

SUMMARY

In 2014, the Civic Empowerment Index research was carried out for the seventh time. It revealed that the Lithuanian civic power had come back to the level of 2008-2009 after a few years of a slight growth: the mean value of the Civic Empowerment Index in 2014 was 34,0 points out of 100 (in 2013 it was 36,0). On the other hand, there was more civic potential accumulated in the Lithuanian schools: in comparison with the previous years, the civic power of the Lithuanian pupils had grown from 47,6 in 2012 to 52,4 in 2014, whereas the civic power of the Lithuanian teachers had remained high – in 2009 it was 47,8 and in 2014 – 48,1 points.

The most important results of the Civic Empowerment Index research of 2014 are summarized in the upcoming pages.

CIVIC POWER OF THE LITHUANIAN SOCIETY

1. In 2014, in comparison with 2013, Lithuanian citizens' interest in public matters had not changed significantly. As well as in the previous years, most attention by the citizens was drawn to the news of their living environment and local community: for 88 per cent it is important to get such news daily. News about politics, culture, economy and business was important to a smaller number of respondents: respectively for 69, 68 and 67 per cent it is important to find out such information daily. In this context it can be noticed that news related to geopolitical issues such as the Russian-Ukrainian conflict (which was widely discussed in the Lithuanian media at the time) were very important to the Lithuanian citizens: 76 per cent of the respondents were interested in getting news on this issue daily. In comparison with the local community issues, geopolitical issue was not as popular among the citizens but significantly more popular than political, cultural, business and economy, criminal news or news about accidents and sports. In 2014, in comparison with 2013, citizens' interest in sports news had dropped by 7 per cent (54 per cent said it was important or very important getting such news daily), interest in criminal news and news about accidents had dropped by 6 per cent (finding out such news daily was important or very important to 68 per cent of the respondents).
2. In 2014, Lithuanian citizens were slightly less active in civic activities. As well as in the previous years, the three most popular civic activities were donating to charity, participating in environment cleaning activities and local community activities (respectively 56, 50 and 33 per cent of the respondents participated in these activities). In 2014, in comparison with 2013, citizens' participation in signing non-electronic petitions, participation in local community activities, demonstrations, rallies and pickets had gone down significantly. This trend could be explained by a few events that happened in 2013: a referendum on land (non-)selling to foreigners and protests against shale gas extraction had been organized which naturally raised citizens' activeness in 2013, whereas in 2014 these issues were resolved in one way or the other and the activeness went down. Furthermore it can be noticed that the only form of activity that became slightly more popular in 2014 was boycotting certain company or country products due to ethical or political motives. Primarily it could be related to boycotting goods from Russia as a reaction to its aggression against Ukraine. However, it can also be noticed that apart from the

last mentioned trend, geopolitical situation did not have a significant impact on the activeness of the Lithuanian citizens. As well as in the previous years, a quarter of citizens were completely passive: in 2014, 26 per cent of the respondents did not participate in any of the 17 civic activities mentioned in the survey.

3. In terms of potential civic activeness, Lithuanian citizens would be mostly motivated to act if some issue emerged in their local community. 70 per cent of the respondents said they would take the lead in solving such issue or would join the ones that were already trying to solve it. Significantly less attention would be drawn to an economic issue: 14 per cent would take the lead in solving it and 38 would join. The smallest part of the citizens would act upon some political issue: only 6 per cent would take the lead and another 33 per cent would join. One third of the respondents (and this is the biggest part in comparison with economic and local issues) would stay on the side and do nothing and 26 per cent were not sure what they would do. In comparison with the previous years, significant differences can be noticed in this dimension of the civic power. First of all, in cases of all three issues, the part of the respondents who were not sure about their reaction had gone down. On the other hand, none of the positions was strengthened: both the part of the ones who would do nothing and the part of the ones who would take the lead had grown. However, political issue in this context stands out with an increased part of the respondents that claimed they would do nothing and it is not compensated by a slight growth of respondents who would take initiative.

