



CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

MA Thesis

# **The Case Study of the ERASMUS Programme in Latvia: Stereotypes and European Identity**

By

Karina Oborune

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Supervisor: János Kis

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## **ABSTRACT**

The European Commission and scholars emphasize that the ERASMUS programme is a successful example of European integration, a symbol of construction of European identity and promoter of tolerance on the basis of breaking stereotypes, encouraging multicultural experience and intercultural education. But because of the lack of empirical findings, this Master thesis has been devoted to research of the impact of the ERASMUS programme on breaking the stereotypes and fostering European identity. The quantitative survey of three hundred thirty former ERASMUS, potential ERASMUS and non-ERASMUS students provides partly justification that the ERASMUS Programme has impact on breaking the stereotypes and promoting European identity. Potential ERASMUS students already have less stereotypes and European self-identification than non-mobile students, therefore the ERASMUS programme is rather catalyst than promoter of European identity and stereotype-breaker.

**Key words:** the ERASMUS programme, European identity, stereotypes.

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## INTRODUCTION

*“Bringing students to Europe, bringing Europe to students...”*

Motto of the ERASMUS Programme

Today the ERASMUS Programme is described as one of the symbols of the construction of the European identity and one of the most successful examples of promoting European integration. Furthermore, the motto of the ERASMUS Programme exemplifies it: “bringing students to Europe, bringing Europe to all students” (Nelson & Neack, 2002: 207 in Oborune, 2009). The programme also contributes to “an ever-closer Union among the peoples of Europe” and highlights the motto of EU: “unity in diversity”. (Oborune, 2009)

Many political scientists have expressed the significance of studying the influence of the ERASMUS programme on promotion of European identity. For example, the idea of studying the effect of student mobility on European integration was initiated by Lijphart (Lijphart, 1964: 252) but never implemented. Also nowadays several authors (e.g. Wallace, Jacobs & Maier, Kamphausen, Valentini, Green, Fligstein, Chopin) point to the ERASMUS programme as a tool for promoting European identity. But, unfortunately, there is a limited number of empirical studies done in this field.

Nevertheless, the emergence of research on the ERASMUS programme in the last years shows the recent interest in studying this field. Corradi (2006) has analyzed the ERASMUS programme in the historical perspective, Sauzet (2008) has focused on the pedagogical evaluation of intercultural learning and stereotypes. Van Mol (2009a, 2009b) and Sigalas (2006, 2009) have both outlined the theoretical framework and researched empirically the impact of the ERASMUS Programme on the European identification. Sigalas has studied British students who have and who have not participated in the ERASMUS programme, as well students who have studied as ERASMUS students in UK. Contrarily, Van Mol has studied non-mobile, potential mobile, future mobile and mobile students in sixteen countries.

Interestingly, Sigalas came to the conclusion that although it is “widely assumed it plays a pivotal role in the promotion of a European identity”, the ERASMUS programme “does not foster a European self-identity or a sense of European pride”. (Sigalas, 2009: 1) Both Sigalas (2009) and Van Mol (2009b) conclude that European identity feeling is already present before participation in the ERASMUS programme. I have previously studied the ERASMUS Programme as promoter of tolerance (Oborune, 2008; Oborune, 2009) but in this research I have decided to study if Sigalas’s and Van Mol’s conclusion can be proved also in the case of Latvia. Therefore, I have proposed following *thesis statement*: the ERASMUS Programme does not have an impact on promotion of European identity and breaking stereotypes in students of Latvia who have participated in the ERASMUS Programme.

The *research problem* of this Master thesis is, whether the ERASMUS programme has impact on stereotypes and European identity. The *objective* of the present thesis is to analyze the European self-identification and to research stereotypes of students of Latvia who have participated/have applied/have not participated in the ERASMUS Programme. To achieve this objective, the following tasks have been drafted: first, to operationalize concepts of “identity”, “European identity”, “stereotypes” and “prejudices” using Adcock-Collier’s model of background concept, systematized concept, indicators and scores; second, to develop appropriate methodology and measurement; third, to conduct a survey of students of Latvia.

In the *empirical* part I have taken into account the limitations of methodological frameworks of previous researches. For example, Sigalas points to three studies about the ERASMUS Programme as promoter of European identity done by Stroebe *et al.* (1988), Krämer-Byrne (2002) and King & Ruiz-Gelices (2003) but to Sigalas’s mind all these researches suffer from some methodological limitations – either unrepresentative sample, or use retrospective rather than longitudinal assessment, or there were studied only ERASMUS students and they were not compared with non-ERASMUS students.

There was held a *quantitative survey* of non-mobile, potential-future mobile students (*treatment group*) and mobile students (*control group*). Overall, three hundred thirty students were surveyed. Survey was designed to meet two tasks: first, to examine the impact of the ERASMUS programme on stereotypes, and second, to determine whether the ERASMUS programme had impact on the promotion of European identity. The questionnaire consists of five indexes, characteristics and a socio-demographic data.

The Master thesis is divided into three parts. *Chapter 1* provides a literature review for the concepts of “European identity” and concepts of “stereotypes” and “prejudices” where the background and systematized concepts are distinguished. *Chapter 2* explains the methodological framework used in the study, justifies the use of quantitative research as well as justifies the used technique of measurement. *Chapter 3* is devoted to analysis of the survey and followed by discussion and conclusion part.

The *literature and sources* of this Master thesis can be conditionally divided into three parts. First, studies of scholars Tajfel, Valentini, Žagar etc. which were used in defining the concept of “identity”. Second, there were implemented an analysis of the concept of “European identity” using literature written by such scholars as Bruter, Van Mol, Fuchs, Öner etc. Finally, there were used viewpoints of Makonnen, Allport, Pettigrew and Tropp etc. about the distinction between concept of “stereotypes” and “prejudices”. One hundred eleven sources were used in the following languages: English, Latvian, and German.

## Chapter 1: Literature Review

Adcock and Collier (2001) in their paper “*Measurement validity: a shared standard for qualitative and quantitative research*” have developed a model of conceptualization and operationalization on four levels. They include namely: first, the level of *background* concept, second, *systematized* concept, third, indicators or measures and, fourth, the level of scores and classifications.

The first level is to understand the *background* concept and in my research the background concepts are “identity”, “European identity”, “stereotypes” and “prejudices” (see chapters 1.1. “Identity” and 1.3.1. “Stereotypes vs. Prejudices”). The use of these concepts can differ in social psychology, sociology and political science, however even within one discipline these concepts can be explained differently. There were observed works written by Valentini, Žagar (concept “identity”), Mackie and Smith, Pettigrew and Zepa *et al.* (concepts “stereotypes” and “prejudices”).

At the second level I have selected a specific – *systematized* – definition for my key concepts that I will use in my research. Adcock and Collier emphasize that a researcher must choose and justify the *systematized* concept (see chapters 1.2. “European identity”, 1.3.2. “Typology”, “Heterostereotypes vs. Autostereotypes”) because the *background* concept is too contested. (Adcock & Collier, 2001: 532) There were analysed the theoretical approaches and knowledge developed by such scholars as Van Mol, Bruter (concept “European identity”) and Apine (concept “Heterostereotypes vs. Autostereotypes”).

In the second chapter of this Master thesis I have worked with the third and fourth level of Adcock’s and Collier’s approach. I have developed indicators and the level of scores (see chapter 2.3. “Measurement”) using the previous studies held about European identity, ethnic stereotypes and the ERASMUS programme.

## 1.1. Identity

### 1.1.1. Typology

Before analyzing the concept of “European identity” I should specify what I mean by concept of “identity”. However, defining and studying “identity” is a difficult task to accomplish. The three main approaches of theorizing the concept of “identity” are following: 1) *universalistic (structural)* (Habermas); 2) *sociological* (e.g. Easton, Nisbet, Weber, Giddens) and 3) *social-psychological* approach (e.g. Turner, Tajfel, Oakes). There is also a distinction between 1) *social identity* (Tajfel, Williams), 2) *cultural identity* (Clifford, Hall) and 3) *collective identity* (Geertz, Habermas).

However, this distinction is debatable and there are different opinions among scholars. For instance, Loukola points out that sociologists distinguish between *social*, *cultural* and *personal* (instead of *collective*) identity (Loukola, 2005: 113), but Snow argues that there is *social*, *personal* and *collective* identity (Snow, 2001: 1). From the other side, Fearon claims that there is only a distinction between *social* and *personal* identity (Fearon, 1999: 2.) Furthermore, Heikinnen thinks that *cultural* identity is one of the forms of *social* identity (Heikinnen, 2009: 29).

In contrast, if we talk about European identity, then the main debate among scholars is not about European identity as *social*, *cultural*, *personal* or *collective* identity but rather if European identity is *individual* or *collective* identity (Müller, 2007: 102). I would rather agree with scholars who argue that European identity is *collective* identity (Hollmann, 2009: 48; Delanty, 2003). To justify my opinion, at first, I will elaborate on the main differences between *individual* and *collective* identity and then I will analyze the definitions of concept of “identity”.

### 1.1.2. Collective vs. Individual Identity

Weeks proposes such definition of *individual* identity (“Me–feeling”): “what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others” (Weeks, 1990: 88). Tajfel defines *individual* identity in the following way: “part of the individual’s self-concept which derives from knowledge of membership of a social group/s together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership”. (Tajfel, 1981: 255)

*Collective* identity requires interaction between individuals (“We-feeling”). Valentini provides following definition: “a feeling and belief that one belongs to a specific category determined by common characteristics”, and this feeling and belief should be recognized by other members (Valentini, 2005: 5). Furthermore, I would like to emphasize that *collective* identity can be analyzed as *active* or *passive* element (Baki, 2009: 5). *Collective* identity as an *active* element means that we study how does identity as a political tool affect European integration. A *passive* element means that we study how does identity as a social process change European integration. The ERASMUS programme is both a political tool and a social process therefore in this research both *active* and *passive* elements are studied.

### 1.1.3. Definition

There is a vast amount of definitions of the concept of identity. In this part I would like to emphasize one concrete definition. Žagar provides a definition of “identity” which combines elements of *individual* and *collective* identity. Žagar’s definition is the following: “identity is the feeling of belonging to a certain entity, defined by different (in the case of collective identities – agreed upon and shared) objective and subjective criteria”. (Žagar, 2001: 2-3) Moreover, as Žagar and other scholars have emphasized, identity (either *individual* or *collective*) is not fixed, but can change and transform (Žagar, 2001: 3; Valentini, 2005: 9).

Therefore, identity is a social phenomenon that can be in the process of formation rather than static. Thus identity is a dynamic phenomenon. Moreover, identity is a multidimensional concept and I do agree with scholars that multiple identities do exist (Risse, 2004; Huyst, 2008; Caporaso & Kim, 2009). European identity can be part of such multiple identities together with national identity.

From this discussion of the concept of “identity” I would like to emphasize four aspects. First, despite the fact that there are different approaches of theorizing concept of “identity”, for the purpose of this thesis I prefer distinction between *individual* and *collective* identity because this distinction is mainly used in the debate about European identity. Second aspect I would like to emphasize is that in the case of European identity we speak about *collective* and not about *individual* identity. Moreover, European identity is part of multiple identities that one can have. Third, identity is a dynamic social phenomenon that can change. Last but not least, the definition of identity I prefer: identity is a feeling of belonging to a specific category determined by common characteristics and recognized by other members. This definition reflects the “collectivity” element that is prescribed to the European identity.

