpreted in terms of contingency theory, which should not be taken as a surprise, because the state, in fact, *is an organization* ( In „*The Court Society*” Elias encouraged considering the states as organizations (Elias, 2006, 151). Furthermore, in his study of the court society Elias explored how the knightly nobility in France became more dependent on the king and flocked to his court, seeking king’s support and recognition. Their behaviour accordingly changed from the brutish manners of the warriors to the “tamed” and pacified conduct of courtiers. Underlying this change was transformation of a decentralized figuration of feudalism to the centralized figuration of absolutism. But there were particular causes of this transformation. The power base of the nobility had been their military function as mounted warriors, the cavalry, which played important role in the middle ages warfare. From the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century there was a shift in the warfare tactics as the Europeans began to use gunpowder and *firearms* became predominant in battles. The use of firearms required artillery and trained infantry (Tilly, 1992, p.76). From that time on, nobility gradually lost its power base as an independent social group and was ultimately defunctionalized (Elias, 2006, p.166-167, p.311).

Technology, however, is practically absent from the figural accounts of organizations. For instance, Mastenbroek has looked at the forms of organization of battle units in the European armies from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He notices the tendency for the tactical units to become more mobile and capable for autonomous action in the battlefields. Those tactical units which were granted more autonomy and were capable for more independent maneuvering in the battlefield proved to be more effective in warfare (Mastenbroek, 2002a). But he does not pay sufficient attention to the fact that such capability of military units was not only the result of training and discipline but also of the technical improvements of weaponry and communication technologies. Conceptualization of organizations just as networks of relationships gives access only to social-psychological plane of organization processes. Rather, organizations are, as representatives of actor-network theory argue, quite heterogeneous entities composed of people, interactions, strategies, information, technical appliances, and other objects (Callon & Law, 1997).

The links between the patterns of interdependencies and forms of subjectivity, identity, and *habitus*, discovered and studied by Elias and his followers, are informative for contemporary research of organizations. But it is important to acknowledge that the patterns of interdependence in and between organizations are influenced by production and communication technologies, which are rapidly changing in the modern world.

Steward Clegg and Ad van Iterson, using the works of Elias, explored the consequences of organizational changes on the employee’s self-regulation. Contemporary organizations increasingly use ‘non-traditional’ forms of work,

coordination and control (Clegg & van Iterson, 2013). Many companies use more decentralized methods of supervision, practice multi-tasking and job enlargement, work in semi-autonomous work teams, develop more inter-organizational linkages. There is a weakening of temporal and spatial concentration which is seen in such phenomena as teleworking, working from home, geographically distributed work units and virtual teams. Organizations become, as it were, 'liquid'. This situation is very different from traditional organizations when presence in the same physical locations imposed certain obligations on face-to-face contacts and communication. Clegg and van Iterson reflect on the possible effects of these tendencies for the employees' subjectivity and behavior. As a starting point they refer to Elias's observation that denser forms of interdependence lead to stricter self-control. On the one hand, the self-control of employees may be expected to weaken because of the diminished effect of co-presence. On the other hand, the employees may need to develop a strong self-control and foresight because their situations in the organizations are more fluid and precarious and because they are involved in longer and more extensive chains of interdependencies which they must keep in sight. These hypotheses are worth exploring and further elaborating but it must be taken into account that these new forms of work and interdependencies are not just the outcome of long-term processes, as the authors seem to suggest, but were enabled by specific innovations in information and communication technologies. The network form of enterprise, with its flexible inter-organizational cooperation and distanced modes of working and the rise of network economy in general were engendered by the developments in computer technologies and emergence of the internet (Castells, 2000). Closer look at characteristics of these technologies and the forms of cooperation and coordination they facilitate will provide with more precise criteria for assessing the balance between autonomy and interdependence in contemporary organizational processes. This will make possible more accurate studies of the changes in self-regulation and subjectivity of employees.

Another promising direction of inquiry is associated with organizational environment. Under conditions of 'liquid modernity' organizations increasingly exhibit the features of open systems (Clegg & Baumeler, 2010). Employees are mobile and not any longer fully 'contained' in their work places. Their identities are not formed predominantly in the organizations where they are employed. In this context van Krieken raised a relevant issue about conceptualization of the environment in the theories of organizations and modernity (van Krieken, 1996). Elias's works may be of use here because of his emphasis on the dynamic, shifting networks of interdependent individuals. Theories developed in figurational sociology about the civilizing, de-civilizing processes and informalization can be useful. The concepts of *network society* and *digital culture* may be suitable options for describing the modern condition for the purposes of organization

studies (van Dijk, 2020; Miller, 2020). Discussion of individualization by Elias is to some degree paralleled in the works on network society. In this context Elias's contention that individual identities are inseparable from collective "we" identities is important (Elias, 1991). In the liquid world there is increase in the factors and influences which form collective identities. The processes of disembedding, time-space distancing and participation in virtual communities produce new configurations in which collective identities are constructed. Digital technologies also provide new possibilities how people experience their selves and construct the narratives about themselves.

### Conclusion

Research of organizations in which Elias's concepts and theories are applied demonstrate their usefulness and capacity to address the issues which are topical for contemporary organization theory. Interpretation of the works of Elias only in terms of relational approach is limiting and produces a rather narrow view of organizations. In this article it has been argued that the strength of figurational analysis will be enhanced if Elias's functionalism is taken seriously into account when interpreting his concepts. Fuller employment of his open-systems, processual functionalism brings more phenomena of organizational life into focus. Establishing functionalism in the figurational sociology provides a platform for the dialogue with contingency theories, which are based on functionalist paradigm. Another gain is introduction of *technology* as a factor shaping different forms of interdependencies. The study of parameters of production and communication technologies may help to differentiate between types and gradations of interdependence, which will advance figurational sociology in general. Two directions of research are identified. First, theories of figurational approach can be used to study the effects of new forms of organizational coordination and control on the subjectivity, the *habitus*, or self-regulation of the employees. Second, theories of the civilizing and de-civilizing processes, informalization and individualization can help to understand the parameters of change of organizational environments. Advancement of the research in these directions should contribute to a better understanding of forms of subjectivity of individuals occupying different positions in modern organizations, including students, teachers and managers in educational institutions.

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## **PUBLICATION ACTIVITY OF UKRAINIAN HEI ACADEMIC STAFF: A CASE STUDY**

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**Abstract.** *In the Ukrainian education and science systems globalization and European integration processes have raised the issue of visibility for Ukrainian scientists. Having the articles in Scopus and Web of Science indexed journals is becoming of particular significance for scientists' authority rise and universities' prestige. Despite the appropriate state of the educational policy, the publishing activity of the majority of Ukrainian Higher Education Institutions' academic staff still remains insufficient, and to date, a very few empirical research has been carried out to determine reasons for that. The aim of this study was therefore, to investigate how such factors as corporate culture of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, academic career, research and language skills, personal development, financial support etc. contribute to and prevent successful publication activity of University's academic staff. Two groups of academicians were interviewed. The results showed that it is necessary to create the conditions for the research culture development, develop the research competence, provide systemic monitoring of publication activity, and improve the mechanisms of financial rewards.*  
**Keywords:** *Higher Education Institutions' academic staff, publication activity, research skills, scientometrics, Scopus, Web of Science.*

### **Introduction**

Research productivity and impact are determined today by a variety of different web tools (for organizations – In Cites based on Web of Science, SciVal based on Scopus; for the researchers – h-index). Scientometric data are considered to be the indicators of competitiveness, success and social impact of the scientific work. The main sources of data are world famous databases – Scopus and Web of Science platforms that help to build ratings of publication activity of academic staff (Comparative research, Pratikno, 2018).

In the field of higher education, this was reflected in the impact on the career of the academic staff who faced the need to increase h-index constantly and the number of scientific articles in journals with a high impact factor; and also playing

role in the formation of university rankings (Shanghai rating (ShanghaiRanking Consultancy, 2020), Times Higher Education, national rankings (Times Higher Education & Thomson Reuters, 2020), which have included scientometric indicators in their methodology.

Such a great influence of scientometric indicators at institutional and individual levels has caused some concerns in the scientific community, which has become particularly acute in recent years. Various studies have repeatedly indicated: how to ensure the correction of numerous errors in the databases, for instance, incorrect indexing of so-called Online-First paper, duplicate publications, and the missing / incorrect indexing of references? (Franceschini, 2016); how to regulate the significant growth of extreme self-citing scientists who want to artificially enhance their performance? (Seebera et al., 2019).

Researchers agree that quantitative information cannot be allowed to turn from a tool into an end in itself: «The best decisions are taken by combining robust statistics with sensitivity to the aim and nature of the research that is evaluated. Both quantitative and qualitative evidence are needed; each is objective in its own way» (Leiden Manifesto for Research Metrics, 2015). According to that, state's policies in science and education spheres are directed to form “coherent systems dedicated to the improvement of publication efficiency – adequate support for individual higher education institutions and scholars” (Jeran, 2017) in order to increase quantitative and qualitative indicators of publishing activity.

### **Scientometrics in Ukraine (literature review)**

Comparing the world and Ukrainian trends in the development of scientometrics it can be said that there is a significant gap in many aspects. It is believed that Ukrainian system for evaluating the effectiveness of research activities corresponds only to the tenth principle of the Leiden Manifesto. Accordingly, the other nine principles need to be rethought and implemented at different level (Kostenko & Symonenko, 2016).

Today's national education policy aims at developing new quantitative and qualitative indicators according to the international standards which include: the average h-index value of researchers that work in higher education institutions; the number of scientific publications in the journals included into the Scopus and Web of Science scientometric databases; the number of scientific journals that are included with a non-zero coefficient of influence into the Scopus, Web of Science scientometric databases.

These indicators affect the development of all subjects of educational and scientific activities. Thus, in the context of an individual research career, such requirement as the publication of articles in Scopus and/or Web of Science indexed journals has become a mandatory requirement for awarding academic

titles of professor and associate professor (order of Ministry of education and Science of Ukraine №13 of January 14, 2016 "On approval of the Procedure for awarding scientific titles to scientific and scientific-pedagogical workers").

