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WHAT DETERMINES ADOLESCENTS' POLITICAL INTEREST AND EXTRACUR-RICULAR PARTICIPATION? – CIVIC EDUCATION AND THE AFFECTS OF STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES IN LATVIA

MA thesis

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All viewpoints of other authors, literary sources and data from elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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Abstract

For a long time, researchers in the field of political science have focused on the importance of civic education and how it affects the democratic state in a longer time of period. In the past decades, even centuries, scholars have focused on civic education and its effects on shaping and developing civil society. Starting from family to different environmental components these all have been decisive in the performance of civic education in schools. School until now has been the most visible actor which can directly work with pupils and accumulate the civic knowledge.

This thesis presents different insights into this topic. Recently, writings about civic education have took into consideration the influence of structural challenges (geographical location and language) when analysing the relation between civic education and political interest and participation. In this thesis the following hypothesis has been drawn: *students who study civic education in depth through civic classes show higher interest levels about political and social processes and extracurricular participation results than those who do not study, even when controlling for pupils' socio-economic background, family context, daily habits, classroom climate and attitudes towards different participation forms.* To examine this hypothesis more closely, a quantitative study is carried out and Latvia as the analysing unit has been picked due to the geographic and language-related challenges. Geography is picked as a mediator variable, because depending on geographical location schools in regional areas are underperforming and have large performance differences with schools in urban area. The second mediator 'language' is chosen, because distribution of Latvian and Russian-speaking pupils in general education in classes on 2018 was 71.68% and 27.20% (together 205'113 pupils). The research encompassed both qualitative and quantitative analysis, where 410 respondents were surveyed, six teacher interviews and 11 class observations were carried out. Altogether six schools participated:

- three Latvian-language schools from more regional areas;
- two Latvian-language schools from an urban setting;
- one Russian-language school from an urban area.

The results of the research show that there are no significant differences between students who take or do not take civic education classes and their interest in political and social

processes and extracurricular participation and this relationship held up when controlling for factors like regional/urban setting as well as language of instruction. At the same time, teaching methods and class observations showed different approaches and responses from classes and those teachers who choose to do practical tasks have higher participation in class than those who are more theoretical and passive. Moreover, in this research the whole process through the interaction of different actors related with civic education has been analysed. Further, it has created a basis for future analysis and the questions which should be asked to minimise adolescents' apathy in political and social participation and particularly on which issues educational institutions should focus on more.

Contents

Introduction

Education has always had a major role in how society functions. It declares, specifies and develops different narratives to reach out for new knowledge. At the same time, education has been used as a platform, on which science not alone plays the leading role, but also the political system, often affecting what will and will not be taught in schools. Specific public policies, decisions and solutions within the educational framework can foster the development of civil society.

Civic education can be viewed as a direct instrument, which shapes the knowledge of political processes in the state (Pratte 1998: 120; Print and Smith 2000: 7; Runde 2016). Civic education perpetuates the state itself - through civics members of the society learn their rights and duties and how to lead themselves in the relation with state (Meira 2014: 5). On the contrary, civic education is an instrument that realizes civic ideals – the appropriate relationship among citizens set by state. It is important to look at civic education in a democratic country, because democracy can sustain itself when mutual toleration, respect, commitments to freedom and rights and legitimate decision making are cherished by its members. All of these measures are learnt through civic education. During the last decades, the perception of civic education from "traditional" to "new civics" has changed, foremost by the content of what civics is (Carretero, Haste and Bermudez 2016: 294). In the beginning, civic education was about knowing history and facts, recognizing political institutions or in other words, the level of awareness in civics was measured by repeatable cumulative knowledge. The "traditional" way of teaching civics can be recognized by "top-down" approach where the main aim is to install certain knowledge rather than generating new ideas or solutions. Nowadays, civic education has shifted towards acquiring skills and developing understanding and shaping motivation through hands-on experiences with civic uses and actions (Carretero, Haste and Bermudez 2016: 295). The "new civics" introduced the "bottom-up" approach which, on the other hand, demands from an individual a more sophisticated and more mature understanding of ongoing processes in the society through participation.

When searching for a definition which would include the vast majority of criteria different scholars have mentioned the production of democratic society (Castaño et al. 2010: 5; Walsh 2013: 5). In Latvia, which is the case study, an important and critical juncture came in

the 1990's when after 50 years of a communist regime, the state regained its independence and became democratic again. The re-establishment of a pluralistic society where freedom of choice and participation in political processes has been based on an individual's understanding was a knowledge that was long forgotten since the first independence from 1918 to 1940. The instruments which a democratic system provides to society can be understood through educational means, explicitly setting out curricula, which would focus on three main civil society components: civic engagement, civic skills and civic attitudes (Maiello, Oser and Biedermann 2003: 386).

Another way to look at the performance of civic education is by analysing civic activity through youth participation in political activities as well as non-governmental organizations (NGO's) (Owen and Soule 2010: 1). In Latvia, studies show a low level for both interest and actual participation in these activities (Klāsons, Sīmansone, and Laķe 2013: 14). Even when youth is defined broadly as between the ages of 13 and 25, political activity scores the lowest among six interest categories (thematic groups online; youth centre or organizations; social and societal activities; thematic groups; NGO's), achieving only 8% of interest. Another characteristic from the same study indicates a low level of trust in political institutions as parliament, President, NGO's and other public institutions. Often the lack of trust comes from an absence of knowledge of what each institution does and what its specific function is. Therefore, civic education could function as a platform which explains and allows students to explore the differences, introduces specific functions and analyses institutional performance.

School is one of the most influential instruments that a state can administrate and achieve certain political outcomes via their policies. One of these outcomes should be a comprehensive understanding of political processes in the state as well as on the international level. This thesis has discussed the idea at an aggregate-level, that if the state fails to implement a profound basis for civic education then also the future society labelled as the civil society will not be able to function in democratic processes. This research has examined in a sequential order the questions of what motivates students to study civic education as part of their secondary studies, and whether this course has a tangible effect on their later subsequent civic knowledge, skills and attitudes. In contrast to already existing research where the aim has been to analyse 14-year olds or younger pupils, this research represents those citizens from age 15 to 19 who

will practice traditional civic participation (voting in elections; being a member of political party; becoming a candidate) shortly or who are already doing it (Pepper, Burroughs and Groce 2003: 39).

Research aim: to analyse interest in political and social processes and extracurricular activities among high-school pupils from more regional and urban setting Latvian speaking and Russian speaking schools as a function of these students' exposure to civic education.

In order to achieve the research aim, following **research tasks** have been carried out:

- to give a theoretical insight about civic education and how outcomes as interest and participation are fostered;

- to examine how on a qualitative level actual civic education classes feed into students' interest and awareness of political and societal affairs;

- to conduct teacher interviews, class observations and collect survey responses from Latvian speaking regional schools, Latvian speaking urban setting schools and Russian speaking urban setting schools;

In this research both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used in order to examine the **hypothesis,** which is:

Students who study civic education in depth through civic classes show higher interest levels about political and social processes and extracurricular participation results than those who do not study, even when controlling for pupils' socio-economic background, family context, daily habits, classroom climate and attitudes towards different participation forms.

The hypothesis reveals the relation of independent variable (IV) and the dependent variable (DV), where IV is "civic education" and DV "levels of interest". It is important to mention that in this research, level of interest is the main DV, but due to how the survey is formed, 'participation' has also been analysed as a DV. Document analysis, secondary data analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and survey data has revealed the link between both variables.

If looking at the theoretical framework, the theory of civic education has been used as the main conceptual background. In a broad sense, civic education (also known as citizen education, citizenship education or democracy education) is defined as "the provision of information and learning experiences to equip and empower citizens to participate in democratic processes" (Rietbergen-McCracken 2006: 6). For this research the part of empowering citizens to participate in democratic processes is the main scope which has been analysed; therefore, the main focus has been put on theories about civic education supporting the accumulation of understanding democratic processes.

Level of interest (particularly interest in political and social processes) as an outcome of civic education has been a supporting platform for civic education theory in this research. This has been mentioned as a separate measure since the empirical part has been strongly related with adolescents' level of interest and participation. Scholars divide the level of interest in political and social processes into two groups: those who argue that political attitudes (level of interest) can change during one's lifetime and those who argue that attitudes are established during childhood and adolescence years (Alwin and Krosnick 1991; Easton and Dennis 1969). In this case, the latter idea has resonated with the intention to understand the family's role on forming political interest in adolescents. Similarly, researchers also look at school and friends as socialization units, which affects the individual's political interest (Koskimaa and Rapeli 2015). In the end, despite the stimuli for political interest, scholars like van Deth and Elff put political interest as a precondition for democratic citizenship (2000: 1).

Regarding "participation", it is possible to look at institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of participation. The former dimension refers to classical understanding of participation shaped by Verba and Nie, arguing that "Political participation refers to those activities by private citizens that aim to influence the government, either by affecting the choice of government personnel or their choices" (Verba and Nie 1972: 2). The non-institutionalized participation, also known as *unconventional participation,* has become more common where the main instruments of affecting political processes are via spontaneous, informal participation, petition signing, boycotts and also internet activism (Nygård, Söderberg and Nyman-Kurkiala 2016: 121). Thus looking particularly at adolescent participation, a lot of institutionalized or conventional participation options are restricted due to age. That is why this thesis has particularly

accented non-institutionalized participation, which is also affected a lot by the socio-economic factors and parenting.

This thesis has been divided into four main parts: conceptualization; data and methods; empirical analysis and discussion. In conceptualization, the main theory and supportive arguments from the participation realm have been covered. In the second part, the focus has been put on the connection between civic education and levels of interest and participation. This part has also defined the approaches for empirical analysis and the way how variables have been composed in juxtaposition to each other through different research methods. In the empirical analysis teacher interviews, class observations and survey data have been presented showing the different participation forms of Latvia's high-school pupils and their further interest in political processes via their studies. The analysis reveals that socio-economic factors and parents' characteristics do not affect pupils' interest level as well as geographical location does not function as decisive variable in all correlations, thus pupils' daily habits play a positive role on interest levels and extracurricular participation outcomes. Lastly, conclusions have been drawn and suggestions for future actions in order to develop civic education in Latvia have been presented.

1. Conceptualization: civic education and its expected outcomes

1.1 Civic education: origins of the concept, political thought and relevance

The first formation of the concept "civic education", already appeared in times of Aristotle. Aristotle argued in *The Nicomachean Ethics* that if a state wants to maintain social order and good life, it should give its citizens the opportunity and tools to become a functional part of the state. In other words, he maintained that it is the state's obligation to educate its citizens about civic virtues (Aristotle. and Ross 2009: 8). Thereby this approach allows the state to maintain the legitimacy of its existence – the values, ideas, interaction, content and other features which all combined are making the platform of civic education that allows bringing concrete state policies. More recently such authors as William Galston have argued that the state may legitimately use public education to teach children those virtues required for the continued stability of the state, but values among different societies and even among different groups vary (Brighouse 1998: 2). Stephen Macedo has stated that the educational system should promote and encourage the mixture of different views (Macedo 2003:26). Questioning differences would eventually lead to critical thinking, cognitive changes and coexistence. Macedo has combined his perspective under the description of what cooperation means in a democratic state. Overcoming the "burdens of judgment" has allowed reasonable citizens to coexist on norms, laws and policies which can be acceptable by all people, even when they have different views about it (Ibid.: 171). This has led to confusion questioning what the content should be and which civic education should be constituted? Therefore this chapter mainly has focused on these questions and different characteristics that throughout the history of civic education have caused debates.

Education and democratic processes used to be considered as two unrelated concepts, however John Dewey was the first scholar from the US who directly linked education to democratic processes because through education society can precisely formulate its purposes, determine goals and means and therefore develop politically and economically in the desired direction (Zoric 2015: 432). Education as a platform allows individuals from communities to interact through learning. Moreover, if a democratic society wishes to see its continuity as democratic then also education should be democratic, secular and civil. When Dewey discussed

democracy, he did not only mention the political apparatus; he also emphasised the value of how people live together and share their experience in an ideal democracy. He looked also at the system or way of life which is meant for every member of the society and where everyone can negotiate, convince, cooperate and consult on a daily basis as well as in politics, economics and education. Civic education for Dewey was the ideal place where to practice these outcomes and values because he saw a significant relationship between "education-society-democratic ideals" (Zoric 2015: 433). Educational institutions gathered together diverse community members where through communication a replication of democratic decision-making processes could be reflected minimising isolation and community's division.

"The scheme of a curriculum must take account of the adaptation of studies to the needs of the existing community life; it must select with the intention of improving the life we live in common so that the future shall be better than the past" (p.191)

From a practical perspective in the context of early 1900s Dewey saw that for newly established democracies the major challenge was establishing democratic processes with "bottom-up" approach in education where individuals think and freely participate. In fragile democracies, individuality and development of "good thinking" were put in a secondary position, and this is why the development of critical thinking was slow (Dewey 1916). New democracies saw it more effective to educate its citizens through ideology, installing certain values and behaviour. Thus, Dewey was against an educational approach with an ideological base because it prevented society from becoming open, tolerant and plural. As a psychologist, Dewey also analysed an individual's thinking patterns and how thoughts are shaped. From his point of view, thoughts are crucial in shaping one's viewpoint. Thus some parts of information are included in viewpoint because they are tested and verified by individuals or groups, but other parts are not because an explanation in real life has not been found. A real-life example shows that people more and more are searching verification for their already existing thoughts through the internet and are not ready to accept other parts of information if they do not already hold it (Pariser 2011). This should be solved through education where the flow of diverse information and viewpoints are represented in order to critically and distantly analyse not only political but any processes which people come across daily. Dewey was inspired by John Locke and his ideas about the negative consequences of insufficient thinking abilities in *Of the Conduct of the Understanding* (1706) and agreed with his ideas. School is the place which

develops critically thinking individuals for sustainable democracy. Without developing effective thinking skills, individuals become:

1) dependent on the public discourse rather than his/her thoughts and he/she can be manipulated easily;

2) egocentric and their decisions are based on emotions, not rational arguments and facts;

3) unable to create civil society because individuals are apathic, they can be manipulated, and there are unable to participate in "bottom-up" decision making processes (Locke. Ed.Bennet 2017: 2-3).

Nowadays Dewey's ideas reverberate, and today's leading civic education researchers still analyse the same phenomenon that he already did a century ago. From his ideas, it can be understood that when looking at civic education in democratic society researchers must look at civics as a mixture of components which in the end affects democratic practices.

Civic education until now does not have a precise and constant definition since depending on the scope of the research; scholars adapt different characteristics in order to fit their focus. To provide an insight into how different the definitions of civic education are, few examples have been described. The first definition has been taken from Kisby and Sloam, where they have described what the citizenship curriculum should seek for. It should:

"Provide students with knowledge and understanding of political ideas and concepts, and local, regional, national and international processes and institutions, develop students' skills to enable them to engage in decision-making, critical thinking, debate, and to participate in civic and political activities; and instill in students values which make it likely they will want to engage in democracy" (Mycock and Tonge 2012: 580).

It has included not only the factual knowledge, which civic education should contain but also an understanding of ideas and concepts, and also international processes have been emphasised which at the end could be effectively used in decision making-processes regarding civics. At the same time, it has particularly emphasised the scope of engagement in democratic processes.

The second example has shown a particular theoretical position from which the defining characteristics have been given.

"It is necessary that civic education foster in children the ability not only to think critically about politics but also to think critically or skeptically about values and beliefs inherited from parents and local communities" (Pybas 2004: 18)

This has been a comprehensive liberal approach, which opposite to political liberalism has marked the importance of the openness and critical thinking dimension where only through these means society can function according to liberal values. Comprehensive liberalism has not only been attached to the political sphere, but it also has pointed out the principles of the morally "good" life which constitutes the political dimension (Gutmann 1995: 558). More specifically it could be said that political liberalism is only a political doctrine where all measures are connected to politics. On the other hand, comprehensive liberalism functions as a platform on which individuality and autonomy of children could be taught. The main gain from of comprehensive liberalism has been the ability to think also critically about values and beliefs which are inherited in different environments in which an individual lives.

The third example has provided an insight of a Rawlsian approach representing not only the stereotypical citizen whose only task is to vote, but also showing that citizenship education asks for a lot more – accepting diversity and demanding active participation.

"[..] civic education in a Rawlsian society would emphasize participation. Not merely as listeners, but as active discussants and participants, youth would interact with one another and with their teachers. Persons would be encouraged to think, discuss, and act rationally and responsibly" (Morrison 1984: 84).