## **1.2. Concept of European Identity**

### **1.2.1. Limitations of concept**

There is a vast amount of literature on the issue of European identity and in the past decades it has become one of the most researchable and highly debatable topics. “Additionally, in the new member countries the very notion of European identity seems to be more widely discussed than in the old member states”. (Valentini, 2005: 10) Historians, political scientists, sociologists and social psychologists have studied concept of European identity, thus it has become an interdisciplinary field to observe. However, to my mind, because of the latter there are shortcomings in the literature - a lack of in-depth theoretical and empirical analysis taking into account many dimensions and perspectives of this phenomenon.

I agree with Huyst’s argumentation why studying the European identity is a comprehensive task: it is hard to define European identity and to measure it (Huyst, forthcoming: 6; Herrmann and Brewer, 2004). Indeed, defining the concept of European identity is a tough task. Even nowadays there is a debate if European identity does exist (see Kielmansegg, 1996; Offe, 1998). However, I would argue that the European identity exists and there are scholars who agrees with that.

Another failure is that some scholars associate “Europe with European Union (..) which is reflected also in the general definition of the word “European”” (Valentini, 2005: 4). Therefore I agree with Rollis that each of the words in the concept of “European identity” taken individually may be ambiguous (Rollis, 2005: 163). Moreover, I disagree with Fokion *et al.* that “European identity tends to be meaningful only when it is contrasted against anything considered as non-European” (Fokion *et al.*, 2006: 8) because this argument rather separates “European” and “identity” but does not take into account the specific meaning of these words together.

Van Mol points to two approaches for the study of European identity: 1) *top-down*; and 2) *bottom-up* approach (Van Mol, 2009a: 9). *Top-down* approach focuses on what unifies Europeans (e.g. cultural heritage, values) (Bruter, 2005: 5). *Bottom-up* approach focuses on feelings of Europeans toward Europe. Similarly as Van Mol, also in this study will be used *bottom-up* approach: the influence of the ERASMUS Programme on individual's European identity feeling.

Taking into account the discussion of the concept of "identity", I would agree with Castells that European identity is the set of values and feeling of belonging to a distinctive European entity, for example, European culture (Castells, 2000: 3). However, there are scholars who conclude that European identity is an elite project (Bancks, 2007: 12; Guibernau, 2001: 27). Furthermore, Fuchs argues that "for a further emergence of European identity a stronger political integration of the EU is necessary". (Fuchs, 2006: 18) Nevertheless, we agree with this opinion or not, I share my point of view with academicians who conclude that the creation of European identity is still an ongoing, very difficult, complex and time consuming process (Öner, 2004: 35; Bakke, 1995: 26; Jasson, 2001: 157).

### 1.2.2. Political vs. Cultural Identity

Kohli distinguishes four levels of analysis of European identity: 1) *constitutional*<sup>1</sup>; 2) *discursive (political)*; 3) *cultural*; 4) *individual* (Kohli, 2000: 120). Scholars (e.g. Niedermayer and Sinnot, McLaren, Green, Fligstein) and also Eurobarometer use the self-identification - it could be all levels of analysis of European identity except the first. However, I would agree with Madeker that Kohli's fourth level of analysis - "individual's feelings of belonging to Europe as a social or political entity" - is the interest of scholars in the most cases (Madeker, 2006: 3).

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. *Declaration on European Identity* (1973)

On the other hand, according to Bruter we can distinguish between *political* and *cultural* European identity. Both identities are important for the thesis because the *political* European identity implies that an individual identifies him/herself with the European Union, but the *cultural* European identity implies that individual “*shares a certain common culture, social similarities, ethics, values and religion.*” (Bruter, 2004; 2005; 2008: 279) Interestingly, based on qualitative interviews in Belgium and Spain, Van Mol concludes that students who have participated in the ERASMUS programme refer to *cultural* European identity, but students who have not taken part in - to *political* European identity (Van Mol, 2009a: 10). On the contrary, Mondrasse has emphasized that only common *cultural* European identity does exist (Buzaianu, 2006: 78).

### 1.2.3. National vs. European Identity

There are three different opinions about the relationship between European and national identity. First point of view is that European and national identity are competing (Fuchs *et al.*, 2009). Therefore some scholars see a strong national identity as the main reason for a weak European identity but, on the other hand, there are academicians (e.g. Eisenstadt & Giesen, 1995; Risse, 2004) who argue that “*the relationship between the two forms of identification is mutually exclusive*” (Kaelble, 2009: 207).

Second view is that European and national identities are complementary. For instance, Fossum, Grundy and Jamieson argue that one can have both national and European identity (Fossum, 2001: 375-376; Grundy & Jamieson, 2007). Also other political scientists emphasize that European identity cannot substitute national identity (Laffan, 2008: 98-99; Prisacariu, 2007: 5; Järve, 2005: 34). Moreover, the project of European identity does not mean the loss of national identity (Müller, 2007: 107). Additionally, Hedetoft (1994: 19) and Sedláček (2009) conclude that people who feel a strong European identity could also feel a

strong sense of national identity. This conclusion was also drawn by King and Ruiz-Gelices (2003: 247).

The last point of view is that on one hand national and European identity can be seen as complementary but on the other hand – contradictory (Öner, 2004: 34). This is similar argument brought by Smith who distinguishes two levels of debate: at the practical and at the conceptual level (Smith, 1992: 56). He argues that European and national identity are competing with each other at the practical rather than conceptual level. I rather disagree with Smith because to my mind these identities are not competing but rather can exist complementary both on the conceptual and practical level.

Therefore taking into consideration the analysis of the concept of “European identity” above I would like to point to five viewpoints. First, to my mind European identity does exist. However, it is a tough task to study and measure European identity. Second, European identity is a feeling of belonging to a distinctive European culture (*cultural* European identity) and/or European Union (*political* European identity). Third, *bottom-up* approach will be used in this research. Fourth, to my mind European and national identities are complementary. Finally, the formation of European identity is a complex project to accomplish.

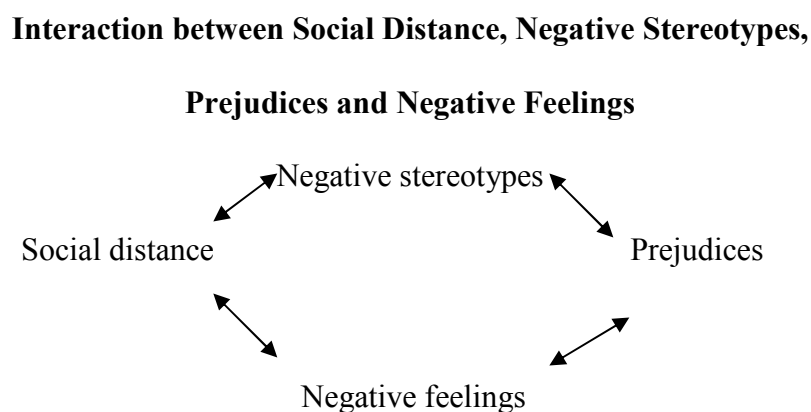
### 1.3. Stereotypes

#### 1.3.1. Stereotypes vs. Prejudices

The concepts of “stereotype” and “prejudice” are often used as synonyms. Despite the fact that some scholars note a similarity of the concepts of *stereotype* and *prejudice* there are sharp differences. *Stereotype* is a type of perception, but *prejudice* is a type of assessment (Oakes *et al.*, 1994: 5, 14 in Oborune, 2009). Mackie and Smith believe that *stereotypes* include a variety of features, which may relate both to physical features and beliefs, and social roles. *Prejudices* are defined as a negative assessment of a social group and its members (Mackie & Smith, 1998: 105 in Oborune, 2009).

Makkonen also offers the following relationship between *stereotypes* and *prejudices* (see Figure 1 “Interaction between Social Distance, Negative Stereotypes, Prejudices and Negative Feelings”). He defines prejudices as unreasonably formed opinions and feelings caused by lack of knowledge, so in order to combat prejudices; one has to contend with the social distance, stereotypes and negative feelings (Makkonen, 2006: 8-9 in Oborune, 2009). Nevertheless, to my mind it is much harder or even impossible to eliminate prejudices than stereotypes.

Figure 1



Source: Makkonen in Scheinin & Toivanen (2004: 161-163)

Allport has put forward the *inter-group contact* hypothesis: the contact with representatives of other groups may reduce the *prejudices* against this group (Allport in Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000 in Oborune, 2009). This is possible only if representatives are of equal status, have common goals; there is no competition and sanctions (Pettigrew & Tropp in Oskamp, 2000: 93-94 in Oborune, 2009). Pettigrew concludes that the process should consist of four separate stages – “acquisition of information, behaviour change, emotional ties and the formation of a change in attitude”. He also adds that friendship has a very positive impact on bias (Pettigrew, 1998: 65-85 in Oborune, 2009).

Oakes, Haslam and Turner found that stereotypes are not fixed but may vary. These authors conclude that we try to believe that the group to which we belong is better than the group to which we do not (Oakes *et al.*, 1994: 211-212 in Oborune, 2009). Rocaech based his opinion on the hypothesis that people with certain personality characteristics are more conducive to (in)tolerance and stereotyping (stereotype-breaking) than others (Zepa *et al.*, 2004: 78 in Oborune, 2009).

Moreover, Driedger and Clifton emphasize that if one has positive thoughts about his own group, it does not mean that he thinks poorly of other people (Driedger & Clifton in Zepa *et al.*, 2004: 11 in Oborune, 2009). Also Devine argues that tolerant people avoid using stereotypes (Devine in Zepa *et al.*, 2004: 11 in Oborune, 2009). Ray is of the opinion that people use stereotypes in those cases where there is a lack of information (Ray in Zepa *et al.*, 2004: 11 in Oborune, 2009). In this research the concept of “stereotypes” rather than “prejudices” will be used because we cannot get rid of prejudices but we can break stereotypes because they are not fixed and people can avoid using them.

### 1.3.2. Typology

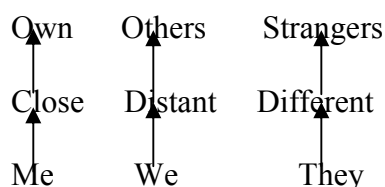
Scholars distinguish *ethnic*, *racial*, *religious*, *age*, *gender*, *profession*, *sexual* and *sexual orientation* stereotypes. In this Master thesis *ethnic* stereotypes are researched because ethnic identity plays more crucial role in the ERASMUS programme than other identities. However, in the literature about the ERASMUS programme academicians rather use “*national stereotypes*” or “*stereotypes based on national identity*” instead of “*ethnic stereotypes*” (Papatsiba, 2005; Sigalas, 2009; Dervin, 2007). Nevertheless, in this research the concept of “ethnic stereotypes” is used by which also “national stereotypes” are considered. Furthermore, it is more important to study ethnic stereotypes than other stereotypes. As officials and survey results show during the ERASMUS programme students learn about different nations, their cultures and become less ethnocentric (Schutte *et al.*, 2008). From the other side, scholars have emphasized that students not only get rid off but also get new stereotypes, especially toward local residents (Dervin, 2007; Oborune, 2008; Oborune, 2009).

### 1.3.3. Heterostereotypes vs. Autostereotypes

Apine stresses that stereotypes contribute to the formation of xenophobia. She indicates two subtypes of ethnic stereotypes: *heterostereotype* (image of another which is always negative) and *autostereotype* (self-image which is always idealized) (Apine, 2001: 17-18 in Oborune, 2009). Also concerning the concept of “identity” Turner indicates the necessity to distinguish between “us” and “them” (Turner *et al.*, 1987). Furthermore, the assumption of “we-they” derives from the theory of *disposition* (Makarēvičs, 2001: 122 in Oborune, 2009) (see Figure 2 “Explanation of Behaviour After Theory of Disposition”). Also Zimmel has similar scale – *own*, *others*, *strangers* (Zimmel in Apine, 2001: 87 in Oborune, 2009).

