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# A NEW CIVICS IN THE DIGITAL AGE: CONNECTING ONLINE AND OFFLINE ACTIVISM IN LITHUANIA

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A NEW CIVICS IN THE DIGITAL AGE:  
CONNECTING ONLINE AND OFFLINE ACTIVISM IN LITHUANIA

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A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Graduate School of  
Clemson University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy  
International Family and Community Studies

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by  
Liepa Vasarė Gust  
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Accepted by:  
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## ABSTRACT

Political participation is critical for the legitimacy of democracy, yet the majority of Lithuanians refrain from participating 20 years after the restoration of independence. Low rates of participation have been reinforced by adverse mass beliefs, including deep-rooted mistrust and political powerlessness. Given that the development of civic culture in a democratic Lithuania is occurring simultaneously with the spread of new information and communication technologies, Lithuania serves as an interesting case study of the potential of online spaces for facilitating participation. Empirical knowledge regarding the relationships between online engagement, civic attitudes, and offline activism would strengthen campaigns to promote democracy through digital literacy.

This study explored Lithuanian young adults' grassroots participation, within the political and cultural contexts of society. It used a cross-sectional design to survey 580 18- to 30-year-olds from five Lithuanian universities in 2012, through a web-based questionnaire. The purpose of the study was to examine the types of Internet engagement and the civic values that contribute to offline participation in organizations, local community activities, and political discourse among self-selected Lithuanian students.

Results indicated three primary factors of Internet engagement: social networking, information exchange, and political expression. Family socio-economic status measures were positively associated with more frequent Internet engagement, as were positive perceptions of government responsiveness and higher confidence in public institutions. Internet engagement dimensions were positively associated with only some civic

attitudes. These findings have important implications for reaching out to disengaged and disaffected youth.

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses, using background characteristics, structural features, Internet engagement dimensions, and civic attitudes as predictors, explained 20% of the variance in the sample's organizational participation, 41% of the variance in community action, and 45% of the variance in political discourse. Internet engagement variables displayed powerful relationships with rates of offline activism above and beyond background characteristics and structural features.

Results point to the many layers of social and psychological experiences that affect civic development in a cultural context, with individuals as active agents in creating their own environments. The study supports an alternative conception of citizenship based on networking, information exchange, and individual expression online, which may contribute to political efficacy and catalyze broader civic reform. The findings may inform programs that aim to promote civil and political rights in young democracies such as Lithuania.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Political participation is critical for the legitimacy of democracy, yet the majority of Lithuanians refrain from participating 20 years after the restoration of independence. Giddens' (1984) Theory of Structuration and Welzel and Inglehart's (2008) Human Empowerment Model provide insight into the barriers for participation, based on links between structural features of society and norms for engagement. Opportunities for self-governance in Lithuania are limited by large municipalities (Mačiulytė & Ragauskas, 2007), a lack of information about non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and high levels of corruption in government (Adomėnas, Augustinaitis, Janeliūnas, Kuolys, & Motieka, 2006). Engagement is restrained further by adverse norms, including a deep-rooted sense of mistrust and feelings of political powerlessness (Žiliukaitė, Ramonaitė, Nevinskaitė, Beresnevičiūtė, & Vinogradnaitė, 2006). However, the digitalization of social networks, information, and public spaces may affect activism in Lithuania, as in the West, where young people are changing their role as citizens (Benkler, 2006).

Youth across nations have come of age in complex political environments in which government structures are changing through revolutions in information and communication technology (ICT). Interactive media are increasingly dominant tools for organizing political action, as they allow citizens to connect with others, access and create knowledge, and set the parameters of public discourse (Bennett, 2008). Research indicates that the presence of citizen interconnectivity through ICTs predicted higher

levels of democracy in 141 countries, with the greatest statistical significance in regions characterized by political transformations (Kedzie & Aragon, 2002). Based on Sen's (1992) argument that quality of life is measured by whether people have the capability of choosing *functionings* they value, the Internet may be seen as a source of freedom to actively participate in society.

The ICT revolution calls for a re-examination of the nature of youth civic engagement, as civic literacies and behaviors are embedded in young people's technology practices and social lives (Alvermann, 2002). Over the past few decades, opposing paradigms of civic culture have emerged, portraying youth as either passive and disengaged or active and engaged (Bennet, 2008). Although there has been growing concern that young citizens are disconnecting from politics and associational life (Putnam, 2000), some scholars argue that youth engage in civil society in new ways that are rapidly replacing old models of traditional participation (e.g., Stolle, Hooghe, & Micheletti, 2005). Others have begun to investigate the use of new media for civic purposes, which foster new forms of citizenship, both online and offline (e.g., Boyd, 2008; Coleman, 2008). Youth across cultures have utilized new media to enlarge the scope of their social interactions and launch civic campaigns (Youniss et al., 2002), as post-industrial society has given rise to increasing autonomy, self-expression, and free choice (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

## **Significance**

In June 2011, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton supported a “Tech Camp” two-day training session in Vilnius, Lithuania to promote transparency, good governance, and Internet freedom by providing students and civil society leaders with tools for digital safety (Baker, 2011). Empirical knowledge regarding the relationships between online engagement, civic attitudes, and offline activism in Lithuania would strengthen such campaigns to promote democracy through digital literacy. Research is necessary on the civic use of new media, and this study is the first about the relationship between Internet engagement and civic attitudes and activism in Lithuania. The study examines the potential online spaces in developing positive civic behaviors among university students.