Moreover, scientometric indicators are taken into account in the procedure for awarding degrees of Doctor of Philosophy: a scientist who has no indexed articles can neither review nor oppose dissertations and participate in a specialized scientific council that awards PhD (Resolution of the Cabinet Of Ministers of Ukraine №167 of March 6, 2019 "On approval of the Procedure for training applicants for higher education for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Science in higher education institutions scientific institutions").

At the organization level scientometric indicators are included in the criteria for granting higher education institutions hierarchical status and relevant privileges, including state funding (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of November 22, 2017 № 912 "On approval of the Procedure and criteria for granting higher education status confirmation or deprivation of this status"; Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of August 22, 2018 № 652 "Some issues of state certification of higher education institutions in terms of their scientific activities").

At the national level scientometric indicators are taken into account in the methodologies of rating universities, take, for example, Consolidated ranking (Osvita.ua, 2020) of Ukrainian universities that uses indicators of the SciVerse Scopus database.

Such state vector for the approval of scientometric indicators has led to the formation of policies for higher education institutions in order to intensify scientific activity, improving research quality in accordance with international standards and presenting the results of the research in journals indexed in Scopus and/or Web of Science.

## **Methodology**

In order to analyze the experience of stimulating the publishing activity of academic staff in 2016-2020 at the Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University (shorter Grinchenko University) such steps have been done:

1. Legal framework, which was developed at the University for the regulation of scientific activities, has been studied: "The corporate standard of scientific activity (Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, 2018)", which presents, in particular, quantitative and qualitative indicators for the monitoring of publication activity; "Leader of the Year" (integrated rating assessment of professional activity of academic staff, presented in the e-system), which takes into account the articles included into Scopus, Web of Science; indicators Google's h-index and

- 10-index; h-index Scopus; h-index Web of Science; "Procedure for awarding the academic titles of professors and associate professors", that defines the minimum number of publications in Scopus and/or Web of Science indexed journals which is necessary demand for advancement in a scientific career.
2. Available mechanisms of financial rewards for publishing activity have been analyzed.
  3. The content analysis of Research Competence Development program, which is annually realized in Grinchenko University, has been made.
  4. Data from the Scopus and Web of Science databases has been processed on the number of articles by Grinchenko University`s academic staff, h-indexes, the language of publications, and quartiles of journals in which researchers are mostly published.

It was outlined the *hypothesis*: the study of the factors that have influence on the publication activity of Borys Grinchenko academic staff provides the opportunity for making relevant administrative decisions in this field in order to increase the ability and motivation of academic staff to publish the articles in Scopus and/or Web of Science indexed journals.

To test these hypotheses, the research has been conducted in order to identify objective and subjective factors that contribute to and hinder the successful publication of articles by Grinchenko University`s academic staff in the scientific journals that are indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. Two **questionnaires** were developed (Q1 and Q2): Q1 consists of 12 items for academicians, who have already published at least one article in Scopus and / or Web of Science indexed journals. As at May 2020, 55 such academicians were identified, and 25 people responded to the questionnaire. The analysis was based on the data obtained from the Scopus and Web of Science database. Q2 consists of 9 items for academicians, who have not articles, published in Scopus / Web of Science indexed journals. As at May 2020, there were 755 such academicians, and 287 people responded to the questionnaire. The survey was conducted using the Google Form G Suite service.

The questions of the questionnaires were aimed at solving the following *research tasks* (RT): RT1 – to identify the internal and external factors that motivated / did not motivate to publish the articles in Scopus and/or Web of Science indexed journals; RT2 – to identify the greatest difficulties encountered in preparing of such articles; RT3 – to identify "success factors" that have helped (according to Q1 respondents) / will probably help (according to Q2 respondents) to publish the articles.

These tasks led us to the suggested interlinked *administrative tasks* (AT): AT1 – to improve administrative measures in order to stimulate publishing activity of academic staff, in particular develop the mechanisms for financial awarding; AT2 – to update the Research Competence Development Program in

accordance with the needs and interests of the academic staff; AT3 – to increase the number of publications of Grinchenko University staff in Scopus / Web of Science indexed journals and, due to this, to increase the ranking position of the University in domestic and international rankings.

### Research Results

The list of external factors that could motivate to publish the articles were formed on the basis of requirements represented in the documents that regulate publication activities at the state and University levels (Figure 1):

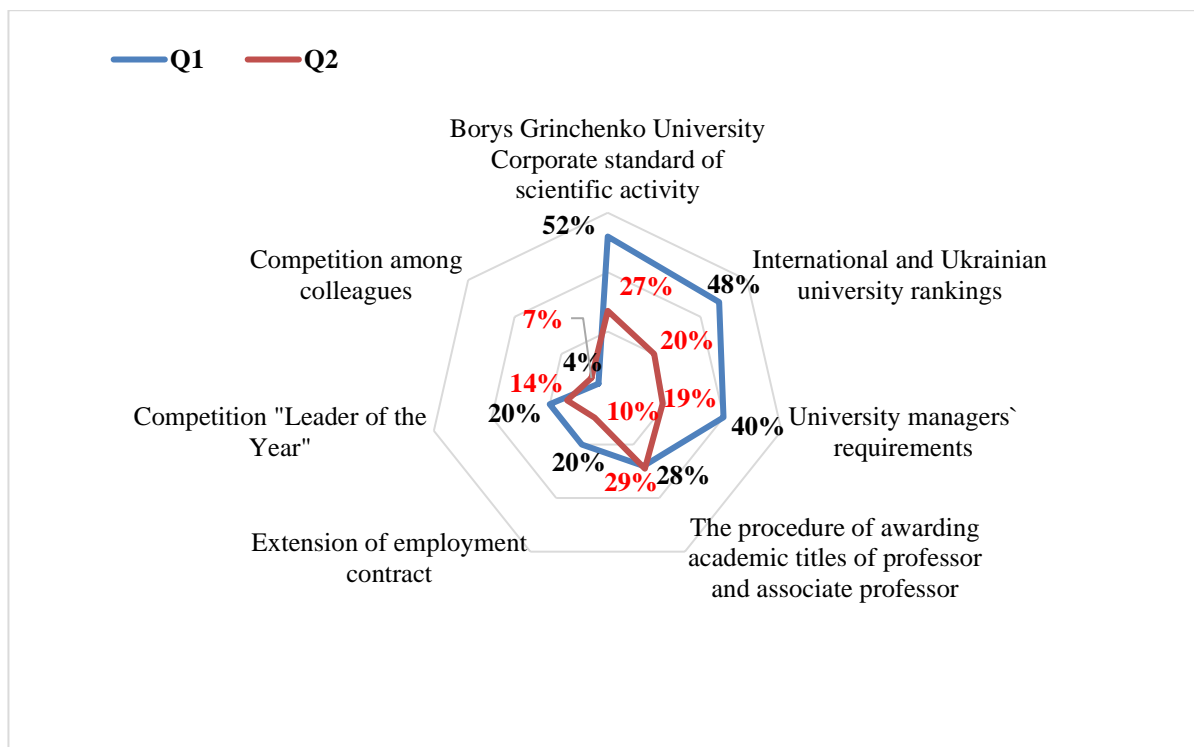


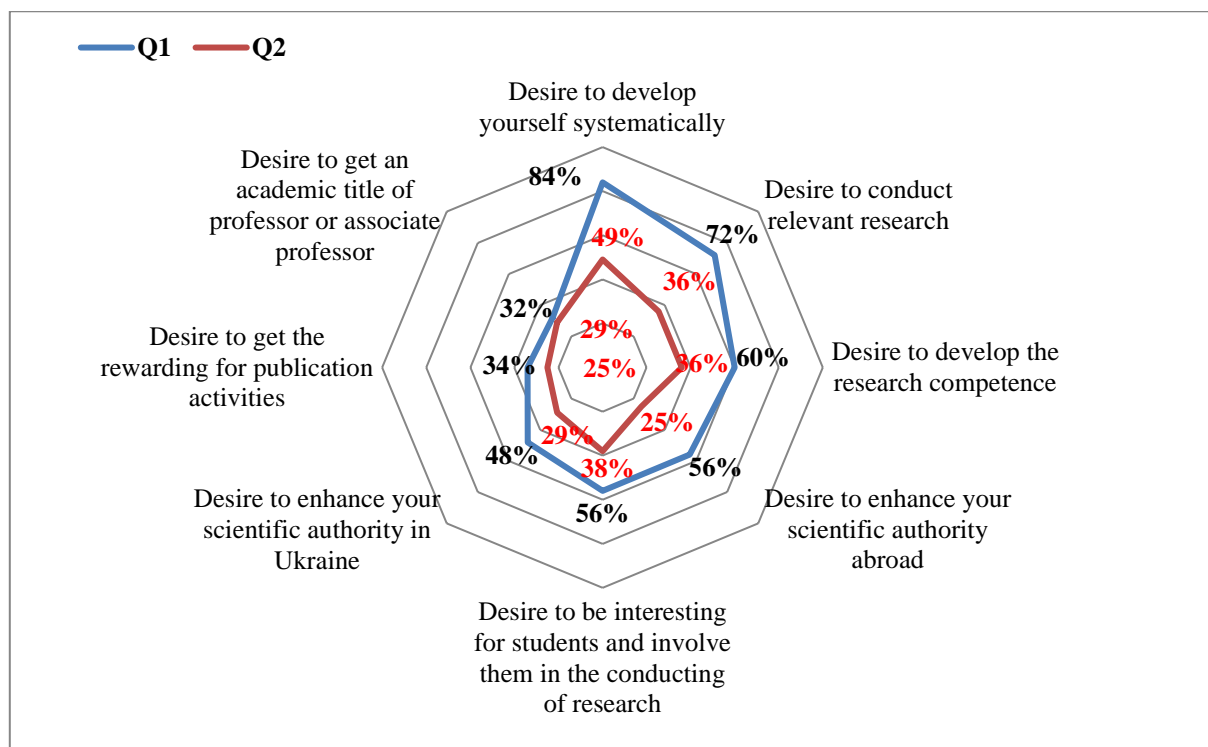
Figure 1 External Factors that Motivated / Did not Motivate to Publish the Articles in Scopus and/or Web of Science Indexed Journals (created by authors)

The results show that Q1 respondents have a greater level of awareness of responsibility for compliance with the Corporate Standard (Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, 2018) and demonstrate the understanding of the connection between their publication activities and the positive image of University formed by rankings, while for Q2 respondents career growth comes to be much more important. It can be suggested that Q1 respondents more often correlate their aims with the aims of University.

