

PART **III**

RESEARCH ON THE DEVELOPMENT
TRENDS OF MULTICULTURAL
COMPETENCY IN LITHUANIA

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3.1. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH ON THE ISSUE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTICULTURALITY COMPETENCE IN LITHUANIA

The aim of the research: This research on the issues of development of multiculturalism in Lithuania seeks to reveal the extent of multicultural competency in Lithuania and to define the directions of systemic change. The analysis of the current situation is based on a quantitative approach, i.e., interviewing a large sample of respondents. The expression of dimensions of multicultural competency in society is described based on evaluations provided by survey participants.

The perception of cultural differences both in society and in the work environment provides possibilities to exploit the strengths of each culture, but at the same time requires the development of multicultural awareness and the continuous improvement of the multicultural competency of members of society.

To define the concept of competency, L. M. Spencer and S. M. Spencer (1993), T. R. Athey and M. S. Orth (1999), H. C. Chen and S. S. Naquin (2006), M. A. Campion, A. A. Fink, B. J. Ruggenberg, L. Carr, G. M. Phillips, R. B. Odman (2011), Barrett (2011), and other scholars distinguish such dimensions as attitudes (views), knowledge (cognitive dimension), and behaviour (abilities, skills). Intercultural attitudes show how individuals perceive and accept other cultures and information that is external to their cultural perception of the world (Leung et al., 2014) and openness to people of other cultures and appreciation of diversity (Barrett, 2011). The dimension of knowledge and awareness includes cultural self-awareness and sociolinguistic perception (Deardorff, 2011) and knowledge of specific culture and general culture, especially when it comes to the processes of cultural, personal and social interaction (Barnett, 2011). Awareness leads a person from knowing “what” to knowing “why” and is very important in the process of acquiring competence (Lichtenstein & Mendenhall, 2002). Intercultural skills determine what a person can do to ensure effective intercultural interaction. Researchers distinguish skills such as foreign language skills, knowledge of the history and culture of other countries, and so on (Leung et al., 2014).

Multicultural competency is related to an individual’s ability to function effectively in different cultures (Whaley & Davis, 2007); therefore, the research design was also based on the model of multicultural competency formation presented by Deardorff (2011), which reveals external and internal outcomes based on attitudes, knowledge and skills specific to multicultural competency. External outcomes are related to appropriate and effective communication in an intercultural situation – knowledge that reflects cultural self-awareness, cultural awareness and sociolinguistic perception, whereas skills in this context are related with the ability to listen, observe, evaluate, interpret and compare.

Attitudes are understood as respect, appreciation of other cultures, openness, lack of

prejudice, curiosity, and desire to learn. Desired internal outcomes are understood as flexibility, adaptability, and empathy. The research design was based on these main components of multicultural competency (Figure 4).

Most often mastered through targeted learning	Most often acquired through experience	Most often formed by the surroundings
↑	↑	↑
Knowledge of formal working protocol	The ability to learn from situations experienced	Respect for other cultural values
Language proficiency		
Awareness of courtesy expressions	Management of new situations	Tolerance to cultural and racial differences
Awareness of the most important historical and social phenomena of the country	Flexibility	
↑	↑	↑
Knowledge (cognitive dimension)	Skills (behavioural dimension)	Attitudes (emotional dimension)
↑	↑	↑
Multicultural competency		

Figure 4. Multicultural competency research model

Empirical research construct and its measurement. The rationale for the questionnaire (construct) used in the empirical research is presented in Tables 8 and 9. The survey questionnaire on multicultural competency is composed of question blocks, which are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Empirical research construct and its measurement

<i>Construct</i>	Rationale for the measurement of the construct
Experience of cooperation with foreigners	The aim is to determine the geography of intercultural contacts and the frequency of contact with foreigners privately and in the workplace; when abroad on business; and when traveling abroad.
The need for multicultural competency in work and personal environments	<p>The aim is to reveal the perception of respondents of the development possibilities of their organisation and the relation with intercultural aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the influence of multicultural competency on their career and personal environment (individual level); • the impact of multicultural competency on the success of organisational activity (level of the organisation).
Evaluation of the importance of elements of multicultural competency	<p>A list of elements of multicultural competency is provided and the respondents are asked to evaluate its importance.</p> <p>Respondents' perceptions of the elements of their multicultural competency might determine their personal priorities in the areas that need to be improved first.</p>
Dimension of knowledge	The aim is to reveal the personal knowledge necessary to express multicultural competency and the perception of the peculiarities of the social, historical and current phenomena of one's own and foreign culture, understanding of interaction processes between an individual and the society (organisation), causes of cultural misunderstandings and etiquette requirements. The scale includes five subscales: knowledge of etiquette, knowledge of how to behave in public places abroad; knowledge of business etiquette; knowledge of customs, expressions of politeness; knowledge of the cultural and political situation.
Dimension of perception	The aim is to reveal the respondents' perception of how foreigners view the relation between managers and subordinates, between men and women, and between young and old persons; how foreigners tend to solve their issues; what the distinctive features of their communication and negotiation are.
Dimension of behaviour (skills and abilities)	<p>The aim is to assess the skills relevant to the multicultural competency that a person reveals in communication with foreigners: the ability to apply their knowledge in practice, establish and maintain intercultural contact, perceive cultural differences and react to them in a flexible way.</p> <p>These questions are related with hypothetical intercultural interactions, so the respondents are asked to rate how they feel they are able to behave in a given environment.</p>

Attitudes	The aim is to reveal “cultural sensitivity”, which focuses on the individual’s ability to feel comfortable while interacting with people of another race, culture, or belief. This dimension includes empathy and tolerance towards cultural differences, rejection of discriminatory and racist behaviour, openness, readiness to understand another culture, and desire to learn about the country’s best historical and cultural values.
Issues in multicultural cooperation	This block of statements is intended to evaluate the most common causes of misunderstandings which arise during communication with representatives of other cultures; the respondents are asked to specify the factors which they view as the most common and significant hindrances to effective cooperation with foreign nationals.
Demographic questions revealing common demographic characteristics of the respondents	In order to find out the possibilities of Lithuanian people to accept the challenges of a multicultural environment, the research collected data on the respondents’ sector of activity (public or private), travel geography for work and private purposes, gender and age of the respondents, the length of service, education, etc.

Cronbach’s alpha was calculated with the SPSS (*Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*) programme (version 24), and was used to assess the internal consistency of the scale. In the questionnaire the Cronbach’s alpha for individual question blocks was not lower than 0.8, which means that the questionnaire is designed properly (Table 9)

Table 9. Reliability of the scale and the subscales

Scale / Subscale		
Name	N of items	Cronbach’s alpha
Evaluation of the importance of elements of multicultural competency in the organisation	9	0.820
Dimension of knowledge	21	0.956
<i>Subscale: knowledge of etiquette</i>	5	0.868
<i>Subscale: knowledge of how to behave in public places abroad</i>	5	0.868
<i>Subscale: knowledge of business etiquette</i>	4	0.873
<i>Subscale: knowledge of customs, expressions of politeness</i>	3	0.879
<i>Subscale: knowledge of the cultural and political situation</i>	4	0.918
Dimension of perception (Understanding relationships)	6	0.954
Dimension of attitudes	9	0.935
Dimension of behaviour: abilities and skills to communicate with foreigners	6	0.889

As we can see in Table 9, for all research scales the Cronbach alpha is higher than 0.8, which confirms the high reliability of the scale.