Potential civic activity in case of a security issue was measured for the first time (for example, another state uses military power against Lithuania): results showed that in comparison with other issues, citizens would be potentially more active facing a local community issue, similarly active facing an economic issue and less active facing a political issue. When facing a security issue, more than a half (52 per cent) of the respondents would potentially act upon solving it: 15 per cent would take the lead and 37 per cent would join. 23 per cent would stay on the side and do nothing and another 25 per cent did not know what they would do.

4. After a quite significant year of 2013, the civic influence perception index has come back to the "usual" level. In 2014, positions of given institutions, individuals and groups in the "influence hierarchy" remained the same as in 2013 and 2012: highest power to influence decision-making was given to government institutions and businesses. Less influential, according to the respondents, was the media, non-governmental organizations and communities. Finally, the least influential were thought to be ordinary citizens and the respondents themselves. Moreover, in comparison with 2013, influence credited to communities, ordinary citizens and the respondents themselves was significantly lower. Thus it seems that the more noticeable growth of self-influence perception in 2013 was a one-time phenomenon that did not take roots in the Lithuanian society (probably this growth was an outcome of a successfully organized referendum and protests that also reached their objectives). Extending previous argumentation, it can be thought that the drop of the civic influence perception index was determined by the fact that the before mentioned referendum finally did not pass due to a low turnout and the protests did not give clear answers to the questions raised by the protestors.
5. In terms of risks related to civic activities, supposition that active citizens are participating in civic activities due to their egoistic incentives, was very popular in the society: 63 per cent of the

respondents saw such type of risk. However, other risks were also perceived as probable: for example, losing a job due to being active (58 per cent thought it was likely or very likely), being publically harassed (likely or very likely – 57 per cent), being considered as weirdos by other members of the society (likely or very likely – 55 per cent) or even receiving threats (likely or very likely – 51 per cent). It can be noticed that 40 per cent of the respondents did not neglect any of the suggested risks (none of the five suggested risks was thought to be unlikely or very unlikely) which means that the environment for civic activities remains very unfavorable.

6. The mean value of the Civic Empowerment Index in 2014 was 34,0. In comparison with the previous years, in 2014 it went down for the first time since 2007, when it was started being counted (in 2013 the mean value was 36,0), and can be equated to the values of 2007-2009. This shift was mostly influenced by the decreased value of the civic influence perception index, a slight drop of the civic activeness and the civic risks perception indexes values. The only dimension of the civic power that showed a small but positive shift was the growing potential civic activeness.

According to the data of 2014, the highest civic power was common among citizens who were younger, with higher education and income, living in bigger cities, students and high school pupils, self-employed and employed. The lowest civic power was common among citizens who were older, with lower education and income, living in smaller cities and non-active in the labor market (pensioners, disabled and unemployed). The same differences among different society groups were also seen in the previous years.

CIVIC POWER OF THE LITHUANIAN PUPILS

1. Lithuanian pupils were mostly interested in the news about their living environment and local community. The biggest part – 84 per cent of the pupils – said it was important or very important to get such news daily. Pupils were also relatively more interested in criminal news and news about accidents – they were important to 73 per cent of the respondents. On the other hand, a smaller part of the pupils was interested in the news about culture, sports, business and economy: respectively 61 per cent, 58 per cent and 58 per cent of pupils said it was important to them getting such news daily. Lowest interest among the pupils was put on the news about lives of celebrities: 32 per cent were interested in getting such news daily.

In general, in comparison to the whole society, pupils were less interested in all kinds of news suggested in the survey. The biggest difference was seen in the interest put on political news. The same tendencies were also seen in the results of the survey of 2012. However, in 2014 the differences between the two groups – pupils and the whole society – were a bit smaller. The only type of news that was more important to the pupils in comparison to the whole society, were sports news, criminal news and news about accidents. Whereas news on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict were the same important to the pupils as they were to the whole society: for 73 per cent of young people it is important to get such news daily. Taking into account the fact that pupils' interest in other public life news is lower in general, it could be said that the importance of getting news on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict among young people was

relatively higher. However, although in general pupils' interest in public matters was lower comparing to the whole society, the same tendency as in 2012 can be noticed: among the pupils, there was a bigger part than in the whole society of those who said that instead of just important it is very important to get certain news daily.