The least motivating factors for the publishing activity for both Q1 and Q2 respondents (competition among colleagues and competition "Leader of the Year") demonstrate low influence of these factors on their professional life. The

analysis of the diagram also indicates that in general for Q1 respondents the values of all indicators (except "competition among colleagues" (-3)) are higher in comparison with Q2 respondents. That indicates a greater motivating effect of external factors on those academic staff who have already published their articles in Scopus and/or Web of Science indexed journals.

The list of internal factors that could motivate to publish the articles were studied on the basis of identifying the main desires connected with the personal and professional development (Figure 2):



*Figure 2 Internal Factors that Motivated / Did not Motivate to Publish the Articles in Scopus and/or Web of Science Indexed Journals (created by authors)*

According to the identified data, the most motivating internal factors for both Q1 and Q2 respondents are almost the same.

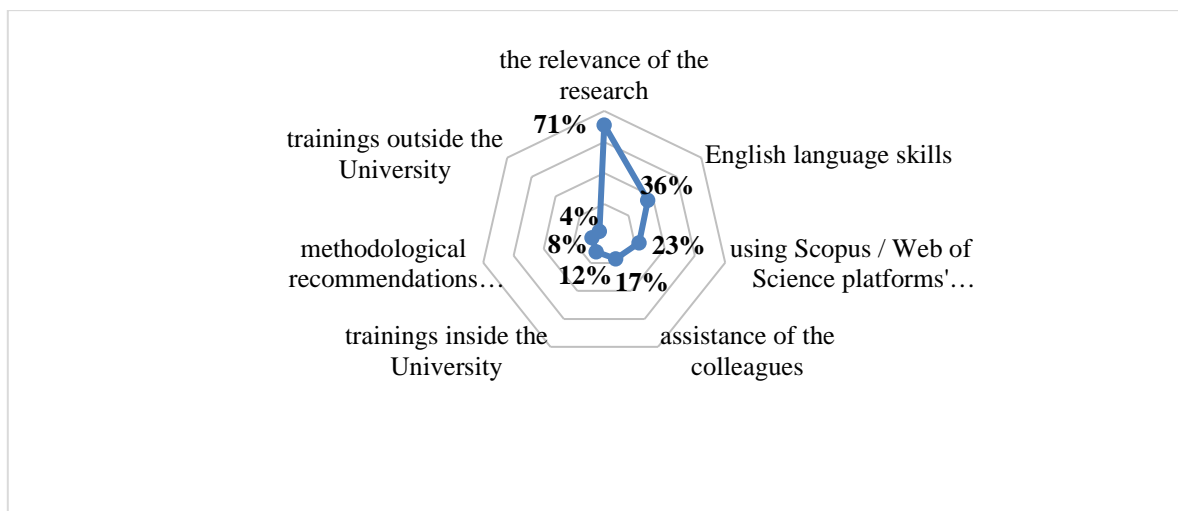
The least motivating internal factors for Q1 respondents (desire to obtain the academic title of professor / associate professor) can be explained by the fact that some respondents have already got these titles and don't need additional financial reward.

It has been suggested that the least motivating internal factors for Q1 respondents (the desire to get the academic title of professor / associate professor and to enhance their authority abroad) are in the long run for that academic staff that do not have any publications in the international peer-reviewed journals.

Comparing the quantitative data from the diagrams 1 and 2, it can be admitted (in evidence:) greater influence of internal motivation factors on the growth of publication activity for both groups of respondents, and overall greater influence of external and internal motivating factors on Q1 respondents than on Q2 respondents (all indicators are about twice as many): Q1: average value for external factors: 31.5; for internal: 55.2; Q2: average value for external factors: 19.3; for internal: 33.3.

The next step was to identify the subjective and objective difficulties that had been arising in the process of writing the article. The answers show that for Q1 respondents, in general, the tasks related to the preparation and publication of an article do not seem very difficult. However, the urgent task is to increase the level of English language proficiency and develop journal search skills.

Analysis of Q2 respondents' answers helps make the conclusion that different difficulties (choosing a topic for research, formatting the article in accordance with the requirements of the journals, formatting the list of sources in accordance with the international standards etc.), to a greater or lesser extent, may be an obstacle to publish the article in Scopus and/or Web of Science indexed journals. Among the most problematic ones – the search for the journal, English language proficiency.



**Figure 3 Factors for the Successful Publishing the Articles in Scopus and/or Web of Science Indexed Journals according to the Q1 Respondents (created by authors)**

The Q1 respondents demonstrate the awareness of relevant research as a determining factor for successful publishing in the indexed journals. Among the least valuable factors according to the Q1 respondents' answers are methodological recommendations prepared at the Grinchenko University that stimulate to review them and adapt to the requirements of indexed journals.

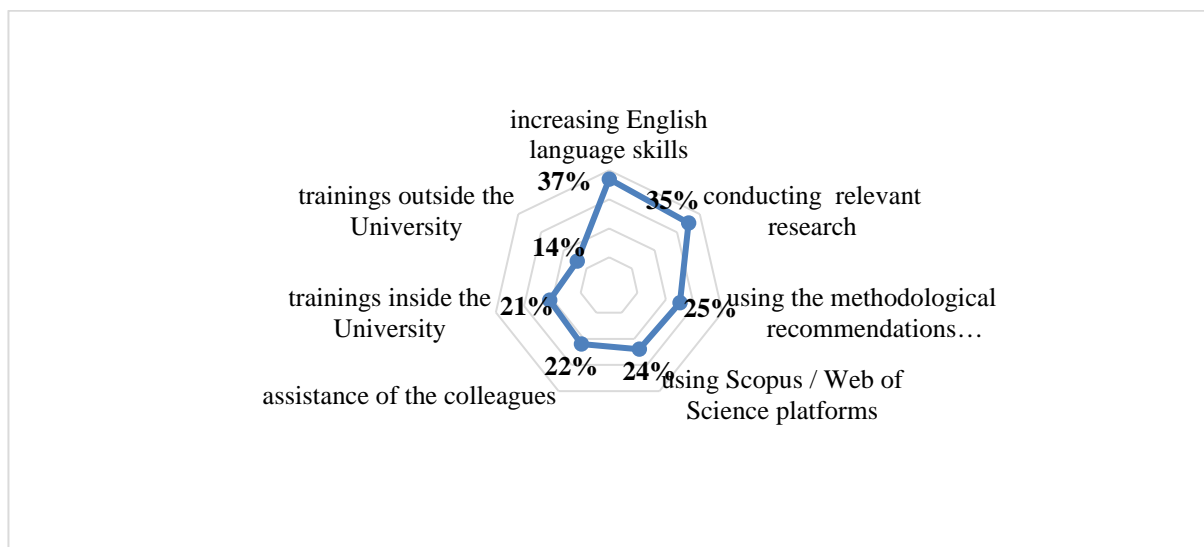


Figure 4 *Hypothetical Success Factors for Publishing the Articles in Scopus and/or Web of Science Indexed Journals according to the Q2 Respondents (created by authors)*

The results reveal the need of Q2 respondents to increase their level of foreign language proficiency and their awareness of the importance of conducting relevant research. It has also been revealed that trainings outside the Grinchenko University are considered to be one of the least important factors of success for both Q1 and Q2 respondents. It may be attributed to the fact that in Ukraine the issue of publishing in indexed journals has become very popular and lots of private organizations make money on it and don't give the quality content.

### Conclusions and Discussion

Studies of the regulatory framework, financial mechanisms, Research Competence Development program, conducting the survey of 25 (questionnaire 1) and 287 (questionnaire 2) respondents and analyzing the results have revealed the objective and subjective factors of low publication activities of Grinchenko University academic staff in Scopus and/or Web of Science indexed journals during 2016-2020. It helps to formulate the main problems and relevant administrative decisions:

- 1) **specifics of the fields of knowledge:** at Grinchenko University human sciences prevail and it is commonly believed that for the representatives of this area it is more difficult to publish the results of their research in the international indexed journals than, for example, it is for representatives of technical fields. In addition to that, there is Institute of Arts in the structure of the Grinchenko University, academic staff of which have shown a very low level of motivation to conduct the research and publish the articles, as they are more focused on artistic



- and educational activities. **Administrative decisions:** a) to take into account the heterogeneity of the research team, in particular by dividing responsibilities at the departmental level between academic staff according to their ability and desire to engage more in science, education or art; b) provide consulting services of the University Library on the search for a journal for publication, literature, etc., especially for representatives of the humanities;
- 2) **poor publishing culture** caused by low level of the most domestic journals which only begin their transformation in accordance with the international standards. What is more, there are too few Ukrainian journals specialized in human sciences that are indexed in Scopus / Web of Science. **Administrative decisions:** to develop the publishing culture by promoting University journals (12 printed and 5 e-journals) to the international databases by the approval of the annual "Action Plan" which will contain the most important tasks such as: assignment DOI identifiers to the articles for the last 4 years; adding the journals into the international databases (DOAJ, Erih Plus, EuroPub etc.); systematic anti-plagiarism checking of the articles for; increasing the number and quality of English-language articles; improvement of the review system etc.;
  - 3) **lack of financial support** (low salaries of Ukrainian academic staff, lack of grant money etc.) – it causes the fact that a significant part of articles has published for free in low quartile (4) journals, which reduces the probability of citing these articles and does not increase the credibility of the scientists. **Administrative decision:** to improve the mechanisms of rewarding for publishing the results of research in the journals indexed in Scopus / Web of Science at the institutional level. One of the main novelty is that the quartile of the journal should be taken into account;
  - 4) **influence of the "old school"** – among the academic community there are lots of representatives that are accustomed to measure the results of their scientific activities by the number of publications in Ukrainian journals, dissertation defense and writing monographs which are not considered to be authoritative achievements in the world scientific community. **Administrative decision:** to conduct systematic educational and motivational activities on the level of middle managers (heads of departments), attaching those colleagues who have already had successful experience in publishing their articles in Web of Science and Scopus in order to increase the understanding the importance of conducting relevant research, publishing activities and their

- opportunities for professional career and status of Grinchenko University at the national and international levels;
- 5) **lack of research skills and needs in constant development of the research competence. Administrative decision:** to improve the Research Competence Development program by developing new trainings such as: "Opportunities of Web of Science and Scopus platforms for researchers"; "Selection of the journal for publication in Scopus and Web of Science". "Author profile and Researcher ID in Publons, synchronization with ORCID, author IDs and indicators of publication activity"; "Text editing services"; "Verification of scientific texts for plagiarism" etc.