1. The results of the analysis of the data were transformed by creating 10 new interval scale variables:
 2. Perception of the importance of multicultural competency in the work environment (combines 15 variables).
 3. Knowledge (combines 21 variables):
 - a) Knowledge of foreigners' etiquette (combines 5 variables);
 - b) Knowledge of how to behave in public places abroad (combines 5 variables);
 - c) Knowledge of business etiquette in a foreign country;
 - d) Knowledge of customs, expressions of politeness (combines 3 variables);
 - e) Knowledge of the cultural and political situation in a foreign country (combines 4 variables).
 4. Perception (combines 6 variables).
 5. Attitudes / emotional state (combines 9 variables).
- Skills of communication with foreigners or multiculturalism (combines 6 variables).

Statistical methods: The SPSS 24 statistical package was used for statistical analysis of the data. The Likert scale was used with adapted descriptive statistics – percentage frequencies, Mode, Median, and Standard Deviation (SD) (Burns & Burns, 2008). As the applied Likert scale and the data do not sufficiently meet the requirements of normal distribution, non-parametric criteria were used to test the hypotheses. Hypotheses for two independent samples (comparison of data by gender and sector in which respondents work) were tested using the Mann–Whitney U test and the Wilcoxon rank sum test (Berkman & Reise, 2012, p. 252). The Kruskal–Wallis test was used to compare the domains of several independent samples. The chosen level of statistical significance was $\alpha = 0.05$, p -value (Asymp. Sig.) ≤ 0.05 .

Data were compared between interval scale variables using a One-Way ANOVA. The relationships between the variables were checked by calculating Spearman's correlation coefficient (r).

Organisation of the research and sampling: The research was conducted in 2015–2016. An anonymous questionnaire was created on the portal apklausa.lt and a link to it was sent to various Lithuanian organisations; it was completed by 1,193 respondents.

Demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Respondents' characteristics

Demographic and professional characteristics		Distribution of answers	
		N	%
Gender	Female	869	72.8
	Male	318	26.7
	Not answered	6	0.5
Age	<25 years	245	20.5
	25 to 35 years	388	32.5
	35 to 50 years	308	25.8
	>50 years	248	20.8
	Not answered	4	0.3
Work experience	<1 year	191	16.0
	1–5 years	384	32.2
	>5 years	579	48.5
	Not answered	39	3.3
Sector	Private	329	30
	Public	767	70
	Not answered	97	8.1

As we can see, the majority of the respondents are female, whereas males constitute a significantly smaller part, which does not fully reflect the demographic situation in Lithuania. The respondents were distributed almost equally by age, with a relatively larger proportion of respondents aged 35–50 years. As a rule, the largest number of employees in organisations are of this age. The majority of the respondents (80.7%) have considerable work experience: 48.5% have work experience of more than 5 years; 32.2% have work experience of 1–5 years; whereas 16% have work experience of up to 1 year. Distribution of the respondents by organisations reflects the situation in Lithuania.

Experience in the work environment (Table 11). The majority of the respondents (78%) have to communicate with foreigners in the work environment, although the intensity of communication varies: almost half of them communicate frequently, on average several times per quarter, while one third (30.1%) have such an experience quite rarely (once per quarter or once per year). It should be noted that a relatively large number of the respondents (16.8%) have no contact with foreigners in the work environment.

Table 11. Communication experience with people of other nationalities

Communication experience with people of other nationalities		Distribution of answers	
		%	
<i>N</i>			
Communication experience with people of other nationalities in the workplace	a) yes, few times per quarter on average	593	49.7
	b) yes, once per quarter on average	122	10.2
	c) yes, once per year on average	238	19.9
	d) no	201	16.8
	Not answered	39	3.3
Going abroad for work purposes	a) once per month on average	45	3.8
	b) a few times per year	167	14.0
	c) once per few years	297	24.9
	d) never	645	54.
	Not answered	39	3.3
Going abroad for personal purposes	a) every week	11	0.9
	b) once per month on average	32	2.7
	c) a few times per year	448	37.6
	d) less than once per year	560	46.9
	e) never	113	9.5
	Not answered	29	2.4

Slightly less than half of the respondents (42.6%) have had experience of going abroad on business, but these business trips are quite rare – a quarter of them (24.9%) take place once in a few years and only 17.8% of the respondents go abroad on business often (several times a year or even once a month).

Personal experience. The vast majority of the respondents have visited foreign countries for personal purposes, whereas only 9.5% have no such experience. Although the share of those who travel frequently is small (3.6%), more than a third (37.6%) of the respondents still go abroad for personal purposes several times a year, while almost half go abroad for personal purposes less than once a year.

3.2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCY IN LITHUANIAN ORGANISATIONS

The practices of various countries clearly shows that one of the most effective tools in shaping a person's attitude towards people of other cultures is the participation of employees in experiential training, seminars, simulation games and internships or business trips abroad,

because it enables them to get to know and learn to tolerate other cultures, show respect for them and learn to avoid possible unwanted ambiguities, as well as develop skills to successfully communicate with people from other cultures.

To this end, the analysis of the conditions for the development of multicultural competency in Lithuanian organisations aimed to assess whether employees are sufficiently encouraged to foster and develop this competence. The research results (Table 12) show that every fourth respondent (24.9%) agrees that multicultural competencies in organisations are developed by employees learning from each other and sharing good practices, but at the same time a slightly higher share of the respondents (27.1%) claim that the development of this competency in organisations is not encouraged and everything is left to chance, i.e., it is the responsibility of employees themselves. Although every seventh (14.0%) respondent thinks that internships and business trips to foreign partners are useful for the development of multicultural competency, almost every fifth respondent (18.7%) is not interested in multicultural issues at all due to a lack of experience in developing multicultural competency, or does not know how to answer the question. Thus, it can be unequivocally stated that so far Lithuanian organisations do not pay enough attention to the development of multicultural competency and elements of competency development are poorly integrated into organisational training programs (professional development). Only one in eight of the respondents (12%) confirmed that such programs exist in their organisations; therefore, issues of competency development are reserved to employees themselves or to personal informal learning.

Table 12. Evaluation of the development of multicultural competency in the work environment

	Items <i>N</i>	Frequency	
		%	
How is the development of multicultural competency stimulated in your workplace?	a) during experiential training, seminars, simulation games	143	12.0
	b) employees are sent to internships or business trips abroad	167	14.0
	c) there is encouragement to share good experience, employees learn from each other	297	24.9
	d) development of multicultural competency is not encouraged, but is reserved to employees themselves	323	27.1
	e) I'm not interested	51	4.3
	f) I don't know	172	14.4
	Not answered	40	3.4

Do you think that the development of multicultural competency could contribute to the success of your career?	a) yes, the possibilities of an international career would be better	328	27.5
	b) yes, there would be a possibility to change my work for a better job	165	13.8
	c) yes, the chances for a career in my present workplace would be better	166	13.9
	d) I think my career does not depend on the level of my multicultural competency	443	37.1
	e) I don't know	48	4.0
	Not answered	43	3.6
Do you think that the development of multicultural competency could contribute to the success of your organisation?	a) yes, trust in the organisation would be higher	233	19.5
	b) yes, the possibilities of partnerships with organisations from other countries would be better	377	31.6
	c) yes, striving for organisational goals and the results of activity would be more efficient	198	16.6
	d) I think the success of my organisation does not depend on the level of my multicultural competency	287	24.1
	e) I don't know, I'm not interested	50	4.2
	Not answered	48	4.0
Do you think that the need for international communication in your organisation will change over the next five years?	a) I think the need will increase (because more foreigners will come, the number of international projects will increase, and so on)	547	45.9
	b) I think the need will remain the same	435	36.5
	c) I think the need will decrease (because projects will end, there will be no new initiatives and so on)	35	2.9
	d) I don't know, I have no idea	136	11.4
	Not answered	40	3.4

More than half of the respondents (55.2%) associate the development of multicultural competency and its continuous development with better personal career prospects; every second respondent sees better personal career opportunities in the international arena; however, every seventh respondent associates their future with a career in their own or another workplace in Lithuania. On the other hand, four out of ten respondents (41.3%) believe that their career does not depend on the development of this competency in any way they are unaware of its impact and therefore are not interested in it.