The rise of Internet engagement may change the way that Lithuanians perceive their role as citizens and take action online or offline, but the nature of that change is not clear. Cyber-optimists hope the ICT revolution will create an abundance of social networks that allow for decentralized democratization, while pessimists warn of the dangers of virtual sociality for real world activism (Ray, 2007). Such divergent views have important implications for policymakers and educators striving to get young people involved in civic life. Based on Giddens’ (1984) theory that individuals’ social practices create new structural features of society, young people’s online participation choices may contribute to larger societal trends. However, such change is slow because socialization is a powerful regulator of human behavior and breaking conventions may bring social sanctions (Welzel & Inglehart, 2010). Still, when opportunities for action change, new behaviors may be adopted by youth, who have less exposure to rigid societal structures.

Theoretically, as interactive technologies become more widespread in Lithuania, they could increase motivation, ability, and opportunity for greater civic involvement (Delli Carpini, 2000). First, the Internet reduces the level of political interest required to access political information, which may attract a broader set of citizens (Garrett, 2006). In fact, 39% of Lithuanian 14- to 29-year-olds indicated learning the most about youth organizations online (Jaunimo Reikalų Departamentas, 2007). Second, the Internet provides easy ways for inactive citizens to translate interest into action, such as bulk emailing. Research indicates that youth who post political content online are more likely to take part in other civic activities (Smith, Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2009). Third, for those already engaged, the Internet provides opportunities to deepen participation through personal blogs and websites (Coleman, 2008). Based on research literature, three primary dimensions of Internet use facilitate civic activism: (a) e-communities, which encourage a participatory culture and social capital, (b) action campaigns, which provide easy ways to exchange information, and (c) public forums, which provide opportunities for political expression and deliberation.

### **Research Questions**

The Internet is a complex and evolving technology used for a variety of purposes within existing social, cultural, and political contexts. Therefore, research is required on the nature of online engagement in different cultures. Although the Internet provides access to social networks, information and tools for action, and new and unique opportunities for expression, engagement in these activities may not be popular in

Lithuania. Socioeconomic status, gender, and individual differences may interact with these opportunities (Smith et al., 2009), and some might find other forms of participation to be a better match for their skills and personality. On the other hand, some citizens may engage online as an alternative to traditional political participation, so the Internet may activate individuals who are inactive offline (Gibson, et el. 2005; Reinsalu, 2009).

Because Lithuanians generally feel alienated from government institutions (Žiliukaitė et al., 2006), they may feel more comfortable participating online.

Lithuanian civil society trends and the presence of new media technologies suggest the following research questions:

- Q1.** To what extent do self-selected Lithuanian 18- to 30-year-olds participate online in activities related to *social networking*, *information exchange*, and *political expression*?
- Q2.** What demographic differences exist among self-selected Lithuanian young adults regarding Internet engagement in *social networking*, *information exchange*, and *political expression* activities?
- Q3.** How are *government responsiveness* and *trust in institutions* related to engagement in *social networking*, *information exchange*, and *political expression* online?
- Q4.** How are *social networking*, *information exchange*, and *political expression* online related to self-selected Lithuanian young adults' values of *interpersonal trust*, *trust in groups*, *political efficacy*, and *self-expression*?

**Q5.** To what extent does frequency of Internet engagement in *social networking*, *information exchange*, and *political expression* predict offline *participation in organizations*, *community action*, and *political discourse*?

### **Summary**

Chapter One provided an overview of the current state of civil society in Lithuania and the necessity of examining the nature of youth civic engagement in light of revolutions in ICT. Empirical knowledge regarding the relationships between online engagement, civic attitudes, and offline activism in Lithuania is required to inform campaigns that promote democracy through digital literacy, and this study provides insight into links between Internet engagement and civic culture and behavior. The chapter ended with a presentation of research questions. Chapter Two will explore Lithuanian civil society in greater detail, using a Human Empowerment Model. It will review the research literature regarding effects of Internet engagement on civic activism, in order to present a theoretical framework for the variables in the study.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Twenty years after the restoration of independence, the majority of Lithuanians remain alienated from civic life. Democratization processes often require tremendous shifts in civil society, from organized resistance against totalitarian regimes to a range of democratic functions, from advocacy to problem-solving (Fioramonti & Fiori, 2010). Soviet history provides context for contemporary Lithuanian civil society, as most post-Communist European countries display more extreme levels of mistrust of public spheres and low participation in associations than do older democracies and post-authoritarian countries (Howard, 2003). Because the Soviet regime denied civil and political rights, Lithuanian identity was defined largely as an ethnicity, based on language, customs, and history, disconnected from political rights (Adomėnas et al., 2006). Likewise, because of the Communist Party's centralized control of the public sphere, citizens adopted protective mechanisms against public action (Howard, 2003). Traumatic memories of Soviet occupation may deter citizens from embracing Tocqueville's (1899) vision of joining associations for mutual benefit, practicing trust and cooperation.

Notwithstanding similar histories among Eastern European countries, each state has shown a unique process of democratization (Maciukaite-Zviniene, 2009). Despite economic gains, Lithuania's Democracy Score, based on Freedom House (2010) measures of electoral process, civil society, independent media, national and local governance, judicial independence, and corruption, has remained stagnant in the last

decade, at 2.21 in 2001 and 2.25 in 2010 (on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest level of democratic progress). Lithuania lagged behind Slovenia (1.93), Estonia (1.96), and Latvia (2.18), primarily because of higher ratings of corruption (Freedom House, 2010). Fioramonti and Heinrich (2007) found that most post-Communist European nations have seen a decline in civic participation and increased mistrust in recent years. Although such trends have been observed in the West as well, they are more threatening to young democracies that depend more on popular engagement for systemic survival than do older democracies, which have established legitimacy (Nelson, 1996).