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# IEKŠĒJĀS KOMUNIKĀCIJAS SAISTĪBA AR EMOCIONĀLO INTELEKTU PROJEKTU KOMANDĀS ORGANIZĀCIJĀ “X”

## *Correlation of Internal Communication with Emotional Intelligence in Project Teams in Organization “X”*

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**Abstract.** Nowadays, due to the fierce market competition, the volume, complexity and requirements of projects are increasing, resulting in intensive communication in project teams. Statistics show that one out of five projects is unsuccessful due to ineffective communication. The role of emotional intelligence in project management has been little studied, but it is believed that promoting emotional intelligence can improve internal communication within the project team. The aim of the research was to study the emotional intelligence and internal communication correlation of project managers and team members in organization “X” in order to develop proposals for the management of organization “X” for promoting emotional intelligence and improving internal communication. The emotional intelligence of project managers and team members was measured by using a survey of emotional and social intelligence competencies. Internal communication in project teams was assessed by using a survey based on aspects of effective internal communication within the project team. The results of the study showed that there is a statistically significant and strong correlation between emotional intelligence of project managers and team members and internal communication in project teams. “Self-management” and “social awareness” or the ability to adapt to other people were identified as the most important competencies of emotional intelligence which are required in order to improve internal communication.

**Keywords:** emotional intelligence, internal communication, project management, project team.

### **Ievads**

#### ***Introduction***

Mūsdienās, saskaroties ar sīvu tirgus konkurenci, pieaug projektu apjoms, sarežģītība un prasības pēc ātruma un precizitātes, kas rezultējas ar intensīvu komunikāciju projektu komandās (Khosravi, Rezvani, & Ashkanasy, 2020).

Statistika rāda, ka 61% no liela mēroga projektiem netiek pabeigti laikā vai ir neveiksmīgi un ka 1 no 5 projektiem ir neveiksmīgs komunikācijas problēmu dēļ (Maqbool, Sudong, Manzoor, & Rashid, 2017).

Aptuveni 90% no projekta kopējā laika projektu vadītājs pavada komunicējot ar projekta komandu un ieinteresētajām pusēm, kas liek lielāku uzsvāru projektu vadītājiem attīstīt cilvēku vadīšanas prasmes, no kurām emocionālais intelekts ir atzīts par vienu no svarīgākajām prasmēm (Hynes, 2019).

Nesen veiktā pētījumā tika atzīta 95% emocionālā intelekta kompetenču saistība ar projektos identificētajām problēmām, tajā skaitā konfliktiem, kas radušies komunikācijas problēmu dēļ. Pētījumā tika konstatēts, ka tālākai izpētei nepieciešams padziļināti izpētīt ne tikai projektu vadītāju, bet arī projektu komandu dalībnieku emocionālā intelekta ietekmi uz kādu no projektos identificētajām problēmām (Livesey, 2017).

Līdz šim lielākā daļa emocionālā intelekta pētījumu ir veikti individuālā līmenī. Pētnieki ir ierosinājuši, ka tas ir jāpārbauda arī komandas līmenī (Lee & Wong, 2019).

Neskatoties uz to, ka organizācija "X" ir viena no vadošajām organizācijām Baltijas valstīs, tajā strādājošie projektu vadītāji atzīst, ka traucējošākais ikdienas darbā, kas negatīvi ietekmē projektu gaitu ir pārpratumi, kas radušies komunikācijas problēmu dēļ.

Pētījuma mērķis ir izpētīt organizācijas "X" projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālā intelekta saistību ar iekšējo komunikāciju, lai izstrādātu priekšlikumus organizācijas "X" vadībai emocionālā intelekta veicināšanai un iekšējās komunikācijas uzlabošanai.

Lai sasniegtu pētījumā izvirzīto mērķi, projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālā intelekta novērtēšanai tika izvēlēta emocionālā un sociālā intelekta kompetenču aptauja (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013) un, izmantojot efektīvas iekšējās komunikācijas aspektus projektu komandā, iekšējās komunikācijas novērtēšanai aptauja (Muszynska, 2018).

Pētījuma jautājumi: Kādā mērā projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālais intelekts ietekmē iekšējo komunikāciju projekta komandā? Kādas no emocionālā intelekta kompetencēm ir nozīmīgākās projekta komandas iekšējās komunikācijas uzlabošanā? Vai pastāv statistiski nozīmīgas atšķirības starp emocionālo intelektu un iekšējo komunikāciju projektu komandās atkarībā no dzimuma, vecuma un amata?

Emocionālā intelekta nozīme projektu vadībā ir maz pētīta, taču pastāv uzskats, ka veicinot emocionālo intelektu, var uzlabot iekšējo komunikāciju projekta komandā. Pētījums izstrādāts, lai aicinātu projektu vadītājus pievērst lielāku uzmanību emocionālā intelekta nozīmei, lai samazinātu pārpratumu biežumu un uzlabotu iekšējo komunikāciju projektu komandās.

## **Literatūras apskats** ***Review of Literature***

Emocionālā intelekta jēdziena parādīšanās 20. gadsimta pēdējā desmitgadē pētnieku vidē izraisīja daudz diskusiju. Tas notika divu šķietami savstarpēji izslēdzošu psiholoģisko jēdzienu “emociju” un “intelekta” apvienošanas dēļ. Tika atklāts, ka emocijas, ja tās tiek pareizi vadītas, var veicināt racionālu domāšanu, atvieglojot lēmumu pieņemšanu un virzot indivīdus uz pareizu rīcību (Wolfe, 2019).

Par emocionālā intelekta jēdzienu pētniekiem ir atšķirīgs redzējums, tāpēc literatūrā ir atrodamas vairākas emocionālā intelekta definīcijas. Salovejs (Salovey) un Maijers (Mayer) emocionālo intelektu definēja kā emocionālo un garīgo spēju kopumu, kas palīdz kontrolēt savas un citu emocijas, atšķirt tās un izmantot informāciju, lai vadītu otra domāšanu un rīcību. Turpretim, Golemans (Goleman) paskaidroja, ka emocionālais intelekts ir balstīts uz kompetencēm, kas palīdz atpazīt un regulēt savas un citu emocijas, sevis un citu motivēšanai, kā arī savu emociju pārvaldīšanā, bet Beirons (Bar-On) emocionālo intelektu definēja kā nekognitīvās spējas, kompetences un prasmes, kas ietekmē indivīda spēju veiksmīgi tikt galā ar vides prasībām (Subhashini & Shaju, 2016).

Emocionālā un sociālā intelekta kompetence ir apgūta spēja, kas balstīta uz emocionālo intelektu, veicinot efektīvu sniegumu darbā. Pēc Golemana un Bojaci (Goleman & Boyatzis) uzskatiem, emocionālais intelekts tiek novērots, personai demonstrējot tādas kompetences, kā “sevis apzināšanos”, “sevis vadīšanu”, “sociālo apzināšanos” un “attiecību vadību” atbilstošā laikā un pietiekami bieži, lai būtu efektīvs situācijā (Livesey, 2017).

Neskatoties uz to, ka pētniekiem ir atšķirīgs redzējums par emocionālā intelekta definīciju, tos vieno kopīga ideja, ka emocionālais intelekts ir spēja atpazīt, izprast, regulēt savas un citu emocijas un atbilstoši reaģēt (Hynes, 2019).

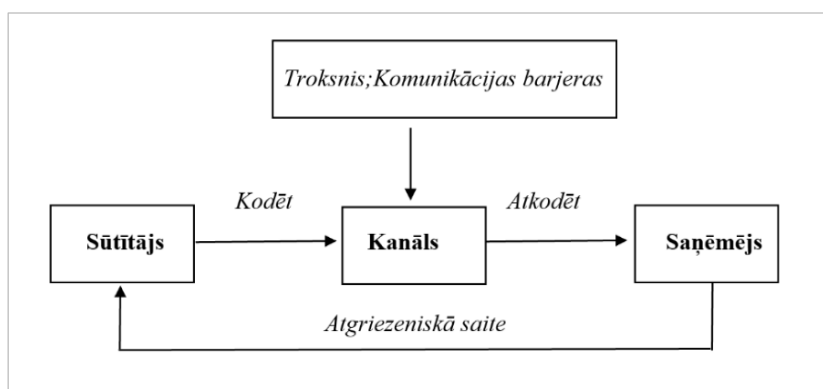
Dins un citi (Din et al., 2018) emocionālo intelektu dēvē par vienu no personības nozīmīgākajiem faktoriem, uzskatot to par profesionālās veiksmes priekšnoteikumu un apgalvo, ka panākumu gūšanai nepietiek tikai ar tehniskajām zināšanām un augstu intelekta koeficientu (IQ), bet ir nepieciešams arī emocionālais intelekts.

Emocionālais intelekts sastāda 58 % no darba snieguma neatkarīgi no darba specifikas. Turklāt, 90 % darbinieku ar augstu sniegumu darbā, ir arī augsts emocionālā intelekta līmenis un tikai 20 % darbiniekiem ar zemu sniegumu darbā ir augsts emocionālais intelekts (Hynes, 2019).