The last perspective undertaken by the civic minimalists has presupposed that state should not intervene or should do it as little as possible in issues regarding moral, behavioural and attitudinal questions. They repeatedly have criticised the conception of democratic civic education because it itself cannot be democratic, given the way it has been practised by indoctrinating specific values and beliefs (Macedo and Tammir 2001: 32). Thus, their argumentation has no substantial ground where they define what the boundaries are, how far the civic education can go and how authoritative parents can be over their children in order to teach them to function in a democratic society. From a minimalist perspective parents have the rights to raise their children according to their ideas, and the state should not take away the natural disposition between children and parents installing values which do not correspond at the micro level.

"[..] civic minimalists argue states may outlaw certain clearly unreasonable educational practices but they must otherwise support the preferences of parents with regard to their own children's schooling. Civic minimalism says that the requirements of publicly mandated (and subsidized) education must be minimal so that parental authority over the

schooling of their own children may be correspondingly maximal" (Macedo and Tammir 2001:27)

These varying definitions provide an understanding of what civic education might contain or how it should be practised. Some in comparison with minimalists have focussed on narrow issues instead of defining what the state should not do when composing the curricula. Kisby and Sloam's ideal citizenship curricula has suggested different characteristics which civic education should cover and what the outcomes of it should be. Comprehensive liberalism has put in the centre not only politics and its related aspects, but also has emphasized that in a democratic country it should be natural that its citizens can critically analyse political as well as any other sphere of public life.

In this research the definition from the Rawlsian approach has been chosen as this definition has emphasised not only the voting but also any other form of participation. The aspect of participation can be both as a cause and as a result of civic education which is this paper's primary focus. In a democratic society the main aim for civic education should be maintaining the state's functioning by teaching pupils the skills which would allow intervening in the democratic processes and sustaining civil society's function. This means that schools should implement concrete features into its future citizens. As a result, through education children would be prepared to become fully co-operating members of liberal society where under conditions of pluralism the meaning of becoming a citizen would entail the ability to live with individuals who hold different views from one's own and participate in social and political processes to sustain society's well-being (Fowler 2011: 88).

Against the backdrop of a Rawlsian understanding of civic education, one can see the notion of "citizenship" as a major outcome that civic education should achieve. In this case, citizenship has been adapted from Bottery's conceptualisation where he has considered citizenship as a relationship between people and the state, where the state provides certain rights and expects to extract certain responsibilities from its citizens (Bottery 2003: 102). Within this research the main focus has been put on the maximal approach to citizenship where citizens are able to require intellectual virtues such as critical questioning in order to make informed decisions regarding public life or participating in institutionalised or non-institutionalized processes. That is why the state through civic education, which mainly has been responsible for educating future citizens, needs to provide an approach in a comparative perspective where

democratic practices are supported and critically analysed at the same time (Silvane 2016: 24). Meanwhile Bernard Crick has said that "political education in a democracy must be a mixture of knowledge and skills as well as discussion of real issues revealing and clarifying values. Activities must be chosen of a kind to enhance each of these dimensions as well as having at least a potentiality for practical effect" (Crick 2007: 247). Crick has directly indicated the notion of gaining knowledge through civic education and practically using it in making civil society through different instruments.

The state is the central actor that shapes the content of the civics curricula. The idea of this approach mainly has been taken from such scholars as John Rawls, Amy Gutmann, Stephen Macedo and other liberals who have stated that education is the most effective platform on which state can reflect and practice its constructed ideas as well as legitimacy and form its future citizens (Hoskins 2012: 23). Gutmann in her book *Democratic Education* has stated that "cultivating character is a legitimate — indeed, an inevitable — function of education. And there are many kinds of moral character — each consistent with conscious social reproduction — that a democratic state may legitimately cultivate" (Gutmann 1999: 41). Other institutions, of course, inevitably would have some impact on shaping individual's understanding. Church, NGOs, social services, family, trade organizations, political parties and other institutions have provided people also with a certain level of civic education, but through "political mobilization" (Finkel 2000: 998). Thus school as the most widely accessible institution has been able to promote specific values, attitudes, behaviours and skills to develop functional citizens for the state. At the same time, there have been many discussions going around whether the state is the only actor which should shape the curricula for education. The most rational argument here has been that even though the state sets the content, it will always be a mixture of actors and components which will affect the result performance of the civic education. Teachers, educational institutions, pupils and parents are the four elements to which most scholars refer as intervening variables. This can also further impact the performance of social and political participation. The main aim, therefore, for the state through civic education should be showing and explaining all the participation ways as tools to increase the understanding and participation in processes for future citizens.

The creation of an active citizen has been the ultimate goal for a liberal society because it has provided consequent development through theoretical knowledge, leading to cognitive understanding and resulting in participation. As one of the scholars has pointed out:

"Active citizen" on the other hand implies something more than that, emphasizing not only the factual knowledge and accomplishing basic tasks, but also adding the dimension of cognitive understanding, which challenges the per se system, asks questions and participates in different processes." (Jochum, Pratten and Wilding 2005: 7)

"Active citizenship" is the tool for the democracy to function effectively because the system can be challenged through innovation and new ideas. Eamonn Callan referring to the creation of citizens through educational means has pointed out that when the state apparatus is carried out in a certain discourse on its society, it is impossible to divide between political, social, economic means and say what is "good" or "right" (Callan 1997: 36). From this the argument the following idea has arisen: education as a system is more powerful and overrides the ability of parents sometimes to pass on the values or the way of life they would want their children to practice. Thus, parents still have the first impact on how children - pupils react to certain situations through values and attitudes. All in all, education aims to inform the pupils with a wide variety of information to develop critical thinking skills and understand other different viewpoints, and to develop skills which help to function in plural society. The complex question has always been the following: which are the magnitudes that should be integrated in civics curricula?

The answer is complicated because there are diverse influences for each society on how they develop the understanding of civic education and what it should consist of. It is complicated to create a unidimensional, all-encompassing identity that would trump all others when nowadays the social and normative environment is so changing, and each society identifies itself with different ideals (Stranbrink 2017: 39). Political liberals, for example, have emphasised that education should consist of three main components, namely, toleration and mutual respect, knowledge of constitutional essentials and liberal citizenship ensuring children hold a reasonable comprehensive view (Fowler 2011: 91). The first and third component especially indicates the necessity to install certain attitudes and beliefs like toleration and respect and also cherishing specific values as liberal citizenship. Rawls commenting on the third component about reasonable comprehensive view says that a reasonable citizen should understand that

there is no particular political status for his/her own beliefs and that there exists a myriad of other reasonable views in society (Rawls 1993: 54). It has pointed to the co-operating nature of political liberalism where no view prevails but rather they all co-exist.

In the basis of this paper it has been considered that the state is responsible for carrying out certain beliefs, values, behaviour and attitudes is taken. It evolves in qualitative and active citizenry for developing social, political and economic processes. The argumentation for doing it depends on comprehensive liberal and maximal citizenship arguments where the state through education can legitimately maintain the democratic system; in which teaching and also questioning values, believes and attitudes has been the primary source of functionality. Education has been the most widely accessible platform for most liberal societies on which future citizens can be shaped. Thus, from the state's perspective, it should not think about its citizens only as belonging to the state. Instead of that it should think that empowering citizens through education they also develop cosmopolitan individuals who can also act outside their nation.

Cosmopolitan citizen as Kok-Chor Tan has argued is "someone who is empowered and has the capacity to participate in global democratic decision-making and governance." (2017). At the same time, the term "cosmopolitan citizen" can be understood as a normative approach which should be adopted in order to function in a globalised world. In this case, both of these explanations have conformed the layout preferences because, first of all, civic education should not focus only on functioning in a democratic society which has borders, but people should be emboldened to participate in democratic processes everywhere. The second assumption has comprehended the ideal understanding of universal values, behaviours and attitudes towards what cosmopolitan citizenry should consist of. It has been inevitable to become completely isolated from the globalised context, therefore, if a nation is living in such an environment where many functions exceed national borders then also the teaching about cosmopolitan citizenship should be part of civic education.

Moving further to more practical matters of civic education it has been clear that the main interaction happens between teachers and pupils. Giving already the theoretical insight of the state's role in shaping civic education, the state is obliged to set the discourse of civic education and what it should consist of. At the same time, the state should not see civic

education only as a separate field but also as an interdisciplinary subject. Civics should be taught in separate classes and through other classes to get maximal performance result (Parker 2002: 203). That is why the primary challenge comes from the way how content is passed during civic education classes and other relevant classes regarding civics.

Analysing the interaction between teachers and pupils gives much space to interpret which teaching approach gives the best stimuli for pupils to later reflect the knowledge and skills in participation processes. Teachers' understanding about the state defined content can impact the way how civic virtues are taught. For example, in a comparative perspective when analysing why Poland's youth has better understanding and participation outcomes than in Romania, it turned out that teachers' understandings, qualification and personal beliefs can have an impact on how themes like "democracy", "corruption", "voting" or other concepts or skills are taught (Tobin 2010: 278). It has pointed out to the fact that selecting particular themes and the way how they are taught is dependent on educator's values and perceptions. The success and right combination of state policies and teacher's ability to teach civic virtues in the context of comprehensive liberalism can be seen when assessing how pupils perceive the given information. At the same time, there is no formula which would achieve levels of development where all students would be willing to participate and interact with political processes outside the classroom.

A lot is dependent on the environment in which a child has been raised or as Verba has defined through many studies – socio-economic, political and social resources affect civic participation (Nygård, Söderberg and Nyman-Kurkiala 2016: 120). These magnitudes are related to social networking, social trust, trust in political institutions and parenting. If adolescents' parents have not had a deep interest in political processes, they lack information, and they do not have higher education children of these parents will be less interested in politics and they will be harder turned to participation (Cassel and Lo 1997: 322). Coming from a particular social group can have a substantial impact on how the pupil will perceive civic education. For example, pupils from low socio-economic background tend to develop academic skills slower and also in lower quality which perpetuates the status in the community. If people's main problems are related to economic issues, they will not primarily focus on participation in civil society but will try to ensure their material needs over post-material (acquiring new skills about

political processes). Therefore, the aim of civic education is giving the knowledge to all pupils despite previously defined structural challenges.

1.2 Outcomes of civic education

The understanding of civic education differs from culture to culture, and so does the desired outcome. Thus, it is clear that in all societies civic education is a tool where the primary outcome should be the continuity of norms, values and order with which adolescents interact. Depending on the understanding and meaning of civic education, it is taught in order to gain specific knowledge, skills; to promote attitudes, beliefs and civic disposition within society (Harmanto et al. 2018: 2). The outcomes of each of mentioned measures are critical thinking, responsibility, cooperation, conflict management, tolerating diversity and individual rights, open-mindedness and other sets of in real-life performed capacities which are vital in a func-tioning society (Ibid: 3). In other words, civic education is a subject with certain outcomes which need particular teaching in order to form individuals who can co-exist.

In order to understand why changes in civic education are needed some authors with precise examples have criticised the form in which policy-makers have shaped civic education in the last decades. Nicole Mirra and Ernest Morrell have argued that the way how policy-makers describe civic education on paper and how teachers must hold the class does not give the desired outcomes. Particularly teaching practices and assessment outcomes have generated discussion about what kind of democracy schools can teach pupils and what are the focuses (Mirra and Morrell 2011: 409). Authors have noticed that the major problem is in the neoliberal approach which aims to teach about democracy which functions for an individual. Mainly teaching assures that each student will have the knowledge and skills that he or she will need to pursue their personal goals rather than community ones. Still, most often teachers use indi-vidual knowledge testing in order to understand each pupil's knowledge level and students are treated like isolated individuals without interaction. Individual abilities are measured by giving the right answers, and that is how a pupil's value is understood. Mirra and Morrell are sceptical and even argue that pupils and students are viewed only as consumers who will compete in global economic processes and their capacities are what make them competitive (Mirra and Morrell 2011: 409).

From that the following question can be raised: why are these scholars so sure about the negative impact of the neoliberal approach? In their view, the approach results in low community participation; an individual's private life is the only one that matters, and people are becoming ignorant of anything else other than their own well-being. Neoliberalism and all of its consequences are accepted as self-evident and as some sort of "end of history" if nations are thinking regarding the competitive economy, but societies are becoming more diverse and problem-solving within communities has become secondary. Critical democracy on the other hand talks about functioning individuals within social context valuing collectivism, production and engagement that is opposite to individualism, consumerism and passivity which neoliberal approach promotes (Mirra and Morrell 2011: 413). Meaning that when the ideal society, where everyone is involved and aware of political and social processes, is failing, then the education itself is unable to provide individuals with curricula which would show the meaning of a functional society. Therefore, gathering and analysing these tools which affect civic education outcomes in critical democracy is crucial to understand where in practice schools fail to communicate directly the main ideas.

Torney-Purta et al. use two umbrella ideas which cover about 30 assessment tools which affect the civic education outcomes. These are civic competency (knowledge, analytic skills and participation skills) and civic engagement (motivations, attitudes and efficacy) (Torney-Purta et al. 2015). Successful civic educational outcomes from these are solving community issues, improving social skills, ability to take perspective, cultural awareness, and altruistic attitudes. The other emphasises the outcomes that support employability (critical thinking and intercultural skills) or school or universities as actors who affect participation and recognising issues in the community (Ibid.). "Participation" as the most visible element among civic skills and civic knowledge stands out. Political and social participation has been a major theme in political theory, where the main accents are on why, under what circumstances and how people choose to participate in different processes. Researchers have been talking about participation which is critical and effective in decision-making processes, which fosters the development of civil society. Authors have emphasised the meaning of daily participation in the decision-making process not only through voting. It is important to understand that while voting is only a

process, which can be done once in four or five-year period, everyday participation affects different levels of political processes with which individuals are connected the most. The purpose of civic education, in this case, is to show the tools and develop critical thinking where in the end citizens use possible variations to reach wider societal prosperity (Buchanan 2012). Even the Education Commission of the states (ECS) in the US specifically discusses democratic participation through institutions as civil, thoughtful, respectful and constructive individuals (Baumann and Brennan 2017: 5).

In the 21st century it is much more than participation in organisations, voting or being a part of a political party. Participation also in a technological sense has increased the impact on the civic outcomes – speaking out on social media about political, social or economic issues is more and more common among adolescents than participation in a formal way. Informal activities also teach how to form an opinion, how to defend it and even more, on the internet it is possible that different ideas will collide. In *Civic Learning and Teaching: A Bridge to Civic life and a Life of Learning* Dan Butin has stated that education itself as we have known it for the last centuries has entered a phase of tremendous change where digital learning technologies will become the core element of education (Butin 2014: 2). In other words, a big part of our daily actions and interactions happens online, and it is even more relevant to discuss online participation as a civic act. At the same time, traditional or formal participation still is functioning as the main outcome in the context of youth civic engagement and extracurricular activities with the ability to construct public dialogue, plan and build coalitions among different interest groups. Therefore, the main aim of teaching about democratic participation is for the sake of society itself, building "citizen-centred ecosystem" as David Mathews has stated when he explained what democracy is (Forestal 2016: 2).

However, "participation" has to be effective in order to maintain democratic processes. Skills, knowledge and capabilities to affect the system are the magnitudes which shape individual's willingness and readiness to participate (de Zúñiga, Diehl and Ardévol-Abreu 2017: 576). Thus, the question here is, how one can develop internal political efficacy as an adult which results in participation? The answer lies in the act of participation from childhood. Participation in different interest or sports club, organisations which deal with social issues, being interested in different topics and discussing them with peers have scientifically shown a correlation with

participation also in political processes. Shifting to adolescent participation opportunities can be linked to any extracurricular activity outside school, which involves communication and interaction about a specific topic which is relevant to the group. School union, student parliament, school council, discussions on the internet, writing a blog, being a part of a demonstration or helping troubled social groups – it all fosters participation (Nygård, Söderberg and Nyman-Kurkiala 2016: 121). Participation in democratic processes should be thoughtful, and it could not exist without political knowledge.