More troublesome than the Freedom House (2010) indicators are findings from the 2010 Gallup Civic Engagement Index, which places Lithuania among the ten least civically engaged countries out of 130 countries studied, based on self-reports of donating money, volunteering time, and helping a stranger in need (English, 2011). The discrepancy between the 2010 Freedom House and Gallup data may be explained by disparities between institutional dimensions of democracy, which are generally present in Lithuania, and actual opportunities for and values for engagement among citizens, which may not be. Although the economic recession may have played a role in decreased resources for action, the Gallup data suggest that among industrialized societies, rates of civic engagement in Lithuania are unexpectedly low. A bottom-up approach exploring citizens' perceptions and values may provide insight by identifying links between structural features of society and individual agency, as proposed in Giddens' (1984) Theory of Structuration and Welzel and Inglehart's (2008) Human Empowerment Model.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Theory of Structuration**

Although civil society leaders produce new social actions and attitudes, they are also affected by existing societal perceptions (Fioramonti & Fiori, 2010). Werner (2008) identified two basic assumptions in a study of civil society institutions and individual activity: (a) humans beings have capabilities to take control over their actions despite circumstances, and (b) the actions of human agents are shaped by social environments. Giddens (1984) elaborated the link between agency and structure, as the social world consists of individuals' actions, which reproduce specific environments. Although humans are knowledgeable agents, the knowledge that informs their practices derives from resources, norms, and rules, which enable or constrain action. These structural features are not permanent, but sustained by human activity, so they are both mediators and consequences of action. As citizens draw on structural features in their social practices, these features become increasingly widespread and ingrained in society, which Giddens (1984) called *structuration*. Based on this framework, Werner (2008) found five rationales for action among Christian business managers that derived from their faith.

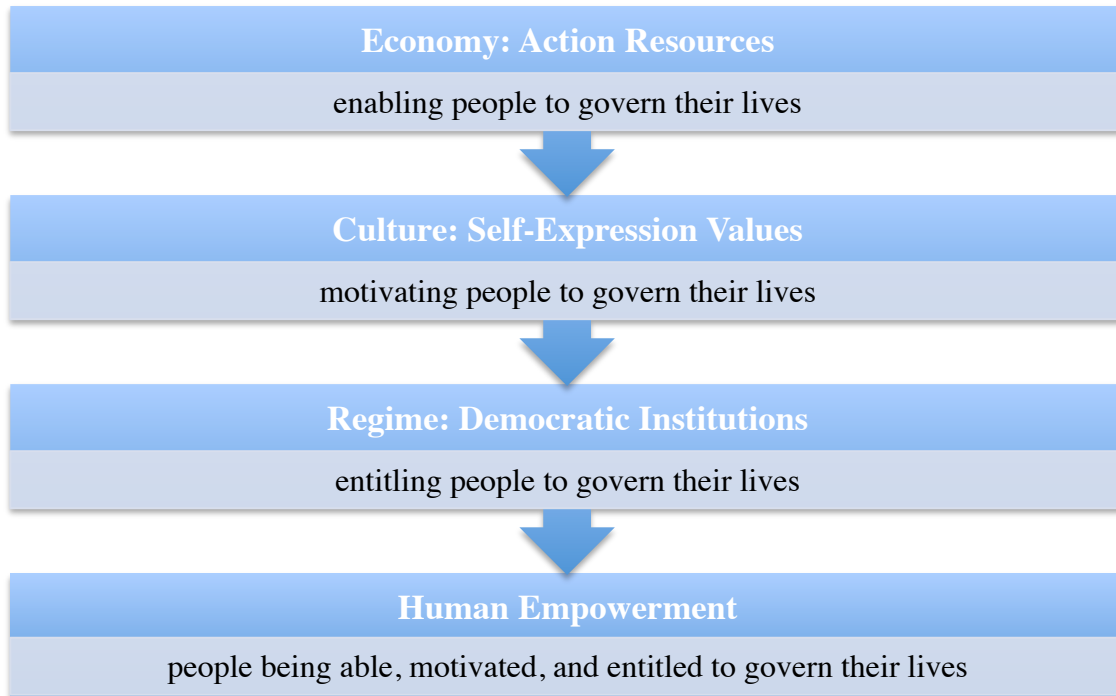
### **Human Empowerment Model**

Welzel and Inglehart (2008) proposed a human empowerment model that complements Giddens' (1984) process of institutionalization of social practices, with a focus on the role of values as a mediator between resources and democratic practices. The empowerment sequence consists of three interrelated steps: action resources, self-

expression values, and democratic institutions, as shown in Figure 2.1. Action resources include material and cognitive assets, such as education, which enable people to govern their own lives. Second, mass attitudes, such as prioritizing self-expression, are linked to demands for free choice, which motivate people to govern their own lives. Societies that emphasize self-expression typically value participation, support gender equality, and rank high on interpersonal trust, as opposed to societies that emphasize survival. Finally, democratic institutions provide the civil and political rights that entitle people to govern their own lives (Welzel & Inglehart, 2008). Although Lithuania has had democratic institutions for over two decades, positive civic values are only beginning to show signs of materialization. Perhaps a lack of opportunities for action, based on structural features, prevent civic values from developing among ordinary citizens.