Figure 2

### Explanation of Behaviour After Theory of Disposition



Source: Makarēvičs (2001: 122)

There are two types of research that can be conducted to measure *heterostereotypes* and *autostereotypes*: 1) *value ratings*, and 2) *characterization*. A couple of studies have analyzed value ratings of own group and other group (Feather, 1980; Linder & Bauer, 1983). However, studies where characterization is used are more popular (since Katz & Braly). Therefore the last part of the questionnaire will be devoted to self-characterization and characteristics of other ERASMUS students and local residents (see Chapter 2.3.1. “Characteristics”).

I would like to emphasize three conclusions that could be derived from the analysis of the concept of “stereotypes”. First, in the empirical part I will use concept of “stereotypes” rather than “prejudices” because, as scholars have argued, stereotypes are not fixed but may vary. Second, I will look at ethnic (national) stereotypes because they can emerge/eliminate during the exchange programme. Third, in the questionnaire I will put questions about *heterostereotype* and *autostereotype* as suggested by Apine.

## CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Green (2007), Moes (2008), and Huyst (forthcoming) conclude that *quantitative* approach is more often used to study European identity, especially using the data of Eurobarometer. But Eurobarometer has both advantages and limitations. On one hand, it allows generalizing data, on the other hand, there is criticism of the measurement used in Eurobarometer (Sinnot, 2005; Bruter, 2008). Moreover, questions on European identity are rather questions concerning attachment (to Bruter's mind attachment is not the same as identity (Bruter, 2008 in Huyst, forthcoming: 10)) and most questions neglect the fact that people can have multiple identities, for example, Bruter argues that national and European identity is in tension in Eurobarometer questions (Bruter, 2008 in Huyst, forthcoming: 10).

Furthermore, Cerutti and Lucarelli (2008) and Bruter (2008) recommend using not only a *quantitative* but also a *qualitative* approach in the study of the European identity. There are both advantages and limitations in using the two approaches together. For example, Cropley points to the main weakness of the *qualitative* research method: it gives far less emphasis to the idea of causation. (Cropley, 2002: 10) At first, I have considered using both approaches, but for this research it is enough to use survey, especially because of time limit.

### 2.1. Survey Methodology

The *population* - students of Latvia who have not participated/have applied to participate/have participated in the ERASMUS programme (2009/2010).<sup>2</sup> *Sample size*: 100 *non-mobile*, 100 *future mobile*, and 100 *mobile* students. A questionnaire was sent to the 1) *non-mobile* students (mainly Bachelor's degree 3<sup>rd</sup> year, Master's degree 1<sup>st</sup> year and PhD

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<sup>2</sup> According to the data in Latvia approximately 112 555 students have studied in the academic year of 2009/2010 (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia: 2009).

degree 1<sup>st</sup> year<sup>3</sup>), 2) *future mobile* students (who will participate in the ERASMUS programme in the autumn term of the academic year of 2010/2011) and 3) *mobile* students (students who have participated in the ERASMUS programme in the academic year of 2009/2010). The questionnaire was distributed via e-mail list with the help of BA, MA and PhD coordinators and administrators of the ERASMUS programme or directors of Departments of Foreign Relations in the faculties of universities of Latvia.

I made the decision about sample size based on three factors, namely: 1) *time available* (April, May), 2) *budget* and 3) *necessary degree of precision*. I have chosen the sample size of 300 students because using a large sample does not compensate a bias in sampling. Moreover, increasing the sample from 250 to 1000 only doubles the precision.

I have used *simple random sampling* in my survey. Simple random sampling is a desirable method of sampling and it means drawing at random without replacement (Hansen *et al.*, 1993: 311). Hansen, Hurwitz and Madow (Ibid: 312) indicate that simple random sampling is the basic probability method (other methods can be more complicated). Random sampling is suitable because it is designed so that each individual in the population will get into the sample with an equal chance (Ibid: 313). Second reason – this method makes solution independent (Rudas, 2009a). Freedman concludes that judgment and choice usually show bias, while chance is impartial (Ibid: 315).

I have chosen *internet (online)* survey because it is more convenient for respondents to provide answers. I have used [www.questionpro.com](http://www.questionpro.com) because it is convenient for the researcher and analysis of data in SPSS. Moreover, it allows creating questionnaires with more than ten questions and it is cheaper than [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The decision was made based on the fact that students cannot take part in the ERASMUS programme if they are going to graduate the university. Therefore sending questionnaires to Bachelor's 4<sup>th</sup> year or Master's 2<sup>nd</sup> year students would be inappropriate. On the other hand, these students could be an appropriate sample for students who have taken part in the ERASMUS programme. Thus, the additional letter was sent to coordinators of the ERASMUS programme to send online questionnaire to the contact list of former ERASMUS students.

<sup>4</sup> For comparison: USD 15/month ([www.questionpro.com](http://www.questionpro.com)) and USD 19.95/month ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com))

Online survey (<http://erasmusaptauja.questionpro.com>)<sup>5</sup> was conducted in the first week of May and was analysed in the second week of May. The e-mails to coordinators and administrators of the ERASMUS programme or directors of Departments of Foreign Relations were sent on 4<sup>th</sup> May and the deadline of completing the questionnaire was 10<sup>th</sup> May 11.59 p.m. There were provided incentives<sup>6</sup> for filling in the questionnaire taking into consideration the previous experience of conducting the online survey in Latvia, France and Switzerland (Oborune, 2008; Oborune, 2009).

In my previous research about the ERASMUS programme I had to gather responses from 100 former ERASMUS students of Latvia (University of Latvia), 100 former ERASMUS students of France (Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Lille) and 100 former ERASMUS students of Switzerland (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich), who participated in the ERASMUS Programme in the academic years of 2006/2007, 2007/2008 and 2008/2009. The first limitation was the time available (two weeks) and the second limitation was the time of holding the survey (July). With this limitation in mind, I took a decision to provide incentives in this research to have a higher response rate and to gather 300 responses from students.

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<sup>5</sup> Survey is closed since 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010

<sup>6</sup> Lottery with the possibility to win three gift cards of *Jāņa Rozes grāmatnīca* in the value of Ls 5

## **2.2. Questionnaire Design**

The designed questionnaire is available in Annex I “Questionnaire”. At the beginning of the questionnaire I have included clear and concise instructions on how to complete the questionnaire (Scheuren, 2004: 8). If the first questions are too threatening or “boring”, there is little chance that the person will complete the questionnaire. People generally look at the first few questions before deciding whether or not to complete the questionnaire, which is one of the reasons why I have put control question first.

There were some more things I had to consider when designing my questionnaire (Borgatti: 1998). The way in which questions are phrased can bias the responses. Several authors have reported that minor changes in wording can produce more than a 25% difference in people’s opinions (Scheuren, 2004: 21). Moreover, I have avoided unnecessary abbreviations, false premises and double negatives (Scheuren: 9). I have avoided language that is familiar to me, but might not be to my respondents. I have made sure it is absolutely clear what I am asking and that the questions address my study goals (Wallonick, 2004: 7). I have put difficult questions towards the middle of the interview when the interviewee has gotten more comfortable. This has two benefits. First, it makes them more likely to answer, and, second, if they do not answer the last questions, at least I have had most of my questions answered. However, afterwards I chose to analyze only completed questionnaires.

An open-ended question is one in which I do not provide any standard answers to choose from. A closed-ended question is one in which I provide the response categories, and the respondent just chooses one (Borgatti, 1998). In my questionnaire, I have chosen closed-ended questions because it is easy and quick to answer, response choices make the question clear, easy to replicate, easy to compare and analyse in SPSS. However, Huyst argues that “a too fixed questionnaire will lose a lot of the different layers of what political identity means to people”. (Huyst, forthcoming: 10-11) Thus it can be also a limitation.

The pilot test of the questionnaire is the test of representatives of the target audience. If there are problems with the questionnaire, they almost always show up in the pilot test. The questions on the questionnaire must be without any ambiguity because there will be no chance to clarify a question when respondents receive the survey (Wallonick, 2004: 9). Missing data is the major challenge in surveys. If 30 percent did not respond, I should delete the given question. (Rudas, 2009b) The pilot test was conducted on 30<sup>th</sup> April (the questionnaire was sent to ten students of each target group) and afterwards the questions were reconceptualized and some new questions were included.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> In the question 4 (see Annex 1 “Questionnaire”) I have included statements about a good knowledge in at least one foreign language (e.g. English, German, French, Spanish, Italian etc.) and participation in exchange, workshop, conference or similar international event abroad. There were also questions included about marital status and children in the socio-demographic data.

## 2.3. Measurement

As Adcock and Collier state in their paper the next level after moving from background to systematized concepts are indicators and I should observe other researchers' indicators, consider if they are well-designed and the validity of the proposed indicators. I should select *indicators* that would be used in my research and justify my choice. Afterwards I should consider what *variables* and *items* would be used and I need to bear in mind that they can be context specific. The methodology was based on two studies: "*Ethnic tolerance and Integration of the Latvian Society*" (Zepa *et al.* (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences), 2004) and "*Does ERASMUS Student Mobility promote a European Identity?*"<sup>8</sup> (Sigalas, 2009). However, the methodology has been re-designed for the purposes of my research.

### 2.3.1. A Socio-Demographic Data

Van Mol alleges that students who participate in the ERASMUS programme are influenced by the soci-cultural and economic context. (Van Mol, 2009a: 5) Findlay *et al.* (2005) have come to the conclusion that the high costs of living abroad is one of the main barriers for students from worse social backgrounds (low income level; place of residence of parents in the least developed region etc.). Van Mol also points to other barriers such as "lack of information, too much administration, difficulties to leave family and friends and linguistic insecurity" (2009a: 6).

Therefore in the social-demographic data I have put questions concerning gender (female/male), age (dividing into three groups: 18-24 years old; 25-29 years old; 30 and more years old), income level (taking into account the current economic situation in Latvia I have divided into four groups: less than Ls 100 Ls (EUR 143), 100 - Ls 200 (EUR 143-285), Ls 200 - Ls 300 (EUR 285 – 422), Ls 300 (EUR 422) and more), and parents' place of residence

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<sup>8</sup> Methodology is better explained in paper written by Sigalas earlier (2006).

(I have included four regions of Latvia - Kurzeme, Zemgale, Vidzeme, Latgale - and I have also separately distinguished the capital – Riga). There were also questions included about marital status (single, engaged, married or divorced) and children after holding the pilot test because the marital status could also be an obstacle for students to participate in the ERASMUS programme. In this part of the questionnaire I have also included questions about university studies, degree and course, as well as a question about the country where the student has studied as ERASMUS student.

### 2.3.2. Indexes

I have constructed indexes based on the proposed five indexes<sup>9</sup> by the Baltic Institute of Social Sciences in the research *“Ethnic tolerance and Integration of the Latvian Society”* (2004). But there were changed, added and eliminated statements in each index and also some indexes were eliminated at all. I have also taken into account the previous researches about the influence of the ERASMUS programme on European identity (for example, research *“Remaining proud of their National Identity, Yet Uniting Ever more Closely? The Erasmus Students as the Role Model European citizens”* (2006) conducted by Sigalas) and conclusions made in the conceptual part of this thesis.

In the construction of the first index “The ethnic self-isolation and dogmatism” the ethnic stereotypes are analyzed. Moreover, I took into account Rocaech’s hypothesis discussed in the conceptual part about “stereotypes”. Based on his hypothesis people with certain personality characteristics are more conducive to (in)tolerance and stereotyping (stereotype-breaking) than others. Therefore not only ethnic self-isolation but also dogmatism (being closed vs. being open) is analysed using this index.