Knowledge as an outcome of civic education consists of giving and explaining information about essential functions of the state, legislation process, the role of government, political parties and everyday events which are related to each of these measures. Knowledge itself is dynamic, changing and challenging at the same time and the ability to use the knowledge allows to succeed in society. Civic education provides adolescents the necessary information that further acquires political knowledge and develops civic skills (Matto et al. 2017: 103). Researchers most often are referring to two types of knowledge – factual and contemporary. Factual knowledge consists of fixed facts, but contemporary knowledge is related to current events and is equally important as the former. Empirical research in post-Communist Poland and Romania has shown that through contemporary examples and explaining abstract terms like democracy, liberty, freedom of association, freedom of speech and other ideas, pupils are able to understand how the state functions, why a particular system is the best fitting, why the division between different state branches exists and why it is so important to allow individuals to participate in decision-making processes based on factual and contemporary example analysis.

Another important factor here is that several studies have revealed that even though factual knowledge is essential, it does not adequately show the scope of how educated an individual is in civics (Maiello, Oser and Biedermann 2003: 385). Often pupils can answer factual questions precisely, but when asking in more details, for example, why elections are needed or why should democracy function in the sake of people, irrelevant answers are given, or pupils guess the potential answers depending on the partial knowledge they have. Those pupils who have received appropriate and effective civic education tend to be more supportive of equality and liberty and are more tolerant because they have the knowledge (factual and contemporary)

which includes different perspectives and they are able to rationalise and choose in favour of democratic processes. Already for several decades, research shows that particularly "political knowledge" as a civic outcome is low both in the US and Europe, and individuals usually have a partial understanding about core institutions and their functions, how representatives are elected or any other factual knowledge. Delli Carpini and Keeter defined political knowledge as "the range of factual information about politics that is stored in long-term memory" (Carpini and Keeter 1996:11). The authors have suggested that "political knowledge" fosters and facilitates political participation, it delivers an informed background to political decisions, and people are able through knowledge to articulate their political ideas and interests. Moreover, a domino effect happens with "political knowledge" on other related fields like political efficacy, levels of trust, and tolerant attitudes can be shaped (Abendschön and Tausendpfund 2017: 205). This means that political knowledge functions as a platform on which civic skills and political participation successfully can be built on. At the same time, it is essential to keep in mind that political knowledge is not only about history and the factual knowledge, it is also about practical knowledge which allows functioning within society (knowing how the health-care works, knowing how to write an application for the local council, etc.) That means that civic education is not only about factual knowledge. A functioning democracy does not need individuals who replicate facts about WWII or how the European Union was established; rather a democratic society needs knowing individuals who can indicate the mistakes or success stories of past and use them as tools for developing common well-being in different levels. More and more teachers themselves understand that knowledge goes hand in hand with teaching skills where adolescents can use the gained information.

The third outcome of civic education relates to civic skills. Different researchers have identified different skill sets which need to be acquired. Communication, critical thinking, collective decision-making and organisation are the most common ones (Kirlin 2003). Mary Kirlin has described the ability to work with real-life situations where individuals are able to organise in groups, they understand the peculiarities of a political system and a concrete issue they are handling, they communicate (from different perspectives) and understand the common good and can form a position on the topic based on the evidence. As we can see, these are practical skills which are expected in the outcome, but most often these expectations are not reached

because of the way how civic classes are taught. Within this research this particular component has been seen as a critical juncture which directly affects the outcome of civic education. In other words, it can be said that the teaching methods and what happens in classes is a reflection of adolescents' daily life. Civic education as active learning is proved to be the most effective way how to see higher results in participation, developing civic skills and using gained knowledge (Mourtisen and Jaeger 2018: 21). Sometimes thus it is a decision between making confident and motivated pupils (active learning) or students who have the required knowledge to make informed decisions.

In the end, civic education consists of the interaction of all three measures (civic knowledge, civic skills and participation).

1.3 Classroom climate: component which affects the quality of civic education

Civic education affects the outcome of how pupils succeed in their civic life once they are adults. Researchers are particularly keen on to analyse how classroom climate impacts pupils skills, knowledge and participation in civics and the results continuously show that the way how civics are taught in class affects the outcome of preparing future citizens (Godfrey and Grayman 2014: 2). The classroom becomes a platform on which adolescents can learn civic skills, gain knowledge and participate in problem-solving and practice the tasks of a responsible and active citizenry. That is why another approach measuring the impact of civic education in the empirical analysis has been the class observation which focused on classroom climate.

The concept "open classroom climate" refers to a way in which pupils are encouraged to develop and express their views. Social cognitive theory suggests that "people are active agents that interact with their environment by using cognitive processes to give direction and meaning to their experience in order to explore, manipulate and influence the surrounding environment" (Knowles and McCafferty-Wright 2015). This theory has been mentioned because it suggests an active model of learning where every pupil can share their ideas, to participate and practice their behaviour. Also, when promoting active learning the classroom replicates fundamental democratic ideals – freedom of thought and participation. Active learning requires an open classroom climate where pupils and teacher play equally crucial roles in maintaining

openness, diversity and functionality. When teachers foster adolescents to speak out, critically analyse processes and search for solutions individual's political efficacy increases and he/she understands the personal value. Working together in class allows realising the collective decision-making process and how they work in civil society. In the end, when pupils can understand their values and collective achievements, the positive political efficacy has a substantial impact on the performance of democratic governance and participation in processes and trust (Inglehart and Wezel 2005: 153). Knowing that each society consists of different socio-economic groups, having an open classroom has shown significant impact among marginalised students (Campbell 2008: 441). Similar research has indicated that the knowledge that pupils gain in school through social connections also increases civic participation of minority groups in the country. That means that civic education and how it is taught can increase social inclusion.

Schools and teachers more directly face the primary challenge on how to reveal and accumulate pupils' capabilities in order to show their political efficacy. Civic education should consist of real-life examples of how to detect problems and how to deal with them democratically. First of all, teachers should encourage pupils to explore their values regarding politics, economics and social issues. Each pupil depending on his/her upbringing and different experiences can have different values even when living in the same environment or attending the same school. Encouraging diversity and respect are core components for replicating a democratic community in class. Simulation inside a class and practical experience in understanding community issues is another way how to allow students to understand that they are agents who can change and develop their community (Bandura 1997: 24). Relationship formation and networking for pupils is a crucial component because getting to know active people from the community, getting to know their values and learning civic skills from them allows to understand the impact what civil society can have. As we can see, the teacher's role is to show the ways how it is possible to become an active citizen and acting as a facilitator in these different processes teachers have to allow a great deal of student autonomy in order to understand the processes from their perspective. In the end, if the classroom climate is open, then the students will feel that they are able to express themselves in a respectful environment (Matto et al. 2017: 104).

Because this study focuses on an ethnically divided country, a brief insight will be given to how civics should be taught in these types of societies. This is an important point since currently Latvia still has Russian-speaking minority schools and Latvian-speaking schools within the Ministry of Education have decided to implement Latvian in all schools. At the same time, many schools, especially in Riga, have both ethnic groups in classes. Historically, mass school systems emerged as a key mechanism for creating solidarity with one's nation state (Bromley 2011: 153). The former understanding functions well in homogenous nations, but nowadays because of globalization processes where states become more multicultural new approaches to civics should emerge due to changing ethnical, linguistic and cultural context. States around the world are adapting to new conditions, but it is important to understand that the term and practice of national citizenship is not disappearing but is rather reshaped on universal values and principles of human rights. Canada as a flagman since 1971 has successfully adapted the new narrative and have defined human rights and multiculturalism as one of core elements of their national identity, starting from textbooks and incorporating it in laws and social traditions until nowadays (Ibid: 156). If a state has not been proactive and has not recognized the vital importance of adjusting to current situation, then preserving an open classroom climate is more demanding because of potential ethnic intentions, thus teachers here play a more significant role. Culturally responsive teaching promotes structural inclusion. It is important because it gives students recognition and civic equality among the other ethnicity and they are willing to participate in school processes more often (Lee 2007: 32). If teachers are unable to understand the necessity for different teaching methods then potentially the minority group becomes alienated and later on does not participate in democratic processes as adults. A crucial aspect to keep minority adolescents in touch with everyday processes is not only being responsive to their "difference but also consists about allowing them to sustain language and cultural aspects while they are learning how to function effectively in the culture they live in now (Paris 2012: 95).

The classroom climate as mentioned several times before is dependent on how teachers shape it and what discourse it takes. Therefore it is worthwhile important to mention the characteristics teachers should have in order to coordinate adolescents during civic education lessons successfully. First of all, it is necessary for teachers to understand that teaching civic edu-

cation is meant for all pupils in the class because every one of them has a crucial part of maintaining democratic processes in the country. In other words, civic education is not only a subject which stays at school but rather the skills that are gained through it will be actively used outside the classroom. The knowledge and attitudes which the teacher presents will directly impact on the pupil's civic outcome. Also the composition of each class should be understood, starting from their pupils' socio-economic background to their spare time interests. This allows composing a unique but inclusive class approach understanding what each class is more interested in. As facilitators or moderators civic education teachers should be able to overcome their own potential biases and they should work with pupils' ideas in the framework of democratic practice (Koscoska 2015: 109). Overall, the ability to work with pupils effectively is dependent on the teachers' educational background. Some researchers assume that a particular teachers' unsuitability affects civic education outcomes because teachers lack appropriate educational background (Galston 2004: 2). There are also cases where teachers are supposed to adopt specific "hidden curriculum" based on the school's agenda and critically built discussion about diverse topics is not school's primary goal. This then leads to negative personal political efficacy and the creation of civil society is stopped. Schools and teachers must understand the role of a teaching institution in a sustaining democracy. Therefore circulation and accessibility of information is a vital component which allows pupils to keep in touch with real-life. The diversity of information also forms different opinions about current issues which should be brought up in classes and critically analysed. Otherwise, we come across a class which is teacher-centred, and the primary method of instruction is rote memorisation (Evans 2008: 530).

Teachers in critical democracy have to be prepared to discuss a plethora of themes which cover economics, sociology, psychology, philosophy, social justice, the rule of law and they must be ready to respond. All of this should be covered without a partisan position, but, at the same time, teachers have to be engaged with political issues. "Teachers cannot be isolated by the problems at micro-level (family and local community) and at the same time speak out about problems in different socio-economic groups," (Andrews, Richmond and Floden 2018). In countries with a society like the US and also European countries like Germany or France it is hard to establish a deliberative environment with distinctly opposite views. From practical experience teachers themselves serve as examples of how diverse poles can be brought closer to

each other by participation in solving community issues. With gained experience, there is enough insight to understand the reasons of different values or viewpoints, and it is easier to work with pupils in class which come from diverse background discussing issues which impact them directly and which are controversial to all groups. Teachers' efforts show the possibility of inclusion and ability to discuss and find a consensus. This shows essential features – short and long-term problem-solving options. Teachers should be interested in solving structural problems because it overcomes incorporated cleavages and, in the end, we are talking about universal benefits for every group. Civic education as a creation of small-scale democracy in class asks attitude change from teachers all around the world. Through civic education teachers can ameliorate levels of "democratic deficit" in youngsters and show the importance of involvement.

As it can be seen, the debate on the importance of civic education in sustaining the state's legitimacy has been critical in all times. The theoretical insights of civic education and classroom climate shapes the practical approaches used in this thesis. The empirical research has been conceptualized based on a scheme revealing the relation between different components of civic education.

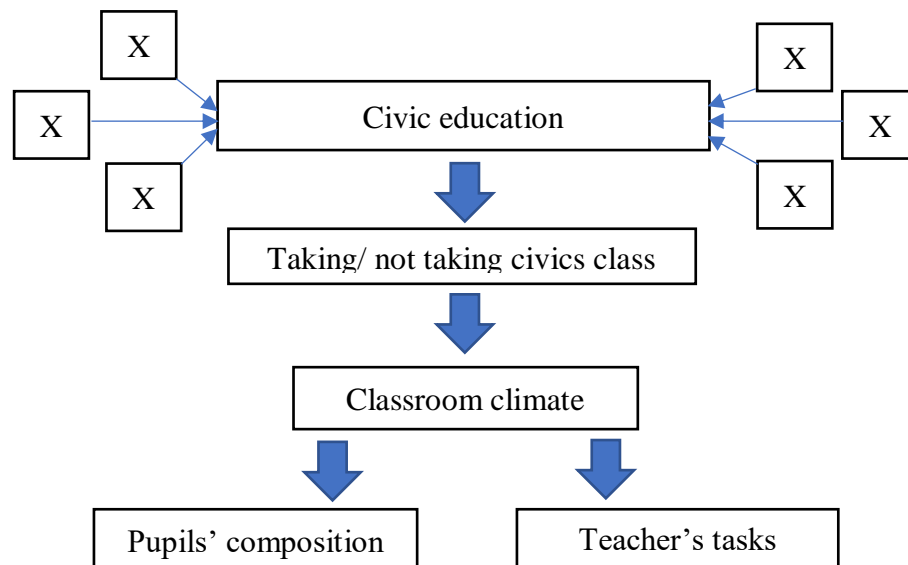Figure 1: Components of successful civic education at school

Figure 1 reveals the four components which have been chosen as the core elements for empirical research. Through surveys the difference between those pupils who take or do not

take the civics class will be depicted. Without depending only on survey results theory above suggests that studying civics is not only the predeterminant of successful civic education outcomes - class climate also plays significant role on shaping attitudes and teaching skills. Observing in-class behaviour (pupils' composition) and interviewing teachers after civics classes (teacher's tasks) puts together all methods commonly used for analysing civic education at a unique combination and no other similar research have been found. Based on the theoretical ideas, empirical part has been based on similar case or comparative studies. Survey questions have been composed of several studies like:

- International Civic and Citizenship education study (2016) which every five-years investigate young people's readiness to undertake their roles as citizens measuring civic knowledge, civic skills and engagement, gathering data from more than 94'000 students from 24 countries in Europe and Latin America, including Latvia;

- a case study about youth political socialization from Norway that has served as tool to explain socio-economic effects on pupil's performance regarding political and social interest (Lauglo 2011);

- a study from Britain which has emphasized the importance of young people's political engagement and focused on pupil's daily habits and their attitudes and perceptions about political processes (Henn, Weinstein and Wring 2002);

- a study in Sweden carried out by Kim et al. (2017) has revealed the importance of asking adolescents about participation habits both online and offline explaining how each affects the participation as adult citizens in the future;

- a study by Daniel A. McFarland's and Reuben J. Thomas' (2006) that revealed the importance of participation in voluntary organizations and that it can increase political participation later in adulthood and therefore the survey included question about voluntary participation as adolescents.

All of these studies reveal the importance of civic education or connected outcomes from it which affect an adult's participation. In this paper the survey analysis is supplemented with

two other important components – class observation and teacher interviews. Both of these magnitudes as described in the theoretical frame can significantly impact the way how pupils' take-in the knowledge and skills developed in civics classes. Hereby, the thesis uses existing research articles about civic class observations and teachers' instruction approaches. The following list of studies has been adapted and improved carrying out class observations and teacher interviews:

- a study conducted with more than 2.800 ninth graders has shown a positive correlation between instructional breadth in civics and external and internal efficacy which in this study has pointed out the importance of approaches used when teaching civics and pupils responsiveness to the content (Gainous and Martens 2012);

- Florin N. Fesnic's (2016) study about civic education in Hungary and Poland has analysed the aspects of teachers' characteristics (qualification, model of instruction and values) and how they impact the way how teachers teach civic classes;

- example of Poland's and Romania's civic education results have determined the gravity of the teacher-pupil in-class relationship and the ability to discuss and critically disagree - the core elements adapted for class observations (Tobin 2010);

- the concept of 'open-classroom' has been used in surveys since 1971 and it has been a major precondition in civic education for better civic outcomes, therefore also this study particularly pays attention to this phenomenon and evaluates the class climate regarding the in-class dynamics (IEA 2004: 120);

- similarly to ICCS study method, asking teachers how they conceptualize civic education and what they see as the main objectives of civics, directly links to the way how civic classes will be taught depending on teachers perceptions (ICCS 2009).

The description above for independent, dependent and control variables has given a sufficient amount of information regarding the chosen scope of thesis and further on serves as the main source of the design for the empirical analysis.

2. Data collection and methods

The most common approach on how to analyse the impact of civic education on pupils in recent researches has been both qualitative and quantitative methods. Through surveys pupils' level of interest and participation in regional and urban schools has been compared. Interviews and class observations have allowed to understand the bigger picture of teachers teaching methods with high-school students and how real-life lessons of civic education classes are held.