In comparison with 2012, pupils in 2014 were a little less interested in sports news and a little more interested in political life news. Although pupils' self-declared interest in politics as such did not change significantly in the last year, their habits of political discussions changed considerably: in 2014, in comparison with 2012, pupils more often discussed politics with their parents, friends and teachers. Another positive trend was that only 17 per cent of the pupils claimed they never discussed politics with their friends.

2. In comparison to the whole society, in 2014, as in 2012, Lithuanian pupils were much more active. There were only 10 per cent of pupils who did not participate in any of the suggested 17 activities (26 per cent in the whole society). Moreover, in none of the activities pupils were less active than the whole society. Especially much more active they were in the activities of non-governmental organizations and movements, civic and social campaigns and environment cleaning activities. As well as in the previous years, the three most popular activities among pupils (and the whole society) remained the same: participating in environment cleaning activities (68 per cent), donating to charity (64 per cent) and participating in activities of the local community (47 per cent). Pupils also participated in some specific activities such as addressing school's authorities in order to represent interests or concerns of their class and fellow class mates: one third of the pupils claimed they had done that. In comparison with 2012, it can be seen that in a few activities pupils' activeness changed significantly: as well as in the whole society, less students participated in activities of the local community and environment cleaning activities but on the other hand, more pupils donated to charity and boycotted certain goods due to ethical or political motives. The latter tendency could be related to boycotting goods from Russia and other activities dedicated to supporting businessman that suffered from Russia's actions.

The most part of Lithuanian pupils had experience in participating in the activities of youth organizations. Only 8 per cent of the respondents told they had never participated in any activities of youth organizations. There was a strong correlation between participating in youth organizations and participating in other civic and political activities. In comparison with 2012, there were fewer pupils who participated in sports organizations but more who took part in pupils' self-governance and other pupil organizations' activities.

3. With their strong resolution to act in case some political, economic, local or security issue occurred, pupils were much more determined than the whole society: twice as many pupils said they would take the lead in solving all of the four suggested issues. In comparison with the whole society, among pupils, there was also 7-8 per cent less respondents who said they would stay on the side and do nothing. A big part of the pupils would also potentially act trying to solve some school issue. They would be mostly motivated to act if some issue occurred in a familiar environment: their local community or school. Less attention (but not little) would be paid to more abstract political, economic or security issues. It can be noticed that pupils' potential civic activeness is mostly related to feeling support from their parents, teachers, fellow class mates

and other people outside the school. In the last two years, since 2012, a part of pupils who did not know how to evaluate the support to their civic activities of different groups had decreased. It can be assumed that during this time pupils had a chance to work with these groups and thus evaluate their support level. Believing in support of the people outside of school borders had grown the most. Likewise, there were also more pupils who thought that their initiatives would be supported by teachers and other pupils.

