POST-SOVIET CIVIL SOCIETY IN TRANSITION: LEFTIST SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN LITHUANIA

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Declaration of Authorship

I, the undersigned …Laura Daukšaitė…. hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. To the best of my knowledge this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted as part of the requirements of any other academic degree or non-degree program, in English or in any other language.

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Abstract

The existing discourse on leftist movements in post-Soviet countries characterizes them as weak and isolated. This research analyzes the case of Lithuania, which has had parliamentary left parties since the democratic transition. Despite this, a new leftist movement recently began to emerge. Therefore, I answer the question, why has the political opportunity emerged for new leftist political groups despite the presence of the "old" left in the Lithuanian government? I analyze the case on several levels. Macro level analysis is based on European Value Study (EVS) 3rd pre-release of 2017 data, while for mezzo/micro level analysis I conducted 8 interviews with the members of the new leftist movement. The research reveals that a precarious society was formed by the losers of democratic transition and globalization. The opportunity for the leftist movement to arise was due to disappointment in society, formed by a long-lasting inefficiency of political parties and their inability to deal with precarious conditions in the country. The new leftist movement was formed recently because the new, more liberated generation, sharing both material and non-material values, started to enter the labor market and faced these precarious conditions on their own. Moreover, because of the nature of their value basis, the new leftist movement is dual -- an anti-austerity-care movement, fighting not only for the improvement of the precarious conditions they are facing, but also taking care of most vulnerable ones and thus creating a more inclusive and equal democracy.

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Introduction

The emergence of leftist social movements in the post-Soviet space is considered to be a complicated phenomenon. Analysis of this topic is usually focused on study of mechanisms through which leftist movements are repressed and then isolated (Piotrowski 2005, Abăseacă and Piotrowski 2018, Cisar 2013). However, in my research I will ask the difficult and often avoided question, what kind of circumstances allow the leftist social movements to arise and be visible in post-Soviet countries?

There are several theoretical explanations in political science, which discuss the emergence and specifics of leftist movements in the post-Soviet space. First is the political opportunity theory by Sidney Tarrow (2011). He presents necessary components of the successful political opportunity to arise. Most important is an increased access to power. It can be assumed that in post-Soviet space the socialist parties are not getting much support because they are negatively associated with the Soviet legacy, especially where socialism was introduced forcefully. For instance, after the collapse of the USSR, the Baltic states wanted to break away from the Soviet Union and to eliminate the Soviet legacy as soon as possible (Piotrowski 2015). However, it should not be assumed that the left wing electorate is gone. Therefore, there is an opportunity for the new leftist social movements to emerge as an ideological alternative to existing social democratic parties. Thus, Tarrow's framework will be useful to discuss the context in which new leftist social movements in post-Soviet space appeared.

To explain how the political opportunity formed in this specific regional context I use Ronald Inglehart's (2008) theory of silent revolution. He suggests that in economically developed Western societies, generations born after the Second World War are shifting

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towards non-material values. Applying this theory to post-Soviet space we can see that the progress of economic development is visible in several countries; however, the shift is not holistic, since in many of these countries material living conditions require improvement. Democratization process in some of these countries, for example, in Baltic states, allowed the new generation to socialize in a liberalized context and to acquire non-material values. Material insecurity together with socio-cultural modernization creates the specific generation concerned about both material and non-material issues. This generation is forming the new left movement. Therefore, Inglehart's perspective with considerable improvements and adaptations to the context of post-Soviet space can help explain one of the components which forms the political opportunity for the new leftist movement.

Last reason for the political opportunity to arise and its specifics can be developed from Donatella della Porta's (2017) research. She analyzed social movements in Southern Europe and noticed that after the Great Recession in 2008, the livelihood of a large part of society became precarious. People lost their previous security and were disappointed. These feelings encouraged some to turn radical and form anti-austerity movements, stressing higher equality and inclusion in society. These goals are also components of a more representative democracy and therefore such movements aim to eliminate precariousness by improving their democratic regimes (della Porta 2015). This theory can be used to explain the emergence of the new leftist social movements in Eastern European context as well, because the disappointment and precarious conditions persisted after the transition period (Zilinskiene and Ilic 2018, Milanovic 1995). Therefore, della Porta's idea should also be revised when talking about post-Soviet countries and the consequences of their democratic transition.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the political focus in the Baltic states turned anti-socialist and after the restoration of independence stayed central-right; however, not in all three states entirely. In Lithuania, the first president after the restoration of independence,

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Algirdas Brazauskas, was the former head of the Lithuanian Communist Party; and the Democratic Labor Party, which mainly consisted of former members of the Communist Party, won the first election (got 73 places out of 141) (Smith-Sivertsen 2010). People tended to vote for the candidates they knew for years and expected to save former economic benefits (Okulicz-Kozaryn 2014).

Despite the presence of the left in Lithuanian government, the alternative leftist movement started to organize in 2016. People took part in protests against the new Labor Code created the "Life is Too Expensive" collective, started to print broadsheets and organize various actions to address the exploitation of workers. Simultaneously, the social center, called "Emma", was opened where readings of feminism, Marxism, underground music nights, screenings, and discussions were organized. Activists from the informal movement "Life is Too Expensive" founded an independent trade union "May 1st" in 2018. They also registered a formal leftist media platform "Life is Too Expensive" in 2019. This way a part of the broad informal movement became formalized while also carrying on its name and ideals. In 2018 the student movement "Outcry" at Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) was created and soon established connections with the aforementioned trade union and the leftist group. These groups supported and encouraged participation in major 2018-2019 protests, marches and strikes[1].

Therefore, the research question is: Why has a political opportunity emerged for new leftist political groups despite the presence of the "old" left in the Lithuanian government?

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[1] Article from „May 1st" Trade union website, inviting to support the teachers' strike (2018): http://g1ps.lt/2018/11/29/tarptautinis-solidarumas-lietuvos-mokytoju-streikui-nuolat-pildoma/;
„Life Is Too Expensive" Facebook posts, where they are inviting to donate for the strike: https://www.facebook.com/perbrangus/posts/759618604371212;
Facebook post inviting for solidarity in reproduction strike, organized together with „Life is Too Expensive": https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1967889540195992&id=1967810113537268&__tn__=K-R

The needs of the electorate to keep the social benefits and economic security from the Soviet system were not satisfied by the elected leftist party. In the 2016 elections, the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party lost their previous recognition in society (in 2012 they got 37 seats in Parliament, while in 2016 only 17). This opened room for discussion about the weakening of the social-democratic tradition in the country (Laucius 2004) and brought attention to the dissatisfaction of the electorate. According to a 2019 survey, about 60% of the population does not trust the Lithuanian Parliament and parliamentary parties, showing the trend of disappointment is a long-lasting phenomenon (Eurobarometer).

As we can see from the survey mentioned above, the present government does not satisfy the needs of the people nor is it building their trust. Without the trust of the electorate, parties in Lithuania are not able to stay in power for long. Such a situation, when the government is not able to build trust and the ideological path of an alternative (representative) party is not clear or satisfying enough, provides an opportunity for new political actors to rise, in this case, on the political left.

The case of Lithuania demonstrates that declining trust in existing social democratic parties can open opportunities for new leftist groups to mobilize. Therefore, we must reconsider the existing consensus on post-Soviet civil society and its ideological stance. This study will seek to explain the emergence of leftist social movements: the opening up of the political structure for opportunity to arise, the nature of social support they receive, their ideology and framing. It will be done by using the three previously discussed theoretical concepts: declining trust in the existing leftist parties; shifting of material values towards more non-material; and precariousness of losers of transition and globalization.

Thus, the research hypotheses are:

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H1: Disappointment from a lack of ideologically similar political parties stimulates the emergence of alternative political powers.

H2: Socio-cultural modernization leads to non-materialistic value transitions in the post-Soviet generation.

H3: Precarious conditions stimulate the survival of materialistic values in the post-Soviet generation.

Civil society in Lithuania will be analyzed at several levels - macro and mezzo/micro. The macro level consists of a theoretical analysis of macro factors, which influenced the emergence of the political opportunity for the new leftist social movement. The mezzo/micro level will delve into a particular leftist social movement in Lithuania to represent the theoretical model and illustrate its applicability. To analyze the social movement, the political opportunity theory will be used (Tarrow 2011). It describes power shifts and the organization of Lithuanian politics and society after independence which allowed the pro-left social movement to emerge.

I use several theoretical concepts to supplement Tarrow's theory in order to reveal the social and economic context for the formation of political opportunity. First, I will describe changes in civil society after democratic transition by using an adapted theory of silent revolution for the context of post-Soviet space (Inglehart 2008). The value change in the first post-Soviet generation is happening in a way that non-material values emerge together or before the material values. It will be explained by discussing generational theory (Mannheim 1952) based on certain implications from observations of Soviet generations (Zilinskiene and Ilic 2018), which suggest the possibility of material value reproduction in the first post-Soviet generation. Second, I will discuss the consequences of democratic transition and globalization in post-Soviet space: emerging "winners" and "losers" (Milanovic 1995, Donatella della Porta

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2017, 2019). Finally, I will discuss how previously mentioned consequences formed a precarious society and the rise of anti-austerity-care movements (Piketty 2014, Donatella della Porta 2017, 2019, Santos 2020).

For the macro level analysis, the latest data from the European Value Study (3rd pre-release of 2017 data) will be used. It will provide data to understand the value changes of the younger generation, compared with the older ones. Descriptive statistics will reveal the tendencies of political participation and the value shift between generations. The mezzo/micro-level analysis will be done through in-depth semi-structured interviews with members of the three leftist groups: "Life Is Too Expensive" leftist media platform, student movement "Outcry" and trade union "May 1st". The aim is to discover their motivation for starting the movement, to find out how and why each of them formed and what were the opportunities and the driving forces for them to unite. The study will identify the value changes of civil society in Lithuania and reveal its activation and direction, introducing a new trajectory in social movement research in post-Soviet space.

The thesis is structured in the following way. In the first chapter I present the analysis of macro political factors in Lithuania, which led to an increase of political opportunities for new political players. In the same chapter the discussion of the social and economic reasons, which caused the formation of political opportunity is presented. It includes a combination of the material and non-material values in the first post-Soviet generation, which was caused by the mixture of socio-cultural modernization and the precarious conditions during and after the transition period. This chapter will also address the possibility of a combination of the anti-austerity and care movement. The second chapter starts with the presentation of the methodology of the research and continues with the analysis of the data. The data confirmed that the disappointment in effectiveness of parties and generational change caused the emergence of the new left social movement in Lithuania. The first post-Soviet generation is

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creating a new, more radical, but ideologically recognizable political player: the anti-austerity-care movement. In the last chapter the discussion and conclusions are presented.

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Chapter 1 – Formation of the political opportunity for the leftist social movements in the post-Soviet space: context of Lithuania

In this chapter I am going to discuss specific political changes in Lithuania together with economic reasons, which can be applied to other post-Soviet countries and which together led to the formation of the opportunity for the leftist social movements. Moreover, I am going to suggest possible combination of two typologies of new social movements -- anti-austerity and care movement.

1.1. Disappointment with existing political parties

In this section I will develop the theoretical discussion of the political circumstances that determined the emergence of a leftist movement in Lithuania. Four conditions for the successful opportunity to emerge by Sidney Tarrow (2011) will be presented and discussed and then applied it to the Lithuanian new left movement.