Autori ir pierādījuši emocionālā intelekta saistību ar projektu veiksmi – skaidru un precīzu komunikāciju, pienākumiem un lomām komandā, uzticību, darbinieku atbalstu un procesiem, kas samazina neskaidrības (Lee & Wong, 2019; Livesey, 2017; Khosravi, Rezvani, & Ashkanasy, 2020).

Iekšējā komunikācija projekta komandā tiek definēta kā informācijas apmaiņa starp projekta vadītāju un projekta komandas dalībniekiem (Hermarij, 2017). Komunikācija ir nozīmīga katrā projekta dzīves cikla posmā, projekta procesu plānošanā, izpildē, uzraudzībā un kontrolē, pieprasot un nosūtot informāciju, uzdodot jautājumus, sniedzot instrukcijas un vadot komandu (Muszynska, 2018).

Projektu laikā bieži tiek fiksētas komunikācijas problēmas (komunikācijas pārrāvumi, pārpratumi u.c.), kas komunikācijas procesā visbiežāk rodas pie ziņojuma atkodēšanas, kas atspoguļots 1. attēlā.



1.attēls. *Komunikācijas modelis* (Wang & Li, 2017)  
Figure 1 *Model of Communication* (Wang & Li, 2017)

Ziņojuma atkodēšanu var ietekmēt vairāki faktori, piemēram, troksnis, komunikācijas barjeras vai jebkas cits, kas traucē ziņojuma pārraidīšanu. Viens no galvenajiem iemesliem ir komunikācijas barjeras jeb uztveres barjeras, kas rodas no katra indivīda uztveres, personības, attieksmes, izglītības līmeņa, pieredzes, individuālas patikas vai nepatikas, emocijām un aizspriedumiem, kas sagroza uztvertās informācijas jēgu. Uztveres barjeras rodas situācijās, kad indivīdi uztver vienu un to pašu informāciju dažādos veidos. Informācijas uztveršanu un komunikācijas procesu negatīvi ietekmē arī personas, kuras baidās izteikt emocijas vai kurām ir spēcīgas patikas vai nepatikas emocijas, kas traucē uztvert un saprast informāciju (PMI, 2017).

Komunikācija ietver tādas prasmes, kā runāšana un rakstīšana (informācijas kodēšana), klausīšanās (informācijas atkodēšana), organizatorisko jēdzienu interpretācija, domāšana un argumentācija (kodēšana un atkodēšana), kā arī modrība uz neverbāliem signāliem, stresa un emocionālu jautājumu risināšana projektu laikā (Hermarij, 2017).

Komunikācija ir efektīva, ja tā sasniedz pirms sarunas izvirzīto mērķi un noved pie rezultāta (Muszynska, 2018). Efektīva iekšējā komunikācija projekta

laikā nodrošina, pareizās informācijas apmaiņu starp pareizajām personām, pareizā laikā un izmaksu efektīvā veidā (PMBOK, 2017).

Komunikācijas procesā emocijas būtiski ietekmē vēstījumu. Emocionālais intelekts ietver verbālās un neverbālās izpausmes novērtējumu un regulēšanu. Pētījumā tika atklāta cieša saistība starp emocionālo intelektu un komunikāciju (Ozkaral & Ustu, 2019).

Jaunākie pētījumi par emocionālā intelekta saistību ar komandas iekšējo komunikāciju ir veikti medicīnas nozarē, kur ir atklāta nozīmīga saistība starp emocionālo intelektu un komandas iekšējo komunikāciju (Raeissi et al., 2019; Amini, Nabiee, & Delavari, 2019; Meng & Qi, 2018).

Lai nodrošinātu efektīvu komunikāciju un novērstu pārpratumus, ir jāfunkcionē visiem komunikācijas procesa komponentiem. Lai izvairītos no pārpratumiem, būtiska ir arī atgriezeniskās saites nozīme komunikācijas procesā, pārliecinoties par vēstījuma saprotamību (Zulch, 2014; Butt et al., 2016). Raksturojot efektīvu komunikāciju, Zulča (Zulch, 2014) uzsver, cik svarīgi ir nodrošināt atklātu saziņu starp vadītāju un komandas dalībniekiem, lai novērstu pārpratumus. Savstarpējai komunikācijai ir jābūt vienkāršai un dublētai, jo atgriezeniskās saite ir būtiska, lai noskaidrotu nodoto informāciju un ziņojumu.

## **Metodoloģija** *Methodology*

Lai sasniegtu pētījumā izvirzīto mērķi, projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālā intelekta novērtēšanai tika izvēlēta emocionālā un sociālā intelekta kompetenču aptauja (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013) un iekšējās komunikācijas novērtēšanai aptauja, izmantojot efektīvas iekšējās komunikācijas aspektus projektu komandā (Muszynska, 2018).

Emocionālā un sociālā intelekta kompetenču aptauju veido 32 apgalvojumi, kas sadalīti 4 vērtību skalās: sevis apzināšanās, sevis vadīšana, sociālā apzināšanās un attiecību vadība. Apgalvojumi tika vērtēti pēc Likerta 6 punktu skalas ar atbilstošiem variantiem: pilnībā nepiekrītu (1 punkts), nepiekrītu (2 punkti), drīzāk nepiekrītu (3 punkti), drīzāk piekrītu (4 punkti), piekrītu (5 punkti), pilnībā piekrītu (6 punkti). Respondentu emocionālais intelekts tiek vērtēts pēc aptaujā iegūto punktu skaita, jo lielāks ir aptaujā iegūto punktu skaits, jo augstāks ir emocionālais intelekts.

Pārbaudot emocionālā intelekta pantu kopu iekšējo rezultātu saskaņotību, rezultāti rāda, ka emocionālā intelekta aptaujas pantu kopu Kronbaha alfa koeficients ir 0.93 ( $\alpha > 0.9$ ), kas nozīmē, ka kopējā emocionālā intelekta iekšējo rezultātu saskaņotība ir izcila.

Lai noskaidrotu projektu komandu iekšējo komunikāciju tika izvēlēti 22 apgalvojumi, kurus izstrādājusi Muzinska (Muszynska, 2018), balstoties uz



efektīvas iekšējās komunikācijas aspektiem projekta komandā. Aptauju veidoja 22 apgalvojumi, kas tika sadalīti 3 vērtību skalās: skaidra un precīza komunikācija, komunikācijas prasmes un apmierinātība ar komunikāciju. Apgalvojumi tika vērtēti pēc Likerta 6 punktu skalas ar atbilžu variantiem: pilnībā nepiekrītu (1 punkts), nepiekrītu (2 punkti), drīzāk nepiekrītu (3 punkti), drīzāk piekrītu (4 punkti), piekrītu (5 punkti), pilnībā piekrītu (6 punkti).

Veicot iekšējās komunikācijas aptaujas skalu ticamības pārbaudi, rezultāti rāda, ka kopējais iekšējās komunikācijas pantu kopu Kronbaha alfa koeficients ir 0.94 ( $\alpha > 0.9$ ), kas nozīmē, ka iekšējās komunikācijas skalu kopējā iekšējo rezultātu saskaņotība ir izcila.

Kopumā organizācijā tiek nodarbināti 95 projektu vadītāji, no kuriem pētījumā piedalījās 54 projektu vadītāji un 48 projektu komandu dalībnieki. Rezultāti rāda, ka no aptaujātajiem 102 respondentiem, lielāko daļu jeb 53% sastāda vīrieši un 47% sievietes. Respondentu vecums svārstās vecuma grupās no 18 - 25 gadiem līdz 50 gadiem un vairāk. Lielākā daļa jeb 30% respondentu ir vecumā no 31 līdz 39 gadiem un no 40 līdz 49 gadiem (31%), tikai 8% respondentu ir vecuma grupā no 50 gadiem un vairāk. Respondentu darba pieredze uzņēmumā svārstās no darba pieredzes, kas ir mazāka par vienu gadu līdz pat pieredzei, kas ir ilgāka par 10 gadiem.

Pētījumā iegūtie dati tika apstrādāti ar *IBM SPSS Statistics 25.0* statistisko datu apstrādes datorprogrammu.

Pētījuma ierobežojumi: Pētījums veikts organizācijas "X" ražošanas un IT struktūrvienību ietvaros.

### **Pētījuma rezultāti un diskusija** *Results and Discussion*

Rezultāti rāda, ka aritmētiskais vidējais pēc Likerta 6 punktu skalas emocionālajam intelektam ir 4.60 un iekšējai komunikācijai projekta komandā 4.50, kas nozīmē, ka organizācijas "X" projektu komandu emocionālais intelekts un iekšējās komunikācijas novērtējums ir samērā augsts.

Kolmogorova Smirnova testa rezultāti rāda, ka emocionālā intelekta un iekšējās komunikācijas dimensiju dati neatbilst normālsadalījumam, tāpēc turpinot datu analīzi, tika izmantotas neparametriskās datu analīzes metodes.

Lai noskaidrotu, vai pastāv statistiski nozīmīga saistība starp emocionālā intelekta kompetencēm un iekšējo komunikāciju projektu komandās un kādas no projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālā intelekta kompetencēm ir nozīmīgākās projekta komandas iekšējās komunikācijas uzlabošanā, tika pielietota Spīrmena korelācija. Iegūtie rezultāti tika atspoguļoti 1.tabulā.