The evaluation of the need for the development of multicultural competency in the future is also rather ambiguous: although almost every second respondent (45.9%) agrees that such a need is constantly growing due to the increasing flow of foreigners and Lithuanian residents going abroad, international projects, etc.; on the other hand, according to every third respondent (36.5%), the need to develop this competency will not change, and every ninth respondent (11.4%) still does not have an opinion on this issue. At the same time, it is positive that those who believe that the need for the development of multicultural competency in Lithuanian organisations will decrease are in the minority (2.9%).

3.3. THE EVALUATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCY IN THE ORGANISATION (QUESTION 15)

The respondents were asked to rate the importance of multicultural competency in the work environment (Table 13).

Table 13. Evaluation of the importance of elements of multicultural competency in the work environment (1 – *not important*; 5 – *very important*)

Elements of multicultural competency	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
15.1. Awareness of international work protocol	219 (20.3%)	106 (9.8%)	285 (26.4%)	252 (23.3%)	219 (20.3%)	3.14	1.391
15.2. Proficiency in foreign languages	26 (2.3%)	28 (2.5%)	118 (10.5%)	252 (22.3%)	704 (62.4%)	4.40	.936
15.3. Understanding courtesy expressions	17 (1.5%)	30 (2.7%)	171 (15.3%)	328 (29.4%)	571 (51.1%)	4.26	.918
15.4. Knowledge of the main historical and social phenomena of other countries	142 (12.9%)	193 (17.5%)	352 (31.9%)	273 (24.8%)	142 (12.9%)	3.07	1.204
15.5. Flexibility	23 (2.1%)	41 (3.7%)	229 (20.6%)	376 (33.8%)	443 (39.8%)	4.06	.967
15.6. Management of new situations	29 (2.6%)	50 (4.5%)	209 (19.0%)	409 (37.1%)	405 (36.8%)	4.01	.988
15.7. Ability to learn from situations experienced	25 (2.3%)	31 (2.8%)	164 (14.8%)	380 (34.3%)	509 (45.9%)	4.19	.942
15.8. Tolerance towards cultural and racial differences	39 (3.5%)	35 (3.2%)	146 (13.2%)	288 (26.0%)	600 (54.2%)	4.24	1.029

15.9. Respect for the values of other cultures	48 (4.3%)	47 (4.2%)	137 (12.4%)	304 (27.5%)	571 (51.6%)	4.18	1.081
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Evaluation of the importance of multicultural competency in the work environment in Lithuanian organisations shows that the vast majority (84.7%) of the respondents believe that priority should be given to proficiency in a foreign language as the main means of communication with foreigners (Mo = 5; Me = 5; Mean = 4.4; SD = 0.936). Respondents also stressed the importance of such elements of multicultural competency in the work environment as: *understanding courtesy expressions* (Mo = 5; Me = 5; Mean = 4.26; SD = 0.918), *tolerance towards cultural and racial differences* (Mo = 5; Me = 5; Mean = 4.24; SD = 1.029) and *respect for the values of other cultures* (Mo = 5; Me = 5; Mean = 4.18; SD = 1.081). Less priority was given to *ability to learn from situations experienced* (Mo = 5; Me = 4; Mean = 4.19; SD = 0.942), *flexibility* (Mo = 5; Me = 4; Mean = 4.06; SD = 0.967) and *management of new situations* (Mo = 4; Me = 4; Mean = 4.01; SD = 0.988).¹⁴² Respondents believe that development of multicultural competency depends less on *awareness of international work protocol* (Mo = 3; Me = 3; Mean = 3.14; SD = 1.391) and *knowledge of the main historical and social phenomena of other countries* (Mo = 3; Me = 3; Mean = 3.07; SD = 1.204). It should be noted that when assessing these elements of multiculturalism, a significant proportion of the respondents expressed a neutral opinion (26.4% and 31.9% of the respondents, respectively, marked the option “neither important, nor unimportant”), which can be related with the limited experience of the majority of the respondents in international communication.

It can be stated that the multicultural competency variables as evaluated by the respondents are characterised by statistically significant positive correlations ($p < 0.01$), but in most cases their relation is weak (r range 0.2–0.4). The strongest correlation (r range 0.7–0.9) is observed between the variables *tolerance towards cultural and racial differences* and *respect for the values of other cultures* ($r = 0.732$). A correlation of moderate strength (r range 0.4–0.7) is observed between the variables *management of new situations* and *ability to learn from situations experienced* ($r = 0.676$); *flexibility* and *management of new situations* ($r = 0.630$); *flexibility* and *ability to learn from situations experienced* ($r = 0.554$); *ability to learn from situations experienced* and *tolerance towards cultural and racial differences* ($r = 0.431$) and *respect for the values of other cultures* ($r = 0.419$). A correlation of moderate strength is also observed between *understanding courtesy expressions* and *tolerance towards cultural and racial differences* ($r = 0.432$), *understanding courtesy expressions* and *respect to values of other cultures* ($r = 0.418$), *understanding courtesy expressions* and *ability to learn from situations experienced* ($r = 0.473$). There is a correlation of moderate strength between *awareness of*

¹⁴² Both the respondents who work in the public and private sectors similarly assess the importance of tolerance for cultural and racial differences ($p = 0.613$; $p > 0.05$), understanding of courtesy expressions ($p = 0.69$; $p > 0.05$), and knowledge of

international work protocol and knowledge of the main historical and social phenomena of other countries ($r = 0.412$).

To briefly summarise, the survey of the respondents on the priorities of development of multicultural competency in Lithuanian organisations reveals that it is most important:

- to develop the ability to communicate with foreigners in a foreign language, which helps to develop a person's ability to listen to and communicate with people from other cultures;

- to understand the expressions of courtesy that prevail in other cultures, which helps to develop a person's ability to adapt to another cultural environment;

- to develop tolerance towards cultural and racial differences, which helps to develop abilities to participate in intercultural exchange;

- to show respect for the values of other cultures, which helps to show empathy and flexibility of cognition and positively assess perspectives of multicultural dialogue.

The above-mentioned elements of multicultural competency form a strong part of the process of competency development.

On the other hand, the negligent attitude of the respondents towards the importance of learning from situations experienced in a multicultural environment, lack of awareness of the importance of flexibility in new situations and poor knowledge of historical and social phenomena of other countries create barriers to the development of personal awareness, sensitivity and understanding when communicating with foreigners, which can be viewed as a weakness in the process of developing multicultural competency.