Before describing the framework of empirical part, a brief insight of Latvia's civic education policies at school should be described. In Latvia civic education is taught through two main subjects, namely, "Social studies" from Grade 1 to Grade 9 and as a separate subject in high school in Grade 12 called "Politics and law". "Social studies," as the first interaction with civic education is composed as an integrated subject which focuses on four main components – ethics, health, civic and economic education. From an academic perspective it covers politics and juridical science, sociology, anthropology, economics, civic competencies in order to achieve skills like learning, decision-making, successful interaction, cooperation, communication and social participation (Valsts Izglītības Satura centrs 2010: 2). The other subject which more specifically focuses on political education called "Politics and law" tries to develop the same characteristics as in "Social studies", but in-depth teaches about political processes. The "Politics and law" subject briefly stands for:

> *"the development of pupils' juridical thinking and cognitive approach to current political and legal process analysis. It accentuates the importance of practical and judicial knowledge. The content of this subject expands learners' abilities to analyse modern political and judicial institutional performance. Subject allows to understand the political processes in society and motivates to use judicial system in order to feel safe. [..] It is important to respect pluralism and to build a wide scope of understanding, develop the capacities to discuss, participate in societal processes and establish self-sufficient initiative."* (Valsts Izglītības Satura centrs 2008: 2)

Even though the subject is an optional one, it is possible to see the lack of desire and opportunity to study it. Out of 328 high schools (professional high schools, distance education schools and extramural education included), 218 education institutions provide a possibility to learn this subject. In other words, one-third of high school educational institutions in Latvia do not provide the possibility to learn this subject. The reason why the level of civic education is

seen as low in Latvia and is considered as a problem is because in recent research carried out by ICCS in 2016 among the Baltic Sea region countries Latvia fell below the medium level of political literacy (Schulz et al. 2016: 62). Plenty of qualitative and quantitative researches show that civic education improves political literacy and allows young adults to operate in a democratic environment more thoroughly (Campbell 2008: 443). The classroom climate thus is a much harder component to describe in case of Latvia. The shift from closed to plural society back in the 1990's introduced to a lot of confusion regarding civil society. The experience of active citizenship for last 50 years was restricted by the Soviet Union's laws and the participation was restrained to voting and being in Communist party. During last 25 years civil society has emerged but is still in the processes of reorganization. Educational institutions as described above in the theoretical part are the platform on which the skills and competences of civil society mature. The classroom climate as the component of creating successful civic skill set is still under examination in Latvia because of weak civic consciousness in the society resulting in passivity (Ījabs 2015: 221).

Together six schools have participated in this research. Five have been Latvian speaking schools, where three have been from more regional area and two from urban area. One school has been a minority speaking Russian school from an urban area. The age of participants has varied from 15 to 19 because in Latvia "Politics and law" class as an optional subject can be taught from grade 10th to 12th, depending on how school has chosen it. The aim of carrying out teacher interviews with the subject "Politics and law" has been to analyse how they understand the importance of civic education, what kind of methods and materials they use to teach about civics and what their perception about civic education is. Class observations have allowed the researcher to understand how pupils in the class interact with each other and the teacher, what kind of class climate is forming, how pupils form their opinions, and how they work in groups. Together in six schools 11 "Politics and law" lessons have been observed. Teacher interviews and class observations in this research have served as additional information sources explaining patterns in the surveys.

The main focus in this research has been on gathering surveys' responses. 500 surveys have been prepared with 23 questions on each. The number of actual participants has been 410 pupils, from which 67 surveys have been from minority or Russian speaking schools, 212 from

Latvian speaking regional schools and 131 from Latvian speaking capital schools. All surveys have been handed out in Latvian despite the fact whether it was a Latvian or minority speaking school. The subject "Politics and law" is taught in Latvian also in minority-speaking schools. The survey has been divided into two parts, where the first part of questions (1st to 13th) have been "Household" section questions and the other half specifically has been focused on the research topic – pupils' participation, attitudes and interests about politics, and class climate. All survey questions can be seen in the Appendix 1 "Pupils survey questions". Looking at the content of questions then No. 10-15; 20-23 have been used and re-phrased as in the International Civic and Citizenship education study 2016 (ICCS) example (IEA 2018: 101). Other questions have been socio-economic household questions and questions designed for this research.

2.1 Variables in the survey

In this research it has been crucially important to understand whether there is an interest and participation level difference between students who study and do not study civic classes. Interest in political and social processes and extracurricular participation as core phenomenon are analysed through concrete environmental settings – living in regional or rural area and attending Latvian or Russian-speaking school. Based on existing data, presumably pupils who study civics and especially come from majority speaking school (Latvian) are more likely to show higher political and social interest rates and extracurricular participation results (Rodirguez 2006: 724). Urbanization, on the other hand, does not play a significant role and in some cases people from semi-urban or rural (regional) area tend to be more active than urban inhabitants (Syal 2014: 70).

The variables which can reveal the causes of forming certain attitudes are most often found in the first socialisation stage or family (Pancer et al. 2007: 751). That is why the first part of the survey have asked questions about pupils' parents (ethnicity, income level, educational level, language usage, interest in political and social processes, voting habits) and also about the internet connection, electronic devices at home and their usage. For example, a sub-hypothesis that can be drawn from these dimensions is that the more parents are interested in political or social processes respond to different information, talk about it and see it as a necessity to talk about it with children, the more likely it is that children will be more involved in the same processes (McFarland and Thomas 2006: 403). That is why the first half of the

survey has measured parental participation and awareness of different processes, but the other half has showed involvement, perception and action of the adolescents.

Looking at the question which has focused on adolescents, then two groups of respondents lay out. One group has been those pupils who take civic education class and the other group- those who do not take the class. Four questions in the survey have been directly linked to "Politics and law" class and understanding why do pupils study this subject, which are the topics they are interested in and how they want to work during civics class. All other questions were the same for all respondents. Depending on these two groups, it has been possible to examine whether taking "Politics and law" class has had a link to higher levels of interest or participation. At the same time, it has been taken into account that in few schools this subject is an obligatory one, but that does not exclude the levels of previous participation. Even more, this sub-group functions as an example where every pupil despite previous experience should be taught about civics and should be motivated to be more interested in political processes.

The combined questionnaire has showed thus an adequate overall picture of pupils' participation levels, attitudes and beliefs. Some major concerns can arise in the survey. For example, no description about what is meant by "political or social issues" (in Latvian *sabiedrības aktualitātes*) has been provided allowing respondents to give a meaning of this phenomenon themselves. At the same time, respondents have answered the questions "as they have understood" and it has indicated a certain level of civic knowledge. None of the questions in the survey has been open-ended. The potential bias with this approach has been the limitation that respondents have. Even when none of the provided choices potentially fit, respondents have to choose closest-related answer (Strauss 2013). The survey has contained Likert-type scale, multiple choice and dichotomous questions.

Another point which should be taken into account is potential response bias because almost all of the surveys have been handed out during the lessons and had a time limit for about 15 minutes which means that some of the respondents could not have had enough time to focus on each question. Also, some of the questions could be have been answered on the base of socially desirable responses like asking "whether you often talk with your parents about political or social issues" and the respondent has chosen to say almost every day or weekly.

However, every time before the surveys were handed out the teacher explained to pupils why they are doing this survey and that accurate answer to each question should be provided.

Despite the potential shortcomings which have been described in theory, almost all surveys which study civic education have used this type of questions, and their data has been recognised as reliable and valid. Cross-tabulation, correlations and partial correlations as the most common functions have been used in this research in order to understand the connection between different variables in the survey.

2.2 Classroom observation

Altogether 11 class observations have been carried out in order to understand how the classroom climate is built. Teachers and pupils have been the two main characteristics which were analysed. The main reason for taking into account the classroom climate has been to measure the degree of openness in the class. It is possible to measure the performance of the class together with the survey responses and classroom climate, similarly how David E. Campbell has done it in his research (Campbell 2008: 443).

Teachers have been analysed by the measures from other already existing data:

- How teachers explain the topic of the lesson (whether it is theoretical or with real-life examples);
- Whether teachers allow to ask immediate questions about the content;
- How teachers structure the lesson (explaining to pupils what will they cover in the lesson step-by-step);
- Whether teachers foster pupils to discuss issues in the class (Hooghe and Dassonneville 2013: 5);
- What types of materials and methods the teacher use during the class;
- Whether teachers encourage to discuss political or social issues about which people have different opinions (Tobin 2010: 277).

If during some of the lessons pupils were doing tests, then teachers were asked to collect the tests in order to understand how teachers measure the gained knowledge. The tests have showed how teachers examine pupils' theoretical knowledge and how they accumulate the knowledge in practical terms.

Pupils have been analysed on terms described below:

- How pupils have responded to the new content (whether they wrote down notes, asked questions, discussed among peers some already known issues regarding the topic);

- In what way they have answered their teacher's questions (whether they used facts in their explanations and whether their argumentation was logical);

- How they have worked in groups (whether all pupils were involved in the group work, in what levels do they observe problems);

- How they understand the tasks which teachers give during the lesson (do they understand the rationale behind it, whether their current knowledge allows fulfilling the exercise appropriately);

- How many pupils in the class are participating by asking questions;

- Whether pupils feel free to express their own opinions in the class even when it differs from others';

- Whether pupils encouraged to make up their minds about issues (Campbell 2008: 443).

2.3 Teacher interviews

In order to explain how classroom climate is built from the observations, teachers and their teaching methods play an essential part. With "teaching methods" author here refers to different practices:

- Instructor/teacher centred method (learners are passive and copious recipients of knowledge from the teacher; teacher does not involve learners);

- Learner-centred method (teacher and learner have equal roles, and teacher is at the same time also a learner; teachers discuss and discover together with pupils);

- Content-focused method (the information and skills are taught regarding particular content and analysing it; programmed learning approach does not foster critical thinking);

- Interactive/participative method (combines all previous methods and focuses on situational analysis) (Postareff 2007).

Besides the way how teachers teach the content of civics, the author assumes that it is essential to understand the values of each teacher. This measurement has been taken from several studies in post-communist space where also the performance of adolescents differed depending on what teachers acknowledge as central values of democracy (Ozoliņa 2010: 585). Of course, in order to fully comment on teacher's perceptions and how severely it impacts pupils' performance in civics class is hard to analyse depending on one interview; thus it gives a glimpse of patterns from which it is possible to draw insights.

The interview consisted of 11 questions which tried to understand first of all the educational background of each teacher and their experience in the civic field. These two questions were picked up from other surveys were the educational background (usually in post-communist countries civics teachers are individuals with bachelor or master's degree in history rather than in any social science field) plays a role on which dimensions teachers emphasise the focus on (Fesnic 2016: 971). If teachers do have a social science background, then also the pupil's results are better regarding knowledge and practical skills instead if a teacher is a historian. Then a set of questions tried to discover how teachers work, including what kind of materials they are using, what tasks they are giving to pupils, and how do teachers themselves adjust to compulsory education content. From a theoretical perspective, pupils of the 21st century are more and more unresponsive to true theoretical knowledge, and more are willing to have practical life tasks. This includes talking about actual political processes in the state or internationally, working in groups (Ozoliņa 2010: 586). At the same time even if adolescents are more into practical activities, it does not always mean full participation and following results. Students lack critical thinking skills or the capability to argue about diverse issues logically. Taking also into account that a relevant state provided materials in civics are outdated (the most recent books is from the year 2011) it is important to understand with what types of materials teachers work. The question about educational content reveals how flexible teachers are. The content itself has not been changed since 2008, but since then major shifts have been changed in the overall perception of the role of civic education (VISC 2008). Civic education has shifted from "theory based" subject to "skill orientated" field which is complex and changes along with processes in the society (Carretero, Haste and Bermudez 2016: 296).

Three questions covered individually teachers own values and perceptions. The author asked conceptual questions, for example, "What do You think democracy is?"; "How do You understand freedom of speech, social equality, gender equality, tolerance or critical thinking?" Theory describes if teachers themselves do not fully understand what democracy is (what it consists of, what it protects and how it can be used) or they do not cherish democratic values as fundamental part of functional society then the pupils will never safeguard them without understanding their importance. That is why a question about pupils' reaction when discussing democratic values has been asked.

The last two questions were based on teacher's perception, and they were linked to shifts of civic education in Latvia and whether there are fundamental differences in teaching between minority and Latvian speaking schools. The former question indicates teacher's awareness of the subject itself, whether in the complex environment in which individuals live today a comprehensive skill set which allows persisting the freedoms of in a meaningful way should exist. The last question has been asked in order to understand the scene of ethnically divided country's schooling patterns. All of the teacher interview questions are in the Appendix 2 "Interview questions for teachers". In the next chapter data analysis has been carried out drawing patterns which have been explained through theory and compared to existing research. In this chapter, the source of analysis has been be surveying's, but at the same time class observations and teacher interviews have explained the potential correlations or indifferences with the survey results.

3. Analysis and Results

A significant number of research studies that focus on the decline of political and social participation find the answer in the lack of appropriate civic education (Campbell 2008: 438). In this chapter, data representation of pupil's surveys, teacher interviews and class observations are provided. Through the analysed data, the necessity of appropriate civic education for every pupil in schools to foster overall civic performance in the future is shown. The main empirical source of data is surveys and other sources are used as supplementary information to explain certain aspects of the teaching and learning of civic education. The questions asked in the surveys consist of 103 variables, but in this research, the main correlates to political and social interest and participation are: parents' interest in political and social processes, level of education and voting behaviour; household income; pupil's daily habits; pupil's level of interest in political and social processes; pupil's participation value; whether or not the pupil takes civics class; pupil's interest in concrete civic questions; pupil's attitudes towards democratic processes; levels of trust in public institutions. The research will reveal correlations between the outlined IVs and:

- ways that pupils show their level of interest;
- pupil's everyday habits regarding political interest;
- how pupils evaluate class-climate,
- pupil's levels of trust in public institutions;
- pupil's understanding about democratic processes;
- pupil's perception of how civics should be taught.

Structural challenges – specifically, geographical location and language – are the control variables used to test whether pupils who live in urban setting and speak Latvian as their first language:

- → have higher results in political interest;
- → are more settled in their everyday habits;
- → tend to show higher trust in public institutions;
- → have better understanding about democratic processes;
- → have different understanding of how civic should be taught.

Before analysing the obtained results, it is important to mention that the amount of responses from Russian-speaking context is unrepresentative, therefore also the control variable 'language' cannot be analysed through correlations appropriately. At the same, the research will reveal some patterns in comparison to minority and Latvian speaking schools.

3.1 What determines adolescents' interest and participation?

The main aim of conducting surveys was to show the relationship between civic education and the level of interest in political processes and participation. Together with 410 surveys the main conclusions and insights about how adolescents from age 15 to 19 relate to political and social content in their daily lives and how actively they participate in extracurricular activities is provided. Table 1 provides insight about participant gender, age and ethnicity.

Table 1: Respondents gender, age and ethnicity among three regional and three urban setting schools in Latvia

	Gender			Age					Ethnicity		
	Male	*Female*	*Other*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*LAT*	*RUS*	*Other*
Latvian speaking regional schools	85	125	2	-	6	60	134	8	206	3	3
Latvian speaking schools in Riga	69	69	1	3	28	57	38	1	124	6	1
Russian speaking school in Riga	33	33	1	0	4	35	28	0	12	51	4
Total	**187**	**227**	**4**	**3**	**38**	**117**	**152**	**9**	**342**	**60**	**8**

As can be seen, most of the respondents have been Latvians (342) from Latvian speaking schools. Female to male adolescents are represented more in this survey (55.36% to 44.64%). The largest group of respondents (152 or 37.07%) have been at the age of 18 when the surveys were carried out, but 3 respondents have been at the age of 15.

The given responses have been analysed within the framework of civic education. Besides the leading theory, an important factor is also the socio-economic background of individuals who have participated. The survey has included questions about parents and specifically their interest in political and social processes, their voting behaviour, incomes per month and the educational level. For example, Table 2 below shows different household variables which can affect pupil's interest in political and social processes. All of these measures from civic

education theory have been marked as essential background indicators which can shift interest towards one or another way.