First, a description of Lithuanian party system is needed to understand the further discussion. Lithuania has a multi-party system, in other words no single party is dominating in the government, therefore political parties are forced to collaborate and work in coalitions. According to Ladislav Cabada and others (2014, 81), there is a growing trend in party system fragmentation in Lithuania. In the 2008 and 2012 elections "no political party reached the 20 percent limit of submitted ballots" (Cabada et al 2014, 81). However, in the 2016 election there were two parties, the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union and Homeland Union (Lithuanian Christian Democrats), which exceeded the 20% limit. Currently there are 29 registered parties, out of which 11 are parliamentary. The main centrist parties in the parliament are Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union (holding 49 out of 141 seats),

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representing a central-right political position and the Liberal Movement (10 seats). The main right-wing parliamentary parties are Homeland Union (36 seats) and Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania (8 seats). There are only two leftist parties, the Social Democratic Labour Party of Lithuania (11 seats), which is identified with the Third Way and is considered more conservative, as well as the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania (9 seats).

Next, I will discuss the circumstances in national politics which created the political opportunity for new political powers to emerge. However, it is important to first define political opportunity. Tarrow (2011) uses Goldstone and Tilly's (2001) definition of political opportunity, which states that it is an opening up of the political system due to change which increases the probability for challengers to reach their goal. Therefore, the existing balance in state politics should be challenged. Political and economic resources should be redistributed in a way that new actors would be able to get their share. The support sources and network connections of existing political actors should be weakened to the point that new political power can take it over. For the opening of the political system, Tarrow gives four conditions which should be satisfied.

First, Tarrow (2011) suggests that for an opportunity to emerge, access to power must be increased. In the 2012 elections, the Labour party together with the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania, received a majority of places in Parliament and formed a coalition. 2012 was the year when people could still feel the consequences of the crisis, and the previous government was blamed for harmful decisions during the crisis. Therefore, the electorate turned to the political left; however, they did not help the country to achieve a fast recovery. Moreover, the prices started to rise when the country entered the Eurozone in 2015; and the new Labor Code, which this government tried to introduce, was rejected by society. As a result, the 2016 elections were won by the Lithuanian Farmers and Green Union, a populist agrarian green party (with 54 out of 141 seats), with the slogan to finally create a professional

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government to represent ordinary people. In Lithuania, there is a tendency for populist parties to emerge (Jonutis 2018, Aleknonis & Matkeviciene 2016), suggesting that trust in the existing parties is low. This situation illustrates the fact that people are not satisfied with their representatives, each year they try to elect somebody new, believing that they would change the situation. The access to power is open for new political players, who promise safer future.

The situation, when the dominating political party is changing after each election is tied with another condition, mentioned by Tarrow. He says that there should be shifting alignments in the political system for new opportunities to arise. After the first election to the Parliament in 1992 in Lithuania, the ideas of the welfare state, presented by the social-democratic government were called radical by the conservative right opposition (who were the former members of "Sąjūdis", the independence movement), and trade unions lost their political significance (Ost 2002; Toots & Bachmann 2010). Therefore, the political left was forced to make compromises and lost their ideological direction in meeting the society's broad expectations. Even though Social Democrats stayed in Parliament and were in the ruling coalition after the 2008 crisis, their popularity gradually decreased (except 2008 elections), as they continued making compromises and shifting towards a more central rather than leftist political direction (Laucius 2004). Professor of philosophy Gintautas Mažeikis (Vytautas Magnus University) stated in an interview to the National Radio and Television (2017) that there is no party representing left-wing politics in Lithuania, so the left-wing supporter is left without alternatives. The unsatisfied needs of the electorate were reflected in the 2016 election, when the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party received only 17 seats. It was a downfall after years of being one of the dominating parties in the Parliament. The Social-democratic party lost its electorate. This was a chance for the alternative leftist political players to step in.

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The third condition for new opportunities to arise, according to Tarrow, is divided elites. In 2017 there was a split in the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania, which was caused by the voting against the coalition with the Lithuanian Farmers and Green Union. Those who wanted to form a coalition were expelled from the party. They formed a new Social Democratic Labour Party. The Presidential election in 2019 started a discussion in another major political power, the Lithuanian Christian Democrat party (Homeland Union). A former party member, Ingrida Šimonytė, decided to participate in the election without the support of her former party, running for the position as an independent candidate. She suggested that the Christian Democrat party needed a reform. This idea gained recognition in the party, and although there were some internal contradictions, the party did not split. This situation satisfies the condition of divided elites.

The last condition for creating opportunity for challengers is to have influential allies. As I will discuss in this research, the new leftist movement in Lithuania consists mostly of the younger generation; they are against the collaboration with any political party because they believe that existing leftist parties do not represent their needs. The people of the movement are well-educated, employed, and often are members of other NGOs, which can become an influential ally; however, this connection is not very strong yet. All in all, three out of four conditions, introduced by Tarrow are satisfied, which explains the political situation which helped give rise to the movement and the beginning of their activities in 2016.

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1.2. Silent revolution in post-Soviet space

In this section, Ronald Inglehart's (2008) theory of the silent revolution will be presented and discussed. I state its limitations, suggest improvements, and then apply it to the post-Soviet space. One presented improvement is the role of an intergenerational value reproduction and another is the discussion of specific transitional influences in post-Soviet

societies, both of which were not taken into account in the original theory. These changes would allow the theory to explain the specificity of the first post-Soviet generation, revealing their concern about material and non-material security. These concerns are one of the stimulating factors for leftist social movement to arise, as it is joined mainly by the younger generation.

In this paper I use a concept developed by Karl Mannheim (1952) and define a generation by its social location. The location of a generation is based not only on the human biological life but also on certain social influences such as historical context and a shared memory of important events that have shaped a particular generation (Dauksaite 2019). Therefore, a generation is a group of people born in a certain period who were able to experience the same historical context at a similar age.

The generations born after the Second World War were raised under conditions of economic wealth (Inglehart 2008). It was the time in Western countries when values changed to become more non-material. This value change was called the silent revolution by Inglehart. Young generations were more concerned about non-materialistic values, compared to previous generations, who were more focused on material security. The non-material generation paid more attention to human rights, ecology, feminism, gay rights, and to a lesser extent to labor issues or economic questions. Their material needs were satisfied, they socialized in the environment of material security, and therefore their attention shifted from material to non-material issues (Inglehart 2008).

One of the main aspects of the silent revolution for Inglehart is the role of education. He suggests that the values of the individual are still forming until he or she reaches adulthood because the first (family education) and the secondary (in this case, school education) socialization is happening in a very intense sequence. Therefore, the role of

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education is very important in shaping the values of a generation. However, there is a discussion about the secondary socialization after entering adulthood (job and other social circles), which can affect value shifts. Even Inglehart himself found that non-material generations shift back to materialistic values at a time of social and economic crisis (Inglehart and Norris 2017). However, it is not clear whether this is the reverse silent revolution or just a temporary reaction of non-materialist generations to economic instabilities. Min and others (2012) concluded that the fundamental values, which were built during the first socialization in the family, do not change throughout life, because of the strong bounding to values acquired in the first socialization. Therefore, the emergence of materialistic values in recent years can be treated as a temporary phenomenon, since younger generations experienced primary socialization in the non-material environment.

However, in Inglehart's theory, the role of intergenerational reproduction is not represented. He mentions that wealth which was accumulated in the family shaped the value change in following generations, but the possibility that parents' values could shape the values of children is not discussed. According to Mannheim (1952), the consciousness of a generation depends on elements of the cultural heritage a generation takes from the accumulated historical memory by means of "fresh" contact. Thus, a generation reproduces the accumulated memory during socialization with older generations, taking from them what it deems needed or useful (Dauksaite 2019). Therefore, there is always a possibility that the younger generation would reproduce the values of their parents if it would be perceived as useful.

This idea is complemented by Anthony Giddens (1991), who argues that the discovery and revitalization of ancestors' lifestyles is typical for generations socializing in traditional contexts. However, in late modernity this renewal of information almost loses its meaning because it is repeated only until these patterns of behavior prove useful. Therefore,

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it should be noted that the individual reflexively chooses which historical memory should be accepted or rejected. In this way, the attitudes of both the younger and the older generations are partly changed during their lifetime, depending on the changing context (Dauksaite 2019). Although bonds to the dominant primary perception (received during primary socialization) still remain (Mannheim 1952). In this way, intergenerational reproduction is complemented by an individual's reflexive relationship with their accumulated historical memory, enabling the younger generation to develop a unique trajectory of social action (to reproduce previously existed values and to shift towards more relevant ones at present).

The concept of silent revolution can be applied when talking about the Soviet space, however several specifics should be considered. Inglehart (2008) pointed out that changes in values of economically poorer societies are slower than changes in Western countries. However, there are other contextual factors besides the economic situation in post-Soviet countries. First, the influence of education should be understood as coming not only from the official educational institutions, but as a broader experience. It should be understood as cultural capital, which can be shaped by various educational experiences, starting from the family and ending with the discourse of society (Bourdieu 1984).

Official education itself does not create the circumstances for non-materialistic values to emerge. The secondary education in the Soviet Union was compulsory; this caused an increase in numbers of educated people, compared with the interwar period (Appendix 1) (Kraniauskiene 2011). Moreover, the ideology based on equality allowed women to get higher education, which also influenced the percentage of educated people.

Lastly, education became the only way to create differences between people in Soviet society. According to Soviet ideology economic inequality was supposed to not exist in Soviet society. Alexi Gugushvili (2017) suggests that the regular models to create class

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stratification, was replaced by the pursuit of cultural capital in Soviet society, thus creating other forms of inequality on the basis of education. However, the ability to get access to higher education was monitored and controlled by the regime since only loyal people were able to get into universities. Therefore, education in the Soviet Union was used differently than in Western democracies and the increase in numbers of educated people does not represent a shift to non-materialistic values. This is because the economic situation was similar, that is to say, mediocre, for the majority of society and only loyalty to the Communist Party guaranteed some privileges (Zilinskiene & Ilic 2018). The rising numbers of educated people in Soviet countries do not represent a shift to non-materialist values because the aspiration for education was encouraged by a need to improve the individual's financial situation (Gugushvili 2017). It means that primary issue was material insufficiency. Therefore, it can be concluded that Soviet society, after the Second World War, did not experience the silent revolution.

However, the beginning of the transition towards more non-material values can be traced back to the late 80s in former Soviet countries. Economic modernization and industrialization was one of the Soviet Union's achievements, but social modernization and liberalization (abandonment of established standards of behavior, a search for alternatives, liberation of society) was not happening simultaneously as in most western states (Giddens 1991). Socio-cultural modernization was not encouraged during the Soviet era, as it contradicted the fundamental aims of the "submissive" (adopting normative models of behavior) socialist society (Norkus 2008; Vaiseta 2014, Maslauskaitė 2010). Therefore, individualism and liberalization appeared only in the last decades of the USSR's existence, when protests against the political system reduced uncertainty of the situation and aroused criticism for a unified model of behavior (Dauksaite 2019). Young people started looking for alternatives: the hippie culture movement and subcultures such as the punk and rave

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movements began to spread. Rock music concerts and raves became the means of resistance and self-expression for youth. Ravers, according to Kristina Šliavaitė (1999), tried to catch up with the Western culture, which clearly indicates a lack of socio-cultural modernization in Soviet times. Therefore, the collapse of Soviet Union indicated the emergence of individualism and liberalization in former Soviet republics (Dauksaite 2019), opening the possibility of a further spread of non-material values.

For further theoretical analysis it is important to define the difference between Soviet and post-Soviet generations. I define the last Soviet generation as those born, socialized, and had entered adulthood in Soviet Lithuania (born 1961-1970). The first post-Soviet generation are those born and socialized in independent Lithuania and who are now entering adulthood (born 1991-2000). The generations between these two periods are considered to be the transition generations since they socialized and entered adulthood during the transition period, and were therefore affected by the unstable political and economic situations. The criteria of socialization and entering adulthood is important because it suggests that the person is formed by the circumstances he faced when growing up, and therefore his decisions are affected by these circumstances (Mannheim 1952).