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<sup>9</sup> (1) The ethnic self-isolation index; (2) The positive social identity index; (3) The dogmatism index; (4) The ethnic contact index; (5) The social distance index between Latvians and non-Latvians.

Second index “The positive social identity” deals with national identity and ethnic stereotypes. As was emphasized in the analysis of concepts, people tend to think that the group they belong to is better than the group to which they do not. From the other side, if one has positive thoughts about one’s own group, it does not mean that one thinks poorly of members outside.

In the third index “The multicultural background” conclusions made by previous researches were taken into account. For example, Van Mol emphasizes language skills of the students who are applying for the ERASMUS programme (Van Mol, 2009a: 6). Also Buggert and Preller (2008) who have analyzed Eurobarometer data concluded that the more languages a respondent knows and the more European countries he/she has visited, the more strongly he/she feels European. For this purpose, I have included a question about being good in at least one foreign language (e.g. English, German, French, Spanish, Italian etc.). I have specified the languages because many students also know Russian and consider it as a foreign language but Russia does not participate in the ERASMUS programme, thus the knowledge of Russian is not relevant.

Furthermore, Murphy-Lejeune (2002) assumes that probably previous experience in a foreign country or experience of foreign culture influences the decision to participate in the ERASMUS programme. Also Sigalas points to the multicultural background of ERASMUS students (2009). Therefore in this index I have included questions about the experience of students living abroad, participation in international exchanges or similar events, as well as their multicultural background (family, relatives or friends of different culture, nationality or ethnic minorities).

The fourth index “The social distance index between Latvians and Europeans” deals with social distance, which is an important parameter of ethnic relations (Zepa *et al.*, 2004: 11). As I have pointed out in my previous research on the ERASMUS programme (Oborune,

2009: 16) Hagendoorn and Kleinpenning have come to the conclusion that the concept of social distance has been applied to assess negative attitudes when people tend to close themselves from other groups (Hagendoorn & Kleinpenning, 1991). Makkonen defines social distance as a lack of social interaction with group members who have negative or prejudiced attitudes. He concludes that negative feelings lead to social distance, which consequently creates stereotypes. Thus, he stresses that the positive experience reduces inter-group social distance, which, in turn, breaks negative stereotypes and negative feelings, which evolves into positive feelings. The most effective way for this exchange will take place between people of similar status (Makkonen in Scheinin & Toivanen, 2004: 161, 163-164).

In the last index “The European identity” I have included questions from Eurobarometer 57 of year 2002 (questions about being European in the future; about feeling close to Europeans; Latvia’s EU membership as a good thing) and studies by Niedermayer and Sinnott (1995), Thomassen and Schmitt (1999) (question about trusting other Europeans), and Sigalas (2006, 2009) (questions about feeling European, being proud of being European, European unification as a good thing). Taking into account the assumptions discussed above, I have created following five indexes and hypotheses:

### **(1) The ethnic self-isolation and dogmatism index**

*H<sub>0</sub>: ERASMUS and future ERASMUS students are more open than non-ERASMUS*

*H<sub>1</sub>: There is no difference between ERASMUS [former and future] and non-ERASMUS students regarding openness*

1. I cannot fully trust anyone of different nationality
2. I would not like that people from other nationalities would live in Latvia
3. It would be better that each nationality would live in their country
4. People have different opinions and thoughts, but only one can be correct
5. It is better to choose partners and friends with similar opinions and tastes as mine.

## **(2) The positive social identity index**

$H_0$ : *There is different perception about national identity between ERASMUS [former and future] and non-ERASMUS students*

$H_1$ : *There is no difference in perception about national identity between ERASMUS [former and future] and non-ERASMUS students*

1. Latvia is a better country than other
2. I would like to be resident of Latvia rather than another country
3. I am proud of being resident of Latvia

## **(3) The multicultural background index**

$H_0$ : *ERASMUS [former and future] students are more multicultural than non-ERASMUS students*

$H_1$ : *ERASMUS [former and future] students are same multicultural as non-ERASMUS students*

1. I have a good knowledge of at least one foreign language (e.g. English, German, French, Spanish, Italian etc.)
2. I have participated in exchange, workshop, conference or similar international events abroad
3. I have lived abroad for more than one month (except the ERASMUS programme)
4. I have friends from another culture (or nationality, or ethnic minority)
5. There are different cultures (nationalities, ethnic minorities) in my family

## **(4) The social distance index between Latvians and Europeans**

$H_0$ : *ERASMUS [former and future] students feel less social distance with Europeans than non-ERASMUS*

$H_1$ : *ERASMUS [former and future] students feel same social distance with Europeans as non-ERASMUS*

1. Latvians and Europeans each live in their own separate world

2. I have no problems in communication with Europeans – they are the same people as me
3. I like if there are people of different nationalities around me

### **(5) The European identity index**

$H_0$ : *ERASMUS [former and future] students feel more European than non-ERASMUS students*

$H_1$ : *ERASMUS [former and future] students feel same European as non-ERASMUS students*

1. I feel European
2. I am proud of being European
3. In the near future I see myself as European
4. I can trust Europeans
5. I feel close to Europeans
6. Latvia's EU membership is a good thing
7. European unification is a good thing

The *response scale* I have chosen is the most widely used scale in surveys the *Likert scale*. This is the standard *Agree-Disagree* ordinal categories response scale, which “consists of a series of statements to which a respondent is to indicate a degree of agreement or disagreement” (Albaum, 1997: 1). I used a *5-point scale*: Strongly Agree → Agree → Neither Agree nor Disagree → Disagree → Disagree Strongly. “As such the scale purports to measure direction (by “Agree/Disagree”) and intensity (by “Strongly Agree/Disagree”) of attitude” (Albaum, 1997). On the other hand, I should be cautious of three possible limitations of this scale: 1) “leniency: tendency to rate something too high or too low (i.e. rate in an extreme way); 2) central tendency: reluctance to give extreme scores, 3) proximity: give similar responses to items that occur close to one another” (Albaum, 1997: 2).

### 2.3.3. Characteristics

For measuring stereotypes, I have used the methodology of the Baltic Institute of Social Sciences – self-characterization and characterization of other ERASMUS students and local residents using Teun van Dijk’s approach (people tend to have a positive self-image and a negative presentation of other groups). In the original research there were 28 characteristics – 13 positive, 2 neutral and 13 negative characteristics. But I have eliminated some from the list<sup>10</sup> and have redesigned it taking into account characteristics that were mentioned by students of Latvia in my previous research (Oborune, 2008; Oborune, 2009).

Therefore I have created a list of eighteen characteristics where eight are positive, two neutral and eight negative: open, friendly, interested, sociable, helpful, polite, extravert, hospitable, easy going, curious, unfriendly, reserved, egoistic, distant, irresponsible, secluded, cunning, and stingy. Also Murphy-Lejeune agrees that ERASMUS students are described as outgoing, curious and sociable (2002: 67). In the questionnaire students were asked to characterize themselves, other ERASMUS students and local residents. As a result, from the responses I have drawn conclusion about *heterostereotypes* and *autostereotypes*.

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<sup>10</sup> I have eliminated such characteristics as “hardy”, “respecting older people”, “power loving”, “religious”, “rational” and other that are not appropriate for my research.

## CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF SURVEY

### 3.1. A Socio-Demographic Data

The results presented in this chapter are based on an online survey conducted in the first week of May 2010 at twenty-three universities of Latvia. Students who participated in the survey did not know the exact aim of the survey. Coordinators of the BA, MA and PhD study programmes and administrators of the ERASMUS programme or directors of Departments of Foreign Relations in the faculties of universities of Latvia were informed about the title of the research and the target group, but were not familiar with the exact aim of the questionnaire for the reason to reduce possible response bias. Seven days were given to distribute and fill the questionnaire (4<sup>th</sup> May – 10<sup>th</sup> May 11.59 pm).

Average time taken to complete the survey was ten minutes and participants were free to move back to their previous responses. There were more responses gathered than expected which can be explained with providing incentives to the students. Started but not completed questionnaires were filtered out, therefore the database contained 330 completed questionnaires.

A descriptive analysis of the *aggregated data* of the gender distribution revealed that 81% of the respondents were female, 19% male.<sup>11</sup> The majority of respondents were in the age group of younger than 25 (89%). Most students are single (80 per cent) and do not have children (98%). Most respondents earn less than Ls 100 or between Ls 100-200 (68%). Almost half (48%) of the students were from Riga<sup>12</sup>. Most respondents were from the two

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<sup>11</sup> This could be explained with the overall gender structure in universities of Latvia where there are more female than male students, as well as with the gender structure of future and mobile students where there are more female participants than men (Agency of Exchange Programmes in Latvia Statistics).

<sup>12</sup> I have looked at the residence place of the parents of students instead of looking of the residence place of students because half of the students come from regions but study in Riga therefore they would respond “Riga” instead of the place they come from. My intention in this question was to compare three groups of students and the least developed region – Latgale but the results did not revealed conclusions I could draw because the representation in all three groups was similar and the results of survey showed the likely distribution of regions if we would look at the overall statistics of students where approximately half of students come from capital and other 50 per cent come from regions.

largest universities: University of Latvia (33%) and Riga Technical University (30%). 74% were Bachelor students and 25% Master students. There were only 1 per cent PhD students. Most students were in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of their Bachelor's degree course (32%) or the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Master's degree (28%).

Concerning the countries where students have studied as ERASMUS, the majority has studied in Germany (11%), Denmark (7%), France, Sweden (each 6%), Italy and Spain (each 5%), Netherlands and Norway (each 3%), Finland, UK, Portugal, Czech Republic and Poland (each 2%).<sup>13</sup> Countries with the least participants (less than 0.5%) are tiny countries such as Malta, Luxembourg and Liechtenstein or small countries such as Iceland or Ireland, as well as Slovakia and Slovenia or ones that have recently joined EU as Bulgaria and Romania.

The database was divided into three groups based on the control question ("Have you ever participated in the ERASMUS Programme?" with possible answers: "Yes", "No", "I have applied"). These three groups were: 1) *mobile* students (who have participated in the ERASMUS programme in the academic year of 2009/2010), 2) *future mobile* students (students who will take part in the ERASMUS programme in the autumn term of the academic year of 2010/2011), 3) *non-mobile* students (who have never taken part in and have never applied for the ERASMUS programme). The first group (*mobile*) included 118 students. The second group (*future mobile*) included 111 students. The third group (*non-mobile*) included 101 students. Although originally I intended to gather 100 respondents in each group, I kept the results and did not discard the "additional" responses recommended by Professor Rudas who advised me on survey methodology.

If we look at the socio-demographic *individual data* according to the three groups above (see Annex 2 "A Socio-Demographic Data"), then most of the students were in the age

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<sup>13</sup> This is similar data to overall statistics where the most ERASMUS students study in Germany. See for example statistics of outgoing students of Latvia in the academic year of 2007/2008 <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/table108.pdf> (European Commission, 2007/2008).

group of 18 –24 years old (mobile students – 91%, non-mobile students – 83%, future mobile students – 94%). If we look at the age group older than 25, then most are non-mobile students (17%), followed by mobile students (9%) and the fewest are future mobile (6%). One can conclude that age could be one of the obstacles why students do not take part in or apply for the ERASMUS programme. Another drawback could be marital status and children. There are more engaged, married and divorced in the non-mobile student group (36%) than in the mobile (13%) and future mobile (14%) groups. Also there are more respondents who have children in the group of non-mobile students (3%) than mobile students (2.5%) and future mobile students group (1%). Therefore being older, not being single and having children seem to be obstacles to participate in the ERASMUS programme.