**Figure 2.1**

**Welzel and Inglehart's Human Empowerment Sequence**



**Lithuanian Democratic Structures and Opportunities**

Large administrative networks in Lithuania restrict opportunities for participation in local governance. Lithuania differs from other European nations in its one *sub-regional* level of government, lacking mechanisms for local self-governance (Mačiulytė & Ragauskas, 2007). Sub-regional municipalities are based on territorial divisions established during the Soviet occupation. More so than Estonia or Latvia, Lithuania has witnessed little devolution of power (Maciukaite-Zviniene, 2009), so governments are geographically removed from the people and unable to truly represent an area's

population. Therefore, government responsiveness is low, and national surveys indicate that the majority (60%) of residents believe that municipal decisions have little or no impact on their lives (Mačiulytė & Ragauskas, 2007). Three-quarters of the population do not trust these governments, one of the lowest rates of institutional trust among post-Communist countries (Piasecka, 2010). Governance in such large territories allows political officials to evade responsibility.

Further, most Lithuanians are not aware of non-governmental organizations' (NGOs) activities (Adomėnas et al., 2006). Lithuania has three legal forms of NGOs: associations, public institutions, and charities. Piasecka (2010) found that in 2009, there were 7,525 operating associations, 2,510 public institutions (schools and hospitals excluded), and 233 charity funds. Although the number of NGOs in Lithuania has been growing, the proportion of the population involved in their activities has not been rising as quickly (Žiliukaitė et al., 2006). Zaleskienė and Tamulevičiūtė (2007) found that among 1135 university students (18- to 24-year olds), only a small proportion knew of political (17%), youth (26%), charity (19%), or religious (13%) organizations in their area. In a national sample of 14- to 29-year olds, 49% reported a lack of information about NGOs as a reason they did not participate (Jaunimo Reikalų Departamentas, 2007). As in other post-Communist nations, many organizations are not embedded at the grassroots level and therefore fail to empower citizens (Fioramonti & Heinrich, 2007).

Finally, Lithuanian media restrain opportunities to become informed and engage in public discourse. Transparency International (2009) found that only 8% of Lithuanians believed the media are *not corrupt*; 51% responded that the media are *partially corrupt*,

and 32% believed that media are *very corrupt*. According to Piasecka (2010), the quality of Lithuanian journalism deteriorated further in 2010 as national broadcasters discarded analytic content in favor of highly rated scandals, and public trust in media fell to a record low. Generally, traditional media outlets are dominated by negative coverage of events, without positive examples of civic action (Žiliukaitė et al., 2006). Thus, even citizens who follow public affairs may not encounter news about civic opportunities. Such selective media coverage can contribute to citizens' lack of social networks and political apathy, as research in the United States indicates that there is a powerful relationship between following the news and social capital, as well as interest in politics (Pasek, Kenski, Romer, & Jamieson, 2006).

### **Civic Engagement**

The structural lack of opportunity for self-governance, participation in NGOs, and public discourse described above may contribute to low rates of civic engagement among Lithuanians. The 2007 Civic Empowerment Index indicated that 40% of the population did not participate in any civic or political activity (Degutis, Ramonaitė, & Žiliukaitė, 2008). Because this passiveness is often associated with experiences of Soviet control, hopes lay with the younger generation, which has matured in an independent Lithuania.

However, a nationally representative 2007 study of Lithuanian 14- to 29-years olds indicated that 43% neither participated nor desired to participate in any clubs or organizations (Jaunimo Reikalų Departamentas, 2007). Only 26% of respondents volunteered, 11% participated in formal organizations, and 5% participated in informal

groups. Zaleskienė and Tamulevičiūtė (2007) found that 73% of college and university students did not participate in any organizations. These low participation rates may be related not only to a lack of information, but also to a lack of positive role models. Research in the West indicates that parents can promote activism through examples set by personal involvement in the community and reinforcement of youth interests (Fletcher, Elder, & Mekos, 2000). Among 14- to 29-year old Lithuanians, 68% reported that upbringing and a family's traditions have the largest effect on their understanding of citizenship (Jaunimo Reikalų Departamentas, 2007).

### **Lithuanian Societal Values for Action**

#### **Interpersonal Trust**

Traumatic memories, fragmented social links, and a complete mistrust of others are psychological legacies of Soviet occupation that contribute to Lithuanians' longing for a strong state (E. Aleksandravičius, personal communication, February 2011). Scholars have analyzed controversies over representations of the past as "young nation-states seek to establish 'historical truth' after 50 years of totalitarian memory manipulation" (Onken, 2010, p. 277). Upbringing and understandings of the past play an important role in shared values and generalized trust. As described by Fukuyama (2000), interpersonal trust is a prerequisite for community development, spurring people to display *spontaneous sociability* in their communities, as they form associations, volunteer, and donate to charities.



Unfortunately, in Lithuania, mistrust is systemic (Adomėnas et al., 2006). Although Lithuanians feel they can trust some familiar people, family, and friends (i.e., particularized trust), they rate very low on trusting people who are unfamiliar or dissimilar in religious belief or origin (i.e., generalized trust). Uslaner (2001) suggested that generalized trust parallels political trust, and is often required at the outset for civic activities to develop in society. Adomėnas and colleagues (2006) explained that political distrust in Lithuania stems from the actions of the administration, which has dominated public discourse and created policies without a basis in citizen participation and cooperation. In fact, government decisions are often unknown to the public until after their enactment (Piasecka, 2010).