Unlike the older generation, the post-Soviet generation is freer and unencumbered by a socialized fear of politically inappropriate behavior. This post-Soviet generation was socialized under the conditions of an independent Lithuania, where liberal democratic ideas flourished in a newly emerging society (Dauksaite 2019). Today's youth in Lithuania demand political participation and empowerment as the basic principles of democracy. The Civic Empowerment Index of 2019, calculated by the Lithuanian Civil Society Institute, showed that youth (15-29 years old) are among the most active groups in the country (scoring 42.4 out of 100).

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In terms of activism, in contrast to the post-Soviet generation, Soviet generations are characterized, according to N. Putinaitė (2007), by their adaptive behavior, conformism, and a unified pattern of behavior consistent with prevailing ideological tendencies. However, the tendency of increasing political activity goes back to the transition generation, where political activism against the occupier was extremely powerful and Western liberal ideas began to spread. This is confirmed by the previously mentioned Civic Empowerment Index, showing that those aged 30-39 years score 42.7 out of 100. Thus, the transitional generation has been part of the labor market for some time, so it can be said that the post-Soviet and transitional generations form the current civic activism in Lithuania.

Therefore, the silent revolution started in the late 80s and according to the data I present in this research is still happening in Lithuania; furthermore, new generations are born, becoming more non-materialist than the previous ones. However, after the transition period, which was followed by deindustrialization, the economic crisis was met with patience and hopes for a better future, since the country was independent and "going West", by joining both the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The situation was improving until the 2008 crisis hit. Lithuanians ran out of patience and the first workers' riots in the history of independent Lithuania broke out. Non-materialist values faded amidst the crisis and people focused more on their material security. However, after several years, the situation stabilized a little, and minimal wealth was restored; therefore, non-materialist values showed up again in the first LGBT pride in Lithuania in 2010, along with pro-choice protests and environmental activism (since 2018). Nevertheless, materialist values did not disappear, they existed simultaneously with the non-materialist ones. Therefore, the movements which support and actively advocate for non-materialist causes are also discussing and raising issues of labor exploitation, social benefits, and the economic situation in the country.

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The duality of previously existed and newly emerged values are illustrated in Zilinskiene and Ilic's (2018, 9) research. They point out that in Lithuania during the Soviet times, two different realities existed. One was public, the other one was private. Patterns of private behaviour were transferred through intergenerational relationships, while the rules of public behavior were introduced everywhere outside the home. However, not all families were like this; others tried to protect their children and eliminated the forbidden private life and the reproduction of cultural, traditional behavior patterns and family history. Materialist values in the first post-Soviet generation may exist in a similar way to the patterns of private life for Soviet generations, since the youth is only starting to enter the market and financial struggles can be felt only from the experiences of their parents. On the other hand, the entire generation is facing liberal education patterns at school and in the media and thus non-materialist values become their primary concern. Therefore, it should be noted that materialist values were being reproduced in families together with the arrival of new non-materialist values in younger generations. More advanced analysis of the reasons why the society cannot shift entirely to non-materialist values will be discussed in the following section.

1.3. "Winners" and "losers" of democratic transition and globalization

In this section I am going to discuss different theoretical perspectives about the "winners" and "losers" of democratic transition and globalization in post-Soviet space. This will illustrate the emergence of economically and socially struggling society that lately is named precarious.

However, first I need to define several terms to be used in this section. One of them is cultural capital. In this section I refer to cultural capital as educational level or amount of education, or knowledge about appropriate behavior in the social space (rules of conformity to

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the regime). Cultural capital in Soviet Union was closely tied with social capital. By social capital I mean connections to Communist Party and loyalty to the regime (Eyal et al 1998).

The cultural capital in Eastern Europe was closely tied to regime loyalty; therefore, without a certain amount of social capital, it was hard to have cultural capital in Soviet times. As Zilinskiene and Ilic (2018) point out, the winners of the transition were those who had strong social networks, while outsiders, who critical of the regime, struggled in adapting to the changed system. Education and social connections allowed people to rebuild their careers faster than those without education or social capital. This finding is in line with Branko Milanovic's claim (1995, 20), that the winners of the transition were "skilled white-collar workers, private entrepreneurs, city people ". Those who did not have social capital turned to education after the democratic transition. The number of people with higher (university) education in the transition generation rises significantly (from ~22% to ~37% for men and from ~29% to ~53% for women) (Kraniauskiene 2011). Therefore, the class stratification after the transition was dependent on the same capitals as Soviet times, however it concerned only a minority and the rest of society was left without previously existing security (equal pay, guaranteed job).

Another challenge for the newborn country was entrance into the global market. As Kriesi and others (2008) suggest, the winners of globalization are those who are entrepreneurs, qualified workers, or cosmopolitan citizens who have the skills to work in international sectors. The losers of globalization are entrepreneurs and qualified workers in traditional sectors, unqualified workers, and citizens with a strong national identity. However, Kriesi and others are describing the situation in Western Europe, for Eastern Europe and the post-soviet context, globalization created even more complications because business sectors were not formed or remained weak several years after transition. Moreover, people were not trained to be entrepreneurs in any way and workers were not ready to work in the

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international market because their abilities and skills were outdated for international interest. This, again, resulted in a huge number of losers in society.

The economic instability and inability of people to create material security after the transition caused disappointment in society. First, it was most visible in the flows of emigration. Since 1990 the Lithuanian population shrank by 710,000 (Lithuanian Department of Statistics 2019). Second, it caused nostalgia for the former equality in Soviet society, which made it more valuable than freedom in the late 90s for most East Europeans (Okulicz-Kozaryn 2014). Moreover, this disappointment still continues because, according to the Standard Eurobarotemer, the main concerns of Lithuanians since 2008 have been rising prices, inflation, cost of living, unemployment and taxation, and, according to the latest data, these concerns have not changed yet (only the concern of unemployment dropped to ~20%) (Appendix 2).

Therefore, the consequences of the democratic transition and globalization created a lot of losers in the society and only a tiny group of winners, who are benefiting from today's economy. Piketty (2014) has suggested that the post-modern global economy creates a huge group of people with similar salaries -- the middle and the lower classes, and only a small group at the top -- the upper class, which receive disproportionately higher salaries. This is supported by the income inequality data. According to the 2017 Eurostat data, Lithuania is the second country in the European Union after Bulgaria with the highest income inequality ratio (8.2 and 7.3 respectively), when the EU average is 5. The existence of this huge group, having less or no economic security, accumulates dissatisfaction, which then creates the political opportunity for new social movements to emerge.

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1.4. An outcome of precarious society: anti-austerity or care movement?

The aim of this section is to discuss the difference between anti-austerity and care movements, which are emerging in precarious societies. Moreover, I will suggest the possible combination of both movements, organized by the first post-Soviet generation.

In the previous section I discussed that at least half of Lithuanian society is constantly concerned about their economic situation. Class division does not mean much in such a society as Donatella della Porta points out by saying that now "the central actors in social conflicts are no longer classes linked to industrial production, but groups with opposing views" (2017, 457). She suggests that the new coalitions are formed from "various classes, and social groups that perceived themselves as the losers in neoliberal development and its subsequent crisis" (2017, 460). Her research is based on Southern Europe, however it can be applied to the Eastern Europe as well, since the majority of the population is facing economic difficulties, which confirms that in eastern Europe class struggle is still present (Ost 2015). Therefore, in the context of post-Soviet countries, the losers of the neoliberal development would also include losers of the transition period. Della Porta also argues that the Great Recession accelerated the formation of a "losers'" society by shrinking the middle class and further weakening the labor class (2019, 5). The Great Recession became a borderline in the Eastern Europe, where the hopes of society for an economically stable future were crushed. The patience for the Western-like living standard disappeared when a lot of people lost their jobs, small businesses went bankrupt, and real-estate depreciated. The long-lasting disappointment broke out in riots and protests not only in Lithuania but in other post-communist countries, too (Beissinger and Sasse 2014).

Three factors, consequences of the transition, globalization, and challenges and the Great Recession, created a society of "losers", where a lot of people were experiencing "loss of fundamental rights such as healthcare, housing and education" (della Porta 2017, 461).

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Della Porta is defining such society as precarious. Precarious conditions should enable people to create coalitions, and take more risks to form movements, which would address the aforementioned issues. Della Porta is calling them anti-austerity movements.

However, not everybody forms coalitions. A lot of people try to keep their disappointment to themselves and act on an individual level. The grievances they experience force them to isolate themselves from collective action because they fail to meet the social norms or have psychological problems (Santos 2020). The disappointment of Lithuanian society is represented by the high percentage of distrust in governmental institutions[2]. However, this disappointment is publicly expressed only by some trade unions becoming active after the 2008 crisis period (teachers', doctors', agricultural workers', and drivers' trade unions, which organized strikes periodically). Meanwhile, the problems of other, less important or prestigious sectors, were not taken to surface. Such conditions may enable a sense of solidarity based on empathy, where people who do not directly benefit from outcomes form movements in order to share their resources with the most vulnerable and those who are not represented in the political arena. Felipe Santos (2020) is refers to these movements where collective action is based on assistance and empathic solidarity as care movements.

As this study will later reveal, the first post-Soviet generation does believe equality is a main component of democratic society. They believe in the non-material values, which were acquired during socialization. Moreover, they are more educated than previous generations. The number of 30-35 years old people with higher (university) education has increased from ~31% in 2004 to ~58% in 2019 (Lithuanian Department of Statistics, 2020). Therefore, they have more cultural capital, which can be used as a resource of knowledge in the care

[2] According to the 2019 survey, about 60% of the population does not trust the Parliament and the Parties (Eurobarometer).

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movement. Their values are a driving force, encouraging them to form care movements and to minimize the level of inequality in their country, giving them non-material satisfaction in helping those who are powerless (Santos 2020).

On the other hand, the self-organized precariat in anti-austerity movements have slightly more capital and resources to mobilize, compared to those deprived from society due to the loss or absence of capital. Presence of two different factors in leftist social movement in Lithuania, presentation and representation of precarious society, illustrates the combination of components of anti-austerity and care movements. The first post-Soviet generation is entering the labor market now and is starting to experience these precarious conditions for themselves. Moreover, the memory of their parents experiencing the same conditions is being activated. Therefore, the activism of the younger generation is partly care, partly anti-austerity based. It is formed like the concept of Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley (1998) – a capitalism without capitalists. However, in this case, the first post-Soviet generation and the social movement, organized by them can be described as materialists even before exposure to material (economic) insecurities.

In this chapter the problem of decreasing trust in parties and parliament in Lithuania was discussed, which opens up the political system for the new political players to emerge. Moreover, other social and economic reasons also influenced the rise of leftist social movement. First, it is generational change and the emergence of non-material values due to socio-cultural modernization. Second, it is precarious conditions and long lasting material insecurity, which was reproduced in the first post-Soviet generation and to which they were exposed when entered the labor market. These circumstances formed the value duality in the first post-Soviet generation: they are concerned about both material and non-material values. This duality is reinforcing them to form anti-austerity-care movements to address not only the problems of broader precariat, which also concerns them, but together represent and empower

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the most vulnerable ones. In this way they are creating more representative and equal democracy.

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Chapter 2 – Formation of anti-austerity-care movements by the first post-Soviet generation in Lithuania

2.1. Methodology

In this study I combined qualitative and quantitative research methods. For the macro level analysis, I used the 3rd pre-released European Values Study (EVS) 2017 data. It includes integrated and national datasets. The fieldwork in Lithuania was conducted in 2018. It is the latest representative data about the values of Lithuanians. I analyzed this data using the SPSS quantitative data analysis program. I calculated descriptive statistics and proportions for each generation. These were required to understand what percentage of each generation holds certain values. To understand the value change between the two generations, the last Soviet generation and the first post-Soviet generation were compared.