*1.tabula. Spīrmena korelācijas koeficienti emocionālā intelekta un iekšējās komunikācijas skalām (autoru veidota)*

*Table 1 Spearman Correlation Coefficients for Emotional Intelligence and Internal Communication Scales (created by the authors)*

Mainīgais (Skala)	Vidējais aritmētiskais	Standart-novirze	Spīrmena korelācijas koeficienti					
			(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Sevis apzināšanās (A)	4.85	0.64	1					
Sevis vadīšana (B)	4.46	0.62	0.56**	1				
Sociālā apzināšanās (C)	4.68	0.60	0.50**	0.43**	1			
Attiecību vadība (D)	4.58	0.56	0.51**	0.67**	0.58**	1		
Iekšējā komunikācija (E)	4.50	0.62	0.55**	0.61**	0.67**	0.59**	1	

\*\* Korelācija ir nozīmīga 0.01 līmenī

Pēc Spīrmena korelācijas iegūtie rezultāti rāda, ka pastāv statistiski nozīmīga saistība ( $p=0.001 \leq 0.05$ ;  $r=0.73$ ) un stipra korelācija starp emocionālo intelektu un iekšējo komunikāciju projekta komandā, kas nozīmē, ka projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālais intelekts veicina vai kavē iekšējo komunikāciju projektu komandā (skat. 1. tab.).

Korelācijā iegūtie rezultāti rāda, ka statistiski nozīmīgākā un ciešākā saistība ar iekšējo komunikāciju projekta komandā ar katru no iekšējās komunikācijas skalām ir emocionālā intelekta kompetencei “sociālā apzināšanās” ( $r = 0.67$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) (skat. 1.tab.).

Arī Livseja (Livesey, 2017) pētījuma rezultāti liecināja, ka visām emocionālā intelekta kompetencēm (sevis apzināšanās, sevis vadīšana, sociālā apzināšanās un attiecību vadība) ir statistiski nozīmīga saistība ar projektos identificētajām problēmām, tai skaitā konfliktiem, kas radušies komunikāciju problēmu dēļ. Turklāt, arī Livseja (Livesey, 2017) pētījuma rezultāti uzrādīja, ka visnozīmīgākā un ciešākā saistība ar projektos identificētajām problēmām, tai skaitā komunikācijas problēmām, tika konstatēta emocionālā intelekta “sociālā apzināšanās”, kas pierāda emocionālā intelekta “sociālās apzināšanās” nozīmi un saistību ar iekšējo komunikāciju projekta komandā.

Lai noskaidrotu, vai projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālais intelekts ietekmē iekšējo komunikāciju projekta komandā, tika veikta Lineārās regresijas analīze.

Rezultāti rāda, ka pastāv stipra korelācija ( $r=0.725$ ) starp emocionālo intelektu un iekšējo komunikāciju projekta komandā, kur determinācijas koeficients  $r^2=0.565$ , kas nozīmē, ka 57% iekšējo komunikāciju projekta komandā nosaka emocionālais intelekts, kas apstiprina emocionālā intelekta nozīmi projektu komandas iekšējās komunikācijas uzlabošanā. Iegūtie rezultāti tika atspoguļoti 2. tabulā.

2.tabula. *Lineārās regresijas analīze starp iekšējo komunikāciju un emocionālo intelektu*  
(autoru veidota)

Table 2 *Linear Regression Analysis between Internal Communication and Emotional Intelligence* (created by the authors)

Modelis (atkarīgais un neatkarīgais mainīgais)	Korelācijas koeficients (r)	Determinācijas koeficients (r <sup>2</sup> )	p- vērtība
Iekšējā komunikācija un emocionālais intelekts	<b>0.725</b>	<b>0.565</b>	0.001 < 0.05
Modelis (atkarīgais un neatkarīgais mainīgais)	Korelācijas koeficients (r)	Determinācijas koeficients (r <sup>2</sup> )	p- vērtība
Apmierinātība ar komunikāciju un emocionālais intelekts	<b>0.642</b>	<b>0.412</b>	0.001 < 0.05
Komunikācijas prasmes un emocionālais intelekts	<b>0.750</b>	<b>0.562</b>	0.001 < 0.05
Skaidra un precīza komunikācija un emocionālais intelekts	<b>0.665</b>	<b>0.443</b>	0.001 < 0.05

Lineārajā regresijā iegūtie rezultāti rāda, ka pastāv stipra korelācija ( $r=0.642$ ) starp emocionālo intelektu un apmierinātību ar komunikāciju, kur determinācijas koeficients  $r^2=0.412$ , kas nozīmē, ka 41% apmierinātību ar komunikāciju projekta komandā nosaka emocionālais intelekts (skat. 2.tab.).

Rezultāti rāda, ka pastāv stipra korelācija ( $r=0.750$ ) starp emocionālo intelektu un komunikācijas prasmēm, kur determinācijas koeficients  $r^2=0.562$ , kas varētu nozīmēt, ka 56% individuālās komunikācijas prasmes nosaka emocionālais intelekts (skat. 2.tab.).

Rezultāti rāda, ka pastāv stipra korelācija ( $r=0.665$ ) starp emocionālo intelektu un skaidru un precīzu komunikāciju, kur determinācijas koeficients  $r^2=0.443$ , kas varētu nozīmēt, ka 44% skaidru un precīzu komunikāciju nosaka emocionālais intelekts (skat. 2.tab.).

3.tabula. *Emocionālais intelekts atkarībā no dzimuma, vecuma un amata* (autoru veidota)

Table 3 *Emotional Intelligence Depending on Gender, Age and Position*  
(created by the authors)

Skala	Amats	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	p- vērtība
Emocionālais intelekts	Komandas dalībnieks	48	51.97	2494.50	0.880
	Projektu vadītājs	54	51.08	2758.50	
	Dzimums	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	p- vērtība
	Sieviete	48	49.25	2364.00	0.469
	Vīrietis	54	53.50	2889.00	
	Vecums	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	p- vērtība
	18 – 25	12	54.54	12	0.664
	26 – 30	21	58.95	21	
	31 – 39	30	50.80	30	
	40 – 49	31	47.63	31	
Vairāk kā 50	8	45.00	8		

Pētījumā tika atklāts, ka nepastāv statistiski nozīmīgas atšķirības starp emocionālo intelektu ( $p=0.880 > 0.05$ ) un amatu (projektu vadītājs vai komandas dalībnieks), kas nozīmē, ka emocionālo intelektu ir būtiski attīstīt gan projektu vadītājiem, gan komandu dalībniekiem. Iegūtie rezultāti atspoguļoti 3. tabulā.

Apskatot, vai pastāv atšķirības starp emocionālo intelektu un dzimumu (sieviete un vīrietis), rezultāti rāda, ka nepastāv statistiski nozīmīgas atšķirības starp dzimumu un emocionālo intelektu ( $p=0.469 > 0.05$ ). Arī Alšamari un citi (Alshammari et al., 2020) pētījumā neatrada statistiski nozīmīgas atšķirības starp dzimumu un emocionālo intelektu (skat. 3.tab.).

Rezultāti rāda, ka nepastāv statistiski nozīmīgas atšķirības starp projektu vadītāju un komandas dalībnieku emocionālo intelektu un vecuma grupām ( $p= 0.664 > 0.05$ ), kas nozīmē, ka emocionālo intelektu ir nepieciešams attīstīt neatkarīgi no vecuma (skat. 3.tab.).

### **Secinājumi** **Conclusions**

Pētījuma rezultāti rāda pastāv pozitīva, statistiski nozīmīga un stipra saistība starp projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālo intelektu un iekšējo komunikāciju projektu komandās. Pētījums uzrāda, ka 57% iekšējo komunikāciju projekta komandā nosaka emocionālais intelekts, kas apstiprina projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālā intelekta veicināšanas nozīmi projekta komandas iekšējās komunikācijas uzlabošanā.

Kā nozīmīgākās emocionālā intelekta kompetences iekšējās komunikācijas uzlabošanā tika konstatētas “sevis vadīšana” un „sociālā apzināšanās”. Lai uzlabotu individuālās komunikācijas prasmes, nepieciešams veicināt emocionālā intelekta sevis apzināšanos un sociālo apzināšanos. Savukārt, lai mazinātu uztveres barjeras un komunikācija projektu komandā būtu skaidra, precīza un bez pārpratumiem, nepieciešams veicināt “sevis vadīšanu” un “sociālo apzināšanos”.

Pētījuma rezultāti liecina, ka nepastāv statistiski nozīmīgas atšķirības starp emocionālo intelektu un iekšējo komunikāciju projektu komandā, kas nozīmē, ka emocionālo intelektu ir vienlīdz svarīgi attīstīt gan projektu vadītājiem, gan komandu dalībniekiem neatkarīgi no dzimuma, vecuma un amata.

Pētījumā tika secināts, ka lai uzlabotu projektu komandas iekšējās komunikācijas efektivitāti un izvairītos no pārpratumiem, kas radušies komunikācijas laikā un negatīvi ietekmē projektu gaitu, organizācijas “X” vadībai ir jāievieš projektu vadītāju un komandu dalībnieku emocionālā intelekta kompetenču novērtējumu un emocionālā intelekta kompetenču veicināšanas apmācības, kā arī organizēt projekta komandas sapulci ar mērķi kopīgi apgūt un veikt atgriezeniskās saites sniegšanas nozīmi un treniņu par informācijas saprotamību, lai pārliecinātos vai vēstījums ir saprasts pareizi un novērstu

nepareizu izpratni par sniegto informāciju, kas palīdzes samazināt pārpratumu biežumu.

### Summary

The research correlation of internal communication with emotional intelligence in project teams in organization "X" is important not only for the management of organization "X", but also for project management research in general, because so far the correlation between emotional intelligence and internal communication within a team has been studied only in medicine.

The results of the research confirmed the correlation between emotional intelligence and internal communication discussed in the theoretical part of the paper, confirming that there is a statistically significant and strong correlation between emotional intelligence of project managers and team members and internal communication in project teams, revealing that 57% of internal communication in the project team is determined by emotional intelligence.

The research draws attention to each individual's communication skills and internal communication in the project team, as well as calls for observing and analyzing how emotions affect communication, focusing on the importance of emotional intelligence and further preventing emotions from negatively affecting the message, thus promoting effective internal communication within the project team, which in turn contributes to teamwork and the success of the project as a whole.

For further research, it would be necessary to conduct an experimental longitudinal study to train emotional intelligence competencies, and to measure the emotion intelligence of the project team before and after the training.

