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## **VALUES OF POLES BY THE EYES OF LITHUANIAN STUDENTS**

The results of sociological research, which was hold during the practice in the Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania are caring out in this article. For this purpose questionnaires with cluster opposite pairs of characteristics, which were grouped by the respondents' attitude to other people, homeland, material goods and themselves, were developed and proposed to fill out to students.

As a result we found that Poles tolerate such values as «honesty», sociability (being

«communicative»), «culture» and «politeness»). Lithuanian students believe that one of the main values for Poles is «education» and «hardworking». It was confirmed that Poles are «very religious», have a sense of patriotism and nationalism.

**Keywords:** *values, stereotypes, communication, Poland, Lithuania.*

**Романенко О. В. Цінності поляків очима литовських студентів.** У статті наведено результати дослідження, проведеного під час наукової практики в Університеті Вітовта Великого (Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas), м. Каунас (Литва). Протягом соціологічного опитування студентам даного ВНЗ було запропоновано анкети з кластерними протилежними парами характеристик, що групувалися у блоки за ставленням респондентів до інших людей, батьківщини і матеріальних благ.

Внаслідок проведеного дослідження було з'ясовано, що поляки толерують такі цінності, як «чесність», «комунікабельність», «культура» і «ввічливість». Литовські студенти вважають, що одними з основних цінностей для поляків є «освіта», «розум» і «праця». Підтверджено, що поляки «дуже релігійні», мають почуття патріотизму і націоналізму.

**Ключові слова:** *цінності, стереотипи, комунікація, Республіка Польща, Литва.*

**Романенко О. В. Ценности поляков глазами литовских студентов.** В статье приведены результаты исследования, проведенного во время научной практики в Университете Витовта Великого (Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas), г. Каунас (Литва). Во время социологического опроса студентам данного ВУЗа были предложены анкеты с кластерными противоположными парами характеристик, которые группировались в блоки по отношению респондентов к другим людям, родине и материальным благам.

В результате проведенного исследования было выяснено, что поляки предпочитают такие ценности, как «честность», «коммуникабельность», «культура» и «вежливость». Литовские студенты считают, что одними из основных ценностей для поляков являются «образование», «ум» и «труд». Подтверждено, что поляки «очень религиозные», имеют чувство патриотизма и национализма.

**Ключевые слова:** *ценности, стереотипы, коммуникация, Республіка Польща, Литва.*

## **Introduction.**

The purpose of this article is to review the communications between Lithuanians and Poles, values that they are guided by and some other aspects of coexistence of two groups. Proper understanding of themselves and their community greatly affects the self-image of person, which has an impact on the perception of others. The globalization influences on this process not only in the local and regional but also to the global scale. The values have a particular importance in situations where groups get together for close and frequent contacts, for example, «have a common geographical space, social

and political, which is shared by the state or a group of neighbors» [1, p. 112]. The same can be said about the students of different nationalities, who met in high school, for example, in the University. Of course, they are in the same group of common interests (like studying) with different experiences and background.

### **Sociological research.**

According to A. Jasińska-Kania, the goal of sociological research could be «a general empirical determination of the level of proliferation in the minds of members of the group specific ideas and / or opinions of the other groups, the degree of repeatability and uniformity of these ideas, as well as factors influencing their diversity and the possible modification» [2, p. 7].

For our study, the semantic differential method was selected [*like was used in the works from the books 3, 4, 5*]. The method is based on the fact that the content of the assessment of values is presented in the form of polarized characteristics [1, p. 134]. Realizing that such analysis «requires an interdisciplinary approach» [6, p. 16] and that they «can be studied in different ways, from different points of view from different perspectives» [1, p. 113], we are trying to determine values of Poles by the eyes of Lithuanian students. For this purpose, the author developed questionnaires (in English) and proposed them to students to fill out. The author made it during the practice in the Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Lithuania) from November 20 till December 4, 2016.

The cluster opposite pairs of characteristics (antonyms) have been proposed to the respondent, who had to specify a number from «1» (negative response) to «5» (positive characteristic), which, in their opinion, for the best reflects person's impression of a particular social group. All values were combine in some groups – by the respondents' attitude to other people, to their homeland, to material goods and to themselves.