Since the macro level data showed a shift towards non-material values, the micro/mezzo analysis focused on the new left movement, which is primarily organized by the representatives of the first post-Soviet generation and focuses on both material and non-material issues. For the micro/mezzo level analysis I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with the representatives of the new left movement from three different but inter-related organizations. These organizations are the leftist media platform "Life Is Too Expensive", the trade union "May 1st", and the student movement "Outcry". I used snowball sampling. Interview questions consisted of five blocks: parents, personal, societal-political changes, the movement itself, and the broader context. The first two blocks were designed to find out the values and the political stance of the informant and his or her parents. The third block covered the reflections of the informant on changes occurring after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. These changes in society and politics resulted in an opportunity for the social movement to emerge, so the fourth block was designed to understand the formation of

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the movement. The last block consisted of questions about similar organizations at the national and regional levels.

I conducted 8 interviews with the representatives and coded them using descriptive and pattern coding, which allowed me to find overlapping information to present in the analysis. Since the majority of interviewees are or were active in several organizations discussed in this research, it is hard to distinguish the main focus of the informant. Therefore, in Table 1 their present distribution is presented. Interviews were 60-100 minutes long. 7 interviews were conducted online and 1 was conducted in person. All interviews were conducted in environments that the informants were familiar with. Interviews were anonymized and any links to the informant during transcription were altered or deleted, unless this information was required to get a better understanding of the case. The list with the demographic information about the interviewees will not be presented because it may result in the identification of the members of the movement.

Table 1. Distribution of informants

	"Life Is Too Expensive"	"May 1st"	"Outcry"
Informant 1		+	+
Informant 2		+	+
Informant 3		+	
Informant 4			+
Informant 5	+		
Informant 6		+	+
Informant 7	+	+	
Informant 8		+	

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2.2. Disappointment as a window for a new political power -- left in transition

In this section the shortened history of the alternative (new) left movement in Lithuania will be presented. It will be discussed by highlighting the moments of opportunities which emerged from the political situation in the country. At the end of the section I will also discuss possible pathways for the future of the movement.

First, it is important to mention several pre-existing activities, gatherings and communities, which formed and shaped the emergence of the new left movement. The following is a description of the context in which the new left emerged:

> *Since the late Soviet era, there have been those radical leftists who oppose the authoritarian system and want libertarian communism. The need has always been there, only fragmented and subcultural. The punk movement can be attributed to this. Punk rockers emerged from the basement and staged a protest in 1991 against militaristic laws. In the 90s it was difficult to get together, because then we had to endure and wait for capitalism to bring happiness. [...] In 2005 anarchija.lt appeared. The people who wrote there were cultural anarchists. That year saw the emergence of the grassroots movement on the issue of public spaces. The Free University was founded in 2008. NK95 was the voice of academics that paved the way for LGBT people. It showed that there is a great deal of left-wing thought in academia. (Informant 5)*

However, all these activities never solidified into a long-lasting movement, which would be characterized by officially registered organizations and working towards a recognition as a new left movement in the country. This citation represents how people gathered together for the first actions of the new left movement:

> *It was first the International Free Speech movement, which operated on the basis of a creative workshop. There we worked on our own expression, enabling the expression of others. [...] And then I joined the organizers of the Free University, where people were clearly more left-wing. [...] The Free University was founded in response to educational reforms. It was an idea that you could create a free education, create your own lectures and invite people, and at the same time create a certain discussion space for certain people. Here I met people on the left, I think they were also gathering at the time, but were not working on inclusive activism. But then a certain collective was born out of it, which was engaged in the setting up autonomous spaces, the protests of organizations on various topics, and which understood itself as*

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a certain collective of people. It was the Solidarity Network that was designed to help workers who have suffered at work or those who tend to fight for better pay [...] In 2016, there was resistance to high prices [...] which were converted from litas to euros [...] There were many groups and small protests all over Lithuania, around 20 events, and then we joined the Kaunas group, and with these people, we organized a march together, and the one in Kaunas was the most successful one in Lithuania. And then I suggested that we do a wider assembly, the proposal was to organize a protest against the labor code. The occupation took place in the City Garden in Kaunas, later in Kudirka Square in Vilnius. And then that movement was called "Life Is Too Expensive." (Informant 6)

In 2016 a new Parliament was elected. In 2015, Lithuania joined the Eurozone and prices immediately started to rise. In 2016 there was an explosion of disappointment caused by the realization that entering the EU would not result in better life conditions. Therefore, it was an opportunity for these leftist groups to unite for action. Especially when the only "left" party, the Social Democratic Party, received significantly fewer places in Parliament than usual. However, the new left clearly state that they are an alternative to the existing Social Democratic Party:

Traditional social democrats cannot solve today's issues; they are a construction from the past. (Informant 4)

These people had a political influence that was formed and sustained under the rule of the Soviet apparatus. They remained recognizable as a force from the former system and were able to stay. (Informant 6)

(We would like to be) an alternative not within the framework of the Social Democrats but an alternative to them, the pressure on the Social Democrats to become Social Democrats. (Informant 2)

The Social Democratic Party is criticized because they do not introduce progressive programs and most of their members understood communism as it was understood in the former system. The alternative to this is a social movement without a definite goal to become a political party and to formalize their position at the level of parliamentary politics. Although it is not a goal of the majority, some members are thinking about standing as candidates in the municipal elections.

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Since 2016 the movement has been growing, and it has since been formalized. So now "Life is Too Expensive" became an official leftist media and additionally trade union "May 1st" was formed to solve the problems of labor exploitation. Social center "Emma" is a place, where gatherings and events of the previously mentioned organizations take place, however it is private property and therefore the connection is not formalized:

> *"Life Is Too Expensive" was an informal organization in which employees helped each other in some way to demand the elimination of injustices. The newspaper "Life Is Too Expensive" was printed for different sectors of workers. That informal network seemed suspicious to the workers, and the press added that the Lithuanian left was probably representing Russian interests. It was decided to establish an official organization, which led to the formation of the "May 1st" trade union. The newspaper was replaced by the "Life Is Too Expensive" page, which was registered as an official left-wing media platform. (Informant 7)*

> *We have a distribution, for example, May 1st is a pragmatic organization, and Life is Too Expensive is a communicative, ideological branch [...] May 1st is like an organizational platform, a tool when we see that there is a problem, we can use its resources to help someone , consult. Life is Too expensive is an educational platform. (Informant 3)*

> *Life is Too Expensive is a communication channel that encourages the spread of left-wing thought and illustrates events through left-wing thought. Life is Too Expensive tries to have its own autonomy and voice that you cannot read anywhere else. We are collaborating with global left-wing media channels, asking to translate their texts. [...] Life is Too Expensive is not a cultural press, it is a political press. (Informant 4)*

> *The Social Center Emma is called the Social Center, but it has no formal organization to represent and maintain it, and it is more like a voluntary, informal project. [...] Legally, it is a private space. (Informant 7)*

> *The purpose of (Emma) is (to provide space) for social activities, film screenings, lectures, concerts, gatherings, meetings of the same organizations May 1st and Life is Too Expensive. There are people who are in charge of the space, participate in activities, go to meetings (Informant 6).*

The presence of "May 1st" and "Life is Too Expensive" and their development of leftist discourse influenced another political movement and trade union to emerge. It partly shaped the emergence of the student movement "Outcry" and the revival of the trade union in Vytautas Magnus University:

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(Discussing student representation) we lacked patience during the party at Emma's social center. [...] it had an impact because looking at their activities, you realized that it is possible to form an organized network because they already had experience and (therefore) some of the people were invited to the "Outcry" organizational group. (Informant 5)

The members of the student movement "Outcry" do not tend to conclude that their movement formed as a result of "Life Is Too Expensive" or the activities at social center "Emma"; however, these played an important role. The idea to form a student movement came up during a party in the social center and some members belong to more than one of these organizations.

The main goals of the student movement "Outcry" is the empowerment of students, because the present representative organ, the Student Union, is not functioning as a voice of students. Therefore "Outcry" emerged as an alternative to non-functioning and bureaucratic Student Unions first at Vytautas Magnus university and then expanded to Vilnius University:

(The biggest achievements of the Outcry are) the resolution to support the teacher's community, because it was rejected a year ago. This is a development of discourse. Also, students got involved in these issues and protests. Last thing, the change of Vytautas Magnus University's Student Union, as members of the Outcry have appeared. We started to constantly criticize and push for change, so the Student Union started to listen, they are starting to do what it has to do, due to this pressure. [...] (However), the VMU Student Union hinders some decisions that are made in the Student Parliament, because it was initiated by the members of the Outcry. Therefore, it is the only way to win a majority election next year (Informant 4).

The path of Outcry is to go institutionally and change the Student Union, the Student Parliament, because of the access to resources. An important resource is communication channels with the administration, the accessibility to the larger group of people at the administrative level. Also, the financial resources would make it easier to organize discussions on labor rights and other alternative topics. (Informant 1)

The emergence of the "Outcry" is an example of where the new left movement is going:

There is a need for as many separate movements as possible to cover their own areas of interest and from which a coalition could be formed. (Informant 2)

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In general, the movement is planning to create a coalition of future leftist organizations and movements by establishing a well-recognized leftist political structure. In the near future, the plan is to strengthen the "1st of May" trade union, together with the "Life Is Too Expensive" left media, and to continue growing the student movement "Outcry" to get as many votes as possible in future elections of the Student Parliament in Vytautas Magnus University.

H1 was confirmed in this section. Disappointment of the electorate, rising from the inefficiency of the political parties to deal with precarious conditions, is causing the decrease in political affiliation. However, it also allows alternative political powers to emerge, such as a new leftist movement.

2.3. Intergenerational material value reproduction

In this section I will discuss the fact that financial problems were of frequent concern for the last Soviet generation. Due to this concern, there was a possibility for material values to be reproduced in the first post-Soviet generation.

Interview analysis revealed that almost all informants' parents experienced financial hardships, job loss and difficulties in finding new employment, before and during the transition period or after the Great Recession. This was happening despite that in most cases one or both parents had higher education degrees:

> *It was difficult, and they could not afford much, and that stress of survival and constant work and struggle was a common motive in their lives [...] they were both studying in a polytechnic institute, where they met [...] it was very difficult because they worked several jobs at once, a little sister (was already born) and they themselves were very young. And everything changed with the restoration of independence, that whole transition that ... there were a lot of direct sales [...] my dad found a job offer at a direct sales company (Informant 1)*

> *My mother was working in the Bazaar, my father was involved in illegal activities, smuggling of goods or machine parts. When I was little, my parents*

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divorced and my mother's financial situation was very bad. [...] she has a university degree in economics (Informant 4)

Dad is a bureaucrat. He feared he would lose his job due to redundancies in 2008 (Informant 5)

Having a university degree did not help these families to secure good, high-paying jobs. Instead, they were working several jobs which were not prestigious or even illegal positions and activities. However, hardship cannot be unequivocally attributed to the transition period. For some families this was the point where their situation improved. For others, economic hardship was caused not only by the unstable situation in the country but also by the circumstances of their private lives, such as having children or getting divorced and being a single parent.

These stories confirm that economic hardship and financial pressures were present in most of the families. However, even if the children were protected from these problems, they faced it in other environments:

I did not have people in my immediate environment who faced a difficult financial situation or discrimination, but over the years I came into contact with such people. I have friends who are gay…and the experiences I had only read about, they confirmed. [...] for me then it became more personal and less abstract (Informant 3).

Experiences in the family or in society formed a perception among informants that a lot of people in Lithuania are facing economic hardship, in most cases including informants' families. In 2005, 41% of the population was at risk of poverty or social exclusion (Eurostat 2020, appendix 3). The lowest percentage (27%) was in 2014. Latest data of 2019 does not show progress, at 28%. When around 30% of the population is balanced on the edge of poverty or social exclusion, a feeling of insecurity about life and the material situation is felt not only for those 30%, but also for the rest of society by forming a discourse. Moreover, the unemployment rate in Lithuania is much more unstable compared to other post-communist states such as Poland, Hungary and Romania, also Western countries such as Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom, (Eurostat 2020, appendix 4). High peaks, reaching ~17.5%

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of population to be unemployed, after the crisis period (in 2001 and 2010) suggests that the labor market is very sensitive to recessions. After the 2008 crisis, the rate of unemployment suddenly reached around 5-6% (in 2007 and 2019). This situation does not create a sense of stability and security for people, because the situation of economic growth is temporal.