Table 2: Household variables and how they impact pupils' interest in political and social processes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Pupils interest in political and social processes	-							
2. Parents interest in political and social processes	-.191**	-						
3. Household Income	.007	.066	-					
4. Parents education	.042	.145**	.155**	-				
5. Parents voting behaviour	.120**	-.007	.233**	.169**	-			
6. Speaking Latvian at home	.093*	.113*	.159*	.102*	-.224**	-		
7. Books at home	-.078	.120**	.032	.249**	.078	.036	-	
8. Gender	-.105*	.053	-.043	-.048	.035	-.050	-.096*	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

The theory has suggested the more parents are interested in political and social processes themselves the more pupils are interested in the same processes. In this case among all pupils, Spearman's rho (ρ) suggests -.191 correlation. This shows that parents' interest does not affect the pupils' interest in social processes. It means that pupils' interest in politics and social processes are low, even when mother's and father's interest is high. This can be linked to three main factors:

1) adolescents lack the resources that older people have accumulated through life and experience;

2) participants could interpret 'interest in political and social processes' regarding traditional forms of participation and they do not frame themselves in these measures;

3) adolescents do not view politics and social issues relevant to their daily lives (Quintelier 2007: 4-6).

A study in Norway showed a similar pattern that interest in political and social processes rises with age. Levels of interest also depends among male and female participants (ρ= -.105* where males are more interested than females) where interest can stay the same or even get wider

when growing older (Lauglo 2011: 57). Four out of six teachers in both regional and urban setting schools argued that a lot is dependent on what happens at home. A Russian-speaking school teacher said, 'If parents are not interested in politics do not expect that their children will be'. Thus, these results show that even when parents are interested it does not affect children's interest levels. For example, only 16 pupils answered that they are 'very interested' in political and social processes and from the same group also ten parents interest levels were marked as "very interested". At the same time, pupils do evaluate their parents as 'very interested' (92), 'quite interested' (225), 'not very interested' (71) and 'not interested at all' (10) in political and social processes comparing to themselves (16; 144; 190 and 48). Low levels of interest were also observed in the classes – out of six schools observer could label only one class as 'active and interested in the topic' (regional setting Latvian-speaking school). All teachers as one argued that pupils show higher interest when practical or group tasks are given; theoretical basis alienates adolescents' interest and for them the subject becomes tedious and uninteresting when they don't see the practical usefulness of the subject. At the same time, during class observations in two regional setting and two urban setting Latvian-speaking schools most of the time teachers explained definitions and made pupils' work individually with texts rather than showed how and where theoretical knowledge can be used and how it can help to analyse daily political or social processes/situations.

Socio-economic status and particularly the household income have a minor impact on pupil's interest in social and political processes and so does parents' education level. Parents' voting behaviour and speaking Latvian at home have an impact and show that the more parents are attending elections, the higher is their children interest in political and social processes. Also, if pupils at home communicate in Latvian, the more interested they will be in political processes. One of the teachers from urban setting Latvian-speaking school gave a small inside dynamics of the class – most of the pupils are from Latvian speaking background, but at the same time a fair amount is mixed or pure Russian origin. A teacher indicated that most of Latvian speaking pupils are passive and uninterested in what happens in the class and overall from three classes he teaches he could say that only four or five fully participate and have understanding about what happens around them. Interesting is that two of them are from pure Russian-speaking background and low socio-economic status families. An insight like this indicates

that the level of interest is not always defined by economic status or the language in which pupils communicate daily at home. Interest arises also among individuals from vulnerable groups.

Pupils' daily habits can define their interest in political and social processes. Communication (speaking out, exchanging thoughts, and critical analysis) and its frequency through different communication channels can be a major aspect which fosters interest. Moreover, the more communication channels adolescents use, the higher interest in political and social processes they will have (Mcleod, Scheufele and Moy 1999: 321). This hypothesis has a visible outcome also in this analysis.

Table 3: Pupils' daily habits and extra curriculum participation								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Pupils Interest in political and social processes	-								
2. Talking with parents	.393**	-							
3. Watching television	.223**	.377**	-						
4. Reading paper	.132**	.264**	.352**	-					
5. Talking with friends	.246**	.440**	.232**	.242**	-				
6. Using internet	.332**	.423**	.258**	.188**	.487**	-			
7. Posting on Social Media	.142**	.032	.104*	.197**	.147**	.171**	-		
8. Commenting on social media	.164**	.145**	.072	.150**	.166**	.212**	.413**	-	
9. Extra curriculum participation	.231**	.152**	.140**	.113*	.164**	.144*	.179*	.138**	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Comparing to Table 2 where parents' interest did not play role on pupil's interest, Table 3 shows that direct communication with parents does (ρ= .393**). Talking with friends also has a significant impact on pupils' interest levels and the more pupils talk with their friends about politics, the higher interest levels they show (ρ= .246**).

During the class observations, especially in regional setting Latvian-speaking schools, it was possible to see that when pupils work individually they are more passive than when

working in pairs or small groups. Communication and interaction for this generation's adolescents is an important factor which fosters interest and also participation. Other daily habits like getting information from traditional sources as television and reading newspapers also tend to show positive impact and the more pupils read and watch television, the higher interest they show. The impact of the internet, at the same time, prevails over traditional sources and using the internet as an information source shows stronger correlation tendencies (ρ= .332**) with pupils' interest levels. Livingstone (2002) explained that particularly communication among different channels is becoming more and more important because the evolving ways of media consumption through internet affects young people's daily life. A teacher from Latvian-speaking urban setting school argued that his main goal is to show that democracy is about every day practices and habits. These results correspond to his statement because communication (speaking, sharing ideas and discussions) is a major part of everyday democratic practices. When asking more practical questions, how often pupils post (ρ= .142**) or comment (ρ= .164**) on social media positive thus weaker correlations appear. The class observations have showed similar situation, when teachers ask questions pupils are not so interested to argument individually, but when working in groups among peers they comment and argue more with the teacher.

Extracurricular activities and pupils' interest levels show a positive correlation (ρ= .231**) This means that those children who are more active outside school also tend to show higher interest levels in political processes. Participation outside school also has a positive impact on how pupils see the effects of what can groups achieve rather than individuals (ρ= .157**) and that exceptionally organised groups at school can resolve problems (ρ= .187**). This can be explained through experience that pupils have gained in different groups or organisations resolving problems or working for community or vulnerable groups. It is worth mentioning that most of the pupils actively participate or have been participating in a sports team, but the smallest number of pupils actively participate or have been involved in human rights organisations. The vast majority of pupils who are or have been involved in a sports team (311) can be explained by the fact that often schools offer different sport activities and also parents are willing that their children do sports. On the other hand, low participation outcome in human rights organisations can be related to the fact that there are officially only four NGOs which defend human rights in Latvia and are neither significant nor influential.

At the same time when looking at data distribution in Table 4, those pupils who answered that they are 'very interested' in political and social processes do not show high results in extracurricular participation. The 'participation value' consists of ten different organizations/activities that pupils have participated in. Those who have participated within an organization/activity within the last 12 months receive two points as participation value and can score maximum as high as 20, if he/she has participated in all of them. Those who have participated in any action but more than 12 month ago receive one participation point. Those who have not participated at all receive zero points. These pupils show low (0-6) and average (7-13) participation results where high participation (14-20) results are among those who are 'not very interested' and 'not interested at all' in political processes. Similar results were represented in a research in 1965 where the extracurricular participation had no direct link on political interest (Ziblatt 1965). It is important to mention that extracurricular participation among all respondents in this research is low or average and only a minority of pupils show high value of extracurricular participation.

Table 4: Pupils interest in political and social processes and extracurricular participation

		Participation value																	
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16	17	19
Level of interest	Not interested at all	2	5	7	4	4	4	7	3	2	3	1	1	2	1	0	3	0	0
	Not very interested	20	12	28	18	22	14	23	19	8	5	7	3	4	3	2	0	1	1
	Quite interested	20	29	29	16	14	12	10	3	7	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
	Very interested	3	0	3	2	0	0	1	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

There are certain barriers which affects a pupils ability to participate in extracurricular activities like:

- lack of trust in decision-making systems;
- poor information how to involve in processes;
- structural challenges like location;
- low socio-economic status (inequality);
- minimal power given to young people to initiate organisational change;

- lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities (Australian Infant, Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health Association 2008: 1).

When not dealing with the mentioned barriers, the opportunity of participation is cut off, hindering political and social interest (Parvin and Saunders 2018: 4). In the case of Latvian school respondents, when correlating for trust in institutions or information sources, geographical challenges or economic background depending on household income then none of variables show significant positive or negative connections.

Understanding pupils' attitudes and beliefs towards different ways of expressing interest in political and social processes reveals also a part of their own behaviour. For example, if a pupil strongly agrees that it is important to be aware of local political processes, then it shows that also he or she will try to be aware. For instance, the majority of pupils who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to given statements (see Appendix 3) are those who label themselves as 'not interested at all' or 'not very interested' in political processes. If looking at participation variables at school and how important 'voting', 'joining a group of pupils', 'participating as a candidate in school elections', 'participation in school discussions' or 'publishing in school newspaper' is, then majority of pupils are neutral or disagree with the given statements. Different research explains this negative correlation through adolescents' unique perception that they are sorting activities; even when adolescents are interested in issues related to politics or participate in political activities they think it is not a political or social question/activity (Keeter et al. 2007). Numerous research articles along public representatives when facing low first-time voter turnout have framed as 'normal' that adolescents are not interested in politics under the age of 18 and would 'fall asleep' when mentioning axes, higher education or evaluating the performance of political parties (Farthing 2010: 182). Proportionally the interest levels among those respondents who are 16 or 17 (none voters) did not differ from 18-year olds (eligible voters). One of Latvian-speaking regional setting school teachers explained that pupils from this generation are more interested in processes surrounding them than few years ago and "I can see it how pupils in class from time to time bring up problems which are covered by news or social media". At the same time both urban and regional setting teachers discussed about the lack of understanding basic issues like recognizing different political parties or their values. Pupils in general are not interested in anything more if it does not directly affect their everyday lives.

Theory suggests that positive parents' voting behaviour establishes attitudes towards voting in their children. Many scholars particularly think that the first-time voter segment turn-out in elections sets example for life and that this example is adapted from parents (Franklin 2004). One of the most visible ways how parents can show to their children their level of participation is by an act of voting. This research focused on understanding whether parents' behaviour affects pupil's attitudes about participation in different school activities (see Table 5).

Table 5: Parent's voting behaviour and pupil's attitudes towards participation in school

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Parents voting behaviour	-					
2. Pupils participation affect school life	.124**	-				
3. Many changes happen when working in group	.056	.519**	-			
4. Organized groups can resolve problems	.105*	.370**	.449**	-		
5. Working together has bigger influence	.078	.379**	.437**	.430**	-	
6. Voting can affect what happens	.039	.337*	.262**	.360**	.321**	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

The results show that parents' voting behaviour affects pupil's attitudes towards participation in school life (ρ= .124**) and also pupil's beliefs that organised groups at school can resolve problems (ρ= .105*). Other results are similar to parents' interest in political and social processes and adolescents' interest. However, pupils are polarised about the real effect of participating in school elections. From 406 valid responses 27,58% "strongly disagreed" and 9,11% "disagreed", but 38,42% "agreed" and 16,25% "strongly agreed" that participating in school elections affects what happens in school. At the same time, 313 adolescents responded that their parents vote in elections. Here few questions can arise, for example, how parents communicate about attending elections and how do they explain it to their children? Interesting is also the fact that those pupils who think that participation can affect school life also show high correlations with other variables. It means that the more pupils value participation as important part of their daily school lives the more they value any form of participation in school. This pattern can be transferred to adulthood suggesting that adolescents who now value participation will value it also later.

If previously an insight of how family and household variables affect pupil's interest in political and social processes was presented, then school also has to be mentioned as a vital

component which affects interest levels. In theory it had been described how important an open-classroom climate is to foster participation and increase interest among future citizens. If teachers are able to ensure a climate where discussion and participation are the main activities also pupils will show higher performance results regarding politics and extracurricular participation (Kudrnáč and Lyons 2017: 50). A question about pupil's perception about class climate had been included in the survey and in Table 6 the results are shown.

Table 6: Classroom climate variables and pupil's interest in political and social processes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.Pupil's interest in political and social processes	-						
2. Teachers encourage to shape position	-.056	-					
3. Teachers encourage to speak out	-.047	.635**	-				
4.Pupils discuss about political and social issues	-.146**	.324**	.269**	-			
5. Pupils speak in class even when having different position	-.073	.292**	.237**	.387**	-		
6. Teachers foster pupils to speak with people with different views	-.050	.387**	.372**	.392**	.414**	-	
7. Teachers show different perspectives	-.077	.420**	.376**	.331**	.265**	.528**	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

The correlations show that even when pupil's interest about politics is low most respondents evaluate classroom climate as open, because majority of pupils answered all statements in the question number 20 (see in Appendix 1) with 'often' or 'sometimes'. Similar to previous tables, correlations among the same type of statements are strong and only correlations with pupil's interest are negative. Classroom climate can affect the willingness to communicate with friends, family members and the readiness to participate in discussions. For example, classroom climate variables and everyday habit variables have positive correlations:

- talking with family and:
    - discussing in class about political or social issues $\rho = .186**$;
    - speaking in class even when having different position $\rho = .154**$;
    - teachers foster pupils to speak with people with different views $\rho = .131**$;
- talking with friends and:

- o discussing in class about political or social issues ρ= .176**;
- o speaking in class even when having different position ρ= .158**;
- o teachers foster pupils to speak with people with different views ρ= .113*;
- posting on social media and:
  - o speaking in class even when having different position ρ= .140**;
- commenting on social media and:
  - o teachers foster pupils to speak with people with different views ρ= .136**.

The relationship between these variables show that there are positive effects of open classroom climate on forming daily habits and the more open the classroom climate is, the more pupils will communicate through communication channels about political and social processes. Furthermore, when looking at classroom climate variables and extracurricular participation then positive correlations arise. For instance, speaking out in class (ρ= .103*) and teachers fostering pupils to speak with people with different views (ρ= .088*) have related connections. It means that when pupils feel free to speak out in class even when they have different opinion, or their teachers encourage to speak with people with different opinions, the more likely they will also have higher extracurricular participation results.

The classroom observations and teacher interviews contribute here. One of the regional setting Latvian-speaking schools showed an outstanding performance comparing to other schools because pupils in the class were able to freely discuss and debate the matter of topic and the performance by peers (forming a political party with aims and values). The teacher herself added that working in groups and allowing to evaluate classmates is the most important method to open pupils up – see their ideas and ideals, how they communicate and how they can represent substantial matters of their own in the front of class. A positive and open classroom climate like this encourages to develop also daily habits and the effects come hand in hand, sharing experience and ideas in class fosters to do it outside the classroom and participate and the more pupils interacts with other opinions in different environments the more open and proactive they become.

The next set of questions is linked to pupil's understanding about democratic processes in a country and their interest levels. Survey question number 22 (see Appendix 1) gave nine statements about processes in a state and pupils had to answer whether they think it is bad, neither bad nor good, or good for democracy. Theoretically, the higher are the interest levels

about political or social issues the more pupils orientate in what is good or bad for the democracy. The results are represented in Appendix 5. The statements number 2 (One company or the government owns all newspapers in a country), 3 (People are allowed to publicly criticize the government) and 8 (The government influences decisions by courts of justice) have a clear answer – all of these processes are bad for democracy. The participants who have lower interest levels in political and social processes show also poorer understanding about democratic processes regarding the questions number 2 (ρ= -.096*) and 3 (ρ= -.048). Whereas the statement number 8 has weak correlation between pupils with high or low level of political interest and government's ability to affect decisions made by court (ρ= -.031). To statements number 4 (All adult citizens have the right to elect their political leaders), 5 (People are able to protest if they think a law is unfair), 6 (The police have the right to hold people suspected of threatening national security in jail without trial) and 9 (All groups in the country have the same right) it has been expected that pupils would have answered as 'good for democracy'. Citizens ability to criticize government (ρ= .103*) and the right to elect (ρ= .132**) have positive results and higher levels of interest show also higher comprehension regarding these questions. Thus, the right to protest (ρ= .043) and the statement that 'upper-class and lower-class income gap is small' (ρ= -.091*) have weak or negative correlations among respondents. The results of these responses can be linked to fact that adolescents have not yet faced protest attempts when it is vital to react by society or that they do not earn money and they lack the experience regarding financial issues. Statements number 7 and 10 depend on the individual values. Among these respondents 'keeping in custody a person without court decision' by a majority of pupils is recognized as neither good nor bad for democracy (200) and does not show a strong correlation among pupil's levels of interest and; the statement that 'all groups in country have the same rights' by majority of pupil's (233) recognized as a good characteristic for democracy and shows strong correlation with pupil's levels of interest (ρ= .115*).