I would like also elaborate on the *individual data* of income level of the students. If we compare the group of those non-mobile and mobile students who earn less than Ls 100, there are more future mobile (61%) than non-mobile students (only 24%). In the more than Ls 200 group of income there are less future mobile (only 22%) than non-mobile students (41%), thus one can conclude that non-mobile students earn more than future mobile students, and therefore are more concerned with their jobs. This could also be a drawback when deciding whether to apply for the ERASMUS programme – because then they might lose their income and job for the study period. Mobile students are between non-mobile and future mobile students: 41% earn less than Ls 100 and 32% earn more than Ls 200.

### 3.2. Indexes

As was explained in the methodological part the main hypotheses I will test are:

H<sub>1</sub>: ERASMUS [former/future] students are more open than non-ERASMUS

H<sub>2</sub>: There is different perception about national identity between ERASMUS [former/future] and non-ERASMUS students

H<sub>3</sub>: ERASMUS [former/future] students are more multicultural than non-ERASMUS students

H<sub>4</sub>: ERASMUS [former/future] students feel less social distance with Europeans than non-ERASMUS

H<sub>5</sub>: ERASMUS [former/future] students feel more European than non-ERASMUS students

#### **H<sub>1</sub>: ERASMUS [former and future] students are more open than non-ERASMUS**

The first three statements of the “The ethnic self-isolation and dogmatism index” were included in the questionnaire because of the goal to study which of the three groups (*mobile*, *future mobile* and *non-mobile* students) tend to be more ethnically isolated and how this influences their attitude to other ethnic groups (nationalities). As results show, non-mobile students are more ethnically isolated than future mobile and mobile students. 9% of non-mobile, 7% of mobile and 5% of future mobile students cannot fully trust anyone of a different nationality. 8% of non-mobile, 5% of mobile and 2% of future mobile students would not like people from other nationalities to live in Latvia. 15% of non-mobile, 11% of mobile and 9% of future mobile students think that it would be better for each nationality to live in their country.

The last two statements of the index were addressed to analyze dogmatic thinking – a situation when people tend to deny opinions that are different from their own. Results of the survey show that mobile students are more open and free in their thinking than non-mobile students and future mobile students. For example, 94% of future mobile students, 92% of

non-mobile and 88% of mobile students disagreed with the statement that people can have different opinions and thoughts, but only one can be correct. Furthermore, 39% of non-mobile students, 34% of mobile and only 30% of future mobile students agree that it is better to choose partners and friends with similar opinions and tastes as mine.

Thus, future mobile and mobile students are more open than non-mobile students and therefore the hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is *proven*. From this analysis one can also conclude that dogmatic thinking of non-mobile students can be a risk factor to gain new ethnic stereotypes and the inability to break the old one. Moreover, there can also be a correlation between self-isolation and dogmatic thinking because people who are less open tend to be aside from people of other nationalities. On the other hand, people who are more flexible in their thinking are more open toward people from other ethnic groups (Zepa *et al.*, 2004: 83-84).

**H<sub>2</sub>: There is a different perception about national identity between ERASMUS [former and future] and non-ERASMUS students**

Zepa *et al.* (2004: 63) have constructed “The positive social identity index” based on the theoretical frameworks developed by scholars of social psychology. One should take into account the dual nature of the positive social identity. Tajfel and Turner (1979) conclude that people tend to think highly of themselves. But Mackie and Smith (1998) point to the fact that “relations among different groups can become so negative that one group’s pride and cultural values can threaten other people”. On the other hand, Driedger and Clifton (1984) argue: “if someone has positive thoughts about his or her own group, that does not necessarily mean that the individual has negative opinions about the representatives of other groups” (Zepa *et al.*, 2004: 63).

57% of mobile, 50.5% of non-mobile and 53% of future mobile students disagree that Latvia is a better country than any other. 33% of mobile, 36% of non-mobile and 32% of

future mobile students would rather be residents of Latvia than another country. 60% of mobile, 55% of non-mobile and 58% of future mobile students are proud of being residents of Latvia. In conclusion, results reveal that non-mobile students have a similar desire to uphold a national identity as mobile students and future mobile students. In short, the hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) is *disproven* because students have a similar perception about national identity.

### **H<sub>3</sub>: ERASMUS [former and future] students are more multicultural than non-ERASMUS students**

The aim of “The multicultural background index” was to analyze the knowledge of foreign languages, participation in international exchanges and other multicultural events (conferences, workshops etc.) and the experience of living abroad, as well as the multicultural background of students (if students have friends and family members from other nationalities, cultures, or ethnic groups).

The results show that 95% of mobile, 83% of non-mobile and 94% of future mobile students have agreed that they have a good knowledge in at least one foreign language (e.g. English, German, French, Spanish, Italian etc.). The result of non-mobile responses is almost equal to statistics of Eurobarometer (2000) that reveal that 82.4% of young people (younger than 24 years) claim to speak a second language (Fligstein, 2009: 142).

Therefore, similarly to Sigalas’s survey results former and future ERASMUS students fare much better in the field of foreign languages than non-mobile students (Sigalas, 2006: 20). Moreover, speaking more than one European language is indispensable for “learning about the particular foreign culture which is also instrumental in the formation of a common European identity” (Sigalas, 2009: 11). From the other side, if we compare future and mobile students, we can see that there is no slight difference. Consequently, those who apply for

exchange programmes already have a good knowledge of foreign languages. On the other hand, this is an obstacle for non-ERASMUS students.

Students could also be affected by previous international exchange. 90% of mobile, only 47.5% of non-mobile and 64% of future mobile students have participated in an exchange, workshop, conference or similar international event abroad. Similar are the results of experience of living abroad more than one month (except the ERASMUS programme): 44% of mobile, 27% of non-mobile and 32% of future mobile students have lived abroad. We can draw conclusions that there is a huge difference between future mobile and non-mobile students and, thus, previous exchange or living abroad experience can promote a student's interest in application for the ERASMUS programme. Therefore, also Murphy-Lejeune's conclusion is proven that previous experience in a foreign country or culture influences the decision to participate in the ERASMUS programme.

If we look at the conclusions drawn above about knowledge of foreign languages, previous international exchange experience and the experience of living abroad, then Fligstein is right that people who speak foreign languages, have traveled and lived in other European countries tend to adopt more European identity and think of themselves as Europeans than those who have not (Fligstein, 2009: 133). These conditions also have an impact on eliminating stereotypes. Ballatore believes that stereotypes are weaker with those students who come from a mixed family or have lived in an international environment before (Ballatore, 2008: 7).

The last two statements were addressed with the aim to analyze the multicultural background of students. 93% of mobile, 72% of non-mobile and 79% of future mobile students have friends from another culture (or nationality, or ethnic minority). Furthermore, 28% of mobile, 24% of non-mobile and 28% of future mobile students have members of family of different cultures (nationalities, ethnic minorities). We can conclude that future and

mobile students have more multicultural background than non-mobile students and therefore the hypothesis (H<sub>3</sub>) is *proven*.

**H<sub>4</sub>: ERASMUS [former and future] students feel less social distance with Europeans than non-ERASMUS**

“The social distance index between Latvians and Europeans” included three statements to which respondents were asked to react. As Zepa *et al.* (2004: 81) point out, mutual relations are influenced by the social distance between two groups (in our case – Latvians and Europeans). Results of the survey show that 80% of mobile, only 64% of non-mobile and 79% of future mobile students like to have people of different nationalities around them. This could be because of the reason that mobile and future mobile students had more previous experience of international exchanges and living abroad than non-mobile students.

Furthermore, Lawler emphasizes that “the notion of identity hinges on an apparently paradoxical combination of sameness and difference”. (Lawler, 2008: 2) Therefore, I included statements about living in separate worlds and sameness between Latvians and Europeans. 15% of mobile, 16% of non-mobile and 13% of future mobile students agreed that Latvians and Europeans each live in their own separate world. As we can see from the results, non-mobile and future mobile students agreed more than mobile students because the last one had experience of living and studying with Europeans. But we should take into account that there is no so slight difference. Moreover, 84% of mobile, 89% of non-mobile and 86% of future mobile students agreed that they have no problems in communication with Europeans because they are the same people. These results are controversial because I was expecting that former ERASMUS students would agree more than future ERASMUS students and non-ERASMUS students.

One explanation of this fact would be that former ERASMUS students have gained stereotypes about some nationalities therefore could not agree with the statement “they are the same people”. The fact of gaining stereotypes instead of breaking can be also proven by the fact that ERASMUS students (of whom 90% had international experience) agreed less (84% comparing with 89%) than non-mobile students (of whom only 47.5% had international experience) that they have no problems in communication with Europeans. Thus, I should reject Makkonen’s conclusion that exchange between people of similar status (ERASMUS students could be such group) always reduces inter-group social distance, which, in turn, breaks negative stereotypes and negative feelings, which evolve into positive feelings. Makkonen should also take into account that through exchanges such as the ERASMUS programme students could not only break old stereotypes but also gain new stereotypes. Stereotyping is further analyzed in the next chapter. Therefore, I can *neither prove nor reject* the hypothesis (H<sub>4</sub>).

#### **H<sub>5</sub>: ERASMUS students feel more European than non-ERASMUS students**

“The European identity index” was constructed to measure European identification of students. In the construction of this index the *bottom-up* approach was used – there was analyzed the influence of the ERASMUS Programme on individual’s European identity feeling or in other words Kohli’s fourth level of analysis – *individual* - the individual’s feeling of belonging to European political or social entity.

As Sigalas points out, *political* European identity is measured by the first three statements of the index: feeling European; feeling proud of being European; in the near future seeing themselves as European. The next two statements address “*community feeling*” as Sigalas calls it: trust other Europeans; feeling close to Europeans. The distinction *political* European identity vs. “*community feeling*” also reflects the distinction active (*political tool*)

vs. passive element (*social process*) of studying the European identity that was discussed in the conceptual part of the Master thesis.

Moreover, as Figel recognizes, the ERASMUS Programme has developed outside of scheme of education programmes (Figel, 2006: 4 in Oborune, 2009). The ERASMUS programme has become: 1) *political tool* of soft power of EU; 2) *social and cultural phenomena*. First, it has become a *political tool* of soft power of the EU because students who identify themselves as Europeans apparently will support the European project (Sauzet, 2008: 81, 83 in Oborune, 2009). Figel also claims that the ERASMUS Programme ultimately benefits all Europeans (New Europe: 2008 in Oborune, 2009) and has given students opportunity to experience European diversity and feel European “that may have impact on the process of European integration” (Byram & Anwei, 2006: 121 in Oborune, 2009). Second, it has become *social and cultural phenomena* because of improving communication and teamwork skills, and understanding of other cultures (Figel, 2006: 1, 4 in Oborune, 2009).

I intended also to see if Van Mol’s argument (that students who have participated in the ERASMUS programme refer to *cultural* European identity, but students who have not taken part in it - to *political* European identity) can be justified using the current data. On the other hand, I can only analyze *political* European identity because there were no questions constructed about *cultural* European identity. If we compare results, then mobile students have more *political* European identity than non-mobile students. Moreover, if we compare results about “*community feeling*” mobile students also have more community feeling than non-mobile students. Thus, Van Mol’s conclusion should be rejected because ERASMUS students have *political* European identity rather than non-ERASMUS students.

Interestingly, also Sigalas has made a similar conclusion to Van Mol’s that the ERASMUS programme had no positive effect on the students’ *political* European identity contrary to the conclusion I have drawn. This can be explained by two reasons: first, Sigalas

has analyzed the ERASMUS programme in Great Britain, which is considered more Euro-sceptic than other European countries. Another explanation is that Van Mol's research was conducted on aggregate level of European countries<sup>14</sup>: in the analysis the possible differences between countries were not taken into account (Van Mol, 2009b: 10). Finally, this can be also explained with the fact that "citizens of small countries generally have more European identity" (Fligstein, 2009: 143).