### **Lithuanian understanding of Poles' values.**

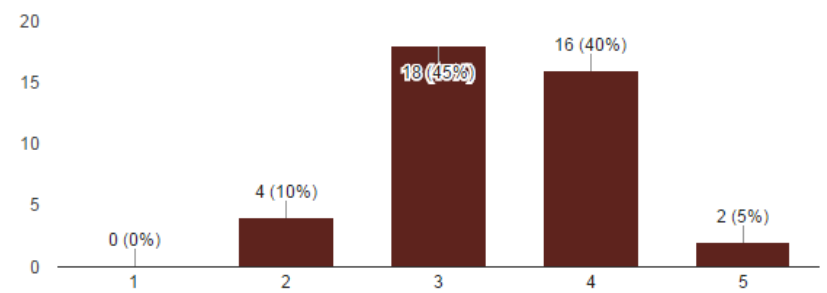
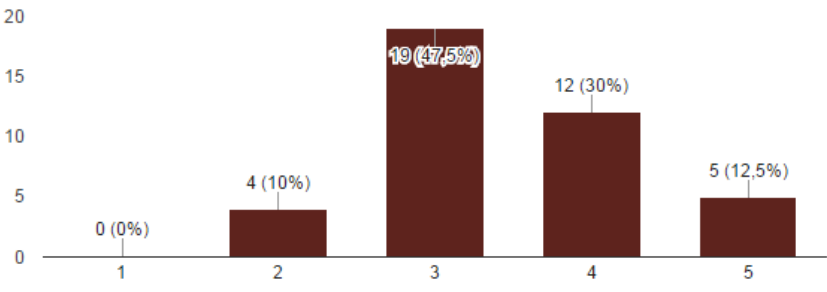
Firstly, we asked Lithuanian students to answer the group of questions named in general «*How Poles are in relation to other people*». The group of questions includes such values traits: intolerant / tolerant, dishonest / honest, closed / open, unsociable / communicative, lack of culture / cultural, rude / polite, easy to be influenced / independent in their mind, opinion (see table 1).

According to the results we can see that the most attractive and necessary values in students' eyes are communicative skills (which is not a surprising in the era of globalization) and culture.

Table 1

### How Poles are in relation to other people (their attitude)?

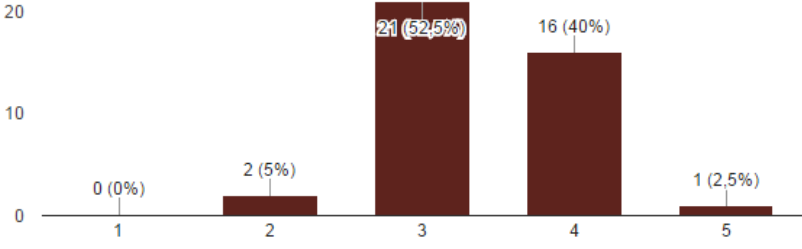
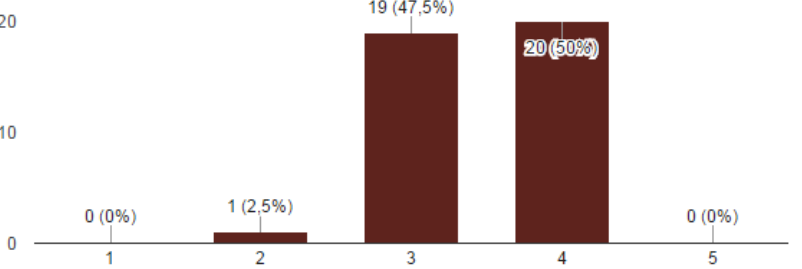
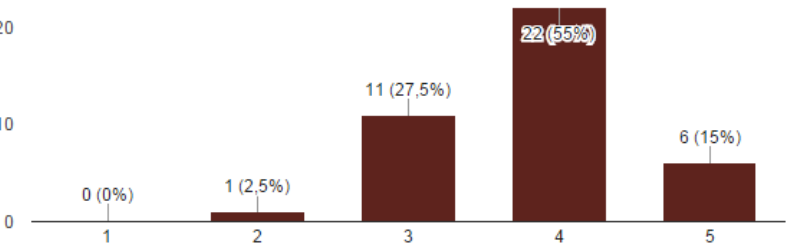
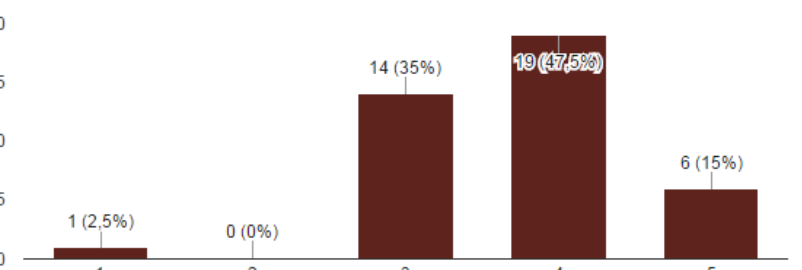
Intolerant	<p>We see that the most students find Poles tolerant (most answers in the middle – 52,5%).</p>	Tolerant
Dishonest	<p>37,5% of Lithuanian students believe that Poles are «<i>honest</i>» (and 2,5% – «<i>very honest</i>»). Very similar about their opinion to Lithuanian ones. Nobody think that Poles are «<i>very dishonest</i>». 2,5% call them «<i>dishonest</i>».</p>	Honest
Unsociable	<p>More than a half of students find Poles «<i>communicative</i>» (57,5%) or «<i>very communicative</i>» (5%). There were zero answers about «<i>unsociable</i>» Polish behavior.</p>	Communicative
Lack of culture	<p>The majority of students found Poles «<i>cultural</i>» (60%) or «<i>very cultural</i>» (15%). This level is also higher than in the answers about Lithuanians.</p>	Cultural