4. Pupils gave the most power on decision-making to the same society groups as it is given by the whole society. However, values given to certain groups are different. For example, pupils viewed the influence of ordinary people, themselves and non-governmental organizations on decision-making as much stronger than the whole society. They also gave more credit to elders (head of a borough, *lith. seniūnas*) and media representatives. On the other hand, in comparison to the whole society, pupils gave the same credit to other governmental, especially national, institutions. So even though the same institutions were given the main power on decision-making, pupils saw the powers of individual citizens and non-governmental sector in a much more positive light. Pupils also saw teachers as powerful in decision-making: they gave more power to teachers than to ordinary people, same power as to media representatives, non-governmental organizations and communities. Pupils' powers in decision-making were seen as similar to other ordinary peoples' powers (but higher than their own powers). During the period of 2012-2014, evaluation of almost all groups and institutions' influence had increased. However, the biggest shift was seen in the evaluation of ordinary people and non-governmental organizations: influence given to these groups had grown the most. Thus pupils remain the group that sees the biggest influence on decision-making in the society and this evaluation is constantly growing.
5. In 2014, contrary to 2012, pupils differed from the whole society with their evaluation of risks. This shift is mostly seen in the evaluation of more severe risks such as receiving threats and losing a job, and less – in the evaluation of “softer” risks related to social support (or lack of it). In other words, these “softer” risks to the Lithuanian pupils seemed mostly common: largest part of pupils said it was likely or very likely that active citizens could be blamed for acting due to egoistic incentives (61 per cent) or being considered as weirdos (53 per cent). Financially and physically dangerous risks seemed less common: being publically harassed or slandered seemed likely or very likely to 50 per cent of the respondents, losing a job and receiving threats – both seemed likely or very likely to 46 per cent. On the other hand, the social environment in schools was thought to be more favorable to civic activities: respondents thought that it was less likely to face risks when acting at school rather than acting in the society. Most of the suggested risks that pupils could face when acting at school, were evaluated as totally unlikely. Still 44 per cent of the respondents thought that as an outcome of their civic activeness they could become victims of bullying, 43 per cent thought it was likely to receive threats, 38 per cent claimed it was likely that their parents would be asked to come to school to explain themselves, 22 per cent thought they could get worse grades and 17 per cent even thought they could be expelled from school. However, it should be also mentioned that more than half of the respondents thought that none of the suggested risks were likely.

6. In 2014, pupils got higher values in all five above discussed indexes: interest in public affairs, activeness and potential activeness, civic influence perception and risks evaluation. The overall pupils' Civic Empowerment Index reached the value of 52,4. It is important to note that this is the highest value ever gotten in the Civic Empowerment Index researches. This value is higher than the values gotten by different society groups including teachers, governmental sector employees, youth and even pupils' Civic Empowerment Index value of 2012. For example, in comparison with 2012, in the last two years pupils' civic influence perception, risks evaluation and interest in public matters indexes grew significantly. Thus it can be seen that Lithuanian pupils' civic power is not just high but is also growing. When socio-demographic characteristics are taken into consideration, it is seen that the mean values of Civil Empowerment Index do not vary significantly among different sexes, classes or living locations. It looks like the civic power is mostly influenced by the close environment: school, communication with teachers and parents and support that is felt when participating in civic activities.

CIVIC POWER OF THE LITHUANIAN TEACHERS

1. Even though the Lithuanian teachers are mostly interested in the same type of news as the society in general, teachers stand out with their higher interest in all these news. For example, news about local community issues were important to find out daily by 94 per cent of the teachers, news about culture life – by 88 per cent, political life – by 87 per cent and business and economy – by 77 per cent. Out of all the suggested news celebrity life news were the least important, together with criminal and sports news. 82 per cent of the respondents claimed it was very important to find out news about the Russian-Ukrainian conflict daily: this is a higher percentage than in other groups. However, in comparison to other types of news, the difference is not that big. Although one third of the teachers claimed they were not very interested in politics, most of them followed news on political issues daily. Teachers mostly discussed politics with their family and friends (67 per cent – at least once a week, 20 per cent – daily or almost daily). 58 per cent discussed politics at least once a week with their colleagues and co-workers. Pupils was the group that teachers discussed politics with the least: 32 per cent – at least once a week, 34 per cent – once or twice a month, 20 per cent – even more rarely and 14 per cent never discussed politics with pupils. Thus discussing politics at school was not very popular among both pupils and teachers (it could be reminded that pupils mostly discussed politics with their parents). Media credibility by the teachers was evaluated similarly as by the pupils and the society in general: the largest part (62 per cent) considered the news provided by the media as reliable, but only 3 per cent considered them as completely reliable. A large portion of teachers (30 per cent) assessed news negatively.
2. Lithuanian teachers remained one of the most active groups of the society. In almost all the civic activities teachers participated more actively than the society in general. In most cases, teachers participated in civic activities two or three times more often than other members of the society. Teachers' civic activeness level was also slightly higher than the one of pupils'. Furthermore, not just some, but all teachers were very active: only 2 per cent of them said they did not participate in any of the 17 suggested civic activities (in the whole society there were 26 per cent who did