Continuing with pupils' understanding about democratic processes among respondents it can be analysed whether there are differences between those who study and does who do not study subject "Politics and law" in school. This subject as the primary source of civic education in high school presumably can affect comprehension about democracy and what it consists of. Proportionally only few statements have seemingly different answers among who do and do

not study "Politics and law" (see Appendix 5). For example, pupils who do study civics show apparently have better understanding about democratic processes when answering the statements number 1 and 9. When answering other statements both respondent groups show minor differences (less than 10%). On one hand, this shows that taking civics class does not sufficiently affect pupils' understanding about democratic processes, but on the other hand, the differences could be minor due to time when surveys were carried out. Class observations have presented an interesting momentum which should be considered as crucial to this part of survey results. What an open-classroom should ideally look like in some classes differed starkly from what theory described. One case in a regional school showed that teacher is unable to get pupils interested in after election topic independently from the methods he tried to operate with. Open classroom climate can cast significant encounters between learning the topic from curricula and responsiveness level from pupils. The biggest challenge is not to analyse the actual results of election but rather to explain why elections as such are necessary and what it gives to individuals and different groups. The observations in a lot of cases showed that mostly pupils are taught about the former rather than the latter. At the end, for pupils it is hard to identify what is good or bad when asking, for instance, the question below 'Did you participate in elections?'. Another circumstance which could affect the outcomes of the survey is that adolescents filled in the surveys at the beginning of the school year, it means that they have studied subject "Politics and law" from one to three months depending on the time when they filled them. Data also shows that, for example, 12 students who recognize themselves as very interested in political and social processes do not study "Politics and law". Here it is important to mention that in the survey few comments were linked to the necessity of teaching civics to all classes independently on their scope of education. At the same time, from 155 students who study civics 76 are not very interested and 24 are not interested at all in political and social processes, where 47 are quite interested and only 4 are very interested. It is worth mentioning that it is hard to understand how variables interact, because some can say that the pupil has high interest levels and therefore he/she decided to take civics class. On the other hand, mandatory civics class can contribute to pupil's level of interest. Thus, one is clear – respondents are inconsistent when answering similar questions, for example, interest in political and social processes is low, but answering that civics as class was chosen because adolescent is interested in societal processes is relatively

high. Therefore, it is hard to measure the real weight of their interest. Nonetheless, it is important to give a brief insight about those pupils who study civics and how they want their lessons to be conducted.

Table 7: Why pupils choose to study subject "Politics and law" and what teaching atmosphere they want in the class?

| | | Way of teaching the class | | | |
		More interactive	More theoretical	More practical	Mixed
Reason why pupils study subject "Politics and law"	I am interested in social processes	18	5	4	13
	I have poor knowledge and I want to know more	6	1	0	6
	I thought this subject will be easy	1	0	1	1
	It was the only elective course	11	3	9	13
	Other	25	1	9	21

Table 7 above shows that out of 155 pupils who take "Politics and law" class:

- 40 pupils who choose this subject because they are interest in societal processes;
- 13 pupils who have poor knowledge about it and want to know more;
- only three pupils who thought that this subject will be easy;
- 36 who answered that this was the only elective course;
- 50 adolescents who answered that there are "Other" reasons why they took this class, but mostly it is linked to whether pupils choose humanitarian or mathematics class.

From these responses it is clear that for more than half of adolescents this course is obligatory when teaching in high-schools and only in one regional setting Latvian speaking school this is an elective course. Despite pupils' ability to choose or study this course as mandatory 61 answered that they would want their class to be more interactive, 54 answered that they want a "Mixed" approach, 23 want the class to be "more practical" and only ten pupils want it "more

theoretical". Regarding theoretical framework then most pupils correspond to 'interactive/participative' and 'learner/cantered' approaches. Class observations conformed that pupils are more interested when working in small groups, discussing problems and presenting viewpoints. Hence, teacher's lecturing about theory is not interesting for nowadays' adolescents and they are more willing to learn through practice. It is crucial to mention that, for example, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) argues on behalf of 'learning through practice' in order to achieve effective transition from school to work and to everyday challenges (Billett 2013: 127). Also local projects like "School 2030" are creating programs through pilot schools where the education will be completely based on acquiring competencies in 2030. Pupils who take civics class also have clearly indicated that topics in which they are most interested are "Rights" and "Practical knowledge".

All topics provided below in Table 8 are taken from current "Politics and law" class program. Pupils are interested in topics which are related to their practical lives, for example, 'individual and state' (104) and 'meaning of money in politics' (105), but least interested in more theoretical topics like 'political culture' (63), 'rule of law' (67) or 'state branches' (72). The low interest in topic 'social groups and their interests' (66) is worth mentioning because in order to understand the complexity of this question practical experience and skills are needed.

Table 8: Pupils who study "Politics and law" and their interest about different themes in civic education

	Yes	No	Maybe
Civil Society	77	20	58
Political participation	74	31	50
Individual and state	104	15	36
Political regimes	95	30	30
Political ideologies	93	31	31
Rule of law	67	38	50
State branches	72	26	57
Political processes	74	26	54
Rights	127	7	21
Social groups and their interests	66	28	60
Meaning of Money in politics	105	15	35
Political culture	63	38	53
International politics	93	18	43
Practical knowledge	113	18	24

Low interest regarding this topic can be linked to pupils' low extracurricular and outside school participation levels among most of the civics class adolescents, but at the same time pupils who have high participation outcome are more interested in this topic than others. It means the higher adolescents' extracurricular and outside school participation scores are the more they will be interest in topics related to society.

This research supposes that students who study "Politics and law" will be more interested in participation than those who do not. Theoretically, when pupils do learn about why, for example, elections are important and what through elections can be achieved the likelihood that these pupils will value participation higher than those who do not take this class. Table 9 below shows that proportionally there are no significant differences in pupil's perception among these different groups.

Table 9: Pupils attitudes towards participation in school		
	Studies "Politics and law"	Does not study "Politics and law"
Pupils participation can affect school life	80.39%	82.61%
Many changes can happen when working together	90.19%	89.50%
Organized groups can resolve problems at school	70.59%	69.04%
Pupils who work together have bigger influence than those who work alone	75.16%	70.75%
Voting can affect what happens in schools	53.59%	55.33%

In all the variables asking about participation at school pupils show fairly equal results taking into account answers, "Completely agree" and "Agree". This indicates that pupils who chose civics class do not have significantly different understanding from peers who do not take class regarding participation in school. Thus, those pupils who study politics and the class was mandatory for them, more often "completely agrees" or "agrees" to the given statements, but not when asking about voting. It means civic education classes can foster the understanding about participation in and outside school. When carrying out a comparison between the same groups and their extracurricular and outside school participation levels similarly the outcomes do not significantly differ among those who study and do not study politics. This shows a weak relation between these two variables among respondents and the perception that those students who in depth study civics class have higher participation outcomes does not conform.

Trust in institutions is another essential measure to look at. Measuring trust in institutions primarily indicates the individual's interaction with each institution and how the institution carries out rules and norms. If the rules and norms are accurately carried out by officials then also the political trust tends to be higher and vice versa, poor official performance results in low trust levels. Political trust is a determinate of functional democracy, and it can be affected by the level of civic knowledge which individual has. Theory suggests that people who have been able to study civics have better understanding how institutions work – what institutional aims and tasks are and how do each of it should perform (Campbell 2006: 66). The more an individual knows about institutional performance, the higher will be the trust in these institutions (Grimmelikhuijsen 2012: 55). It is important to point out that also too high trust indicated

lack of critical attitudes. Focusing on the impact of civic knowledge correlations in Appendix 6 seek to understand whether there exists a trust gap between those who take or do not take civic class. In other words, the more pupils gain civic knowledge about institutional functions, the higher levels of trust they will show. Among Latvian adolescents who participated in the surveys there is no significant difference between these control groups (see in Appendix 6). An outlaying difference between both appears when asking about trust in 'Army' when those who study civics are trustier to it (77.99%) than those who do not (65.72%). On the other hand, those who do not take "Politics and law" class trust more in 'School' (63.70%) than those who study the subject (52%). Overall, regarding different groups, we speak about low trust in 'Parliament Saeima', 'Political parties', 'Media', 'Social media' and 'People'. This resembles in Eurobarometer 2018 data as well where people show higher levels of trust in Government rather than parliament and high trust in the European Union, which in this case can be associated with the EU institutions (European Commission 2018: 12).

Structural dimensions: language usage and geographical location

In the beginning of this research language and geographical location were detected as structural challenges which can change the outcome of pupils' levels in interest and participation. Carrying out the research where both conditions would be represented equally was demanding, especially finding regional setting Russian-speaking school where "Politics and law" as subject is taught. The segment of schools fitting needed conditions was rather small therefore only one Russian-speaking school from urban setting has participated in the research. The main intention in next paragraphs is to show the inner dynamics of Russian-speaking group rather than comparing Latvian and Russian speaking school adolescents.

Table 10 shows Russian-speaking school pupils household variables and how they impact their interest in political and social processes.

Table 10: Russian speaking school pupils household variables and how they impact their interest in political and social processes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Pupils interest in political and social processes	-							
2. Parents interest in political and social processes	.666**	-						
3. Household Income	-.044	.030	-					
4. Parents education	-.024	.114	.145	-				
5. Parents voting behaviour	.076	.083	.085	-.008	-			
6. Speaking Latvian at home	.121	.120	.138	.000	-.098	-		
7. Books at home	.023	.183	.103	-.141	-.095	-.024	-	
8. Gender	.243*	.260*	-.001	.075	.127	-.067	-.282*	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

The table above shows that parents' interest has the biggest influence on their children. That means that the hypothesis that the more interested in political and social processes parents are the more interested their children will be conforms among Russian-speaking school adolescents. It is essential to capture political interest among Russian-speaking pupils and their parents. The majority of Russian-speaking parents in this study are 'quite interested' or 'very interested' in political and social processes and the same applies to adolescents. Aspect of political and social interest is essential especially in minority communities, because parents' interest and ability to sparkle interest in their children affects how future generations from minority community will determine its role in the society. In comparison with all respondents the correlation was negative, where parents' interest was high, but pupils' interest low. Russian-speaking school teacher in the interview emphasized the meaning of interested parents and how it reflects on their children. The correlation shows exactly that. Other variables do not have such a strong impact on pupils' interest levels, thus gender does play a role, but female respondents show higher interest levels than males. Table 2 showed that parents' voting behaviour does have a significant impact on pupils' interest levels, but not in this case even though most of Russian-speaking school pupils have responded that their parents participate in elections. The everyday language also does not play a crucial role in affecting pupils' interest, because among this group pupils have responded that at home they communicate in Latvian, Russian and also in other

languages. Household income and parents educational background does not have a major impact on children's' interest level similarly as in Table 2. Even though we see that among Russian-speaking school adolescents' interest is somewhat higher than among all respondents, teachers approach in lessons is profoundly theory-based. In the interview she stated that it is important to teach how to work with documents, laws and give theoretical knowledge about citizens' rights. Survey data showed that even when pupils are responding that they want more mixed or practical civic lessons, class observation revealed the opposite approach – pupils were reading parts about institutions from Latvia's Constitution *Satversme* and filled in the information in working paper. It indicates two possible explanations:

1) pupils despite teachers approach and their own perception of how class should be held are still interested about political and social processes;
2) class environment is not the aspect which impacts adolescents the most where family and daily habits could be.

Table 3 showed that daily habits are more effective magnitudes which affect pupils' level of interest than socio-economic background. Russian-speaking school adolescents show different results in Table 11.

Table 11: Russian-speaking school pupils' daily habits and extra curriculum participation									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Pupils Interest in political and social processes	-								
2. Talking with parents	.203	-							
3. Watching television	.111	.409**	-						
4. Reading paper	.276*	.365**	.439**	-					
5. Talking with friends	.223	.336*	.253*	.333**	-				
6. Using internet	.247*	.336**	.270*	.353**	.535**	-			
7. Posting on Social Media	.159	.058	-.001	.260*	-.056	.129	-		
8. Commenting on social media	.410**	.233*	.057	.128	.062	.233*	.321**	-	
9. Extra curriculum participation	.347**	.107	.019	.000	.301*	.227	.057	.182	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

The main differences among Russian-speaking adolescents and all respondents together are regarding 'commenting on social media' (ρ= .410**), 'extracurricular participation' (ρ= .347**), the impact of 'newspaper reading' (ρ= .276*) in pupils interest levels. Those Russian-speaking school pupils who are very interested in political and social processes tend to comment on social media more on daily basis than in comparison to Latvian-speaking pupils. That means that Russian-speaking pupils are more open to express their views online rather than offline, because direct communication with friends or parents has less impact. At the same time, similarly to general group of respondents, these adolescents are more willing to comment on other's viewpoints rather than reveal their own. Results report stronger correlation between extracurricular participation and interest levels meaning that the more active are Russian-speaking school adolescents the more interested they are in political and social processes. Even though theory suggests that minority groups could be less involved in participation, this sample shows something different. The trend between Latvian speaking and Russian speaking pupils is similar – the majority of adolescents are passive in participation, the same was seen among those who study politics and who do not; thus Russian speaking pupils show higher average participation score and lower "low participation" score. Extracurricular participation for minority adolescents can be a much more important way of expressing themselves than to ethnical citizens due to the cultural stigmas that minority groups face. Other variables show similar patterns in comparison with Table 3 where all variables have positive correlations with adolescents' interest levels.

Further looking into parents' effects on pupils' attitudes towards participation no significant correlations appear, thus all of them are positive. Also, as in Table 5 all other correlations (2-6) have high correlation values which means that pupils who value participation as such will also value higher working in group and voting (see Appendix 8). Parents' interest most visibly results into voting and in the case of Russian-speaking pupils we see that those parents whose voting behaviour is positive (they attend elections) their children in tend to value higher voting at school and recognize it as important participation form (ρ= .089). Also, other correlations in the table show positive outcomes depending on parents voting behaviour. Class climate can be even more important for minority class pupils because the way how teachers form the climate impacts their interest and awarness what happens around them. Table 13 shows

that positive correlations arise among their interest and how they value class climate and the more open is the class climate, the more interested they are in political and social processes.

Table 12: Class-room climate variables and Russian-speaking pupil's interest in political and social processes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.Pupil's interest in political and social processes	-						
2. Teachers encourage to shape position	.140	-					
3. Teachers encourage to speak out	.134	.726**	-				
4.Pupils discuss about political and social issues	.232	.418**	.387**	-			
5. Pupils speak in class even when having different position	.400**	.316*	.374**	.414**	-		
6. Teachers foster pupils to speak with people with different views	.505**	.279*	.392**	.427**	.433**	-	
7. Teachers show different perspectives	.394**	.365**	.489**	.351**	.451**	.675**	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Compared to the general data, Russian-speaking pupils' interest has positive correlations with open-classroom climate, showing significant results between interest and teachers showing different perspectives (ρ= .394**) and teachers fostering pupils to speak with people with different opinions (ρ= .505**). General results showed that even uninterested pupils evaluate that their classroom climate is open, but in Russian-speaking case open-classroom correlates with pupils' interest. At the same time when comparing Table 6 and Table 12 some correlations between open-classroom variables differ and showing stronger correlations between variables among Russian-speaking students All in all, pupils are inactive to speak themselves about political and social issues in class and they are more modest about speaking even when having different opinions. Regarding classroom variables which are dependent on teacher's behaviour pupils evaluate them higher than their own participation. It means that despite teacher's efforts pupils are not adding the characteristics to develop fully open-classroom climate which would help in building a stronger sense of community where diversity, discussion and critical thinking are vital components. Classroom participation resembles also in extracurricular participation where Russian-speaking school pupils have similar scores to general sample, thus these adolescents show higher percentage of medium level participation and lower level of 'low level participa-

tion' scores than Latvian pupils. The way of attracting pupils' attention is through the approaches which teachers use in class. Russian-speaking adolescents (just as in the general results) emphasized that they prefer "more interactive" and "mixed" way of teaching class. Both approaches demand and at the same time allow children to participate with their unique opinion and take-in other ones too. The provided topics in the class also play a role on pupils' willingness to participate and in case of Russian-speaking pupils most of them would want to gain practical knowledge and learn about international politics, rights, political ideologies and political regimes. Comparing to general results pupils show also interest in theoretical topics and it could be due to fact that the teacher asks factual knowledge from pupils more than in other classes.