3.4. THE EVALUATION OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCY

3.4.1. The dimension of knowledge

The analysis of the respondents' multicultural competency aimed to establish such aspects as the basic knowledge of intercultural communication, self-awareness in interacting with different cultures, as well as the characteristics of behaviour and the dominant processes of personal interaction.

Thus, the analysis focused on the respondents' evaluation of the acquired knowledge about the priority requirements for etiquette and behaviour in other countries, the prevailing customs and expressions of courtesy, and knowledge of the cultural and political situation in foreign countries (Table 13). In addition, the results of the study showed that the respondents evaluated the knowledge of different elements of multicultural competency quite differently.

the international work protocol ($p = 0.082$; $p > 0.05$), but representatives of the business sector consider learning from experienced situations ($p = 0.049$; $p < 0.05$), new situation management skills ($p = 0.029$; $p < 0.05$), and flexibility ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.01$) to be more important.

The study revealed that the knowledge acquired by the respondents about multicultural competency is rated lower than the importance of the competency itself (Table 14).

Table 14. Assessment of the dimension of knowledge of multicultural competency (cognitive dimension) (1 – *not important*, 5 – *very important*)

Constructs	Items	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Knowledge of etiquette	20.2.1. I know how to present myself, exchange greetings and talk to foreign nationals when getting acquainted.	22 (2.0%)	111 (9.9%)	281 (25.2%)	376 (33.7%)	327 (29.3%)	3.78	1.036
	20.2.2. I know what suitable and unsuitable topics are while communicating with foreigners.	41 (3.7%)	109 (9.8%)	358 (32.2%)	367 (33.0%)	238 (21.4%)	3.59	1.043
	20.2.3. I know how to behave at the table.	21 (1.9%)	73 (6.5%)	236 (21.0%)	447 (39.8%)	346 (30.8%)	3.91	.969
	20.2.4. I know how time is understood – where, when and how much it is allowed to be late.	40 (3.6%)	73 (6.5%)	281 (25.1%)	391 (34.9%)	335 (29.9%)	3.81	1.048
	20.2.5. I know what suitable and unsuitable colours of clothes are to wear.	89 (8.0%)	144 (12.9%)	351 (31.6%)	314 (28.2%)	214 (19.2%)	3.38	1.166

Knowledge of how to behave in public places abroad	20.3.1. I know the public order of the countries I'm visiting.	50 (4.5%)	145 (13.2%)	399 (36.2%)	343 (31.2%)	164 (14.9%)	3.39	1.035
	20.3.2. I know places where smoking is allowed.	160 (14.5%)	131 (11.8%)	279 (25.2%)	244 (22.0%)	293 (26.5%)	3.34	1.364
	20.3.3. I know how to use the system of public transport.	75 (6.7%)	158 (14.2%)	386 (34.7%)	302 (27.2%)	191 (17.2%)	3.34	1.121
	20.3.4. I know what the usual amount to tip in the country is.	108 (9.8%)	183 (16.6%)	417 (37.8%)	260 (23.6%)	136 (12.3%)	3.12	1.128
	20.3.5. I know what the acceptable time for meal and typical food is, how much and what kind of alcohol is suitable at lunch and dinner time.	108 (9.8%)	178 (16.1%)	374 (33.8%)	300 (27.1%)	147 (13.3%)	3.18	1.150
Knowledge of business etiquette	20.4. I know how to write business letters to foreigners.	134 (12.0%)	202 (18.1%)	346 (31.1%)	267 (24.0%)	164 (14.7%)	3.11	1.217
	20.5 I know what the proper outfit style for business meetings is.	56 (5.1%)	114 (10.3%)	342 (30.9%)	363 (32.8%)	233 (21.0%)	3.54	1.086
	20.6 I know how to greet foreign nationals, business partners on holidays and on what occasions business presents are suitable.	117 (10.6%)	214 (19.3%)	381 (34.4%)	266 (24.1%)	128 (11.6%)	3.07	1.148
	20.7 I know what the perception of ranks/subordination in the country is.	143 (13.0%)	235 (21.3%)	397 (36.0%)	243 (22.0%)	86 (7.8%)	2.90	1.120

Knowledge of customs, taboo, expressions of politeness	When communicating to foreigners I know their:							
	20.8.2. Customs	85 (7.7%)	199 (18.1%)	417 (37.8%)	281 (25.5%)	120 (10.9%)	3.14	1.078
	20.8.1. Taboos	94 (8.6%)	210 (19.1%)	398 (36.2%)	275 (25.0%)	121 (11.0%)	3.11	1.102
	20.8.3. Expressions of politeness	57 (5.2%)	130 (11.9%)	354 (32.3%)	384 (35.1%)	170 (15.5%)	3.44	1.052
Knowledge of the cultural and political situation	20.9. When communicating to foreigners I can enumerate:							
	20.9.1. Holidays that are important in their country.	127 (11.7%)	234 (21.5%)	372 (34.2%)	248 (22.8%)	108 (9.9%)	2.98	1.143
	20.9.2. I'm acquainted with culture of their country.	89 (8.2%)	217 (19.9%)	400 (36.7%)	284 (26.1%)	99 (9.1%)	3.08	1.070
	20.9.3. I know the political situation of their country.	83 (7.7%)	179 (16.6%)	412 (38.1%)	298 (27.6%)	109 (10.1%)	3.16	1.062

The statements describing the acquired **knowledge of etiquette** were evaluated favourably (evaluation fluctuates from 3.8 to 3.91). Nonetheless, it should be noted that the respondents evaluated the perception of the importance of *expressions of courtesy* more favourably (Mean = 4.26) than knowledge. The correlation between the variables of the perception of importance and knowledge is statistically reliable ($p < 0.01$), though very weak (r range 0.212–0.278). Furthermore, 70.6% of the respondents evaluate their *knowledge of the behaviour at the table* as very good or good (Mean = 3.91; Me = 4; Mo = 4), and more than half of the respondents believe that they are aware of *how to greet and approach and to make contact with a foreigner* (Mean = 3.78; Me = 4; Mo = 4) and *know how time is understood – where, when and how much it is allowed to be late* (Mean = 3.81; Me = 4; Mo = 4). However, half of the respondents do not know or doubt their knowledge about *dress-code* (52.5%) (Mean = 3.38; Me = 3; Mo = 3) and *appropriate or inappropriate topics for conversation with foreigners* (45.7%) (Mean = 3.59; Me = 4; Mo = 4).

Knowledge of how to behave in public places abroad is evaluated less favourably than knowledge about etiquette. Less than half of the respondents (from 35.9 to 48.5%) favourably evaluated all variables of this scale. More than a third of the respondents doubt their knowledge of the public order of the countries they visit (Mean = 3.39; Me = 3; Mo = 3).

For instance, 26.0% of the respondents know little about the current regulations on smoking in public places (Mean = 3.34; Me = 3; Mo = 3), 20.9% of the respondents do not know what the prevailing public transport system in other countries is (Mean = 3.34; Me = 3; Mo = 3), and 24.9% are not aware of the dominant meal times and typical food on various occasions (Mean = 3.18; Me = 3; Mo = 3). A fairly large proportion of the respondents (26.4%) doubt their knowledge on how large a tip is accepted in various situation (Mean = 3.12; Me = 3; Mo = 3).