Concern about financial problems is imprinted in the discourse and consciousness of the society; however, for the first post-Soviet generation these concerns were activated when they became students, started to enter the labor market, relied less on their parents/family, and experienced the precarious conditions themselves:

> *The job issue is that when you reach a certain age, you need to start working [...] and you start to see that somebody was fired because of (sexual) orientation or (you are) paid a lower salary because you are a woman (Informant 6)*

> *(I have) a much greater appreciation of material matters now. It is only because I entered adulthood and began to work, and realized that work sucks. Despite having a decent position, it drains a lot of energy from you. If my job is frustrating because I don't have time for personal life, then how should people who are doing repetitive, routine work feel, and the manager behaves like you're a replaceable robot? (Informant 3)*

> *Looking at the social space, society is very angry and dissatisfied, it accumulates anger and simply burns with it because it experiences humiliation at work [...] I, as a student, also feel precarious because I have no guarantees for my future (Informant 5)*

H3 was confirmed in this section: material values were reproduced in the first post-Soviet generation through family and simultaneously by observing a precarious society. However, these values were activated and became respondents' primary concern only when they started to enter the labor market and adulthood.

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2.4 Unique traits of the first post-Soviet generation

2.4.1. Impact of socio-cultural modernization

The change of the political regime and the socio-cultural liberation had its impact on the civil society in Lithuania. Socialization in a more liberalized discourse and understanding

of civil rights and freedoms, shaped civil activism even in the transition generations. But the change is more evident when we compare the first post-Soviet and the last Soviet generations. In this section I am going to reveal the shift of the civil society towards different and more open ways of political action.

The analysis of the 3rd pre-released European Values Study (EVS) 2017 data revealed that the post-Soviet generation is or tends to be more politically active than their parents' generation. This growing tendency can already be observed in the transition generations (Table 2). The first post-Soviet generation has signed more petitions (18.7%) than their parents (14.8%) despite their young age. Moreover, they are much more open to forms of political activism than previous generations. The proportion of those who might sign a petition in the first post-Soviet generation is 60.4%, while in the last Soviet generation it is 51.7%. The tendency increases in the transition generations. Around 53% might sign a petition. Also, the first post-Soviet generation is less categorical than previous generations. 20.9% of the first post-Soviet generation would never sign a petition, while the last Soviet generation is more critical with 33.5% of those who would never sign. A slow shift towards being more open to petitions is visible by observing the transition generations (Table 2).

Table 2. Signing a petition

	Age/N			
Position	18-27 (187)	28-37 (177)	38-47 (208)	48-57 (236)
Have done	18.7 %	21.5 %	19.2 %	14.8 %
Might do	60.4 %	53.1 %	52.9 %	51.7 %
Would never do	20.9 %	25.4 %	27.9 %	33.5 %

Table made by the author, using data from European Value Study, 2017

Similar tendencies can be observed in joining boycotts (Table 3), lawful demonstrations (Table 4) and unofficial strikes (Table 5). However, there is a difference in the

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level of participation in these actions. The first post-Soviet generation has smaller numbers (boycotts 4.4%, demonstrations 4.2%, strikes 1.1%) than the last Soviet generation (boycotts 6.9%, demonstrations 7.8%, strikes 1.8%). This tendency can be explained by the fact that the first post-Soviet generation has not had many opportunities to participate in such actions due to their young age, while the last Soviet generation could participate in the political demonstrations against the Soviet regime. Despite that, the first post-Soviet generation is more willing to participate in these actions (boycotts 62.3%, demonstrations 65.1%, strikes 50.0%), compared to the last Soviet generation (boycotts 48.5%, demonstrations 55.1%, strikes 30.9%) and the transition generations (Tables 3,4,5). The first post-Soviet generation is also less categorical and less critical of the discussed actions, compared with the previous generations (Tables 3,4,5).

Table 3. Joining boycotts

Position	Age/N			
	18-27 (183)	28-37 (167)	38-47 (205)	48-57 (231)
Have done	4.4 %	6.6 %	10.7 %	6.9 %
Might do	62.3 %	54.5 %	51.2 %	48.5 %
Would never do	33.3 %	38.9 %	38.0 %	44.6 %

Table made by the author, using data from European Value Study, 2017

Table 4. Attending lawful demonstrations

Position	Age/N			
	18-27 (189)	28-37 (173)	38-47 (206)	48-57 (245)
Have done	4.2 %	2.9 %	9.7 %	7.8 %
Might do	65.1 %	56.1 %	54.4 %	55.1 %
Would never do	30.7 %	41.0 %	35.9 %	37.1 %

Table made by the author, using data from European Value Study, 2017

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Table 5. Joining unofficial strikes

Position	Age/N			
	18-27 (174)	28-37 (167)	38-47 (190)	48-57 (220)
Have done	1.1 %	0.6 %	1.6 %	1.8 %
Might do	50.0 %	35.3 %	39.5 %	30.9 %
Would never do	48.9 %	64.1 %	58.9 %	67.3 %

Table made by the author, using data from European Value Study, 2017

However, despite the willingness to participate in the contentious politics of the first post-Soviet generation, they report a much greater satisfaction with the political system than previous generations. 41% of them are rather satisfied and 37.5% are rather dissatisfied (Table 6).

Table 6. Satisfaction with the political system

Position	Age/N			
	18-27 (200)	28-37 (190)	38-47 (221)	48-57 (261)
Rather dissatisfied	37.5 %	44.2 %	39.4 %	49.4 %
Rather satisfied	41.0 %	33.8 %	43.4 %	32.9 %
Neutral	21.5 %	22.1 %	17.2 %	17.6 %

Table made by the author, using data from European Value Study, 2017

Furthermore, the first post-Soviet generation is the least active in national elections (only 12.6% always participate and 41.6% stated that they never participate (Table 7)). This can be explained by the fact that those who were 18-20 in 2018 were not able to participate in an election, since they were not 18 when the last national election took place (in 2016). However, the tendency of declining turnout in national elections is also visible in previous generations. It signals that society is becoming apolitical regarding national politics and therefore tends to look for alternative ways of political expression (such as petitions, demonstrations or strikes).

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Table 7. Voting in national elections

Voting	Age/N			
	18-27 (190)	28-37 (192)	38-47 (226)	48-57 (269)
Always	12.6 %	21.4 %	25.7 %	36.1 %
Usually	45.8 %	65.1 %	67.3 %	58.4 %
Never	41.6 %	13.5 %	7.1 %	5.6 %

Table made by the author, using data from European Value Study, 2017

All in all, socio-cultural modernization after the dissolution of the Soviet Union is evident when observing the data about civil activism in Lithuania. The younger generations are becoming more open to contentious politics, compared to previous generations who were more afraid of it. Moreover, the younger generations are finding new ways of political expression, such as signing petitions.

2.4.2. Combining materialist and non-materialist values

In the first section it was stated that material values are reproduced in the first post-Soviet generation. They are activated when young people experienced precarious conditions upon entering the labor market or when exposed to inequalities or exploitation in their immediate social environment. However, the unique trait of this generation was revealed during the interviews. They are also concerned about non-materialist values, usually simultaneously or even before being exposed to material issues:

> *LGBT + people are often more sensitive. Those, who did not fit in for a variety of reasons in their communities… To some extent, there are people who have some kind of mental illness or are more sensitive, have anxiety or depression, they may feel another's pain. But it also happens that people come from a bourgeois family and want to help others [...], but they also have some problems of their own. (Informant 6)*

> *(Interest) in labor relations issues, labor policy stems from discrimination, which has been an important issue for a long time. After (x health problems) I moved to another school where I experienced bullying (...) later it helped me become a more empathetic person (...) sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, contempt for people who have not succeeded in life and the injustice that they are being blamed for their own*

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situation ... It made me sick. (...) (so) in the beginning, social issues and identity politics were more important. (Informant 3)

A shift towards non-material values in the first post-Soviet generation is also confirmed by the data of the European Value Study. First, there is an increased tendency in belonging to the environment, ecology, animal rights movement across all generations. However, the highest percentage (2.4 %) of participation in these movements is in the first post-Soviet generation (Table 8).

Table 8. Belonging to environment, ecology or animal rights movement

	Age/N			
Belonging	18-27 (209)	28-37 (186)	38-47 (221)	48-57 (267)
Yes	2.4 %	2.2 %	2.3 %	1.5 %
No	97.6 %	97.8 %	97.7 %	98.5 %

Table made by the author, using data from European Value Study, 2017

Decrease in the importance of material values among members of the first post-Soviet generation is presented in Table 9. When asked how important a good pay is when choosing a job, the first post-Soviet generation valued it the least (2.4% answered that it is not important, compared with 0.4% for the last Soviet generation). The importance decreases in younger generations.

Although the shift of interests is visible, it is not drastic. The change is happening gradually because it is only the beginning of the changes which started with the transition generation. The shift towards non-materialist values is difficult and interrupted by the constant presence of economic insecurity. It is possible to track the tendency of values shifting toward the non-materialist, however the country is still in the process.

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Table 9. Important in a job: good pay

	Age/N			
Important	18-27 (210)	28-37 (193)	38-47 (230)	48-57 (268)
Yes	97.6 %	98.4 %	98.3 %	99.6 %
No	2.4 %	1.6 %	1.7 %	0.4 %

Table made by the author, using data from European Value Study, 2017

However, the best representation of the shift towards non-material values in the younger generations is in Table 10. The respondents were asked which they preferred, to protect the environment or the economic growth. The first post-Soviet generation showed increasing interest in environmental issues (39.5 %), compared with the previous generations (34.1% for the last Soviet generation). Even though economic growth still receives more concern, its importance is decreasing (Table 10).

Table 10. Protect environment versus economic growth

	Age/N			
Position	18-27 (177)	28-37 (175)	38-47 (203)	48-57 (232)
Protect environment	39.5 %	36.0 %	33.0 %	34.1 %
Economic growth	60.5 %	64.0 %	67.0 %	65.9 %

Table made by the author, using data from European Value Study, 2017

Previously presented analysis confirms the H2, that socio-cultural modernization influenced a shift towards more non-material values in the first post-soviet generation. Returning to the analysis of the personal stories of the interviewees, the social origin (non-material) of personal problems caused a feeling of injustice among the respondents. They were looking for explanations as to why society is full of discrimination, anger and inequality:

> *(Started) with cultural education, (interest) in punk rock, with the stupid rebellion that was broadcasted in music (...) that something in the world is not OK, that the present is problematic and flawed. (Informant 5)*

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After school and after quitting university I really felt like there was something I fundamentally didn't like. How life is typically organized in our society ... and somehow that was very intuitive and that led me to look for some conceptual ways to explain the frustration I felt. (Informant 1)

These experiences of "sick society" guided them to look for answers in the leftist theory, anarchism. It was usually the academic community or teachers that influenced such directions, but for some it was a personal discovery:

I started to transform at university, I met some specific communities, I was influenced by the academic community, the social center Emma. I also went abroad to work in the summer, (where) I met people who were quite engaged. (Informant 1)

Santara Sviesa is such an intellectual informal movement in which I also participated a lot. It was there that I met my young friends who were actually on the far left. And through some discussion, I realized that there was something there. It felt good to no longer be an alternative thinker, that opposite thinker who is disliked. (Informant 2)

I have always had an interest in alternative culture, questioning the norm, pop culture. [...] But I was interested in political theory from the outset [...] (as a teenager) I was impressed by the hippie subculture, such belief in idealism. [...] I discovered and started reading anarchist texts on social media, namely the site anarchija.lt. Then my understanding of capitalism, competition, liberalism began to expand… (Informant 3)