If we look at the responses of *political* European identity in detail, then 81.3% of mobile students, 58.4% of non-mobile and 71.5% of future mobile students feel European. Non-mobile students represent the average data of statistics according to which only slightly more than half of Europeans identify themselves with Europe and regard themselves as Europeans (Kaelble, 2009: 205). On the other hand, mobile and future mobile see themselves more European than non-mobile students.

77.1% of future mobile students, 63.4% of non-mobile students and 67.9% of future mobile students are proud of being European. Interestingly, mobile students identify themselves more as Europeans and also have more national identity than non-mobile students. For example, if we look at the previous results of national identity: 60% of mobile, 55% of non-mobile and 58% of future mobile students were proud of being residents of Latvia. Thus, Hedetoft, Sedláček, King and Ruiz-Gelices are right concluding that people who feel a strong European identity could also feel a strong sense of national identity. Furthermore, it means that the ERASMUS programme does not mean the loss of national identity. Moreover, the argument discussed in the conceptual part is proven: people can have both strong European and national identity and these identities are complementary rather than excluding each other.

Additionally, 79.6% of mobile, 65.4% of non-mobile and 75% of future mobile students in the near future see themselves as Europeans. The results of the component of

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<sup>14</sup> Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey (Van Mol, 2009b: 8).

“*political* European identity” prove Kaelble’s statement that the ERASMUS programme reinforces loyalty to Europe (Kaelble, 2009: 209). But, on the other hand, it also approves Papatsiba’s argument that “the analysis of the observations at the end of the exchange period does not reveal a strong European identity” (Papatsiba, 2004: 6).

If we look at the responses of “*community feeling*” in detail, then 71.2% of mobile, 61.4% of non-mobile and 62.5% of future mobile students trust other Europeans. These results also are similar to responses of trusting people from different nationalities where non-mobile students trusted less people from other cultures than mobile and future mobile students.

70.4% of mobile students, 59.5% of non-mobile students and 65.2% of future mobile students feel close to Europeans. These results also prove Sigalas’s conclusion that socialising with other people promotes a feeling of community (Sigalas: 2006: 23) because mobile students trust and feel close to Europeans more than future mobile students. As Sigalas adds “the more people socialise with each other the more they trust each other and the closer they feel” (Ibid) as in the case of the ERASMUS programme.

The last two statements divide into *euro-sceptics* vs. *euro-optimists* (Sigalas, 2006: 24-25) depending if students agree or disagree with the following two statements: Latvia’s EU membership is a good thing; European unification is a good thing. I have included seven statements because as Sigalas (2006: 21) argues that “a multitude of questions allows us greater confidence we are measuring the right concept” (Ibid). But in his view there are also shortcomings: “survey analysis becomes much more complex if we have many variables, and the interpretation of the results is more difficult” (Ibid). This limitation should be taken into consideration.

There is more *euro-scepticism* in the group of non-mobile students than mobile and future-mobile students. There are more *euro-optimists* among mobile students than non-

mobile students. If we look at responses, then 78% of mobile students, 68% of future mobile and 59.4% of non-mobile students consider Latvia's EU membership as a good thing. The responses of non-mobile students are similar to overall statistics, which reveals that 56.2% in 2004 viewed the EU as a good thing for their country (Fligstein, 2009: 150).

Moreover, we should take into account Fligstein's conclusion that "if a person has some European identity, he/she is more likely to see Europe as a good thing for his/her country" (Fligstein, 2009: 150). Furthermore, 61% of mobile students, 50% of future mobile and 49.5% of non-mobile students see European unification as a good thing. Therefore Holmes (2000) is right arguing that those who have not interacted with people from other European countries are less favorable toward the European integration. Finally, I conclude that the hypothesis ( $H_5$ ) is *proven* because results of the survey show that ERASMUS students feel more European than non-ERASMUS students.

### 3.3. Characteristics

One of the final tasks of the questionnaire was to explore the self-characteristics of students and how they describe other ERASMUS students and local residents. Non-mobile and future mobile students were asked only to characterize themselves. The characteristics are divided into three groups: positive, neutral and negative (see Annex 4 “Characteristics”).

Mobile students have more positive self-characterization (79.2%) than future mobile (77.9%) and non-mobile students (76.1%). Mobile and future mobile students have also described less negative characteristics (accordingly 9.8% and 9.7%) than non-mobile students (12.3%). Most of the mobile students have described themselves as friendly (17.5%), interested (12%) and open (13.3%). Future mobile students have described themselves similarly: friendly (18.2%), interested (12.5%) and helpful (11.6%). Non-mobile students have described themselves as friendly (17%), helpful (14%) and polite (12.5%).

Using the part “Characteristics” in the questionnaire I intended also to check Allport’s *inter-group contact* hypothesis that contacts with representatives of other groups may reduce the stereotypes against this group. ERASMUS students fall into the requirements that Allport has prescribed: representatives of the group are of equal status, have common goals, and there are sanctions no competition and. ERASMUS students could also go through all four stages defined by Pettigrew: acquisition of information, behaviour change, emotional ties and the formation of a change in attitude. Additionally, ERASMUS students become friends and as Pettigrew has emphasized friendship has a very positive impact on stereotype breaking.

If we look at results then ERASMUS students have characterized themselves as almost as positive as other ERASMUS students (positive characteristics in 79% case of self-characterization and 76.5% of positive characterization of other ERASMUS students). Respondents have described other ERASMUS students as friendly (21%), open (18%) and

sociable (17%). This proves Murphy-Lejeune's statement that ERASMUS students are described as outgoing and sociable.

Furthermore, in this part I aimed also to analyze *heterostereotype* (image of another which is always negative) vs. *autostereotype* (self-image which is always idealized). Therefore, I asked former ERASMUS students to characterize local residents. This reflects Turner's distinction between "us" (ERASMUS students) and "them" (local residents) and Zimmel's scale – me (as ERASMUS student), we (other ERASMUS students), and they (local residents).

If we look at the data about characterization of local residents by mobile students, then we can conclude that students characterized themselves as more positive (79.2%) than local residents (69.4%). ERASMUS students described locals as helpful (16%), friendly (15%) and hospitable (11%). Mobile students have also characterized local residents as more negative (22.2%) than themselves (only 9.8%). For example, ERASMUS students described locals as distant (10%) therefore they did not feel very close to the local population.

Thus, Oakes *et al.* are right arguing that people believe that the group to which they belong is better than the group to which they do not. Moreover, I should decline Driedger's and Clifton's conclusion that if one has positive thoughts about his own group it does not mean that he thinks poorly of other people. On the other hand, Ray's opinion could be also right - people use stereotypes in those cases where there is a lack of information. For example, ERASMUS students did not have enough contact with local people.

## DISCUSSION

### European identity

It is hard to draw conclusions from the results of the survey aimed at finding out if the ERASMUS programme promotes European identity because future mobile students in their responses are between mobile and non-mobile students. On one hand, future mobile students are different from non-mobile students and therefore have already more European self-identification. But on the other hand, mobile students have more European identification than future mobile students, therefore the ERASMUS programme has an effect on European identification, especially in the case of being proud to be European, which could be the result of communication with other Europeans during exchanges.

Furthermore, from these results I would draw the following conclusion: students, who would require more intercultural education, international experience and promotion of European identity, do not participate in the ERASMUS programme because the European identity of future mobile students is increased through participation but non-mobile students would need it more. This conclusion is in line with my findings also in my previous researches (Oborune, 2008; Oborune, 2009).

As former Special Assignments Minister for Society Integration Affairs Dr. Nils Muižnieks pointed out in the semi-structured interview I have conducted in my previous MA thesis: “to some extent ERASMUS students belong to a self representative sample. Those who go to study abroad are already prepared to communicate with people of other nationalities and cultures, because if they are not ready, they do not participate. Therefore, they are not the typical young people [...], they are not the average young people. These are young people who are willing to travel, which are ready to come into contact with other cultures” (Muižnieks in Oborune, 2009: 30).

Nevertheless, the ERASMUS programme plays an important role in promoting the idea that we, Europeans, are all alike and foster trust and feel closer to Europeans. Moreover, the ERASMUS Programme has also an impact on the society, which interacts with ERASMUS students (both the host country during the ERASMUS exchange and the home country when mobile students accomplish the ERASMUS programme). When ERASMUS students return from the exchange programme, they become ambassadors of tolerance, of European integration and, finally, ambassadors of European identity (Papatsiba, 2005: 5-6, Wallström, 2007: 4).

Therefore, the future aim should be to make the ERASMUS Programme “more accessible and more attractive to a large audience” (Figel in Oborune, 2009). One per cent of European students is not an adequate number for promoting European identity and community feeling (EU Observer, 2006). As Figel believes “the more go out, the higher the beneficial impact stemming from this experience” (Figel in Oborune, 2009). Moreover, students who return from the ERASMUS programme can have an impact on the society they belong to. I can draw this conclusion not only about promotion of European identity but also about stereotyping. For example, Kalanowska has emphasized that “many more students still need to participate to change various widespread views, prejudices and stereotypes” (Kalanowska, 2008: 103).

Information about opportunities of mobility for the non-mobile is essential (Byram & Anwei, 2006: 116 in Oborune, 2009). The European Commission asked Member States to increase grant for giving opportunities to more students, especially to less privileged (EUROPA, 2006 in Oborune, 2009), because only students with a good financial background can afford to become ERASMUS students (NY Times, 2009: 1 in Oborune, 2009). Therefore, the ERASMUS Programme should not be idealized. It has its shortcomings that probably create a barrier for promoting European identity and eliminating stereotypes.

## Stereotypes

From the survey results one can reveal that the inter-personal contact between ERASMUS students helped to overcome ethnical stereotypes and has brought people closer. After participation in the exchange, students feel that young people in Europe are similar rather than different because they can communicate with each other and create friendships.

On the other hand, the more negative characterization of local residents shows the limited contact between ERASMUS students and local people. Therefore more contact between mobile students and inhabitants of host country is encouraged.

Mobile students could also adopt and break stereotypes about European nationals. Moreover, we should take into account that even in the situation of breaking stereotypes they can come back later. Additionally, also in the literature it is emphasized that it is a myth that students get rid of stereotypes. For example, Dervin argues that students cannot eliminate all stereotypes (Dervin, 2008: 1). He also stresses that Allport's contact hypothesis has never been proven empirically.

Therefore the research cannot provide significant results concerning the hypothesis that participation in the ERASMUS programme breaks stereotypes. On most questions also in indexes, the answers of former and future mobile students seem to be quite similar. This rather suggests that the ERASMUS programme has no impact in the relevant respect. The differences between mobile and non-mobile students are explained by the attitudes of the former established prior to their participation in the ERASMUS programme (and explaining participation itself) rather than their experiences as participants of the ERASMUS programme.

## CONCLUSION

First, the *major conclusion* of the MA thesis is the following: on one hand, ERASMUS programme influences students' European identity and stereotypes, but on the other hand, students who take part in the ERASMUS programme differ from non-mobile students – they are more open, have more multicultural background, stronger national and European identity and are more ready to eliminate stereotypes. Therefore my proposed *thesis statement* (the ERASMUS Programme does not have an impact on promotion of European identity and breaking stereotypes in students of Latvia) has been proved. The ERASMUS programme is a catalyst rather than promoter because future mobile students already self-identify with Europe and are more open to eliminating stereotypes than non-mobile students.