The analysis of the importance of the element *awareness of international work protocol* for multiculturalism development revealed that the respondents view it as not that important (only 43.6% attributed it to more important elements), whereas one in five of the respondents view it as an absolutely unimportant element. **Knowledge of business etiquette** is evaluated even more critically. Only 53.8% of the respondents are aware of how to write business letters to partners (Mean = 3.11; Me = 3; Mo = 3). Less than half of the respondents gave positive evaluation to such elements as *what style of clothing is acceptable in business meetings, how to properly greet a foreign business partner on the occasion of the holidays and in which cases it is appropriate to send business gifts, what the perception of ranks / subordination in the partner country is*, etc. It should be noted that evaluation of all dimensions reveals a large number of respondent who have doubts. As many as 33.3% of the respondents negatively evaluate their knowledge of the perception of ranks and subordination in other countries (Mean = 2.90; Me = 3; Mo = 3), and 29% of the respondents do not know how to properly greet a foreign business partner on the occasion of a holiday (Mean = 3.07; Me = 3; Mo = 3). Knowledge of the business dress code poses least doubts (15.4%) (Mean = 3.54; Me = 4; Mo = 4).

The analysis of the importance of the element *respect to values of other cultures* for development of multicultural competency revealed that the respondents attribute the former to most important elements (Mo = 5; Me = 5; Mean = 4,18), however **knowledge of customs and expressions of politeness** is viewed as less important. The respondents gave the most favourable evaluation to such elements as *knowledge of courtesy expressions* (Mean = 3.44; Me = 4; Mo = 4); meanwhile the respondents have less *knowledge of customs* (Mean = 3.14; Me = 3; Mo = 3) and *unacceptable topics of conversation* (Mean = 3.11; Me = 3; Mo = 3). It should be noted that only around 10% of the respondents classified these elements of multicultural competency as very well known.

Knowledge of the cultural and political situation was evaluated by the respondents as the lowest of the aspects studied. Only one in ten respondents noted that they are well aware of the political situation in other countries, whereas 25% of the respondents rated their knowledge in this area as poor (Mean = 3.16; Me = 3; Mo = 3). The respondents rated the knowledge of foreign holidays the lowest: 33.2% noted that they do not know, a similar

proportion (34.2%) noted that they doubt that they know (Mean = 2.98; Me = 3; Mo = 3) this aspect. This evaluation reflects the following element of multicultural competency: **knowledge of the most important historical and social phenomena of other countries** (Mo = 3; Me = 3; Mean = 3.07).

Statistically significant positive correlations ($p < 0.01$) were found between all statements describing the knowledge dimension of multicultural competency. There is an average correlation between the variables (r range 0.4–0.7). The strongest relation was found between the variables describing the cultural and political situation – *I can enumerate holidays that are important in their country* and *I'm acquainted with culture of their country* ($r = 0.762$) – as well as between *I'm acquainted with culture of their country* and *I know the political situation of their country* ($r = 0.716$).

To briefly summarise, the respondents' acquired knowledge of multicultural competency is less favourably evaluated than the importance of multicultural competency. The current gap between the importance of the competence and the knowledge acquired shows the weaknesses of the cognitive process, which has slowed down the development of multiculturalism in society. Meanwhile, knowledge about another ethnic group (history, dominant values, etc.) develops abilities of openness and flexibility in relations with foreigners, at the same time, the ability to effectively manage these processes is developed at the state level.

3.4.2. The dimension of perception (perception of relations)

Analysis of the level of perception of multicultural competency shows even fewer positive attitudes than evaluation of the acquired knowledge (Table 15).

Table 15. Evaluation of the dimension of perception of multicultural competency (1 – *not important*, 5 – *very important*)

Constructs	Items	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Understanding relations / perception of relations	I understand how foreigners I'm communicating with perceive inter-relations:							
	How they perceive relations between managers and subordinates.	113 (10.4%)	221 (20.4%)	384 (35.5%)	270 (24.9%)	95 (8.8%)	3.01	1.106
	How they perceive relations between men and women.	89 (8.1%)	176 (16.2%)	388 (35.7%)	305 (28.1%)	129 (11.9%)	3.19	1.099
	How they perceive relations between young and older persons.	91 (8.3%)	173 (15.9%)	377 (34.7%)	316 (29.1%)	130 (12.0%)	3.20	1.106
	How they tend to tackle their problems.	102 (9.4%)	198 (18.3%)	410 (37.9%)	268 (24.8%)	104 (9.6%)	3.07	1.090
	What the peculiarities of their communication and negotiation are.	102 (9.4%)	192 (17.7%)	399 (36.8%)	287 (26.5%)	104 (9.6%)	3.09	1.093
	What method of expression of emotions is acceptable.	93 (8.6%)	190 (17.7%)	394 (36.7%)	275 (25.6%)	123 (11.4%)	3.13	1.104

Only a third of the respondents (33.7%) understand the prevailing relationship between managers and subordinates in foreign partner organisations, while a similar proportion of the respondents doubt that they understand this aspect (35.5%) or do not understand it at all (30.8%). This evaluation corresponds to the evaluation of the variable of business etiquette in the dimension of knowledge *I know what the perception of ranks / subordination in the country is*: only 29.8% of the respondents evaluated this knowledge positively, while 34.3% rated it negatively. There was a statistically significant moderate correlation between *I know what the perception of ranks / subordination in the country is* and *I understand how foreigners I have to communicate with perceive relations between managers and subordinates* ($r = 0.600$; $p < 0.01$). A statistically significant moderate correlation was also found between the variable in the dimension of knowledge *I know what the perception of ranks / subordination in the country is* and the variable in the dimension of understanding *I understand the peculiarities of their communication and negotiation* ($r = 0.567$; $p < 0.01$).

Only a third of the respondents (34.4%) believe that they understand how foreigners solve problems, while more than half of the respondents admitted that they doubt (37.9%) or negatively evaluate (27.7%) their understanding of the question (Mean = 3.07; Mo = 3; Me = 3). A similar situation is observed with respect to the analysis of the respondents' perception of traditions of communication between foreigners (Mean = 3.09; Mo = 3; Me = 3), and the peculiarities that prevail in various negotiations. Although four out of ten respondents (40.0%) understand how foreigners perceive the relationship between men and women, a similar number of respondents do not have an opinion on this issue, and every fourth (24.4%) is not interested in it at all (Mean = 3.19; Mo = 3; Me = 3). The respondents' perception is similar in case of the predominant relationship between young and older people in partner organisations (Mean = 3.20; Mo = 3; Me = 3). The study established statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) positive strong correlations between all statements that describe the dimension of perception (Table 16). Such strong positive correlations suggest that evaluation of all variables is directly related. The strongest correlation was observed between the statements *I understand how foreigners perceive the relationship between men and women* and *I understand how foreigners perceive the relationship between young and older persons* ($r = 0.850$; $p < 0.01$). Such strong positive correlations suggest that evaluation of all variables is directly related. There is also a significant correlation between perception of problem solving and perception of communication and peculiarities of negotiations ($r = 0.816$; $p < 0.01$).