### **Political Efficacy**

Research indicates that many Lithuanians fear political participation, and consider it a dangerous and deviant activity (Žiliukaitė et al., 2006). The Civic Empowerment Index showed that the majority of the population believed that people who actively participate in political campaigns can lose their jobs (62%), be considered strange (53%), be publicly slandered (59%), and receive death threats (63%) (Degutis et al., 2008). There is a general anxiety about public action and a lack of social support, a relic of Soviet times (A. Balčytienė, personal communication, July 2010). Žiliukaitė's (2010) analyses suggest no significant difference in sense of risk between those who do and do not participate. In fact, activists have reported more frequent harm as a result, but have continued in hopes of motivating others. Still, norms for cooperation are so weak that

people rationally decide not to take part because they understand the risks. However, norms may be shifting. In 2009, the proportion who thought that a civically active person would be considered strange decreased to 43% (Civil Society Institute, 2010).

Most fundamentally, citizens believe their actions cannot make a difference in society. This belief leads to low feelings of efficacy, the power to act purposefully to effect change and control one's life. The 2007 Civic Empowerment Index indicated that citizens believed that they have the least political influence in adopting decisions that affect their lives, with a majority (57%) reporting that they have no power at all to influence important decisions (Degutis et al., 2008). Žiliukaitė and colleagues (2006) pointed out that such attitudes often are grounded in reality—citizens lack pathways to affect government policies and programs. On the other hand, this sense of powerlessness is not always based on actual experiences in civic activities, but rather on the belief that such activities are not worthwhile (Žiliukaitė et al., 2006). Research indicates that Soviet legacies have had a profound effect on efficacy. Hrebendar, McBeth, and Morgan (2008) asked over 70 Lithuanian political, academic, and media leaders to identify holdovers from Communist times, and 43% identified low feelings of efficacy.

### **Self-expression Values**

Welzel and Inglehart (2009) argued that most approaches to analyzing democratization have neglected the importance of mass beliefs, which motivate people to take advantage of freedoms and put pressure on political elites. World Values Surveys data indicated that the extent to which a public emphasized *self-expression values*

(autonomy over authority, participation over security, tolerance over conformity, and gender equality over patriarchy) in the 1990s explained 81% of the cross-national variation in effective democracy (the product of formal democracy and elite integrity) in 2000. The extent to which the public endorsed *democracy* explained only 20% of the variance (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

Unfortunately, Lithuania's scores on the World Values Survey (2006) showed that survival-oriented values deepened during its first decade of independence from the Soviet regime, unlike other industrializing societies, which have moved toward greater emphasis on self-expression values. Pew Research Center data indicated that the proportion of Lithuanians who preferred a democratic government to a strong leader dropped from 79% in 1991, the year after the restoration of independence, to 42% in 2009 (Bell, 2011). These shifts might indicate that democratic institutions in Lithuania have not met expectations, as citizens lack opportunities for active participation.

### **Cycle of Negative Norms and Inactivity**

Even though Lithuania has a democratic government, citizens lack positive civic norms, which arise through everyday civic experiences that increase the perceived utility of democratic freedoms (Welzel & Inglehart, 2009). Because the majority of Lithuanian citizens do not believe that they have the power to change their lives, they refrain from taking action, even though they are dissatisfied with government (Adomėnas et al., 2006). According to Zimmerman (2000), empowerment requires opportunities for individuals to practice their capacities to effect change. Indeed, research in the West suggests that

participation in community activities (Niemi, Hepburn, & Chapman, 2000) and deliberative forums (Gastil, 2000) has increased political efficacy and activism.

Conversely, Lithuanian citizens' inactivity reinforces negative attitudes, so that they continue to avoid opportunities to experience their power as citizens (Žiliukaitė et al., 2006). The lack of civic norms and opportunities for action reinforce each other to institutionalize civic apathy, which has become ingrained and widespread in Lithuania. This has serious implications not only for democracy but also for citizens' quality of life, as Welzel and Inglehart (2010) found that in response to widening life opportunities, people increasingly emphasize self-expression, which in turn increases the role of self-efficacy in life satisfaction, and raises life satisfaction itself.

### **Civic Potential among Lithuanian Young Adults**

There is evidence of increasing activism among Lithuanian youth. Among 14- to 29-year olds, 32% indicated wanting to participate in organizations relevant to their interests, 60% were interested in engaging in community life, and 65% were interested in civic campaigns (Jaunimo Reikalų Departamentas, 2007). According to the Civic Empowerment Index, 15- to 19-year olds participate in civic activities more than older citizens (Degutis et al., 2008). Degutis and colleagues (2008) isolated the potential for activism by presenting hypothetical situations in which respondents face serious problems—political (e.g., the President introduces direct rule by dissolving Parliament), economic (e.g., the government significantly increases taxes or decreases services) and local (e.g., a garbage dumpsite is developed near you)—and asking whether they would

organize an activity, contribute to an activity, or stay on the sidelines. In 2007 and 2009, resolving local problems displayed the greatest potential for action, with about three-quarters of respondents willing to participate (Civil Society Institute, 2010).

Perhaps because Lithuanians generally do not trust government and feel incapable of influencing decisions through political institutions, they are drawn to local community networks, where they may have more influence. Žiliukaitė and colleagues (2006) found that the mobility of the urban population hindered the formation of strong neighborhood relationships, and rural areas provided more opportunities for organizing. In-depth interviews indicated that participation in small rural associations had a socialization effect on participants, who then began to engage more frequently, in order to mobilize others to solve local problems and improve quality of life (Imbrasaitė, 2006). In 2009, the percentage of Lithuanians participating in local community activities grew to 33%, up from 17% in 2007 (Civil Society Institute, 2010). The presence of such informal participation supports the notion that civic activism exists, based outside of formal political institutions, which remain relatively closed and narrow (Žiliukaitė et al., 2006).