<p>Rude</p>	 <p>Students think that Poles are «<i>polite</i>» (40%) or «<i>very polite</i>» (5%). Nearly a half believe that the truth lies somewhere in the middle (45% chose variant «<i>nor rude nor polite</i>»).</p>	<p>Polite</p>
<p>Easy to be influenced</p>	 <p>We can see, that students think about Poles as people, which are difficult to manipulate: «<i>independent mind</i>» in 30% and «<i>very independent mind</i>» in 12,5%. As in previous questions, nearly a half believe that Poles are neither easy to be influenced no independent (47,5%).</p>	<p>Independent</p>

The second group of questions about Polish values was dedicated to their character and mental abilities (see table 2).

Table 2

## Poles' «mental» values

Emotionally neutral	 <p>As we can see from the students' responses, they find Poles more emotional than neutral: 2,5% are «<i>very emotional</i>», 40% – «<i>emotional</i>». Only 5% was determined as «<i>emotionally neutral</i>». For the rest it is «<i>hard to say</i>» (52,5%).</p>	Emotional
Coward	 <p>Students also named such Polish value as being brave.</p>	Brave
Humble	 <p>The respondents also think that Poles are more «<i>proud</i>» than Lithuanians (55% to 32,5%) and «<i>very proud</i>» (15% for Poles to 7,5% for Lithuanian).</p>	Proud
Uneducated	 <p>The importance of a such value as an education and good knowledge, student marked Poles at the same level as Lithuanians: 15% – as «<i>very educated</i>», 47,5% – as «<i>educated</i>» and only 2,5% – as «<i>uneducated</i>».</p>	Educated

We can see that in this group of answers the education is an essential value as much as bravery. The next group of questions was about Poles' «material» values. The results are represented in the table 3.

Table 3

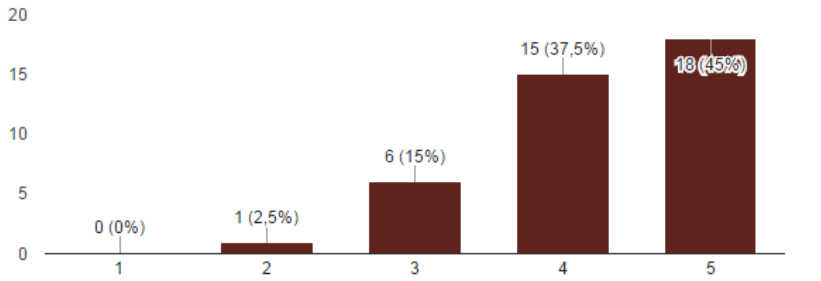
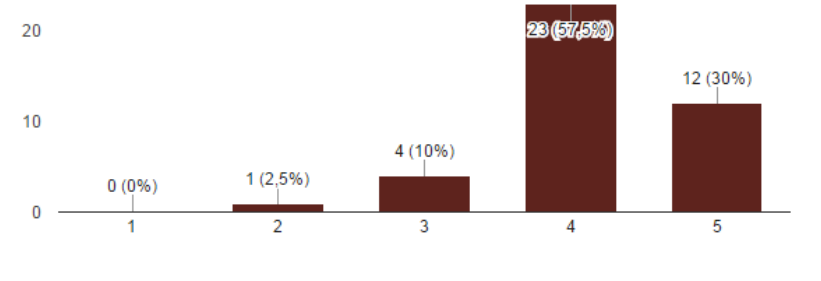
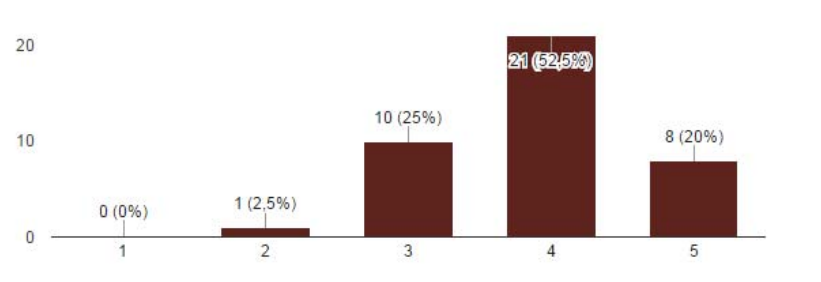
**Poles' «material» values**