Table 16. Spearman's correlation between the variable in the dimension of perception

Spearman's rho (r)	How they perceive the relationship between managers and subordinates	How they perceive the relationship between men and women	How they perceive the relationship between young and older people	How they tend to tackle problems	What the peculiarities of their communication and negotiation are	What method of expression of emotions is acceptable
I understand how foreigners I have to communicate with interact with each other: How they perceive the relationship between managers and subordinates	1	.761**	.766**	.749**	.717**	.695**
How they perceive the relationship between men and women		1	.850**	.753**	.735**	.741**

How they perceive the relationship between young and older people			1	.767**	.726**	.712**
How they tend to tackle problems				1	.816**	.771**
What the peculiarities of their communication and negotiation are					1	.811**
What method of expression of emotions is acceptable						1
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

3.4.3. The dimension of attitudes

The statements reflecting the emotional dimension (attitudes) of multicultural competency were evaluated positively and very positively by the majority of the respondents. The majority of respondents agreed that they understand and tolerate racial differences (74.9%) (Mean = 4.10; Me = 4; Mo = 5), cultural differences (74.7%) (Mean = 4.07; Me = 4; Mo = 5), religious diversity (73.6%) (Mean = 4.06; Me = 4; Mo = 5), they try to find out a way of communication acceptable to foreigners who come to Lithuania and do not behave in a way which would offend them (70.1%) (Mean = 3.94; Me = 4; Mo = 5), and they willingly speak about their country and its culture (70%) (Mean = 3.94; Me = 4; Mo = 5). As we can see (Table 17), evaluation of the importance of such elements of multicultural competency as tolerance for cultural and racial differences (Mo = 5; Me = 5; Mean = 4.24) and respect for values of other cultures (Mo = 5; Me = 5; Mean = 4.18) was positive. A statistically significant moderate correlation was found between evaluation of the statements *I have tolerance of cultural and racial differences* and *I understand and tolerate racial differences* ($r = 0.341$; $p < 0.01$), as well as between the statements *I have tolerance of cultural and racial differences* and *I understand and tolerate religious diversity* ($r = 0.357$; $p < 0.01$).

A slightly smaller share of the respondents are interested in the culture of the foreign country (62.3%) (Mean = 3.73; Me = 4; Mo = 4), the prevailing interests in the society (58.5%) (Mean = 3.70; Me = 4; Mo = 5) and customs (55.5%) (Mean = 3.65; Me = 4; Mo = 5). Almost half (48.0%) of the respondents state that when they establish contact with unknown people, they do not give priority to a representative of their own nationality, but 33.0% of the respondents expressed hesitation in this regard, whereas 18.9% disagreed with this statement (Mean = 3.43; Me = 3; Mo = 3).

Table 17. Evaluation of the dimension of attitudes (emotions) of multicultural competency (1 – *not important*, 5 – *very important*)

Items	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
When contacting new people, I do not give any priority to representatives of my own nationality.	71 (6.6%)	133 (12.3%)	355 (33.0%)	301 (27.9%)	217 (20.1%)	3.43	1.136
When communicating with foreigners I'm interested in their:							
Culture;	47 (4.3%)	81 (7.4%)	285 (26.0%)	390 (35.6%)	292 (26.7%)	3.73	1.066
Customs;	53 (4.8%)	90 (8.2%)	311 (28.5%)	369 (33.8%)	270 (24.7%)	3.65	1.085
Interests.	43 (4.0%)	84 (7.8%)	323 (29.8%)	343 (31.7%)	290 (26.8%)	3.70	1.069
When communicating with foreigners I willingly tell them about my own country, I want to introduce them to the culture of my country.	35 (3.2%)	70 (6.5%)	220 (20.3%)	361 (33.4%)	396 (36.6%)	3.94	1.056
I try to find out what way of communication is acceptable to the foreigner and try to avoid unacceptable behaviour so that they are not offended.	34 (3.1%)	51 (4.7%)	240 (22.1%)	380 (35.0%)	382 (35.1%)	3.94	1.019
I understand and tolerate cultural differences.	24 (2.4%)	38 (3.8%)	192 (19.3%)	328 (33.0%)	412 (41.4%)	4.07	.987
I understand and tolerate racial differences.	30 (2.7%)	48 (4.4%)	196 (18.0%)	324 (29.7%)	493 (45.2%)	4.10	1.023
I understand and tolerate religious diversity.	34 (3.1%)	43 (4.0%)	209 (19.3%)	334 (30.8%)	463 (42.8%)	4.06	1.029

The study established statistically significant positive correlations ($p < 0.01$) between all elements of the dimension of attitudes of multicultural competency (Table 18). As we can see, the relation between the variables is of different strength. A moderate strength correlation (r range 0.4–0.7) prevails among the variables. The strongest relation is between the variables that express tolerance for cultural, religious, and racial differences, as well as between the variables that express interest in culture, customs, and interests (Table 18).

Table 18. Spearman's correlation between the variables in the dimension of attitudes

Spearman's rho (r)	When contacting new people, I do not give any priority to representatives of my own nationality	When communicating with foreigners I'm interested in their culture	When communicating with foreigners I'm interested in their customs	When communicating with foreigners I'm interested in their interests	When communicating with foreigners I willingly tell them about my own country	I try to find out what way of communication is acceptable to the foreigner and try to avoid unacceptable behaviour	I understand and tolerate cultural differences	I understand and tolerate racial differences	I understand and tolerate religious diversity
When contacting new people, I do not give any priority to representatives of my own nationality	1	.466**	.434**	.456**	.377**	.389**	.390**	.398**	.410**
When communicating with foreigners I'm interested in their culture		1	.877**	.804**	.652**	.609**	.569**	.524**	.518**
When communicating with foreigners I'm interested in their customs			1	.813**	.635**	.582**	.551**	.495**	.504**
When communicating with foreigners I'm interested in their interests				1	.620**	.566**	.545**	.513**	.505**
When communicating with foreigners I willingly tell them about my own country					1	.685**	.641**	.570**	.533**
I try to find out what way of communication is acceptable to the foreigner and try to avoid unacceptable behaviour						1	.695**	.624**	.600**

I understand and tolerate cultural differences							1	.840**	.817**
I understand and tolerate racial differences								1	.854**
I understand and tolerate religious diversity									1
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).									

3.4.4. The dimension of behaviour

The respondents' evaluation of the acquired skills of multicultural competency (Table 19) is less positive than evaluation of the statements describing the importance of the competence, but is more positive than evaluation of the statements describing the acquired knowledge and perception.

Table 19. Evaluation of the dimension of behaviour of multicultural competency
(1 – not important, 5 – very important)

Constructs	Items	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Skills – language	I can communicate in foreign language(s) in my professional activity.	53 (4.7%)	130 (11.5%)	329 (29.1%)	333 (29.5%)	284 (25.2%)	3.59	1.122
Skills	Communication to foreigners is not stressful for me or does not cause lack of self-confidence.	34 (3.1%)	84 (7.7%)	308 (28.3%)	352 (32.3%)	311 (28.6%)	3.75	1.048
Skills	I know how to behave in unexpected and new situations that emerge due to cultural diversity.	43 (3.9%)	136 (12.5%)	404 (36.9%)	340 (31.1%)	171 (15.6%)	3.42	1.021
Skills	I'm flexible when I communicate with foreign nationals.	35 (3.1%)	84 (7.7%)	290 (26.5%)	377 (34.4%)	310 (28.3%)	3.77	1.044
Skills – self-reflection	I observe and understand what I have learned during communication with foreign nationals.	26 (2.4%)	83 (7.6%)	270 (24.8%)	413 (37.9%)	297 (27.3%)	3.80	1.001