Anarchism as the primary source of the alternative and radical ideas was mentioned in several interviews. The existence of previous radical leftist thought could be felt in the stories of the interviewees. They mention academic circles and communities, which have links to Vytautas Magnus university. However, these informal communities never formed a unified movement or took action, which would represent not only their interests, but the struggles of the entire society:

"NK95" was the voice of academics that paved the way for LGBT people. It has shown that there is a great deal of left-wing thought in academia, but they have their positions and do not want to risk losing them by taking to the streets. "Life Is Too Expensive" was not out of nowhere, it gradually took some influence from certain people, learned from unfortunate events. (Informant 5)

Previous generations were unable to take action. They were limited by the unfortunate situation, where being a leftist was a crime against the state:

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(In the past) thinking left was a crime because some ... tried to legalize leftist political thinking through the courts. (Informant 2)

At first, (society) defined our group as anarchists because you know, there could be no communists in Lithuania for a decade. Now, as you know, you can be one. You can use that word. [...] Two prime ministers in a row called the teachers' union protests pro-Russian. And never did this allegation turn out to be true. (Informant 6)

However, these leftist, transitional generations were speaking up in the universities, writing articles, and organizing intellectual gatherings, which were noticed by the first post-Soviet generation. The conditions under which this generation grew up influenced their disappointment. This disappointment, arising from the discrepancy between the reality and the dominating discourse of neoliberal progress, stimulated the organization of the new left movement:

For a while this dream worked well and motivated things. The more West, the better, and we just need to make an effort and it will only get better, just like in the West. But then came the realization and the frustration that this model of competitive, free market and liberal democracy is not a source of prosperity for many, and this dream does not deliver what it promised. (Informant 7)

To put all things together, the socio-cultural modernization after the democratic transition influenced the flow of non-material values. It was the time, when the first post-Soviet generation socialized, therefore they are motivated by both material and non-material values. However, the difference between their primary non-material values and precarious conditions they are facing activates material values and questioning of unjust reality, which leads to the formation of the leftist social movement.

2.5. Movements of the precarious society: between anti-austerity and care

In previous sections the precariousness of the Lithuanian society was already mentioned. However, in this section it will be discussed in detail by disclosing the nature of the new left movement in Lithuania. The following citation succinctly describes an

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atmosphere of instability in the country, when the "dream" of a better, neoliberal future was shattered and people faced economic and social deprivation:

> *For older people, that dream never existed, they suffered trauma from the moment of transition. Some say they long for the Soviet era, but they have very specific reasons. They are longing for some stability, work, respect that they do not have now when they are expected to die for something to change in the country. And for the younger generation, this dream turned into emigration. When all your values are focused on the pursuit of the West, it is better for you to go West than to wait for things to catch up here. The 2008 crisis and the switch to the euro were a blow. Even my father, who is a liberal, says it is too expensive for him to live. It seems that recently a lot of sectors have started complaining, so this story that everything is getting better seems to be convincing only in the center of Vilnius. (Informant 7)*

The situation described by the interviewee confirms the idea raised in the conceptual part, that only a small group of elites share the increasing wealth in Lithuania, while the majority is struggles because of economic and social inequality.

Another question concerns the type of the movement. Is it an anti-austerity movement, where the precariat is uniting? Or is it a care movement, which empowers the most vulnerable ones? In the previous section, it was discussed that the first post-Soviet generation acquires non-material values during the socialization; however, material concerns are reproduced through family and society or experienced directly when entering the labor market. Therefore, this generation is concerned about both, material and non-material values. This is how the informants describe the overlap of material and non-material concerns:

> *Someone is fired because of his orientation or (someone) is paid a lower salary because she is a woman [...] And through the issue of work all social things can become visible. (Informant 6)*

Even though they focus mostly on the material issues, social questions are not left out of the discussion:

> *(When) dealing with trade unions, where there is a labor movement, then there is a tendency to emphasize social solidarity, to introduce feminist, queer considerations. (Informant 7)*

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Therefore, the movement represents non-material and material values, which are both a presentation of authentic concerns of the post-Soviet generation and a representation of older (material) issues. Moreover, the movement is dual: it is anti-austerity and a care movement. It represents the most vulnerable and plays a role of caring, at the same time solving present or future problems of the organizers, thus being a movement of the precariat. These citations represent the duality of the movement:

> *There were postmen who had problems, because their workplace was supposed to be closed. Someone had (our) number and called. This group, which works in one workplace, started talking about working conditions; and then you start to think about what (may be possible) problems, maybe not according to the Labor Code in one way or another. "May 1st" members are now communicating with them further. There is a published article about their working conditions in the post office. Trade union offer free consultations to people, but after consultations, people rarely return or join a union. It's like charity (Informant 6).*

> *A group of women from the Lithuanian Railways called us because of unequal salary increases and asked for a consultation. We helped them with that, we advised on labor rights.[…] At the very beginning of the (Corona virus) crisis, there was an informational sheet of workers' rights. (It was informing) that they cannot simply fire you, (it was) warning that you will not sign any documents, or that you can cancel the signed document. It can also be a direct help. We have money in the treasury, if you lost your job, you can take it, the time will come - you will return (Informant 8).*

> *When we built the Solidarity Network, there were a lot of students on our side. The point is, to appreciate that you will work in the future, and now you are a student… you may have to work. Those who had already worked were certainly the majority. At that time, you had to be able not to work and sit in the occupation. It's a little harder for a working person to do that (Informant 6).*

First and second citations represent only several situations where the movement acted as a care movement, but the same mechanism is shared in other cases. Students in the Solidarity Network had such resources as time and some additional knowledge to organize the protests and occupations; however, they did this not only to represent the workers but also as a future investment into better working conditions for themselves.

In this chapter it was revealed that a sense of economic insecurity is common in Lithuanian society. The presence of this discourse, together with facing precarious conditions on their own, causes the emergence of materialistic values in the first post-Soviet generation.

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However, the impact of socio-cultural modernization can be tracked while observing the willingness and openness of the first post-Soviet generation to participate in contentious politics. Moreover, it caused non-materialist values to emerge since an increased interest in ecology and environment is observed in younger generations. The discrepancy between their non-material ideals of an equal and inclusive society while being exposed to precarious conditions created the disappointment to form a movement to address both problems which concerned the first post-Soviet generation, as well as problems facing the most vulnerable groups in society. Thus, the movement created by the first post-Soviet generation is an anti-austerity-care movement.

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Conclusions

In general, leftist social movements in post-Soviet and post-Communist countries are perceived as repressed and isolated. However, the emergence of it can recently be tracked in Hungary, Poland and Lithuania. In first two, the rightist government is dominating for several years, while in Lithuania the leftist parties were present in the government for a while even their popularity is decreasing. Therefore, even the political context of Lithuania is slightly different, the socio-economic reasons of leftist movement to emerge can be similar in other post-Soviet or post-Communist countries.

In this research I was exploring the reasons why did the political opportunity emerge for the new leftist groups, despite the presence of the left in Lithuanian government. Since in other post-Soviet countries, which were mostly effected by westernization leftist parties are small and non-popular.

This research was based on the theory of political opportunity, combined with the concept of silent revolution and generational value change; also, a discussion of the emergence of winners and losers during the democratic transition and globalization. This theoretical framework explained the emergence of new political players in Lithuania, the reasons why the political opportunity emerged and its specificity, revealing the formation of a precarious society. These social and economic reasons, together with political changes, created an opportunity for the new leftist movement in Lithuania to emerge.

All three hypotheses were confirmed by this research. The main political change was decreasing political affiliation of society, which is tied with disappointment and low trust in political parties. It emerged from the inefficiency of parliamentary parties in dealing with the long-lasting precarious conditions. Since the existing political parties did not satisfy the needs of the electorate, there was an opportunity for an alternative political power to emerge, the new leftist movement.

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One of the reasons the political opportunity formed was revealed by using the concept of silent revolution and adapting it to the post-Soviet context. Socio-cultural modernization and non-material value shifts in Lithuania started in the 80s and intensified after the restoration of the independence. Therefore, the first post-soviet generation was socialized in an environment which emphasized non-materialistic values. Thus, they are more encouraged to rise and stress the problems facing society.

The analysis of the winners and losers of the democratic transition and globalization revealed that society is facing precarious conditions. Material insecurity was a common experience for the last Soviet generation. These materialistic values of the last Soviet generation were reproduced for the first post-Soviet generation and became activated when the younger generation started to enter the labor market. Because of these circumstances the first post-Soviet generation is both materialistic and non-materialistic and is interested in both types of values, making them even more conscious about the precarious conditions in the country.

These three conditions: long lasting precariousness, creation of disappointment and loss of trust in political parties, and the activation of materialistic values in the more politically conscious last Soviet generation are the reasons that the political opportunity for the new left arose.

The research also revealed that the new leftist movement is not only an anti-austerity movement fighting against inequality and precarious conditions in the country, but also a care movement. This movement mobilized to help not only themselves, but also to stress the problems of most vulnerable and to empower those who are non-represented. The reasons for this duality of the movement may rise from the essence of the first post-Soviet generation, which is the main organizer of the new leftist movement in Lithuania. Their concern about material and non-material issues stimulates the goal to improve democracy and living

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conditions in the country. Therefore, they are interested not only about the issues which are familiar to them, but also about the struggles of others. In this way, the new leftist movement is trying to eliminate precariousness by creating a more representative and thus more equal democracy.

The theoretical framework, which was adapted to post-Soviet space, can be applied in research about leftist social movements in other post-Soviet or post-Communist countries to test the possibility of value change through generations after the democratic transition and the impact of precarious conditions. This framework can be used to test the emergence of the leftist social movements in previously mentioned Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic as well. By applying this framework, the dominant discourse about leftist movements in post-Soviet space and post-Soviet civil society can be challenged.

The research was limited due to time frames. Therefore, previously existing leftist groups are not represented here, and their influence is discussed only through the lenses of the new leftist movement. Moreover, the broader picture of political players in the field, such as political right and rightist movements, are not discussed in this research. Thus, important influences could be missed. Therefore, further research to represent a broader picture can be included.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Differences between generations on highest education

Highest education acquired (age cohorts, male)

	1930-34	1935-39	1940-44	1945-49	1950-54	1955-59	1960-64	1965-69	1970-74	1975-79	1980-84
Higher education	13,73	7,97	16,67	19,27	23,49	16,81	20,28	15,58	21,78	29,41	36,64
College	0,98	1,45	2,27	4,59	3,61	4,74	3,20	3,02	4,44	7,74	5,17
High school with profession	13,73	15,94	20,45	26,61	39,76	49,14	56,23	61,81	41,33	30,03	24,57
Middle school with profession	7,84	5,07	6,82	12,84	10,84	4,74	5,69	1,51	4,89	4,64	5,17
High school	1,96	7,97	12,12	14,68	14,46	18,10	11,39	12,06	20,44	19,81	20,26
Middle school	25,49	36,96	32,58	18,35	7,23	6,47	3,20	6,03	7,11	8,36	8,19
Primary school	24,51	21,01	5,30	3,67	0,60	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Not finished primary school	11,76	3,62	3,79	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
In total with specialization	*36,27*	*30,43*	*46,21*	*63,30*	*77,71*	*75,43*	*85,41*	*81,91*	*72,44*	*71,83*	*71,55*
In total with general education	*63,73*	*69,57*	*53,79*	*36,70*	*22,29*	*24,57*	*14,59*	*18,09*	*27,56*	*28,17*	*28,45*

Research of Generations and Genders (2009)

Higest Education acquired (age cohorts, women)

	1930-34	1935-39	1940-44	1945-49	1950-54	1955-59	1960-64	1965-69	1970-74	1975-79	1980-84
Higher education	12,27	10,14	15,09	19,89	23,63	28,52	28,49	29,05	29,39	45,20	53,44
College	1,23	3,86	2,16	9,14	9,34	9,97	9,30	9,13	12,21	9,25	9,54
High school with profession	11,04	13,04	24,57	31,72	40,66	42,61	43,60	41,91	30,92	17,79	17,18
Middle school with profession	4,91	12,56	16,38	15,05	18,68	12,03	13,66	15,77	20,23	15,66	12,21
High school	3,68	0,97	3,88	3,23	3,30	3,09	2,62	2,49	3,05	5,69	2,67
Middle school	20,86	26,09	29,74	18,82	4,40	3,44	2,33	1,66	4,20	6,41	4,96
Primary school	33,74	28,50	6,90	2,15	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Not finished primary school	12,27	4,83	1,29	0,00	0,00	0,34	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
In total with specialization	*28,22*	*28,02*	*45,69*	*63,98*	*76,92*	*84,19*	*84,01*	*82,57*	*75,57*	*77,94*	*82,82*
In total with general education	*71,78*	*71,98*	*54,31*	*36,02*	*23,08*	*15,81*	*15,99*	*17,43*	*24,43*	*22,06*	*17,18*

Research of Generations and Genders (2009).