Second, I will provide a *summary of the major findings*. From the analysis of the concepts of “identity”, “European identity”, “stereotypes” and “prejudices” I would like to point to following conclusions. European identity does exist but it is a tough task to study and measure it. European identity is a type of multiple identity one can have and it is complementary rather than excluding national identity. Furthermore, the definition of European identity could be the following: it is a feeling of belonging to a distinctive European culture (*cultural* European identity) and/or European Union (*political* European identity). Concerning the concept of “stereotypes” and “prejudices”, I would like to point out that in the empirical part I have used concept of “stereotypes” rather than “prejudices” because stereotypes are not fixed but may vary, as scholars have argued. I have analyzed ethnic stereotypes putting emphasis on the distinction between *heterostereotype* (image of another which is always negative) and *autostereotype* (self-image which is always idealized).

From the analysis of the survey results we can draw the conclusion that mobile and future mobile students are more open than non-mobile students. Furthermore, good knowledge of foreign languages, previous international exchange experience (e.g. participation

in the international events, conferences, workshops etc. or living abroad) and multicultural background (friends and/or family members from other culture, nationalities or ethnic minorities) on the one hand is a potential obstacle for non-mobile students to participate in the ERASMUS programme, on the other hand, these could be pre-conditions for adopting a European identity and weakening of stereotypes. But we should take into consideration that mobile students could not only break but also gain new ethnic stereotypes.

Indeed, the ERASMUS programme is both a *political tool* and a *social process*. Former and future ERASMUS students adopt more political European identity and community feeling than non-ERASMUS students contrary to previous researches (Sigalas, 2006, 2009; Van Mol, 2009b). But on the other hand, Van Mol is right arguing that the ERASMUS programme acts as a catalyst for European identity because feeling of European identity is already present in students before exchange (Van Mol, 2009b). Moreover, it does not mean that if someone has a strong national identity he/she cannot have strong European identity. The survey data show that ERASMUS students have both strong national and European identity.

It is often argued that the ERASMUS programme fosters European identity and breaks stereotypes. On the other hand, there is a limited number of studies which analyze these aspects. Besides, there have been previous researches only in the case of Britain (Sigalas, 2006, 2009) and on the aggregate level in sixteen countries (Van Mol, 2009b). Therefore, this case study of students of Latvia using the *bottom-up* approach and the theoretical framework developed can *contribute* to and supplement studies done in other European countries.

It is noteworthy that this study has disproven some of the statements made by previous studies. For example, the survey results have revealed that Sigalas (2006) does not seem to be right arguing that the ERASMUS programme does not have an impact on *political* European identity and has a small effect on promoting support for European integration. Furthermore,

Sigalas's conclusion that the ERASMUS students are not necessarily more multicultural and 'Euro-friendly' than other students also contradicts the results of the survey.

Next, potential *further implications* of this thesis are provided. First, using the methodology I have developed there can be similar studies implemented in other European countries. Second, the results of the survey are important not only for Latvia, but also for the European Community. Especially EU officials should take into account that those students who participate in the ERASMUS programme already feel more European and are more open than non-mobile students.

The main *limitation* of this study is the lack of longitudinal assessment (*pre-* and *post-test*) because of the scarce resources such as time available to conduct a repeated survey with participants before and after participation in the ERASMUS programme (if the survey would be held in autumn term, then students should be surveyed in August and January, if the survey would be held in spring term, then students should be surveyed in January and June). Another *limitation* is the lack of comparison with incoming students because it could be as in the case study of Britain (Sigalas, 2006) that the host country plays a crucial role.<sup>15</sup> The third limitation to emphasize is a lack of qualitative research because the interviews with mobile, future mobile and non-mobile students would reveal more information about the stereotypes students have gained and eliminated during the exchange and the pre-conditions for formation of European identity.

Finally, some *recommendations* are given for the further research. First, holding research in all European countries would come at a high cost, but, on the other hand, it should not be excluded as an option. Furthermore, while doing such a study, researcher must take into account possible differences between European countries. Last but not least, a qualitative study is also encouraged.

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<sup>15</sup> In this study Sigalas conclude that incoming students (whose host country was Britain) felt less proud to be Europeans after the ERASMUS programme (Sigalas, 2006: 24).

## APPENDICES

### Annex 1

#### Questionnaire<sup>16</sup>

Central European University (CEU) invites you to participate in survey about the ERASMUS programme. It will take approximately 5 minutes to complete the questionnaire. It is very important to learn your opinion. Your participation is completely voluntary and strictly confidential. If you would like to participate in lottery (three gift cards of Jāņa Rozes grāmatnīca in value of Ls 5), please provide your e-mail address in the end. Survey will be closed on 10<sup>th</sup> May 11.59 p.m.

#### 1. Have you ever participated in the ERASMUS Programme?

- Yes
- No
- I have applied

#### 2. Choose one answer in each row

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I cannot fully trust anyone of different nationality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would not like that people from other nationalities would live in Latvia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would be better that each nationality would live in their country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People have different opinions and thoughts, but only one can be correct	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is better to choose partners and friends with similar opinions and tastes as mine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3. Choose one answer in each row

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
Latvia is a better country than other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to be resident of Latvia than another country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am proud of being resident of Latvia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 4. Choose one answer in each row

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I have a good knowledge in at least one foreign language (e.g. English, German, French, Spanish, Italian etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<sup>16</sup> The template is available <http://erasmusaptauja.questionpro.com>

I have participated in exchange, workshop, conference or similar international event abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have lived abroad more than one month (except ERASMUS programme)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have friends from other culture (or nationality, or ethnic minority)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are different cultures (nationalities, ethnic minorities) in my family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**5. Choose one answer in each row**

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
Latvians and Europeans each live in their own separate world	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have no problems in communication with Europeans – they are the same people as me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like if there are people of different nationalities around me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**6. Choose one answer in each row**

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I feel European	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am proud of being European	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In the near future I see myself as European	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can trust Europeans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel close to Europeans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Latvia's EU membership is a good thing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
European unification is a good thing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**7. Choose 3 characteristics with which would you describe yourself**

1. cunning (viltīgs)
2. curious (ziņkārīgs)
3. distant (atturīgs)
4. easy going (bezrūpīgs)
5. egoistic
6. extravert
7. friendly
8. helpful
9. hospitable (viesmīlīgs)
10. interested in (ieinteresēts)
11. irresponsible (bezatbildīgs)
12. open (atvērts)
13. polite (laipns)
14. reserved (atturīgs)
15. secluded (noslēgts)
16. sociable (sabiedrīks)
17. stingy (skops)
18. unfriendly

**8. Choose 3 characteristics with which would you describe other ERASMUS students during exchange (answer only if you have taken part in the ERASMUS programme, if not - choose the last option)**

1. cunning (viltīgs)
2. curious (ziņkārīgs)
3. distant (atturīgs)
4. easy going (bezrūpīgs)
5. egoistic
6. extravert
7. friendly
8. helpful
9. hospitable (viesmīlīgs)
10. interested in (ieinteresēts)
11. irresponsible (bezatbildīgs)
12. open (atvērts)
13. polite (laipns)
14. reserved (atturīgs)
15. secluded (noslēgts)
16. sociable (sabiedrīks)
17. stingy (skops)
18. unfriendly
19. I have not taken part in the ERASMUS programme

**9. Choose 3 characteristics with which would you describe local residents during exchange (answer only if you have taken part in the ERASMUS programme, if not - choose the last option)**

1. cunning (viltīgs)
2. curious (ziņkārīgs)
3. distant (atturīgs)
4. easy going (bezrūpīgs)
5. egoistic
6. extravert
7. friendly
8. helpful
9. hospitable (viesmīlīgs)
10. interested in (ieinteresēts)
11. irresponsible (bezatbildīgs)
12. open (atvērts)
13. polite (laipns)
14. reserved (atturīgs)
15. secluded (noslēgts)
16. sociable (sabiedrīks)
17. stingy (skops)
18. unfriendly
19. I have not taken part in the ERASMUS programme

**Age**

1. 18-24
2. 25-29
3. 30 and more

**Gender**

1. male
2. female

**Marital status**

- Single
- Engaged
- Married
- Divorced

**Children**

- I do not have children
- I have child(ren)

**Your income level**

- less than Ls 100
- Ls 100-200
- Ls 200-300
- more than Ls 300

**Place of residence of your parents**

- Riga
- Kurzeme
- Zemgale
- Vidzeme
- Latgale

**Country where you have studied as ERASMUS student (if you have not taken part in the ERASMUS programme, choose the last option)**

1. Austria
2. Belgium
3. Bulgaria
4. Cyprus
5. Czech Republic
6. Denmark
7. Estonia
8. Finland
9. France
10. Germany
11. Greece
12. Hungary
13. Iceland
14. Ireland
15. Italy
16. Liechtenstein
17. Lithuania
18. Luxembourg
19. Malta
20. Netherlands
21. Norway
22. Poland
23. Portugal
24. Romania
25. Slovakia
26. Slovenia
27. Spain
28. Sweden
29. Turkey

30. United Kingdom
31. I have not taken part in the ERASMUS programme

**University**

1. BANKU AUGSTSKOLA
2. DAUGAVPILS UNIVERSITĀTE
3. LATVIJAS JŪRAS AKADEMIJA
4. LATVIJAS KRISTĪGĀ AKADEMIJA
5. LATVIJAS KULTŪRAS AKADEMIJA
6. LATVIJAS LAUKSAIMNIECĪBAS UNIVERSITĀTE
7. LATVIJAS MĀKSLAS AKADEMIJA
8. LATVIJAS POLICIJAS AKADEMIJA
9. LATVIJAS UNIVERSITĀTE
10. LIEPĀJAS MEDICĪNAS KOLEDŽA
11. LIEPĀJAS UNIVERSITĀTE
12. PSIHOLOĢIJAS AUGSTSKOLA
13. RĒZEKNES AUGSTSKOLA
14. RĪGAS EKONOMIKAS AUGSTSKOLA
15. RPIVA
16. RSEBAA
17. RĪGAS STRADIŅA UNIVERSITĀTE
18. RĪGAS TEHNISKĀ UNIVERSITĀTE
19. RĪGAS UZŅĒMĒJDARBĪBAS KOLEDŽA
20. SIA BIZNESA AUGSTSKOLA TURĪBA
21. SDSPA ATTĪSTĪBA
22. VENTSPILS AUGSTSKOLA
23. VIDZEMES AUGSTSKOLA

**Degree**

1. Bachelor
2. Master
3. PhD

**Course**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- Other

**If you would like to participate in the lottery, please provide your e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_.**

## A Socio-Demographic Data

	Mobile	Non-mobile	Future mobile
<b>Age</b>			
18-24	90.7	83.2	93.8
25-29	9.3	12.8	3.6
30 and more	0	4	2.6
<b>Gender</b>			
male	24.6	11.9	20.5
female	75.4	88.1	79.5
<b>Marital status</b>			
Single	86.5	64.3	85.7
Engaged	9.3	29.7	11.6
Married	4.2	3	1.8
Divorced	0	3	0.9
<b>Children</b>			
Yes	97.5	97	99.1
No	2.5	3	0.9
<b>Income</b>			
less than Ls 100	41.5	23.8	60.7
Ls 100-200	26.3	35.6	17.0
Ls 200-300	11.0	9.9	14.3
more than Ls 300	21.2	30.7	8.0
<b>Region</b>			
Riga	51.7	45.5	45.5
Kurzeme	14.4	9.9	8.9
Zemgale	7.6	9.9	5.4
Vidzeme	12.7	17.8	24.1
Latgale	13.6	16.8	16.1
<b>ERASMUS country</b>			
Austria	1.5		
Belgium	1.5		
Bulgaria	0		
Cyprus	0		