Skills	In case of conflicts or misunderstandings due to cultural differences, I know how to solve them properly.	45 (4.2%)	138 (12.6%)	408 (37.4%)	347 (31.8%)	153 (14.0%)	3.39	1.010
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Despite the fact that 84.7% of the respondents acknowledged the importance of being able to communicate with foreigners in a foreign language, only half of the respondents (54.7%) think that they are able *to communicate in a foreign language in professional activities* freely, while every third (29.1%) doubts the competence to communicate in a foreign language and 16.2% of the respondents have to limit their contacts with foreign partners due to the lack of language skills (Mean = 3.59; Me = 4; Mo = 4). There was a weak statistically significant correlation between these variables ($r = 0.241$; $p < 0.01$). Two thirds of the respondents (65.2%) positively evaluated the statement *I observe and understand what I have learned during communication with foreign nationals* (Mean = 3.8; Me = 4; Mo = 4), which can be attributed to self-reflection and formed learning skills. Furthermore, 62.7% of the respondents gave a rather high evaluation of the acquired skills of being flexible in communication with foreign nationals (Mean = 3.77; Me = 4; Mo = 4), although the importance of flexibility is evaluated even more positively (73.6%, Table 19). Additionally, 60.9% of the respondents do not feel stress or lack of confidence in communication with foreigners; on the other hand, almost every third respondent (28.3%) feels constrained when communicating with foreigners (Mean = 3.75; Me = 4; Mo = 4). Only 46.7% of the respondents believe that their behaviour in unexpected situations due to cultural diversity does not increase their communication problems with foreigners, but 36.9% of the respondents agree that they have insufficient skills to deal with such situations, and 16.3% of the respondents admit that they have not acquired such skills (Mean = 3.42; Me = 3; Mo = 3). The respondents evaluate their skills in dealing with issues arising from cultural differences in a similar way: 45.8% agree that they have such skills, whereas 37.4% question their abilities and 16.8% note that they do not have such skills (Mean = 3.39; Me = 3; Mo = 3).

Statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) positive correlations were found between all skills variables. As we can see (Table 20), the relations between the variables are of different strengths. A moderate strength correlation (r range 0.4–0.7) prevails among the variables. The strongest relation is between the variables *I'm flexible when I communicate with foreign nationals* and *I observe and understand what I have learned during communication with foreign nationals* ($r = 0.754$). The weakest relation is between the variable *I can communicate in foreign language(-s) in my professional activity* and other variables of the dimension of skills.

Table 20. Spearman's correlation between the variables in the dimension of skills

Spearman's rho (r)	Communication to foreigners is not stressful for me or does not cause lack of self-confidence.	I know how to behave in unexpected and new situations that emerge due to cultural diversity.	I'm flexible when I communicate with foreign nationals.	I observe and understand what I have learned during communication with foreign nationals.	In case of conflicts or misunderstandings due to cultural differences, I know how to solve them properly.	I can communicate in foreign language(s) in my professional activity.
Communication with foreigners is not stressful for me or does not cause lack of self-confidence.	1	.687**	.681**	.622**	.561**	.430**
I know how to behave in unexpected and new situations that emerge due to cultural diversity.		1	.669**	.612**	.690**	.386**
I'm flexible when I communicate with foreign nationals.			1	.754**	.619**	.439**
I observe and understand what I have learned during communication with foreign nationals.				1	.606**	.404**
In case of conflicts or misunderstandings due to cultural differences, I know how to solve them properly.					1	.373**
I can communicate in foreign language(s) in my professional activity.	.430**	.386**	.439**	.404**		1
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

To sum up the dimensions of attitudes, perception and skills of multicultural competency, the respondents certainly have positive views towards foreigners and show

respect for their cultural values and tolerance towards differences. However, the level of perception of the subtleties of communication and relations between foreigners in the work environment is still rather low. This might have contributed to a fairly low evaluation of the skills of communication and cooperation with foreigners. It is valuable that the majority of the respondents positively evaluate their skills of self-awareness, flexibility and learning through experience in communication with foreigners, but Lithuanian organisations should pay more attention to the development of problem-solving and conflict management skills in a multicultural environment.

3.5. PROBLEMS IN MULTICULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The development of multiculturalism inevitably involves various communication barriers and a number of problems (e.g., due to communication style, different temperament, language skills, other religions, etc.), so the survey sought to find out what respondents believe to be most common communication problems with foreigners. A deeper analysis of the results of the study (Table 21) showed that the respondents do not view the problems in multicultural communication as very complicated.

Table 21. Evaluation of problematic aspects of multicultural communication (1 – it does not cause any difficulties; 5 – these problems are the most common)

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Different temperament	298 (28.1%)	221 (20.8%)	271 (25.5%)	178 (16.8%)	94 (8.9%)	2.58	1.294
Language	159 (14.7%)	181 (16.8%)	291 (26.9%)	239 (22.1%)	210 (19.4%)	3.15	1.317
Different perception of relation between managers and subordinates	272 (25.6%)	232 (21.8%)	334 (31.4%)	148 (13.9%)	78 (7.3%)	2.56	1.216
Different style of informal communication	258 (24.3%)	248 (23.4%)	326 (30.7%)	169 (15.9%)	60 (5.7%)	2.55	1.180
Different religion	520 (49.1%)	213 (20.1%)	197 (18.6%)	75 (7.1%)	54 (5.1%)	1.99	1.192
Different decision making	248 (23.4%)	202 (19.0%)	380 (35.8%)	157 (14.8%)	75 (7.1%)	2.63	1.192
Ignorance of the culture of foreigners	326 (30.7%)	254 (23.9%)	298 (28.1%)	125 (11.8%)	58 (5.5%)	2.37	1.189
Employees are not interested in foreigners	331 (31.3%)	207 (19.6%)	282 (26.7%)	158 (14.9%)	80 (7.6%)	2.48	1.276

One of the most salient problems is the problem of the language barrier. Only a third of

the respondents (31.5%) do not have any difficulties in multicultural communication. On the other hand, four out of ten (41.5%) respondents agree that they have serious problems while communicating with foreigners due to lack of language skills (Mean = 3.15; Me = 3; Mo = 3) (Table 20). It should be noted that problems of poor communication with foreigners are not affected by any demographic factors. However, the impact of lack of language knowledge or poor knowledge depends on the sector of activity in which the respondents work and their experience in communication with foreigners. Accordingly, more employees in the public sector than in the business sector agree that lack of language skills causes serious problems in multicultural communication ($p = 0.001$; $p < 0.01$). Respondents who communicate with foreigners only occasionally are more likely to identify lack of language knowledge as a communication problem than those who communicate with foreigners very often or do not communicate with them at all ($p = 0.001$; $p < 0.01$).

One out of four respondents (25.7%) is convinced that different temperaments cannot cause any problems when Lithuanians communicate with foreigners, just as many (25.5%) did not decide on their position (this is often related to poor experience in communication with foreigners); however, almost half of the respondents (48.9%) believe that differences in temperament should be seen as a serious disruption of multicultural communication (Mean = 2.58; Me = 3; Mo = 1). More representatives of the business sector, unlike those who work in the public sector, consider differences in temperament to be problematic aspects of communication ($p = 0.018$; $p < 0.05$). Younger and less experienced respondents are more likely than older and more experienced respondents to agree that different temperaments cause various problems in multicultural communication ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.01$).