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# STRATEGIC INTERNAL COMMUNICATION: ANALYSIS OF THE PRACTICE OF REGIONAL HIGER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF LATVIA

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**Abstract.** *In the organization's strategic management, internal communication is one of the main components enabling the strategic management process to be carried out. Its role is important in both the planning and implementation of the strategy. Still, in practice, the internal communication's potential remains untapped, resulting in the pursuit of organizations' strategic objectives. In developing the doctoral thesis, the author has an interest in investigating not only businesses, but also higher education institutions (HEIs), as they are similar organizations to other sectoral institutions, and their processes must be similar. The purpose of this study is to analyse who currently manages the internal communication function of four Latvian regional universities and to what extent the internal communication can be considered strategic. The study reviews international literature on the strategic management of organizations and the strategic management of internal communication. It uses a combined research strategy involving questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with respondents indicating that their university has developed an internal communication strategy.*

*The results show that the internal communication management practices of universities differ since some universities do not clearly define the purpose of internal communication, strategies, and plans, as well as those which merely indicate the existence of internal communication management practices. In all four universities, specialists carry out internal communication in the field of marketing, communication, or human resources management who demonstrate that private business practices are being applied – implementing internal communication in fragmented ways without acknowledging it as a management's function.*

*The research participants have indicated that internal communication should be managed by the administrative vice-rector. Since the analysed articles show that the employee responsible for the internal communication function should be part of the decision-making process, more in-depth research should be continued which would allow making conclusions whether the administrative vice-rector at the university should take on the strategic management function of internal communication.*

**Keywords:** *higher education institution, internal communication, strategic management, strategy.*

## Introduction

The researchers identified in the study, including Gupta and Senger, have identified internal communication as the central activity in an organization,

irrespective of whether it is an educational, non-governmental, non-profit, or for-profit organization (Gupta & Senger, 2020). However, studies analysing internal communication in higher education institutions (HEIs) reflect a trend that this function is underdeveloped due to the complex and bureaucratic nature of HEIs (Hollingsworth 2017; Tahir, 2010; Tomaselli, 2018, cited in Delport, 2020). This, in turn, has a significant impact on the achievement of the strategic goals of universities, which means losing in competition with other higher education institutions where the strategic goal of the organization is closely linked to the implementation of HEI internal communication management. In turn, this could threaten the sustainability of higher education institutions.

The aim of this study is to analyse the internal communication management practices of four regional universities, as well as to find out the knowledge of the university management level representatives about strategically managed internal communication. Within the framework of the research, two research questions have been raised:

Q1: Who currently manages the internal communication function of HEI?

Q2: To what extent can HEI's internal communication management practices be considered strategic?

The study analyses international literature on the strategic management of organizations and the strategic management of internal communication. In order to achieve the aim of the research, the author uses questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with respondents indicating that their university has developed an internal communication strategy. Within the framework of the research, it is planned to provide recommendations for further research.

## **Literature Review**

Strategic internal communication derives from the theories of strategic management and communication management. Therefore, the connection between these concepts will be described, and the essence of the strategic management of internal communication will be explained.

The strategic management of internal communication derives from the basic concept of strategic management, providing for strategic planning, strategic implementation and strategic control (Mišankova & Kočišova, 2013). And the research conducted in companies shows that the strategic implementation is rated the lowest (Mišankova & Kočišova 2013). Mišankova and Kočišova also refer to Sadler's definition that strategy is a complex process of defining activities that helps companies achieve goals and offers medium- and long-term tasks before providing operational solutions. Moreover, Gurowitz adds that there is a direct link between strategy implementation, leadership and communication, emphasizing that they are inseparable (Gurowitz, 2012, cited in Mišankova &



Kočišova, 2013). Other researchers Andreas Rasche, David Seidl, referring to Lahman's theory that social systems consist of communication, state that strategic management should be defined and conceptualized as communication (Rasche & Seidl, 2016). Thus, researchers in management sciences indirectly highlight the important role of internal communication in the strategic management process.

However, the strategic management of internal communication also derives from the overall concept of communication strategic management. Goodman is confident that the main task of strategic communication is to communicate efficiently with all stakeholders – both internal and external (Goodman, 2000), while Argenti adds the necessity to support the development of positive attitude among employees (Argenti, 2000 cited by Mohamad, Bakar, Halim, & Ismail, 2014). Meanwhile, already in 1995 Van Riel argued that the most important strategic mission of corporate communication is to ensure the competitive advantage of the company (Goodman, 2000).

Scholes, taking a stakeholder perspective, defines internal communication as follows: "Professional management of interactions between all those with an interest or 'a stake' in a particular organisation" (Scholes, 1997 cited by Welch & Jackson, 2007). This definition suggests a strategic approach and focuses on participants or stakeholders in internal communication. Rickard Andersson also emphasizes in his study that employees are key players in strategic internal communication who may or may not take responsibility for the communication process (Andersson, 2019). The definition includes a significant turn in the development of the research of internal communication – as Scholes marks internal communications as a professional process, it is a signal about the role of internal communication in the organization's strategic management. Thus, Welch and Jackson, combining what different authors have said, create their own definition for strategic internal communication: "strategic management of interactions and relationships between stakeholders within organisations across a number of interrelated dimensions" (Welch & Jackson, 2007).

Besides, communication can be called strategic internal communication when it is managed with a goal to connect the internal stakeholders with the organization's strategic intention. When this happens, the strategic internal communication can result in improvement of the organization's performance, characterized by the following: increased employee engagement, sense of belonging to the organization, improvement of corporate reputation and prestige (Dolphin, 2005; Meyer & De Wet, 2007 cited by Hume & Leonard, 2014). David Cowan also points to connecting employees to the strategic purpose as one of the important end results of good internal communication (Cowan, 2017).

According to James E. Grunig, Dozier and Verčič strategic communication has traditionally been viewed as an organizational support function (Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002; Verčič & Grunig, 2000 cited by Falkheimer et al., 2016),

however, considering the growing focus on intangible resources, communication has become relevant to the organization's management (Falkheimer et al., 2016). However, research and practice show that communication professionals are often not involved in the decision-making process. Moreover, Grimshaw and Mike conclude that one of the significant reasons why companies do not have an efficient strategic internal communication function is that there is no understanding of what the strategic internal communication is (Grimshaw & Mike, 2008 cited by Hume & Leonard, 2014). Consequently, the management also underestimates the important role of communication in achieving goals and increasing competitiveness. However, the study by Emanuele Invernizi, Silvija Biragi, Stefanija Romenti concludes that internal communication can provide strategic support at three levels: (1) to form a strong link with the organizational context, developing a two-way approach to communication in order to get closer to employees; (2) through a participatory approach to the management of the organization, internal communication expands the organization's ability to engage employees and make them work like entrepreneurs; (3) well-organized internal communication helps managers become effective managers (Invernizi, Biragi, & Romenti, 2012). Paulo Henrique, Leal Soares, Rozalia Del Daugo emphasize the importance of internal communication planning: "As an organizational process, it is important that the communication with employees is conducted with the clarity of purpose and within a management framework..." (Henrique, Soares, & Daugo, 2017).

Summarizing the research of all the authors, the main strategic principles of internal communication have been identified and summarized within the framework of this article:

- Presence of the function implementer in the management team;
- Scanning and listening to the internal environment of the organization;
- Targeted communication of the leader about the organization's strategy and its implementation;
- Link of internal communication with the organization's operational strategy and goals;
- Employees as important stakeholders;
- Employee involvement and dialogue in the decision-making process;
- Internal communication planning;
- Evaluation of internal communication activities.

The practical part of this study has been constructed based on these eight principles of strategic internal communication, which allows evaluating the internal communication management practice of regional universities in Latvia.

## Methodology

Within the framework of the practical part of the research, the strategic internal communication management practice in four regional higher education institutions of Latvia was studied, based on the eight fundamental principles of internal communication management summarized in the literature review. According to two criteria, HEI was selected: (1) organization must be state funded and must be located in one of the four regions of Latvia. The research was implemented in two stages: (1) a questionnaire with closed-ended questions was developed and distributed electronically to the management representatives and communication professionals of six regional HEIs in Latvia; (2) in the second stage, semi-structured telephone interviews were held with the communication representatives of the universities where the study participants had indicated that the HEI had developed an internal communication strategy. The aim of the second stage was to clarify the aspects of the strategic internal communication management from the perspective of the communication manager.

The questionnaire developed within the first stage was based on eight theoretical fundamental principles of the strategic management of internal communication. Nine closed-ended questions were created in two conceptual frameworks: (1) the delegation of the internal communication function within HEI, and (2) the strategic management of internal communication.

The questionnaire was filled in by 12 representatives from four out of six regional HEIs of Latvia, representing all the regions of the country - *Vidzeme*, *Kurzeme*, *Zemgale* and *Latgale*. Various management representatives participated in the study: a rector; academic vice-rectors; a vice-rector for research; directors of institutes; a dean of a faculty; the head of the Circular Economics Centre; communication management representatives. Given that the topic of the research is related to the internal processes of the organization, the disclosure of which may endanger the competitiveness and reputation of HEI, the represented higher education institutions are described using the codes HEI A; HEI B; HEI C; HEI D, thus ensuring the confidentiality of the study participants.

As there are differences in the design of the structure in the higher education institutions, as well as significant differences in the number of employees, the higher education institutions cannot be compared with each other within the study, but the answers will be analysed separately.

The survey data were analysed both using descriptive statistics by summing up all the answers to the questions about the delegation of the internal communication function, and applying the methodology of qualitative content analysis by investigating the internal communication management practice. The answers provided within the analysis were grouped according to two initially set parameters: the delegation of internal communication management and the

strategic management of internal communication in the analysis of the various university practices. Also, the attitudes and understanding of the strategic internal communication management among different study participants within one HEI were compared.

Within the study, there are recognized limitations of the method. Study gives understanding about each case, and let's analyse trends, but the used methods does not allow a generalization of the data. Consequently, the results can only be extended to regional universities of Latvia.