<p>Lazy</p>	<p>Poles like to work: 10% of Lithuanian student call them «<i>very hardworking</i>», 52,5% – just «<i>hardworking</i>». 7,5% think Poles are «<i>lazy</i>» and 2,5% that they are «<i>very lazy</i>».</p>	<p>Hardworking</p>
<p>Helpless</p>	<p>Poles are more «<i>enterprising</i>» (in the sense of business and overcoming life's difficulties) than Lithuanians (47,5% to 35%). Only 2,5% of students think that Poles are «<i>helpless</i>».</p>	<p>Enterprising</p>
<p>Poor</p>	<p>32,5% of Lithuanian students think Poles are «<i>rich</i>» (in comparison to 7,5% for Lithuanians). 2,5% think, that Poles are «<i>very poor</i>» (in comparison 10% for Lithuanians) and 5% – «<i>poor</i>» (27,5% for Lithuanians).</p>	<p>Rich</p>

The next group of questions was about Poles and their Homeland. Please, see results in the table 4.

Table 4

**Poles' «patriotic» values**

<p>Secular</p>	 <p>Poles are «<i>very religious</i>» (45%) or «<i>religious</i>» (37,5%). Sometimes they are neither religious nor secular.</p>	<p>Religious</p>
<p>Unpatriotic</p>	 <p>Students claim that Poles like their Homeland and they are very patriotic: 30% are «<i>very patriotic</i>» (but Lithuanians have only 20% for this value); 57,5% – are «<i>patriotic</i>» (in comparison with 30% for Lithuanians); 10% – choose neutral variant (in comparison with 40% for Lithuanian ones).</p>	<p>Patriotic</p>
<p>Cosmopolitan</p>	 <p>The same situation is about nationalism. Only 2,5% of students think that Poles are «<i>cosmopolitan</i>». 52,5% consider them «<i>nationalistic</i>» (in comparison with 32,5% for Lithuanians) or «<i>very nationalistic</i>» (20%). 25% can't answer this question directly, so they choose and proclaimed neutral variant.</p>	<p>Nationalist</p>

According to the students' thoughts Poles are very patriotic and religious. One of their most important value is nationalism.



## **Summary.**

In every nation, in every ethnic group you can meet many different character traits of good or bad. It is people with their weaknesses, peculiarities, so it is difficult to talk about one of the dominant value. According to M. Budyta-Budzyńska, «ordinary people automatically and involuntarily repeated opinions about others found in their environment» [1, p. 129].

For the consolidation or modification, the treatment of «others» affects such factors as the mood, the situational context of mutual relations. For Lithuanians, who are studying, living or have business together with Poles perception that nationality through the prism of their values can be «corrupted». Firstly, it is formed on basic sympathy or antysympathy in the small group, their family experience.

Lithuanian students think Poles are not as tolerant as Lithuanians are. Students admit, that Poles have such values as honesty: Lithuanians found Poles «open» (32,5%), «very open» (2,5%), «communicative» (57,5%), cultural (60%) or «very cultural» (15%) and «polite» (40%). Students think about Poles as people, which are difficult to manipulate, which are neither aggressive nor quiet.

Speaking about values, based on features of character and mental abilities of Poles, Lithuanian student noticed that Poles are more emotional than emotionally neutral (2,5% – «very emotional», 40% – «emotional»). They are brave (50%), proud (55% for «proud» and 15% to «very proud») and cheerful (40%). We see that in student's eyes Poles is more «valuable nation».

At the same time one of the main value for Poles is education (15% for «very educated» and 47,5% – as «educated») and being smart (57,5%), they like to work (52,5% – «hardworking»), are more rich and enterprising (47,5%) than Lithuanians. We confirm the fact (or the stereotype) that Poles are «very religious» (45%) or just «religious» (37,5%). This value for Lithuanians is not very essential. We also confirm that Poles has a value of patriotism and nationalism: according to students' opinion Poles are «very patriotic» (30%) or just «patriotic» (57,5%) in much more bigger degree than Lithuanians (20% and 30% appropriate). The same situation in the sphere of nationalism – Poles are more «nationalist» than Lithuanians (52,5 to 32,5%).

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