One in five respondents (21.9%) agree that different decision-making styles among Lithuanians and foreigners have an impact on multicultural communication. However, four out of ten respondents (42.4%) do not agree with this, while one in three respondents (35.8%) show poor knowledge of the issue (Mean = 2.63; Me = 3; Mo = 3). Those who work in the business sector indicate different decision-making styles as problematic in comparison with those who work in the public sector ($p = 0.001$; $p < 0.01$). In addition, younger and less experienced respondents are more likely than older and more experienced respondents to agree that different decision-making styles lead to a number of problems in multicultural communication ($p = 0.02$; $p < 0.05$).

Different attitudes towards informal communication styles cause communication problems to every fifth respondent (21.6%), but almost half of the respondents (47.7%) did not agree with this opinion even if the attitudes towards communication were different, while every third respondent (30.7%) could not express a strong opinion on this issue (Mean = 2.55; Me = 3; Mo = 3). Younger and less experienced respondents are more likely to agree that

multicultural communication problems are caused by different informal communication styles ($p = 0.004$; $p < 0.01$).

The respondents assess perception of relationships between managers and subordinates in a similar way. For instance, 21.2% of the respondents believe that different perceptions of relationships are an obstacle to multicultural communication, but almost half of the respondents (47.4%) believe that prevailing relationships between managers and subordinates in different cultures should not hinder the development of multicultural communication. However, one in three of the respondents (31.4%) also failed to express a strong opinion on this issue (Mean = 2.56; Me = 3; Mo = 3). Younger and less experienced respondents, in comparison with older and more experienced ones, are more likely to agree that there are problems in multicultural communication due to different perceptions of the relationship between managers and subordinates ($p = 0.011$; $p < 0.05$).

Every fourth or fifth (22.5%) respondent is convinced that insufficient interest in foreigners should be considered a cause of communication problems, while slightly more than half of the respondents (50.9%) do not agree with it and therefore do not see any problems with this point. Nonetheless, as one in four of the respondents (26.7%) cannot express a strong opinion on this issue, it shows that they are not familiar with these problems (Mean = 2.48; Me = 2; Mo = 1). In multicultural communication, knowledge of a foreign culture is not insignificant. Respondents had to assess whether they agreed that lack of knowledge of a foreign culture could be associated with potential problems in communicating with foreigners. Only one in six respondents (17.3%) agree that lack of knowledge of a foreign culture becomes a real communication problem; more than half of the respondents (54.6%) do not agree with this opinion, yet 28.1% of the respondents do not have a strong opinion on this issue (Mean = 2.37; Me = 2; Mo = 1). The research revealed that lack of interest in foreigners and their culture are more often mentioned as problematic aspects of communication by the respondents who work in public sector institutions (disinterest in foreigners $p = 0.007$; $p < 0.01$, lack of knowledge of a foreign culture $p = 0.002$; $p < 0.01$).

Seven out of ten respondents (69.2%) do not see belonging to a different religious denomination as a cause of multicultural communication problems in Lithuania. However, one in eight respondents (12.2%) agree that such a problem exists, and almost one in five respondents (18.6%) did not express a strong opinion on the issue (Mean = 1.99; Me = 2; Mo = 1). For comparison, the results of the survey of tolerance profile requested by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Lithuania in 2003 showed that Lithuanians were less tolerant towards other religions than towards other races or nationalities, and 22.3% of the respondents said that other Christian denominations should not be tolerated in Lithuania, while 40.3% of the respondents criticised the existence of non-Christian religions

in Lithuania.¹⁴³ Respondents who work in public sector institutions more often mentioned the activities of non-Catholic religions in Lithuania ($p = 0.017$; $p < 0.05$) as a problematic factor of multicultural communication. Younger and less experienced respondents also tend to associate problems with different religions ($p = 0.001$; $p < 0.01$).

The research established statistically significant positive correlations ($p < 0.01$) between all factors that determine the problems of multicultural communication. As we can see (Table 22), the relationship between variables is of different strength, with a moderate-strength correlation prevailing (r range 0.4–0.7). The strongest correlation (r range 0.7–0.9) is between the variables *problems in communicating with foreigners are due to lack of knowledge of a foreign culture* and ... *due to the employees' lack of interest in foreigners* ($r = 0.792$). There is also a strong link between the statements *problems in communicating with foreigners are due to different relations between managers and subordinates* and *due to different styles of informal communication* ($r = 0.754$).

Table 22. Spearman's correlation between variables describing multicultural communication problems

Spearman's rho (r)	Different temperament	Languages	Different relations between managers and subordinates	Different styles of informal communication	Different religion	Different decision- making	Lack of knowledge of a foreign culture	Lack of interest in foreigners
Different temperament	1	.293**	.566**	.585**	.446**	.563**	.487**	.476**
Languages		1	.408**	.388**	.311**	.281**	.367**	.388**
Different relations between managers and subordinates			1	.754**	.531**	.631**	.596**	.588**
Different styles of informal communication				1	.578**	.620**	.607**	.599**
Different religion					1	.506**	.635**	.603**

¹⁴³ At the request of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Lithuania, a survey "Lithuanian Tolerance Profiles (Attitudes of Lithuanians Towards Representatives of other Races, Religions and "Problematic" Social Groups, Experiences of Discrimination) was conducted, in which 1,044 respondents over 18 years of age were interviewed (Vilmorus, 2003).

Different decision-making						1	.573**	.554**
Lack of knowledge of a foreign culture							1	.792**
Lack of interest in foreigners	.476**	.388**	.588**	.599**	.603**	.554**	.792**	1
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).								

Thus, we can claim that the respondents are aware of possible communication breakdowns and multicultural communication problems, but view them as not very frequent. Perhaps the problem of the language barrier is most clearly perceived and most often identified. As the participants realize the importance of foreign language proficiency, they feel the lack of relevant skills and consider this as one of the major problems in multicultural cooperation.

Among the identified problematic aspects, perception and acceptance of differences stand out, because the problems, according to the research participants, are caused by different temperaments, decision-making styles, and different perceptions of working and informal relationships. Lack of interest in foreigners and lack of knowledge of their culture are also identified as problematic aspects of cooperation with foreigners. Evaluation of problematic aspects is influenced by the sector in which the respondents work, their age, length of service and experience in cooperating with foreigners.

Summarizing the results of the whole study, we see that the respondents have a positive attitude towards the importance of multicultural competency, respect for foreigners, their cultural values and tolerance for differences. Aspects of multicultural competency are vivid in Lithuanian organisations and enable them to participate in intercultural exchange, cooperate and adapt to other cultural environments with empathy and respect the values of other cultures. However, it is important to pay attention to the dimensions of multiculturalism, which enable us to act and be flexible in new situations in a multicultural work environment. These research results highlight the relatively low understanding of the peculiarities of communication and relations between foreigners in the work environment and a not very high evaluation of communication and cooperation skills with foreigners. At the same time, it is now apparent that although the respondents perceive the importance of developing the multicultural competency, tend to associate it with their career opportunities, and see an increase in the need to develop this competence, at the same time they acknowledge that the development of multicultural competency is reserved to self-learning. It should be noted that

more attention should be paid to the development of multicultural competency in Lithuanian organisations by including it into professional development programs, with a focus on the development of problem-solving and conflict management skills in a multicultural environment.

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