Feelings of institutional and interpersonal distrust, a lack of political efficacy, and low emphasis on self-expression persist because citizens still lack opportunities for action, in part due to the large municipality structures, a lack of information about NGOs, and a limited media environment. These attitudes discourage the creation of social capital, hinder participation in organizations, and restrain political discussion (Putnam, 2000). Civic apathy is strengthened as a societal norm. However, citizens may still acquire participatory values if they have opportunities to experience their civic power.

Because traditional Lithuanian media sources are not trusted, new digital technologies may provide one pathway to activism. Online, people may find motivation, tools, and new opportunities to network, share information, and expand public expression (Delli Carpini, 2000), practicing democratic values and self-reliance. This may catalyze a shift in norms as citizens realize the benefits of civic activism.

### **Internet Use in Lithuania**

Although a substantial digital divide still exists, the Internet has become embedded in everyday life for many young people in Lithuania. The rise of Internet use has been rapid in the past decade. Lithuania is among the top ten countries that have increased access and usage indicators between 2002 and 2007, and stands out for low ICT prices compared to income levels (International Telecommunication Union, 2009). Households with Internet access increased from 14% of the population in 2005 to 55% in 2010 (Statistics Department of Lithuania, 2011). As in other countries, disproportionately more youth use the Internet than older citizens. Among Lithuanian 16- to 24-year-olds, 94% reported using the Internet in a three-month time period, compared to 61% of the overall population (Statistics Department of Lithuania, 2011).

The Lithuanian administration has purposefully worked to lower the nation's digital divide by providing tax incentives for computer purchases and setting up free public Internet access points in rural areas. Meanwhile, the Universal Computer Literacy Program and National E-Learning System initiatives have promoted computer literacy throughout the country (Gudauskaitė, 2007), similar to the Tiger Leap program in

Estonia, which brought Internet access to all schools. Given the increasing media market online, news portals are beginning to compete to provide high quality information and news in user-friendly ways (Piasecka, 2010). As new media technologies become more widespread, they could become important tools for motivating citizens to organize, take action, and take part in political discourse.

### **Three Dimensions of Internet Use That Promote Civic Engagement**

#### **Social Networking and E-communities**

The Internet allows for interest-based communities that foster social capital—the norms, trust, and resources present in a community that lead to increased social involvement essential to democracy (Putnam, 2000; Scott & Johnson, 2005). Qualitative research indicates that websites can establish community norms, trust, and collective resources for users (Scott & Johnson, 2005). A Pew Research Center study indicated that active Facebook users were 43% more likely than other Internet users and over three times more likely than non-users to feel that most people can be trusted, after controlling for demographic variables (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie, & Purcell, 2011). Facebook users also have more close relationships (i.e., confidants), and more social support (i.e., emotional support, companionship, instrumental aid), than other Internet users and average Americans (Hampton et al., 2011).

Online communities can strengthen real-world relationships that are formed through daily interactions. Social networking sites are often used to keep in touch with close friends and colleagues, and increasingly, to revive dormant ties (Hampton et al.,

2011). As people network online, they can strengthen bonds, as well as create new bridges, bolstering social capital (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007). Research on an e-community health project in Melbourne showed that networked computers acted to strengthen real-world community bonds in a neighborhood (Hopkins, Thomas, Meredyth, & Ewing, 2004). Hampton and Wellman (2003) found that messages addressed to many people gave online communication characteristics of public space, creating a sense of community inclusion and opportunities to build trust offline.

Finally, e-communities may create an online culture with high levels of citizen involvement, as individuals achieve goals while asserting personal values (Dahlgren, 2005). Online communities are more comprehensive than other tools, such as listservs, because they provide users with a range of opportunities for personal development, all embedded in a growing network of social ties (Scott & Johnson, 2005). TakingITGlobal and YouthNoise are sites designed specifically for civic activism, with opportunities to engage with news, discussion boards, databases of events, and profiles of over 100,000 members, the majority of which are in the developing world (Raynes-Goldie & Walker, 2008). Online, youth have the freedom to create social identities in public spaces, where norms are reinforced (Boyd, 2008). At the same time, social networking sites have empowered youth to mobilize quickly offline. For example, students used MySpace profiles to organize nation-wide protests of U.S. immigration reform in 2006 (Boyd, 2008). Research indicates that active Facebook users are two and a half times more likely than other Internet users to attend political rallies or meetings (Hampton et al., 2011).



## **Information Exchange and Social Action**

People can access an abundance of information online, which can support the growth of large networks of activists who lead social action campaigns (Dahlgren, 2005). For example, the Internet makes data available to post on blogs and facilitates distribution of action kits to initiate local on-the-ground campaigns. Diani (2000) argued that as ICTs increase opportunities for communication and information-sharing, they broaden the support base for activism, help people identify with issues, and make transnational advocacy effective through coordination. As youth interact online based on personal interests, civic involvement becomes individualized and embedded in everyday life (Hayhtio & Rinne, 2007). Such changes may lead to a decline in the importance of traditional hierarchical organizations in favor of networked organizations that are more adaptable (Garrett, 2006), which may contribute to greater participation. The Finnish online protest against gossip journalism exemplified how citizens can use the Internet for networked action, to petition respect for personal privacy (Hayhtio & Rinne, 2007). The result was a spread of public deliberation promoting ethics in media worldwide.

The Internet allows for greater flexibility in political consumerism, purchasing goods based on political or ethical considerations. Ward (2008) argued that engagement in online political consumerism works with young people's lifestyle-related concerns and therefore draws in new civic actors. While some point to the power of transnational corporations to escape from politics, others conclude that new technologies allow people to incorporate social goals into their brand identity, as they choose to support particular companies' policies and practices (Micheletti & Stolle, 2008). Therefore, buyer-driven

companies must consider citizens' values in their production policies. Canadian, Belgian, and Swedish case studies have indicated that consumerism may take on political significance, leading to higher trust in fellow citizens, more organizational participation, and higher scores of political efficacy (Stolle, Hooghe, & Micheletti, 2005).