Czech Republic	2		
Denmark	7		
Estonia	1.5		
Finland	2		
France	6		
Germany	11		
Greece	1.5		
Hungary	0.5		
Iceland	0		
Ireland	0		
Italy	5		
Liechtenstein	0		
Lithuania	1.5		
Luxembourg	0		
Malta	0		
Netherlands	2.5		
Norway	2.5		
Poland	2		
Portugal	2		
Romania	0		
Slovakia	0		
Slovenia	0		
Spain	5		
Sweden	6		
Turkey	1.5		
United Kingdom	2		
<b>University</b>			
Banku Augstskola	0	1	0.9
Daugavpils Universitāte	0	4	8
Latvijas Jūras Akadēmija	1.7	0	0
Latvijas Kristīgā Akadēmija	0.85	0	0
Latvijas Kultūras Akadēmija	0.85	5	9.8
Latvijas Lauksaimniecības Universitāte	3.4	3	0
Latvijas Mākslas Akadēmija	1.7	5	9.8

Latvijas Policijas Akadēmija	0.85	0	0
<b>Latvijas Universitāte</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>14.3</b>
Liepājas Medicīnas Koledža	1.7	0	0
Liepājas Universitāte	0.85	6	2.7
Psiholoģijas Augstskola	0	1	0
Rēzeknes Augstskola	0	1	0
Rīgas Ekonomikas Augstskola	0	0	0.9
RPIVA	1.7	1	0
RSEBAA	5	1	0
Rīgas Stradiņa Universitāte	0.85	1	0
<b>Rīgas Tehniskā Universitāte</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>33.9</b>
Rīgas Uzņēmējdarbības Koledža	0	1	0
SIA Biznesa Augstskola Turība	0	5	0
SDSPA Attīstība	0.85	0	0.9
Ventspils Augstskola	0.85	2	0
Vidzemes Augstskola	0.85	3	16.1
<b>Degree</b>			
Bachelor	<b>71.2</b>	<b>68.3</b>	<b>83</b>
Master	26.3	31.7	17
PhD	2.5	0	0
<b>Course</b>			
Bachelor's 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	28.8	14.8	<b>48.2</b>
Bachelor's 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	<b>36.4</b>	23.8	17.0
Bachelor's 4 <sup>th</sup> year	13.6	13.9	4.5
Master's 1 <sup>st</sup> year	19.5	<b>37.6</b>	29.5
Other	1.7	9.9	0.9

## Analysis of indexes

## I The ethnic self-isolation and dogmatism index

## Mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I cannot fully trust anyone of different nationality	41.5	39	12.7	6.8	0
I would not like that people from other nationalities would live in Latvia	51.7	31.4	11.9	5.1	0
It would be better that each nationality would live in their country	36.4	28.8	23.7	9.3	1.7
People have different opinions and thoughts, but only one can be correct	55.1	33.1	8.5	3.4	0
It is better to choose partners and friends with similar opinions and tastes as mine	12.7	26.3	27.1	31.4	2.5

## Non-mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I cannot fully trust anyone of different nationality	25.7	48.5	16.8	6.9	2
I would not like that people from other nationalities would live in Latvia	36.6	45.5	9.9	7.9	0
It would be better that each nationality would live in their country	27.7	40.6	16.8	11.9	3
People have different opinions and thoughts, but only one can be correct	51.5	40.6	5.9	1	1
It is better to choose partners and friends with similar opinions and tastes as mine	5.9	16.8	38.6	31.7	6.9

## Future mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I cannot fully trust anyone of different nationality	22.3	54.5	17.0	5.4	0
I would not like that people from other nationalities would live in Latvia	43.8	39.3	14.3	1.8	0
It would be better that each nationality would live in their country	26.8	35.7	27.7	8.9	0
People have different opinions and thoughts, but only one can be correct	52.7	41.1	3.6	0.9	0.9
It is better to choose partners and friends with similar opinions and tastes as mine	5.4	24.1	39.3	28.6	1.8

## II The positive social identity index

### Mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
Latvia is a better country than other	17.8	39.0	33.9	5.9	3.4
I would like to be resident of Latvia than another country	6.8	17.8	42.4	26.3	6.8
I am proud of being resident of Latvia	2.5	5.9	31.4	38.1	22

### Non-mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
Latvia is a better country than other	13.9	36.6	36.6	8.9	4.0
I would like to be resident of Latvia than another country	3	18.8	42.6	28.7	6.9
I am proud of being resident of Latvia	3	8.9	33.7	42.6	11.9

### Future mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
Latvia is a better country than other	17.0	35.7	38.4	7.1	1.8
I would like to be resident of Latvia than another country	7.1	12.5	48.2	24.1	8
I am proud of being resident of Latvia	2.7	6.6	32.4	39.6	18

### III The multicultural background index

#### Mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I have a good knowledge in at least one foreign language (e.g. English, German, French, Spanish, Italian etc.)	0.8	0.8	3.4	39.0	55.9
I have participated in exchange, workshop, conference or similar international event abroad	2.5	4.2	3.4	32.2	57.6
I have lived abroad more than one month (except ERASMUS programme)	28.0	23.7	4.2	16.9	27.1
I have friends from another culture (or nationality, or ethnic minority)	1.7	2.5	2.5	33.1	60.2
There are different cultures (nationalities, ethnic minorities) in my family	44.1	22	5.9	17.8	10.2

#### Non-mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I have a good knowledge in at least one foreign language (e.g. English, German, French, Spanish, Italian etc.)	0	5	11.9	51.5	31.7
I have participated in exchange, workshop, conference or similar international event abroad	17.8	30.7	3	26.7	21.8
I have lived abroad more than one month (except ERASMUS programme)	39.6	32.7	1	8.9	17.8
I have friends from another culture (or nationality, or ethnic minority)	9.9	10.9	5.9	48.5	23.8
There are different cultures (nationalities, ethnic minorities) in my family	36.6	31.7	6.9	15.8	7.9

#### Future mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I have a good knowledge in at least one foreign language (e.g. English, German, French, Spanish, Italian etc.)	0	1.8	4.5	44.6	49.1
I have participated in exchange, workshop, conference or similar international event abroad	9.8	20.5	5.4	33.0	31.3
I have lived abroad more than one month (except ERASMUS programme)	23.2	42.9	1.8	13.4	18.8
I have friends from another culture (or nationality, or ethnic minority)	0.9	9	11.6	41.1	37.5
There are different cultures (nationalities, ethnic minorities) in my family	29.5	34.8	7.1	17.9	9.8

#### IV The social distance index between Latvians and Europeans

##### Mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
Latvians and Europeans each live in their own separate world	8.5	51.7	24.6	14.4	0.8
I have no problems in communication with Europeans – they are the same people as me	1.7	5.9	8.5	48.3	35.6
I like if there are people of different nationalities around me	0.8	0.8	17.8	48.3	32.3

##### Non-mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
Latvians and Europeans each live in their own separate world	5.9	48.5	29.7	14.9	1.0
I have no problems in communication with Europeans – they are the same people as me	0	1	9.9	70.3	18.8
I like if there are people of different nationalities around me	0	6.9	28.7	50.5	13.9

##### Future mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
Latvians and Europeans each live in their own separate world	11.6	41.1	34.8	11.6	0.9
I have no problems in communication with Europeans – they are the same people as me	0.9	4.5	8.9	68.8	17
I like if there are people of different nationalities around me	0	2.7	18.8	62.5	16.1

## V The European identity index

### Mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I feel European	0	1.7	16.9	59.3	22
I am proud of being European	0	4.2	18.6	52.5	24.6
In the near future I see myself as European	0.8	1.7	17.8	55.9	23.7
I can trust Europeans	0	3.4	25.4	56.8	14.4
I feel close to Europeans	0	3.4	26.3	55.1	15.3
Latvia's EU membership is a good thing	0.8	0.8	20.3	51.7	26.3
European unification is a good thing	0	5.1	33.9	43.2	17.8

### Non-mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I feel European	0	6.9	33.7	47.5	11.9
I am proud of being European	0	3	33.7	50.5	12.9
In the near future I see myself as European	0	5.9	28.7	54.5	10.9
I can trust Europeans	1	4	33.7	57.4	4
I feel close to Europeans	0	5	35.6	54.5	5
Latvia's EU membership is a good thing	0	7.9	32.7	49.5	9.9
European unification is a good thing	1	9.9	39.6	41.6	7.9

### Future mobile

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
I feel European	0	3.6	25	61.6	9.8
I am proud of being European	0.9	0.9	30.4	51.8	16.1
In the near future I see myself as European	0	1.8	23.2	65.2	9.8
I can trust Europeans	1.8	3.6	32.1	57.1	5.4
I feel close to Europeans	0.9	4.5	29.5	58.9	6.3
Latvia's EU membership is a good thing	2.7	2.7	31.3	51.8	16.2
European unification is a good thing	1.8	4.5	43.8	41.1	8.9

## Characteristics

## Mobile

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Self	<b>79.2</b>	9.8	11
ERASMUS students	<b>76.5</b>	2.6	21.3
Local residents	<b>69.4</b>	22.2	8.4

## Non-mobile

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Self	<b>76.1</b>	12.3	11.6

## Future mobile

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Self	<b>77.9</b>	9.7	12.4

## Self-characteristics (mobile)

Characteristic	Frequency (%)
cunning	0.3
curious	9
distant	2.5
easy going	2
egoistic	0.3
extravert	1
<b>friendly</b>	<b>17.5</b>
helpful	11
hospitable	3.4
<b>interested</b>	<b>12</b>
irresponsible	0
<b>open</b>	<b>13.3</b>
polite	10.8
reserved	5
secluded	1.4
sociable	10
stingy	0
unfriendly	0.3

## Self-characteristics (non-mobile)

Characteristic	Frequency (%)
cunning	0.3
curious	8.6
distant	3
easy going	3
egoistic	0.7
extravert	1.3
<b>friendly</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>helpful</b>	<b>14</b>
hospitable	3.6
interested	7

irresponsible	0
open	10.6
<b>polite</b>	<b>12.5</b>
reserved	6.6
secluded	1.7
sociable	10
stingy	0
unfriendly	0

#### Self-characteristics (future mobile)

Characteristic	Frequency (%)
cunning	0.3
curious	10.4
distant	2
easy going	2
egoistic	1.2
extravert	3
<b>friendly</b>	<b>18.2</b>
<b>helpful</b>	<b>11.6</b>
hospitable	3.6
<b>interested</b>	<b>12.5</b>
irresponsible	0
open	8
polite	9.2
reserved	5
secluded	1.2
sociable	10.7
stingy	0
unfriendly	0

#### Characteristics of other ERASMUS students (only mobile)

Characteristic	Frequency (%)
cunning	0
curious	4.3
distant	0.3
easy going	17
egoistic	0.3
extravert	2.3
<b>friendly</b>	<b>20.9</b>
helpful	4.3
hospitable	3.8
interested	5.5
irresponsible	2
<b>open</b>	<b>18</b>
polite	3.8
reserved	0
secluded	0
<b>sociable</b>	<b>17.4</b>
stingy	0
unfriendly	0

### Characteristics of locals (only mobile)

Characteristic	Frequency (%)
cunning	1.2
curious	4.2
distant	10.2
easy going	4.2
egoistic	0
extravert	0.6
<b>friendly</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>helpful</b>	<b>16.3</b>
<b>hospitable</b>	<b>10.8</b>
interested	7.8
irresponsible	0
open	5.4
polite	10.2
reserved	7.8
secluded	3
sociable	4.2
stingy	0
unfriendly	0

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