not participate anywhere and among pupils this part was 10 per cent). Although the most popular activities that teachers took part in remained the same (donating to charity, participating in environment cleaning and local community activities), involvement in other activities was more influenced by the existing situation. For example, in 2009, after taking part in a lot of strikes of 2008, teachers still more actively addressed government institutions and raised different issues in the media whereas in 2014 there were more teachers who boycotted goods due to ethical or moral motives (this can be related to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict).

3. Even though most of the teachers tend to have an attitude of a “minimal” citizen-involvement (62 per cent claimed that an ordinary person should at least be interested in issues regarding their living environment and vote in elections), there were also more of those among teachers than in the whole society who claimed that the citizen-involvement should be more extensive. For example, 29 per cent (almost double than in the whole society) said that every ordinary citizen should at least participate in the local community activities and accordingly less of those, who supported conscious withdrawal from the communities life: there were 6 per cent who said that for a good citizen it was enough to sincerely live their personal life.
4. No doubt teachers are the leaders of their communities: 86 per cent of them would take action in trying to solve some local issue and 79 per cent would act if such an issue occurred in their school. More abstract issues would get less (but not little) attention: 68 per cent of the teachers would act on solving some economic issue and 64 per cent would act on solving a security issue. On the other hand, a smaller part of teachers would act on solving a political issue – 46 per cent of them.

Teachers would be much more active than an average society member in solving local, economic, security or political issues, however, only a small part of them would take the lead (except in the case of a local issue) – most of the teachers would only join if other citizens organized the activities.

It seems that when solving issues in school communities, good relationships between teachers and pupils would play the lead role: pupils mostly trusted in support of their parents and teachers while teachers mostly trusted pupils’ and their fellow colleagues’ support. Support from the school’s administration was seen ambiguously, and support from pupils’ parents and other people outside of school borders was considered as least likely.

5. Teachers, in comparison with the whole society, saw much more civic influence in the state and much more than they saw in 2009, but less than it is seen by pupils. The influence of governmental institutions and businesses was seen similarly by the teachers as it was by the whole society. However, their own influence on decision-making, influence of other ordinary people, the media and non-governmental organizations was evaluated much more positively. Furthermore, teachers and pupils as a group were thought to be more influential than other ordinary people. Hence this group was not only one of the most active but was also feeling its power. On the other hand, teachers were quite moderate when evaluating their political competence (although less moderate than the society in general.)
6. Notion that civically active people could face various risks was popular among teachers. Three quarters of the respondents thought that active citizens could be blamed to be acting for egoistic reasons (77 per cent), more than a half thought they could lose a job or be publically

harassed (in both cases – 69 per cent). Moreover, 66 per cent thought they could be considered as weirdos and 56 per cent even saw a risk of receiving threats. Only 3-6 per cent of the teachers saw the risks as highly unlikely and in general, none of the 5 risks seemed unlikely or very unlikely to 38 per cent of the teachers. When asked about their real experience, 15 per cent claimed to have faced at least one out of the 5 risks in the last 5 years.

7. The mean value of the teachers' Civic Empowerment Index in 2014 was 48,1 points out of 100. This index value is considerably higher than the one given to the whole society but is smaller than the value of the Lithuanian pupils and is almost the same value that teachers got in 2009. But even though the mean value did not change significantly in the period between 2008 and 2014, some changes can be seen in certain dimensions of the Civic Empowerment Index. First of all, teachers' civic influence perception index value had grown (even though slightly): more influence on decision-making was given to non-governmental organizations, communities, ordinary people and them personally. On the other hand, teachers' potential civic activeness had gone down: less teachers than before said they would act on solving various public issues. Finally, teachers' general interest in public issues had also gone down. When taking socio-demographic characteristics into consideration, it could be noticed that younger teachers and the ones living in bigger cities had slightly more civic power than the older ones and living in smaller towns (but not villages). Taught subject did not have any influence on civic power.