### **Political Expression and Deliberation**

Theoretically, the Internet leads to an improved public space for debate when barriers are brought down between the general population and political elites (Dahlgren, 2005). Research indicates that youth participation has been enabled through new technologies, as 44% of young Internet users who joined discussion groups and read political blogs had not been politically engaged in the past (Graf & Darr, 2004). Gagnier (2008) found that the youth-created Mobilize.org has reduced feelings of political exclusion: as youth become engaged online, they bring attention to issues and implement their own solutions. Online, young people discover political interest for themselves and practice civic skills, such as identifying issues, motivating others, and taking action. Iyengar & Jackman (2003) found that recipients of an interactive campaign CD voted at much higher rates, showed more interest in campaigns, and expressed greater faith in voting than other young adults. Similarly, as youth explore issues online, their interactions may lead to more positive civic values.

Top-down government campaigning focuses on decision-makers and limits the degree to which youth can contribute (Lewis, 2005). Research indicates that young people perceive particular online tools as important in increasing their motivation and

ability to participate. However, some sites are perceived to be communicating “*at* young people” instead of “*with* young people” (Collin, 2008, p. 536). Youth want to have real power to influence decisions. As Benkler (2006) argued, the digital generation is changing how people experience citizenship: “they no longer need to be consumers and passive spectators. They can become creators and primary subjects” (p. 272). In fact, youth have established their own online networks and produced original civic content, which represents new forms of political activism (Harris, 2008). In Australia, Vibewire and GetUp are youth-led political spaces with deliberative forms of participation, which allow for community-building (Vromen, 2008). Such spaces provide opportunities for expression absent from conventional channels of political communication (Harris, 2008).

Internet tools serve to advance democratic openness by providing a space for deliberation for youth who are uncomfortable talking about politics face-to-face (Dahlgren, 2005). In Korea, citizens created alternative journalism online to challenge the existing media, allowing free exchange of opinions and active formation of groups, which then mobilized offline (Woo-Young, 2005). Although the Internet allows for the creation of homogeneous information environments and ideologically specific news (Garrett, 2006), research indicates that Internet users do not filter out viewpoint-challenging news. According to U.S. surveys, the Internet contributes to a wider awareness of political arguments (Horrigan, Garrett, & Resnick, 2004). The Internet offers a variety of outlets for expression and discourse with thousands of alternative journalism and grassroots advocacy sites that encourage debate. E-thepeople, for example, is a site designed to

foster democratic deliberation by presenting a variety of views, while using community-building principles to increase interest (Scott & Johnson, 2005).

### **The Effects of Internet Engagement on Civic Activism**

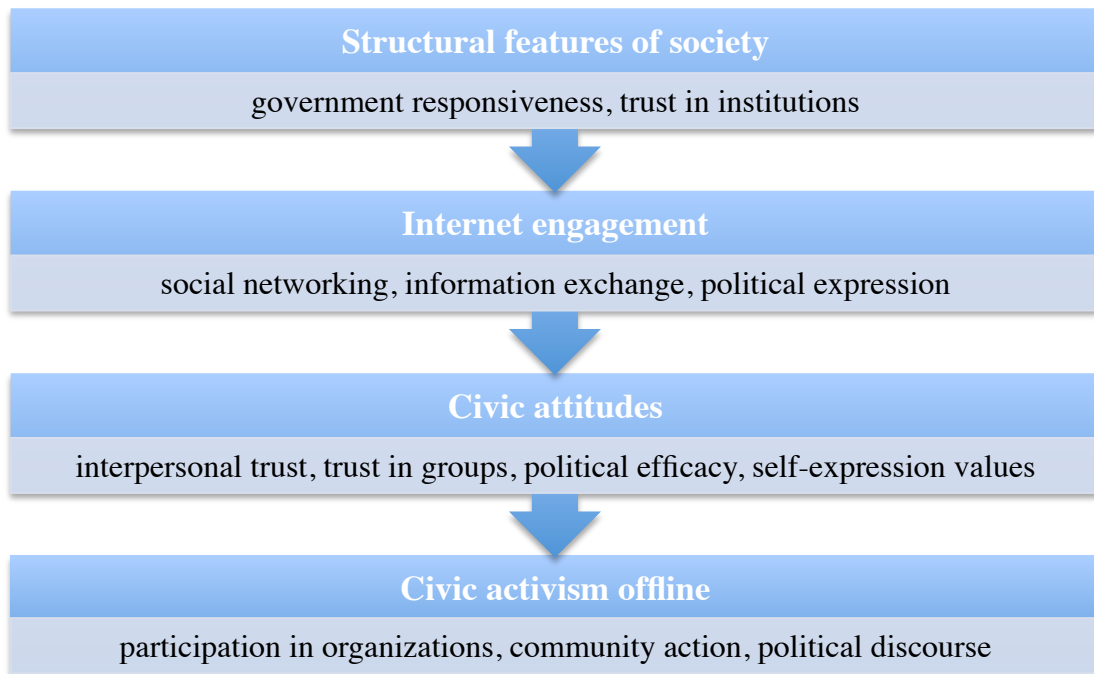
Youth have described a connection between their online and offline participation, and for some, the Internet makes local activism easier (Collin, 2008). Each of the Internet engagement pathways outlined relates to offline participation. First, the Internet can lead to the emergence of wider participation in organizations. Research indicates that those who use the Internet at least a few times a week are more socially engaged offline than those who never use it, and those who use it daily are the most socially engaged (Lopez, Levine, Both, Kiesa, & Kirby, 2006). NGOs such as Amnesty International have used Facebook to coordinate protests around the world (Stirland, 2007). Second, studies show the Internet increases skills and improves access to resources, which leads to greater activism locally (Valaitis, 2005). Shah, Kwak, and Holbert (2001) found that youth who use the Internet for information are more likely to get involved in their communities. Third, through political expression, youth may become interested in politics, leading to more significant acts such as community action and political discourse. Research in Finland indicated that those who were active in online politics increased their awareness and activity in a self-perpetuating cycle of knowledge and involvement (Grönlund, 2007).