With factual knowledge comes also understanding about processes what happens in democracies. Table 13 below shows how Russian-speaking school adolescents respond towards different statements. Comparing to general data from all the respondents (see Appendix 4) only correlation in Table 13 between pupils' interest levels and government affecting the decisions made by court were similar (ρ= .031 and ρ= .062). All other variables have different outcomes. For example, the most demonstrative difference is between pupils' interest and the income gap between upper-class and lower class (ρ= .226*) where among Russian-speaking school children the higher is pupils' interest level the more 'small income gap' will be valued as important factor for democracy. The general data showed that pupils have the same tendency, but the correlation is not so strong (ρ= .091*) as among Russian-speaking school pupils. Visible differences there are also among the statements number 2 (ρ= -.088), 3 (ρ= .163), 4 (ρ= -.003), 7 (ρ= .140) and 10 (ρ= .001). Theory suggests if pupil's knowledge is sufficient and he or she is interested in political and social processes he/she will be able to depict what is good or bad for democracy. Even if correlations among Russian-speaking students are not significant, we see that pupils with higher interest tend to more often answer that political leaders giving jobs to their family members is bad for democracy and pupils with low interest see it as good for democracy. On the other hand, the same respondents with high interest tend more often to answer that all newspapers owned by one enterprise, party or government is good for democracy. The next statement regarding criticizing government is a unique ability for any citizen in a democ-

racy. From general data those with higher interest more often answered that it is bad for democracy, but among Russian-speaking school adolescents the correlation is almost neutral (ρ= -.003) indicating that pupils' interest levels do not affect the perception about this process. Questioned about keeping in custody a person without court decision Russian-speaking school respondents show that those who have higher interest levels also more often answer that it is good for democracy. Last variable shows that among these respondents interest level does not play a role where in case of general sample the higher interest, the more often pupils will respond that having the same rights for all groups in country it is bad for democracy.

Table 13: Russian speaking school pupil's interest in political and social processes and their understanding about democratic processes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.Pupil's interest in political and social processes	-									
2. Political leaders give jobs to their family members	-.088	-								
3. One enterprise, party or government owns all newspapers	.163	.017	-							
4. People are allowed to criticize government	-.003	.066	.574**	-						
5. All citizens have the right to elect	-.086	.101	-.472**	-.518**	-					
6. People are allowed to protest	.014	.038	-.559**	-.575**	.568**	-				
7. Police can keep in custody people without court decision	.140	.157	-.558**	-.443**	.459**	.680**	-			
8. Government affects the decisions made by court	.062	-.119	.275*	.404**	-.269*	-.299**	-.198	-		
9. Upper-class and lower-class income gap is small	.226*	.147	.159	.081	.065	.224*	.038	.066	-	
10. All groups in the country have the same rights	.001	.046	.230*	.351**	-.138	-.218*	-.181	.112	.224*	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

It is interesting that more than half of Russian-speaking students answered that it is good for democracy to have small income gap and majority of them was quite interested or not very interested in political and social processes. Russian-speaking group in Latvia often has been portrayed as minority group with not enough equal rights regarding participation and historical

memory, and those who have been marginalized seek out for more inclusive community than ethnic majority. We see that this is not the case and it can indicate that these adolescents feel that their ability to function in the community is not stigmatized by their ethnic origin.

Looking at the impact of geographical location this thesis seeks to answer the question whether there is a difference in pupil's behaviour, attitudes or value perception based on the place he/she lives in. People's perception of the world is divided between 'local' and 'global' and in this thesis it is assumed that those people who live more in regional setting have stronger sense of 'local' than 'global' perception and therefore are less interested in political and social processes and have lower level of participation due to geographical conditions. (Webb et al. 2015: 8). From the collected data 212 pupils are from more regional setting and 198 are from an urban area. The partial correlations will reveal whether geographical location in case of Latvia's adolescents plays a role in their interest and participation.

Table 14: Household variables and their impact on pupil's interest in political or social processes controlling for geographical location

	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Partial Correlation Coefficient
1. Pupil's interest in political and social processes	-	-
2. Parents interest in political and social processes	-.162	-.169
3. Household Income	.023	-.026
4. Parents education	.066	.019
5. Parents voting behaviour	-.042	-.019
6. Speaking Latvian at home	.082	.021
7. Books at home	-.064	-.095
8. Gender	-.080	-.055
9. Regional or Urban	.228	-

Table 14 shows that geographical location does not have any significant impact on household variables and their impact on pupil's interest in political and social processes. We see that geographical location correlates with pupil's interest level showing that higher interest is among those students who live in an urban area. At the same time, living in urban area or more rural setting does not determine pupil's interest level related to household variables. It turns out that geographical location does not significantly affect any correlations relating pupils' interest and their daily habits, their attitudes and knowledge towards democratic processes, their participa-

tion value and other correlations in previous tables. It means that the assumption that geographical location as controlling variable does not play a role in bivariate correlations. The gathered data show that higher results are among pupils from Riga followed by big city pupils in regions, but lower results were among small city and rural setting pupils. The absence of significance when controlling for this structural variable can be linked to the fact that based on previous model in this research three schools are from Riga, two schools are from big cities in regions and only one school is from small city in region, where this research divided all schools only in two variables – urban or regional. Another explanation can be found in the availability of extracurricular participation when in all cases both school and city provides pupils with wide spectrum activities in which to participate. At the same time, pupils' interest which is dependent on family and local community does not differ in urban area or regions where urban setting parents are recognized as 'quite interested' or 'very interested' in political and social processes 76% and regional setting parents 82%. Even if it can be seen that geographical location is not a significant control variable along existing correlations, when measuring geographic location as independent variable it shows some important impacts on pupil's interest, participation as well has impact on household variables.

Table 15 below indicates the correlations between geographical location (IV) and household variables (DV). The premise is that those people who live in an urban setting will also have higher political interest, incomes, education and they will be more active voters. The correlations which underlines as significant conforms the premise, but not in all cases.

Table 15: Geographical location and household variables						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.Geographical location (regional or urban)	-						
2. Parents interest in political and social processes	.014	-					
3. Household Income	.194**	.066	-				
4. Parents education	.259**	.145**	.155**	-			
5. Parents voting behaviour	-.069	.138**	.041	.079	-		
6. Speaking Latvian at home	.288**	.113*	.159*	.102**	-.224**	-	
7. Books at home	.112*	.120**	.032	.249**	.078	.036	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Geographical location significantly impacts household income, parents' education level speaking Latvian at home and the amount of books at home, indicating that urban setting families have higher outcomes in previously mention variables. At the same time, parents voting behaviour shows weak correlation the opposite way (ρ= -.069), indicating that regional parents are more active voters than urban parents. Also parents' interest in political and social processes does not entirely conform the premise that urban parents are more interested, the correlation (ρ= .014) shows that the relationship between these two variables are neutral showing regional and urban setting parents both have similar interest levels.

Focusing on the relation between geographical location and 'pupils' interest in political and social processes' and 'extracurricular participation', the former shows that urban pupils have higher interest levels than regional pupils (ρ= .223**), but participation value is higher among regional adolescents (ρ= -.041). It is important to mention that the highest participation value scores (19 and 17) are among regional pupils. At the same time, even if urban setting adolescents are more interested in political and social processes it is hard to define this correlation as strong or that regional pupils are more active than urban adolescents. Patterns between geographical location and pupils' attitudes towards participation in school show that regional adolescents' value higher school participation than urban setting pupils do, but similarly as before the correlations are not very strong. Only in relation to the statement 'working together has bigger influence' do urban pupils tend to answer more often that they 'strongly agree'. One could argue that regional school pupils value higher participation at school because among some individuals it could be the only way of participation because of their socioeconomic status.

Table 16: Geographical location and pupil's attitudes towards participation in school

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.Geographical location (regional or urban)	-					
2. Pupils participation affect school life	-.129**	-				
3. Many changes happen when working in group	-.087*	.519**	-			
4. Organized groups can resolve problems	-.034*	.370**	.449**	-		
5. Working together has bigger influence	.055	.379**	.437**	.430**	-	
6. Voting can affect what happens	-.084*	.337*	.262**	.360**	.321**	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

A weak pattern shows that those pupils who have indicated that their parents have higher income levels also have higher participation scores (ρ= .026). At the same time, only 5 pupils out of 209 from regional area whose household income is maximum €860 per month showed high participation results, but, on the other hand, 9 pupils who answered that their household income is more than €860 per month in regional area had high participation scores. Table 16 could indicate that participation at school for low income background pupils is the only way how they can fulfil themselves and participate. When looking at urban setting adolescents then geographical location correlates with income levels (ρ= .194**), but hardly mirrors it on extracurricular participation or participation in school. From urban setting pupils whose household income is 860EUR per month only one showed high participation results, but eight responded that their household income is higher than €860 per month and scored high in extracurricular participation.

When asking about pupils' beliefs and attitudes towards participation among regional and urban setting participants few correlations indicate significant results. For example, 'knowing about political processes at local level', 'knowing about political processes in country' and 'publishing in school's newspaper' is more important among regional setting adolescents (ρ= -.217**; ρ= -.192**; ρ= -.102*) (see Appendix 3). All other correlations from question number 13 in the survey (see Appendix 1) except 'knowing about political international political processes' also tend to show more positive tendencies among regional setting pupils than urban area adolescents. It means that the hypothesis that pupils from an urban area will be more interested in different participation forms does not conform. It is possible to compare pupils' understanding about democratic processes depending on geographical location (see Appendix 1 question number 22). Tendencies show different outcomes. For example, the statement 'one enterprise, party or government owns all newspapers in a country' is viewed as 'good for democracy' more among urban pupils. This as previously discussed is actually 'bad for democracy' and shows that urban setting adolescents have less understanding how it violates democracy. At the same time, 'upper and low-income class income gap is small' is valued 'good for democracy' among urban setting school respondents. No other correlations were recognized as significant and did not draw tendencies about better understanding in regional or urban setting schools. Regarding class climate there are no significant differences between urban and regional

setting pupils' perception but one. Pupils from the regions tend to answer often that pupils in class discuss more about political and social processes than urban adolescents do (ρ= -.115*). Other correlations tend to show that regional setting adolescents more positively value class climate, but these relationships between variables are not significant.

Another important moment is to look at those adolescents who study and do not study civics class depending on geographical location and how it impacts their interest or participation. It turns out that those participants who live in an urban area and take civics class are more interested in political and social processes (ρ= .251**) than regional participants. From these results it means that pupils who live in an urban area and are taking civics class more likely will be more interested in political and social processes. In meantime, correlation is similar thus weaker among those who do not take civics class – urban students are more interested even when they do not study civics (ρ= .169**). The last correlation examples will be linked to geographical location and trust in institutions (see Appendix 8). Geographical location possibly can play a role in trust. Pupils who live in regions tend to show higher levels of trust in their local community (local government; school) rather than national or international institutions. On the other hand, urban school pupils more interact with international processes and therefore can show a higher level of trust in international institutions In this research adolescents from regions are trustier to government of Latvia (ρ= -.100*), local government (ρ= -.132**), the army (ρ= -.228**) and school (ρ= -.164**), but urban setting respondents have higher trust in Saeima (ρ= .106*) and social media (ρ= .115*). The former correlations can be linked to the described conditions about local community – people in regional cities or small cities are more aware of what happens in their local council and how it works and have more direct impact than in urban areas. Pupils also are more related to school and activities provided by the institution and therefore they are trustier. Pupils from urban setting schools on the other hand are closer to what happens in Saeima. Regarding higher trust levels in social media, more than half of urban setting adolescents who daily or almost every day use internet as information source trust social media 'quite a lot' or 'absolutely', when the same adolescent group in regions reaches only one third. It explains that urban setting youth more often use social media than regional setting youth and therefore are trustier to the information published on internet than those who do not use it as often.

In conclusion, the empirical analysis has given a broad insight of how many variables can affect pupils' interest in political and social processes as well as their extracurricular participation activity. The sample of 410 respondents from regional and urban setting Latvian and Russian-speaking schools has allowed to draw conclusions which are related to the main aim of this research. From the given analysis it is clear that pupils despite their structural challenges are not interested in political and social processes. From collected data pupils characterize their parents as more interested in political processes than they are themselves and therefore parents' interest does not have an impact on pupils' interest. Household income, parents' education level or the amount of book at home does not affect pupils' interest levels. The only variable which has correlations with pupils' interest related to parents' is 'parents voting behaviour' where in those cases where parents are active voters their children are more interested in political processes. Another variable which positively affects interest is the language in which pupils communicate at home and those who speak Latvian show higher interest. At the same time question 'what causes interest towards political/social processes or participation?' is still unanswered. Asking and seeking answers for this question is important, because it affects the democratic continuity in the country. If it is possible to indicate the stimuli which affect the interest, then schools should particularly work on them. One already stands out, in a century like people live in nowadays it is essential to attract attention and it can be done through interactive approaches. Teachers even more and more try to use computers, videos and presentations to show the core theoretical information, but at the same time, it cannot be saturated only with complicated definitions and descriptions. Nowadays pupils demand to learn practically through workshops, simulations and evaluation of one another. Looking at Latvia's case, the curriculum has not changed for the last ten years, so pupils will not respond to given content. From the conducted interviews, observations and surveys it can be summed that civic education is a lot more than only two civic classes a week for those who choose this subject. As we saw the overall scores in participation or interest in politics are not high for those who take the class or for those who do not. The schools have a significant role in shaping attitudes towards civics, and the school institutions should be the most active players who change the current discourse. Teachers for many times did mention that school is the place which shows different perspectives, different opinions and choices and they should do it even more in a deliberative and comprehensive way to develop the future citizens. At the same time, in the

field of civic education, there are many variables which do affect the outcome which should be analysed. In this analysis, the bigger picture has been approached in order to understand the issues and problems where pupils lose the interest or what affects their ignorance. In the meantime, teaching about civics in a divided society comes with more responsibilities because the teaching methods need to be engaging and integrating, but they cannot be dismissive towards the minority groups and it indeed should not be imposed. This research was a glimpse of the complex environment regarding civic education in Latvia where the main shift in the discourse should begin at schools.

4. Conclusion

Civic education has been a widely debated concept since the beginning of the 20th century, and even in the times of Aristotle, the importance of handing over civic virtues was a precondition for maintaining democracy. During the last decades, democratic countries face a decay of civic education among adolescents and researchers more and more are focusing on the causes and explanations of this pattern. The theory explicitly argues that civic education has to be a part of educational programs; thus major confusion arises when trying to define 'how' to educate future citizens and 'what' adolescents should know. In this thesis survey research and classroom observation was chosen as research method in order to define the factors which affect pupils' interest in political processes and their extracurricular participation. The opportunity of having an insight of large variety of classes, seeing different class climates and how pupils can react to the contents of civic classes allows to draw important conclusions from the carried-out research.

To test the hypothesis, a study consisting of survey analysis, class observations and teachers' interviews was conducted. 410 survey responses from 6 different schools were the main source of analysis which did not show a strong correlation between pupils who take the civic class and do not and their different interest levels in political or social processes or participation performance. The main conclusions from the study:

1) overall, the level of interest in political and social processes and adolescents' extracurricular participation is low;

2) socio-economic factors like household income, parents' education/voting behaviour/interest levels in political and social processes do not affect pupils' interest levels as anticipated based on theory (see Table 2);

3) parents' voting behaviour has a minor impact on pupils' attitudes towards participation at school activities (see Table 5);

4) pupils' daily habits play a role on rising interest among adolescents about political processes (see in Table 3);

5) pupils' who show higher interest levels in political and social processes show also higher extracurricular participation outcomes (see Table 4)

6) geographical location correlates with variables like levels of interest in political and social processes, trust in institutions and questions of interest regarding civics, but location does not function as a decisive control variable among any correlations (see Table 14);

7) the language variable could not give representative data from the sample, but respondents show equally low participation in activities among both groups, and Russian-speaking adolescents show strong correlations between their and parents interest levels, as well classroom climate plays crucial role in their political interest.

This study showed that analysing civic education still is important and understanding to what content students respond the most is even more relevant to researchers and policy makers nowadays. Researchers in civic education field should more focus on how the environment affects pupils' attitudes and how it shapes interest, for example, in different language schools or minority schools in plural communities. These measures are mentioned because structural challenges affect pupils' interest and extracurricular participation results (Spriņģe 2019).