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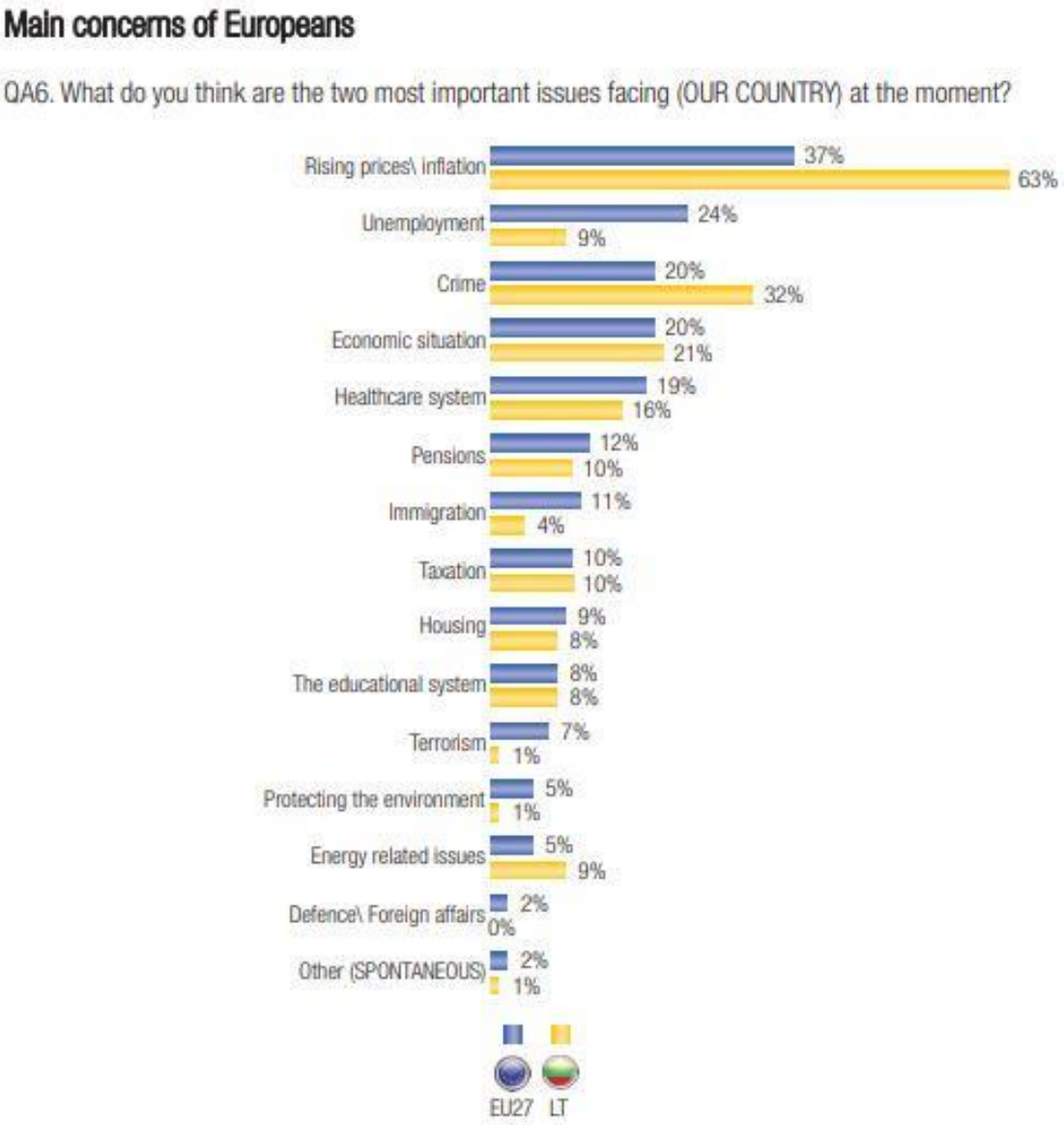
Appendix 2: Standard Eurobarometer: Main concerns of Europeans

2008



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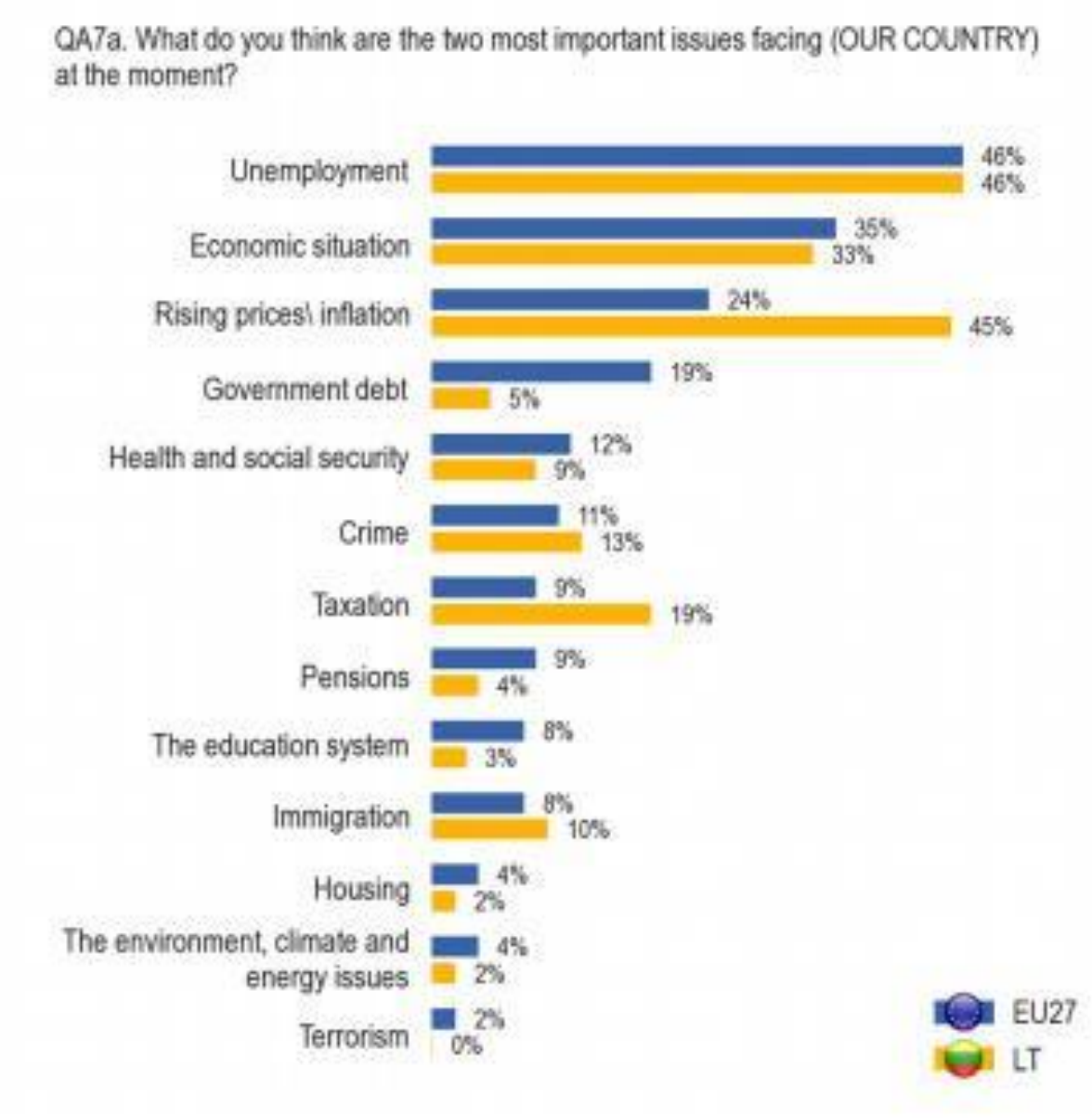
2012

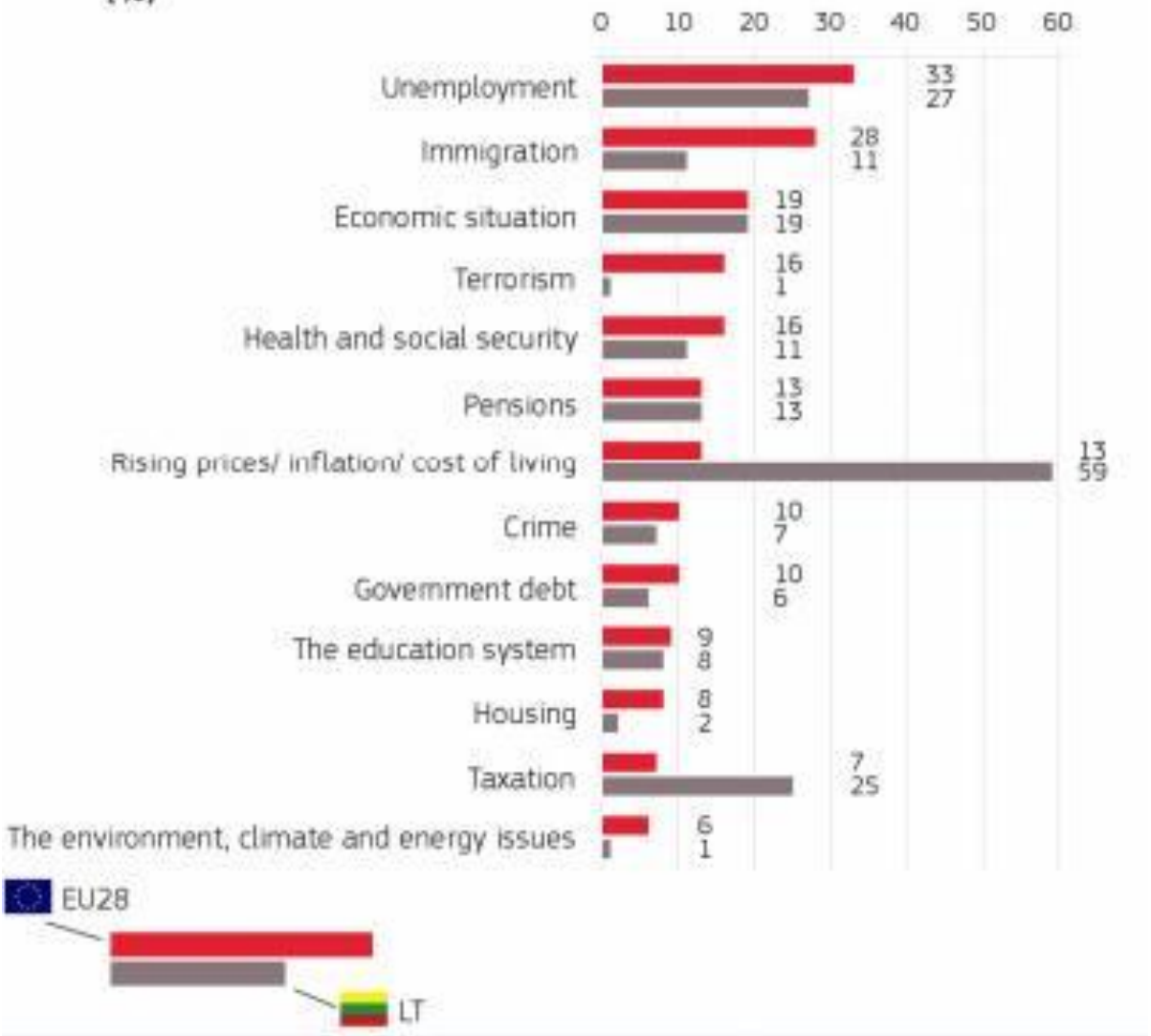


CEU eTD Collection

2016

QA3a What do you think are the two most important issues facing (OUR COUNTRY) at the moment?