## **Research Results**

The aim of the study was to answer the following research questions: Who currently manages the internal communication function of HEI? To what extent can HEI's internal communication management practice be considered strategic? Therefore, the results are described in two parts: analysing the delegation of internal communication management and the compliance of internal communication management with the strategic fundamental principles.

### *Delegation of internal communication management*

The results of the research show that regional universities have different views on internal communication management. Analysing the delegation of internal communication management and its presence at the management level, 11 out of 12 study participants have indicated that currently internal communication at HEI is managed by the communication manager and his/ her department alone or together with a marketing or human resources specialist. However, it was concluded that in one of the HEIs this function was not delegated to anyone (See Table 1).

In order to analyse whether the communication manager can be considered as a representative of the management group, the answers provided by the research participants about the subordination of structural units and specialists were also analysed. It should be noted that in one of the four HEIs the communication manager is directly subordinate to the rector. In the other three HEIs, these specialists are subordinate to the administrative vice-rector or the director at the level of a vice-rector. This in turn indicates the operational rather than the strategic role of this function. And it should be noted that in all universities, regardless of the subordination of the communication manager, the scanning and researching the organization's internal environment is more often the function of the human resources manager, although in one case the human resources specialist indicated during the phone interview that he/she performs this task when instructions come from the management and not as a self-initiated

process. In the particular case, the human resources manager also thinks that the management of internal communication does not fall within his/her job responsibilities. In turn, evaluating the answers about the delegation of internal communication management in those universities where this function is delegated to more than one employee, there is room for additional research on which of all the recipients of the delegation plays a leading role in the implementation of the function.

*Table 1 Current Delegation of Internal Communication Management in HEI*

Delegation of internal communication management	Number of research participants' answers
Communication manager/ specialist and his/her structural unit	5
Internal communication manager/ specialist	1
Marketing department as a whole	2
Shared responsibility between communication, marketing and human resources managers/ specialists	3
Nobody	1

*Source: Author's research data.*

*n=12*

In addition, to understand the attitude and position of university management representatives and implementers of internal communication about the ideal version of the management of this function, the question was asked on who should manage internal communication in the organization. Five of all HEI representatives believe that internal communication should be managed by the communication manager, while the remaining responses were divided between marketing, human resources managers, the clerk and the administrative vice-rector (*See Table 2*). These responses on the desirable situation are only partially in line with the existing delegation in the higher education institutions, which means that a discussion would be required in university management teams about the design, delegation and objectives of this function.

The research participants from HEI D have indicated that the function of internal communication management is delegated to both human resources, communication and marketing specialists and vice-rectors. There was a discord among HEI D representatives over who should manage internal communication. Of the three research participants, each had their own opinion - one thought that this function should be led by the marketing manager, the other - by the clerk or the human resources specialist, and the third – by the administrative vice-rector. This ambiguity indicates a varied understanding of the role of internal communication management in an organization.

**Table 2 Opinions of Research Participants on Who Should Manage (plan, implement, evaluate) Internal Communication in the University**

Job title (who should manage internal communication)	Number of research participants' answers
Marketing manager	2
Human resources manager/ specialist	1
Communication manager	5
Administrative vice-rector	2
Clerk	1
Shared responsibility between communication and human resources managers	1

*Source: Author's research data.*

*n=12*

HEI C was represented by only one participant who is closely involved in the management of the internal communication function. He/she pointed out that currently the rector had delegated the management of internal communication to both the communication manager/ specialist and the Human Resources Management unit as a whole, but, answering the question on who should manage internal communication at the university, the participant indicated that it should be the human resources specialist.

HEI B was represented by three management level employees. Two of the participants gave an answer “difficult to say” to the question whether the rector had clearly delegated the management of internal communication to a particular colleague. When answering the question about the current delegation of the function, one of the participants indicated that the rector had not delegated the management of internal communication to anyone, but two indicated that this function was managed by the communication manager and his/ her structural unit. Two of the participants thought that internal communication should be managed by the communication manager, but the third participant pointed to the human resources director at the level of vice-rector as the possible responsible employee.

HEI A was represented by five management level employees. There was discord among them as to who had been currently delegated to manage the internal communication function. Three of the participants considered that it was the communication manager and his/ her unit, one - that it was the internal communication specialist who was directly subordinate to the rector, another - that the delegation was divided between the communication and human resources management units. There was also disagreement about who should manage this function. Three participants considered that internal communication should be managed by the communication manager, one – by the administrative vice-rector,

and another one – that it could be a shared responsibility among communication, human resources managers and the student club.

### *Compliance of internal communication management with the strategic principles*

Three of the questions of the survey allowed analysing the attitude and knowledge of university management representatives about strategically managed internal communication, and whether internal communication management at HEI can be considered strategic. The study participants were asked to rate statements about strategically driven internal communication within their HEI on a scale from 1 to 4 (strongly disagree; somewhat disagree; somewhat agree; strongly agree). The statements included both the participation of the implementer of the internal communication function in the management meetings and the planning, implementation, and evaluation aspects of the internal communication.

The study reveals that the attitude and knowledge of HEI management representatives about the strategic internal communication is at a high level, however, none of the four universities fully exploits the strategic potential of internal communication. For example, 75% of the survey participants when asked to describe the concept of “strategically managed internal communication” indicated the answer “strongly agree” with the statement “the employee responsible for internal communication management participates in defining the strategy and taking important decisions”, but when evaluating the real situation in the organization, only 40% indicated the answer "strongly agree".

Based on the evaluation of the research participants according to the scale, the author of the research summarized the answers provided by creating a table showing the strategic internal communication manifestations according to the eight theoretical fundamental principles in each higher education institution (see Table 3).

The author concludes that only in two of the four HEI the research participants were of the same opinion that the implementer of the internal communication function participates in management meetings and is involved in the organization's strategic planning process. Only one of the four universities fully performs the scanning and regular listening function. In another university, the study participants indicated that this function was not performed at all, but two other institutions – that it was performed partially. Analysing the question on the leader's communication on the strategic goals and positioning of the university, it can be concluded that in one of the four universities the study participants unanimously answered that the rector purposefully communicates the organization's strategy and goals, while the opinions of the representatives of the three other universities differed. In one case, the respondents indicated that they

completely disagreed with the statement that the leader purposefully communicates the strategic purpose, while in another case the respondents at higher-level positions indicated that they somewhat communicated the strategy, but the participant at a lower-level position disagreed completely with this statement, thus it is not possible to unequivocally state the existence of this practice.

It has also been observed in the study that none of the universities has a clear indication of the existence of an internal communication goal and strategy. In two of the four higher education institutions, the research participants indicated that the university had developed an internal communication strategy, but when making clarifications during the telephone interviews, the researcher concluded that internal communication activities were mainly implemented at the operational level, referring to this function as part of the unit's work regulations. However, neither internal communication goals, nor the strategy were defined.

*Table 3 Evaluation of Internal Communication Management at Higher Education Institutions According to Eight Theoretical Fundamental Principles (corresponds / partially corresponds / does not correspond with the principle)*

Theoretic principles of strategic internal communication	HEI A	HEI B	HEI C	HEI D
Presence of the function implementer in the management team	Corresponds	Partially corresponds	Partially corresponds	Partially corresponds
Scanning and listening to the internal environment of the organization	Corresponds	Does not correspond	Partially corresponds	Partially corresponds
Targeted communication of the leader about the organization's strategy and its implementation	Corresponds	Does not correspond	Partially corresponds	Partially corresponds
Link of internal communication with the organization's operational strategy and goals;	Partially corresponds	Partially corresponds	Corresponds	Partially corresponds
Employees as important stakeholders	Corresponds	Partially corresponds	Partially corresponds	Partially corresponds
Employee involvement and dialogue in the decision-making process	Corresponds	Partially corresponds	Corresponds	Partially corresponds
Internal communication planning	Does not correspond	Does not correspond	Does not correspond	Partially corresponds
Evaluation of internal communication activities	Partially corresponds	Does not correspond	Does not correspond	Does not correspond

*Source: Summary of the author's research results.*



As the research does not provide an unambiguous answer about the practice of defining the strategy of internal communication in regional universities, the author evaluates the analysed practice as partly in line with the strategic fundamental principles.

In the evaluation of the internal communication practice, the participants of the study more often indicate that they somewhat disagree with the statement that the employees of the university would be regularly invited to evaluate the internal communication activities or that the internal communication plan would be regularly reviewed. One of the eight fundamental principles of the strategic internal communication is employees as stakeholders and the promotion of dialogue between the management and employees. In three of the four HEIs, participants either somewhat disagreed or somewhat agreed with the statement that employees are important stakeholders that need to be involved in the decision-making process. However, when asked whether the management purposefully promotes the dialogue between employees and management representatives, two university representatives in their self-assessment of internal communication indicated that the dialogue was facilitated, while there was no consensus in other two universities, the opinion ranged from “strongly disagree” to “somewhat agree”.

### **Conclusions and Discussion**

The results of the research show that in Latvian regional HEIs there may exist very different views within one organization on both the delegation of internal communication management and the strategic management of internal communication.

At present, it can be observed that the practice of delegating and managing the internal communication function in higher education institutions is implemented according to the same principles as it is implemented by business organizations. In most cases, this function is performed by communication, marketing or human resources managers and specialists. Therefore, it can be concluded that both in HEI and business this function is performed at the operational rather than the strategic level. And since there are universities where the delegation is unclear, there is a possibility that internal communication is implemented in a fragmented way, without a single specific manager who leads and directs the process with a specific goal. The strategic implementation of internal communication is also threatened, as the main goal of most university communication, public relations and marketing departments is to “sell” the university as a great place to study, which means that the priority goals of these departments are related to external stakeholder communication and relations, leaving internal communication as a secondary task. Therefore, in future research

it would be worthwhile to explore who should lead the internal communication in the university management team, proposing a hypothesis that the administrative vice-rector who is part of the management team and who is responsible for the communication units would be one of the solutions to make internal communication management a management-level function with a specific goal and strategic positioning. And the second suggestion for future research would be to analyse the connection between the extent of strategic internal communication management practice and the success of implementing the organization's strategy.

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