EVALUATION OF THE CIVIC EDUCATION IN LITHUANIAN SCHOOLS

1. Both pupils and teachers although considering civic education as more effective than non-effective, tended to evaluate its efficiency as quite mediocre. However, pupils' opinion on civic education was a little better than the one of the teachers'. Subjective evaluation of the civic education effectiveness was mostly related to the higher civic power of the school community. In other words, those students who were more optimistic in evaluating the efficacy of civic education, were usually the ones who had more civic power (they were more interested in news on public issues, had higher perception of civic influence, saw less risks in civic activities). Same with teachers: the ones who better evaluated the effectiveness of civic education were the ones with more civic power. Thus effective civic education could be related to pupils' higher civic power although in teachers' opinion, family rather than school is more important in forming civic values among young people.

LITHUANIAN CIVIC POWER AND GEOPOLITICAL ATTITUDES

In the context of 2014 it was impossible not to take into consideration citizens' attitudes on geopolitical issues. The most important conclusions are presented below.

1. Crimea's incorporation into the Russian territory was seen as very negative by more than a half of the Lithuanian citizens (52 per cent) and another 11 per cent considered it as negative. In spite of a quite one-sided portrayal of this situation (that is, considering it as an occupation of

Crimea) in the Lithuanian media, there were still 8 per cent of the respondents who saw it as a positive thing (5 per cent – very positive and 3 per cent – positive). And there were 29 per cent who did not have a clear opinion or did not give their evaluation. In contrast to the predominant opinion (that Crimea's incorporation into the Russian territory should be mostly supported by the Lithuanian citizens who are of the Russian nationality), survey results showed that although Russians saw this situation as positive more often, in general the group of the ones who evaluated it positively was mostly combined of citizens who were of the Lithuanian nationality. It can be also noticed that the evaluation of the Crimea's situation was mostly related to the evaluation of the Soviet times: those who remembered the Soviet times in a negative light, also thought that the Crimea's incorporation was a negative thing and those who considered the Soviet regime as positive also thought that Russia's actions in Crimea were appropriate.

2. Lithuanian citizens mostly have a favorable view on Western Europe: political system, economic wealth and human rights in this region were highly evaluated and considered as better than in Lithuania or Russia. Especially highly evaluated was the economic wealth of the Western Europe. In general, respondents' view on Lithuanian and Russian political systems, economic wealth and human rights was not very clear: evaluations were neither very positive nor very negative. However, different aspects of the two countries were seen differently: for example, Lithuanian economic situation was seen as slightly better than the Russian one and the situation of human rights in Lithuania was seen as more different (better) than in Russia. In 2014, comparing with 2006, evaluation of the Lithuanian economic wealth and the situation of human rights slightly decreased, although relatively the biggest shift was seen in Russia's evaluation: its human rights situation, economic wealth and political system was seen as much worse than in 2006.
3. More than a half of the Lithuanian citizens (57 per cent) claimed they were determined to defend their country in case of a military conflict and 15 per cent had an opposite intension. Another 29 per cent did not know what they would do in such situation. Thus the tendency seen in the European Values Studies of 1990-2005 had totally changed in 2014: in the mentioned period the determination to defend the country was constantly diminishing whereas in 2014, a part of the respondents who claimed they would not defend the country was three times smaller than in 2005 and a part of those who would has grown considerably. Citizens' determination to defend their country in 2014 was quite similar to the one experienced in 1990. It can be noticed that this determination was mostly related to the civic power: the ones who had more of it were more determined to take part in defending their country. And on the contrary – the ones who claimed they would not defend the country were also the ones who had less civic power.