(%)



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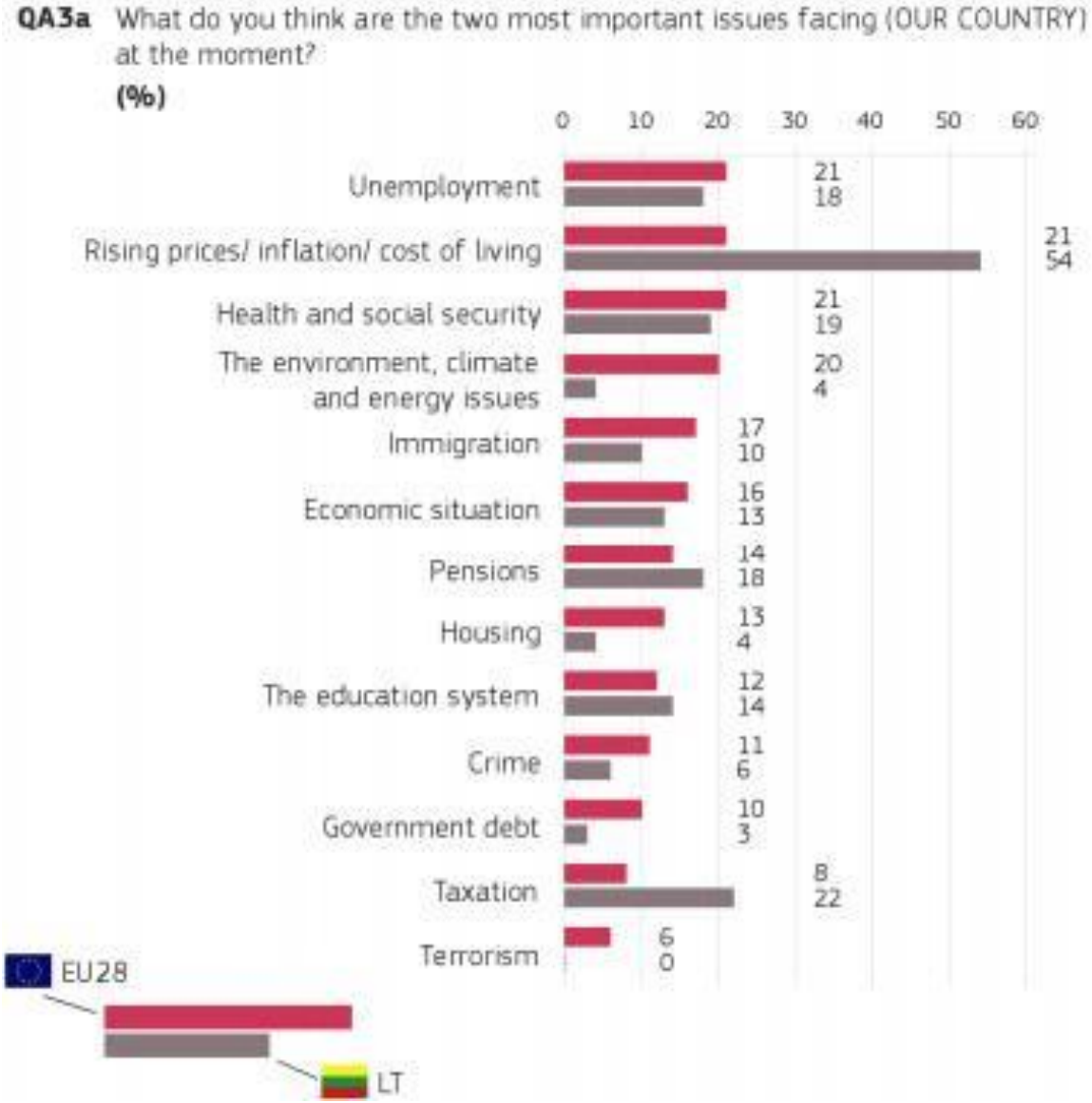
2019



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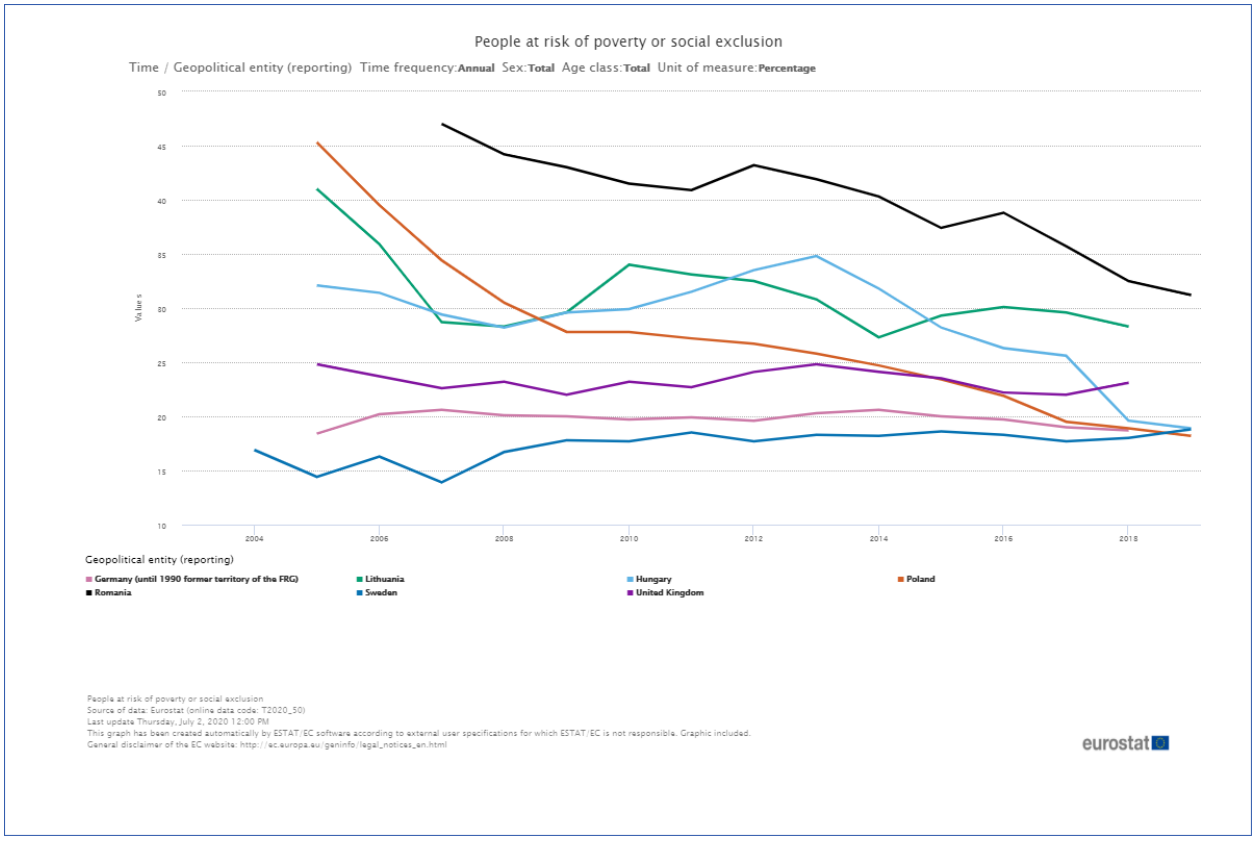
Appendix 3: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion



Eurostat (2020).

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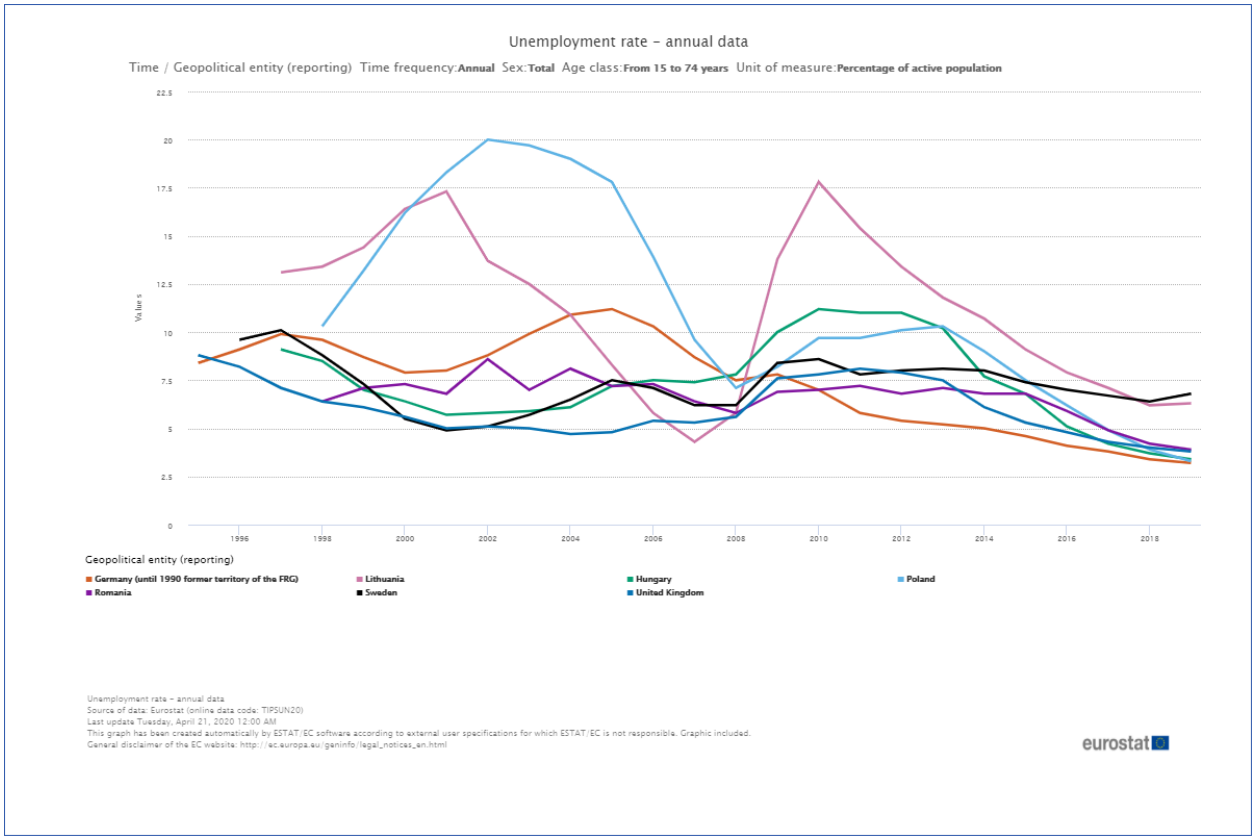
Appendix 4: Unemployment rate



Eurostat (2020).

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