The amount of data collected from Russian speaking schools was unrepresentative, thus the inner dynamics at even one school can indicate what issues to focus on further. Statistically it is known that to Russian-speaking schools go those adolescents whose parents are from lower socio-economic class and from theory socio-economic status affects pupils' political interest tremendously (OECD 2018: 92). It means that schools in Latvia face visible socio-economic stratification depending on geographical location and income level which then affects qualified teachers/staff attraction for disadvantaged schools and fundamentally affects pupils schooling outcomes. Researcher task is to observe what happens in schools like this and how these schools prepare future citizens depending on the overwhelming conditions.

The collected data showed essential differences which should be analysed in more detail. From teachers' interviews and class observations these would be the following steps which should policy-makers and local communities take in order to achieve higher interest in political and social processes and extracurricular participation among adolescents:

1) Ministry of Science and Education must change its "Politics and law" curricula adapting it more to 21st century challenges and use interactive and practical methods as the main working tools in the lessons;

2) Civics should be integrated in the general curricula and should be taught as obligatory subject for all high-school pupils;

3) Ministry of Science and Education should to reshape the overall objectives of educational institutions and the aims of how future society should look in a democracy;

4) Schools themselves, especially, where older teacher generations are dominant should attract university students to teach social and humanitarian subjects in schools to explain the necessary theoretical and teach practical skills of how to function in society as responsible and active individuals;

5) Local communities and local governments should take responsibility and also educate parents about how to work with children and how to engage together with them in social activities.

In conclusion, the carried out research serves as a valuable platform in order to understand the challenges and tasks for Latvia in context of civic education. The transition to new competence based-learning approach in Latvia launches in year 2020 and a seperate field in highschool curricula is constructed for an interdisciplinary content called *Social and civic education*. The content aims at educating about *big ideas* as stated in *Skola2030* including raising awereness about individual, society, power, economy, multiculuturalism and time. In the theoretical framework author mentioned some of these magnitudes as defining cornerstones in civic education. The future approach of learning and establishing Latvian in all schools will indicate whether it is possible to diminsh the gap between urban and regional school performance and will interest and participation in political and social processes improve when the overall learning system is changed.

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APPENDIX

Survey questions to pupils

Hello, my name is Elīna Mīļā and I am a second-year student from University of Tartu. I am writing my thesis about the meaning of civic education and how learning it can affect individual's performance as an active citizen. I have made this survey in order to understand does ethnicity and the place You live in impacts the way why did You choose to study Civics. The data will be anonymous and will be used for quantitative analysis for the conducted research.

1. **Gender** *(circle the correct answer)*:

   Male
   Female
   Other

2. **Age**:

   …………………………………………………….

3. **Ethnicity** *(circle the correct answer)*:

   Latvian
   Russian
   Other (……………………………………………..)

4. Tick the ethnicity of those with whom You live together! *Tick the answers with "∨"*

	Latvian	Russian	Other	I don't live with this person
Mother (also stepmother or foster mother)				
Father (also stepfather or foster father)				

5. What are the incomes of those with whom You live together! *Tick the answers with "∨"*

	EUR 0-430	EUR 431-800	EUR 801-1200	EUR 1200 and more	I don't know
Mother (also stepmother or foster mother)					
Father (also stepfather or foster father)					

6. What is their level of education? *Tick the answers with "∨"*

	Elementary school	High school	Secondary vocation education	Higher education	Other
Mother (also stepmother or foster mother)					
Father (also stepfather or foster father)					

7. In what language do you speak at home most of the time? *Tick the answers with "∨"*

	Yes	No
Latvian		
Russian		
Other		

8. How interested are you and your parent(s) in political or social issues? *Tick the answer with "∨"*

	Very interested	Quite interested	Not very interested	Not interested at all
You				
Mother (also stepmother or foster mother)				
Father (also stepfather or foster father)				

9. Who of these people You live together vote regularly? *(tick Your answers with "∨")*

	Yes	No	Don't know	Refuse to answer
Mother (also stepmother or foster mother)				
Father (also stepfather or foster father)				

10. About how many books are there in your home? *Tick the right answer with "∨*

	1-50	51-100	101 and more
Books at home			

11. How many of the following devices are used regularly in your home? *Tick Your answer with "∨"*

	None	One	Two	Three or more
Desktop or portable computers				
Tablet devices or e-readers				
Mobile phones with internet access				

12. Do you have an Internet connection at home? *(circle Your answer)*

YES

NO

13. How often are you involved in each of the following activities? *Tick Your answer with "∨"*

	Never or hardly ever	Monthly (at least once a month)	Weekly (at least once a week)	Daily or almost daily
Talking with your parent(s) about political or social issues				
Watching television to inform yourself about national and international news				
Reading the newspaper to inform yourself about national and international news				
Talking with friends about political or social issues				
Using the internet to find information about political or social issues				
Posting a comment or image regarding a political or social issue on the internet or social media				
Sharing or commenting on another person's online post regarding a political or social issue				

14. Please, give Your opinion about these statements! *Tick the answers with "∨"*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I think that it is important to be aware of local political processes.					
I think that it is important to be aware of state politics.					
I think that it is important to be aware of international politics.					
People rarely use their rights as citizens – protests, signs a petition, speak to local counselors, etc.					
Voting in elections at school is important.					
Joining a group of pupils to campaign is important.					
Becoming a candidate for class or school council is important to me.					
It is important to take part in public discussions at school.					
It is important to write an article for school newspaper or website.					
It is important to participate in any type political activities, even when they turn out aggressive and violent.					

15. Have you ever been involved in activities of any of the following organizations, clubs or groups? *Tick Your answer with "∨"*

	Yes, I have done this within the last 12 months	Yes, I have done this but more than a year ago	No, I have never done this
A youth organization affiliated with a political party or union			
An environmental action group or organization			
A Human Rights organization			
A voluntary group doing something to help the community			
An organization collecting money for a social cause			
A group of young people campaigning for an issue			
An animal rights or animal welfare group			
A religious group or organization			
A community youth group			
A sports team			

16. Are You taking "Politics and law" class? *(circle Your answer)*

Yes

No

17. Why did You choose to take "Politics and law" class? *Tick Your answers with "∨"* If you are not taking this class, go to question No. 21

○ I am interested in societal processes

○ I have poor knowledge about this field and wanted to know more

○ I thought that this subject will be easy

○ It was the only elective course which school provided

○ Other

………..

18. How would You like Your Politics and law class to be held? *(tick Your answer with "∨") Go to question 21, if You are not taking this class*

○ More interactive (exchanging opinions, debating, providing different viewpoints)

○ More theory based (teacher mostly talks about different topics)

○ More practical (teacher explains a topic and then arrange groups and gives a task for each group)

○ Mixed

○ Other

………..

19. Which of these topics You would be interested to study while taking "Politics and law" class? *Tick Your answers with "∨"*

	Yes	No	Maybe
Civil society			
Political activity			
Individual and power			
Political regimes			
Political ideologies			
Rule of law			
The power branches in the state			
Policy making			
Rights			
Social groups and their interests in politics			
The meaning of money in political activities			
Political culture			
International politics			
Practical knowledge about how to argument opinion, analyze processes, etc.			

20. When discussing political or social issues during regular lessons, how often do the following things happen? *Tick Your answer with "∨"*

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Teachers encourage students to make up their own minds.				
Teachers encourage students to express their opinions				
Students bring up current political events for discussion in class				
Students express opinions in class even when their opinions are different from most of the other students.				
Teachers encourage students to discuss the issues with people having different opinions.				
Teachers present several sides of the issues when explaining them in class.				

21. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about student participation at school? *Tick the right answer with "∨"*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Student participation in how schools are run can make schools better					
Lots of positive changes can happen in schools when students work together.					
Organizing groups of students to express their opinions could help solve problems in schools					
Students can have more influence on what happens in schools if they act together rather than alone					
Voting in student elections can make a difference to what happens at schools					

22. Which of the following situations do you think would be good, neither good nor bad, or bad for democracy? *Tick the right answer with "∨"*

	Good for democracy	Neither good nor bad for democracy	Bad for democracy
Political leaders give government jobs to their family members			
One company or the government owns all newspapers in a country.			
People are allowed to publicly criticize the government			
All adult citizens have the right to elect their political leaders			
People are able to protest if they think a law is unfair.			
The police have the right to hold people suspected of threatening national security in jail without trial.			
Differences in income between poor and rich people are small.			
The government influences decisions by courts of justice			
All groups in the country have the same right.			

23. How much do you trust each of the following groups, institutions or sources of information? *Tick the right answer with "∨"*

	Completely	Quite a lot	A little	Not at all
The government of Latvia				
The local government of your town or city				
Courts of justice				
Political parties				
Saeima				
Media (television, newspapers, radio)				
Social media (Twitter, blogs, Facebook, Youtube, etc.)				
Army of Latvia				
Schools				
The United Nations				
People in general				
European Commission				
European Parliament				

Interview questions for teachers

1. What is your educational background?

2. How long you have been a teacher for "Politics and law" class?

3. What are the main goals which You try to achieve at the end of the school year at Your class?

4. Which are the materials, tasks and methods which are the most effective on pupils and they are willing to participate?

5. How to You evaluate the obligatory content of education and how much do You adapt it in your lessons?

6. In Your opinion, what is democracy and how do You teach about it to Your pupils?

7. Explain, please, how do You understand these values: freedom of press, social equality, gender equality, tolerance, critical thinking?

8. How You ever faced with negative or controversial attitudes for pupils when talking about democratic values?

9. How often do You speak about problems in local community, in the state or internationally?

10. How, in Your opinion, has the meaning of civic education changed in Latvia since regaining independence?

11. Do You think that there exist fundamental differences between how the civic education is taught in Latvian-speaking schools or in Russian-speaking schools?

Pupils' attitudes and beliefs about participation and their interest in political and social processes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Pupils Interest in political and social processes	-										
2. Knowing about political processes at local level	.267**	-									
3. Knowing about political processes in the country	.247**	.677*	-								
4. Knowing about international political processes	.133**	.468**	.576**	-							
5. People rarely use their rights	.090*	.184**	.182**	.168**	-						
6. Voting at school is important	.140**	.222*	.160**	.126**	.149**	-					
7. Joining a group of pupils	.130**	.180**	.111*	.169**	.136**	.320**	-				
8. Candidating at school	-.138**	.134**	.045	.081	.039	.347**	.476**	-			
9. Participating in discussions	-.167**	.277**	.237**	.265**	.093*	.390**	.469**	.535**	-		
10. Publishing in school paper	-.169**	.214**	.138**	.092*	.092*	.377**	.348**	.425**	.558**	-	
11. Participation in any political activities	-.109*	-.199**	.103*	.078	.124**	0.72	.243**	.355**	.270**	.272**	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Appendix 4

Pupil's interest in political and social processes and their understanding about democratic processes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.Pupil's interest in political and social processes	-									
2. Political leaders give jobs to their family members	.096*	-								
3. One enterprise, party or government owns all newspapers	.048	.479*	-							
4. People are allowed to criticize government	-.103*	-.295**	-.264**	-						
5. All citizens have the right to elect	-.132**	-.330**	-.421**	.397**	-					
6. People are allowed to protest	-.043	-.349**	-.373**	.352**	.431**	-				
7. Police can keep in custody people without court decision	.021	.105*	.079	-.084	-.069	-.013	-			
8. Government affects the decisions made by court	.031	-.061	-.064	.143**	.130**	.100*	.095*	-		
9. Upper-class and lower-class income gap is small	.091*	.194**	.278**	-.151**	-.200**	-.162**	.060	.009	-	
10. All groups in the country have the same right	-.115*	-.231**	-.200**	.289**	.296**	.360**	-.116*	.059	-.081	-

**. Correlation is signficant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Pupils' who study and do not study "Politics and law" and their understandings about democracy

	Studies "Politics and law"			Does not study "Politics and law"		
	Bad for democracy	Neither good or bad for democracy	Good for democracy	Bad for democracy	Neither good or bad for democracy	Good for democracy
Political leaders give government jobs to their family members.	66%	25%	9%	51.2%	32%	16.8%
One company or the government owns all newspapers in a country.	68.21%	21.85%	9.94%	71.48%	24.49%	4.03%
People are allowed to publicly criticize the government.	9.28%	32.45%	58.27%	10.48%	39.11%	50.41%
All adult citizens have the right to elect their political leaders.	11.18%	17.11%	71.71%	4.47%	22.76%	72.77%
People are able to protest if they think a law is unfair.	7.94%	25.16%	66.9%	4.47%	23.98%	71.55%
The police have the right to hold people suspected of threatening national security in jail without trial.	15.89%	49.66%	34.45%	22.76%	62.43%	14.81%
Differences in income between poor and rich people are small.	38.15%	44.73%	17.38%	35.48%	51.20%	13.32%
The government influences decisions by courts of justice.	38.15%	44.66%	17.19%	19.02%	42.91%	38.07%
All groups in the country have the same right.	10.52%	27.63%	61.85%	9.23%	32.93%	57.84%

Trust in institutions and information sources among those who study "Politics and law"

	Not at all	A little	Quite a lot	Definitely
Government of Latvia	11.92%	7.28%	37.08%	43.70%
Saeima	18.66%	48.66%	28%	4.66%
Political parties	21.33%	54%	22%	2.66%
Court institutions	5.36%	36.24%	47.65%	10.73%
Army	7.33%	14.66%	46.66%	31.33%
Local government	9.33%	31.33%	46%	13.33%
School	10%	38%	42%	10%
Media	9.33%	42%	45.33%	3.33%
Social Media	12%	47.33%	34%	6.66%
United Nations	4.05%	24.32%	47.97%	23.64%
European Commission	7.28%	30.46%	47.01%	15.23%
European Parliament	7.28%	29.13%	43.70%	19.86%
People	13.33%	42.66%	36%	8%

Trust in institutions and information sources among those who do not study "Politics and law"

	Not at all	A little	Quite a lot	Definitely
Government of Latvia	17.74%	6.85%	33.06%	42.33%
Saeima	27.53%	46.96%	21.45%	2.42%
Political parties	29.14%	51.01%	18.62%	2.83%
Court institutions	11.33%	34.41%	42.91%	11.33%
Army	11.69%	22.58%	42.74%	22.98%
Local government	7.28%	31.17%	49.39%	12.14%
School	11.69%	24.59%	50.40%	13.30%
Media	8.87%	37.90%	47.58%	5.64%
Social Media	9.27%	49.19%	34.67%	6.85%
United Nations	12.60%	23.98%	45.52%	17.88%
European Commission	9.42%	33.60%	45.90%	11.06%
European Parliament	9.34%	30.89%	46.34%	13.41%
People	14.91%	43.54%	37.09%	4.43%

Parent's voting behaviour and pupil's attitudes towards participation in school						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Parents voting behaviour	-					
2. Pupils participation affect school life	.180	-				
3. Many changes happen when working in group	.079	.662**	-			
4. Organized groups can resolve problems	.168	.657**	.773**	-		
5. Working together has bigger influence	.173	.615**	.694**	.654**	-	
6. Voting can affect what happens	.089	.498**	.528**	.564**	.576**	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (1-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Geographical location and trust in institutions and information sources														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Geographical location (regional or urban)	-													
2. Government of Latvia	-.100*	-												
3. Local government	-.132**	.020	-											
4. Court institutions	-.026	.123**	.454**	-										
5. Political parties	.101	.030	.426**	.385**	-									
6. Saeima	.106*	.004	.483**	.380**	.690**	-								
7. Media	.030	.139**	.239**	.179**	.215**	.237**	-							
8. Social media	.115*	.036	.084*	.060	.163**	.153**	.456**	-						
9. The army	-.228**	.097*	.398**	.346**	.226**	.234**	.231**	.106*	-					
10. School	-.164**	.019	.397**	.219*	.246**	.178**	.172**	.154**	.265**	-				
11. The United Nations	-.064	.118**	.338**	.434**	.277**	.290**	.188**	.120**	.462**	.238**	-			
12. European Parliament	.030	-.005	.434**	.460*	.228**	.334**	.201**	.112*	.370**	.211**	.529**	-		
13. European Commission	.001	.066	.385**	.433**	.228**	.292**	.134**	.075	.367**	.198**	.574**	.842**	-	
14. People	.041	.117*	.188**	.085*	.110*	.138**	.196**	.231**	.077	.204**	.079	.155**	.193**	-

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WHAT DETERMINES ADOLESCENTS' POLITICAL INTEREST AND EXTRACUR-RICULAR PARTICIPATION? – CIVIC EDUCATION AND THE AFFECTS OF STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES IN LATVIA

(Vello Andres Pettai)

Tartu (20.05.2019)
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