Because low government responsiveness and low trust in institutions are ingrained in Lithuanian society, young adults may prefer to become engaged in civic affairs through alternative pathways (Micheletti & Stolle, 2008). Based on Welzel and

Inglehart's (2008) human empowerment model, Internet engagement among Lithuanians may provide opportunities for action that are absent offline, and therefore lead to positive civic norms, such as interpersonal trust, political efficacy, and self-expression values, as shown in Figure 2.2. As young people make their own choices online, their micro-level responses to new environments may accumulate into macro-level trends in society (Welzel & Inglehart, 2010). Positive civic norms may act as mediators between online activism and increased offline activism. Of course, value change is a difficult and slow process, so Lithuanian youth may not engage in offline civic activities at high rates.

**Figure 2.2**

**The Study's Logic Model**



Scholars have debated the individualistic nature of self-expression values, which emphasize tolerance, gender equality, autonomy, and expression, and whether they give rise to civic or uncivic impulses. According to some, individualism erodes cooperation for mutual benefit and hinders the development of social capital (Flanagan & Lee, 2003, Putnam, 2000). However, Schwartz (2004) argued that autonomy is often related to solidarity and concern for others. Similarly, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) maintained that the individualistic nature of self-expression values implies fundamental human equality, which allows for greater levels of trust and community action. Empirically, Welzel (2010) found that self-expression values were strongly associated with levels of generalized trust and collective action across 48 countries.

### **Measuring Different Types of Internet Engagement**

It is important to distinguish the specific ways in which individuals use the Internet when investigating effects on civic activism. Research has focused on social capital, revealing links between participation in online and offline associations (Driskell & Embry, 2008; Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001). Valenzuela and colleagues (2009) found that intensity of Facebook use correlated with students' social trust, civic engagement, and political participation. Others have focused on informational uses: Shah, Kwak, and Holbert (2001) found that online information exchange had a positive impact on local civic activism. Online political information access has been associated with greater efficacy and participation (Kenski & Stroud, 2006) and increased engagement in associations (Driskell & Embry, 2008). Researchers have also investigated Internet use to

follow public affairs, finding correlations with political activity (Jennings & Zeitner, 2003; Prior, 2005). In East Asia, those who used the Internet to follow current events and express their views also displayed higher rates of community participation (Lin, Kim, Jung, & Cheong, 2005). Following the news online has been associated with political discussion, which in turn influences participation (Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005).

Some scholars believe that the Internet will only serve to activate citizens who are already interested in politics, by reducing costs of accessing information and offering more convenient ways of engaging (Vromen, 2008). Boulianne (2009) suggested that political interest may mediate the relationship between Internet use and engagement. Xenos and Moy (2007) found a pattern of direct effects of Internet use on information acquisition and psychological effects for concrete acts of engagement, contingent on levels of political interest. Different motivations for Internet use affected engagement outcomes in Shah and colleagues' (2001) study, in which Internet use for information exchange had a positive impact on local civic engagement and trust, but recreational Internet use did not. Similarly, Prior (2005) found differential effects based on Internet use for information and entertainment, so that the Internet increased gaps in political knowledge and voter turnout between those who read the news and those who searched for entertainment. However, specific Internet activities, such as blogging and social networking, may alter the traditional patterns of political interest (Smith et al., 2009).

The research literature regarding Internet use and its effects on civic engagement variables is inconsistent. There are major differences in how researchers operationalize Internet use and civic engagement, as well as differences in approach to analysis. For

example, studies have examined Internet access and hours of use (Jennings & Zeitner, 2003; Lopez, et al., 2006), purposes of Internet use (Shah et al., 2005), or intensity of use (Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009). Civic engagement may contain a range of activities and attitudes, from traditional political attitudes and behaviors such as trust in institutions and voting, to less conventional activities, such as community action. Boulianne's (2009) meta-analysis revealed that two factors decreased the likelihood of finding statistically significant relationships between Internet use and civic engagement: the inclusion of political interest in a causal model (as in Xenos & Moy, 2007) and predicting Internet use from engagement instead of the other way around (as in Gibson, Lusoli, & Ward, 2005).

### **The Study's Research Questions**

New global realities call for a reconsideration of how young people participate in civic life, especially in young democracies. In the U.S., Pew Research Center studies indicate that teen girls are more likely than boys to use social networking sites, share self-created content online, make online purchases, and use Twitter, and they are just as likely as boys to keep blogs (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010). Lithuanian young women may also participate in these ways more frequently than young men. In Estonia, citizens are increasingly participating online to complement traditional practices, even though the population is generally politically passive (Reinsalu, 2009). This finding is particularly relevant for Lithuania, as both countries' transitions to democracy were characterized by gaps between democratic institutions and civic culture, so that citizens remained alienated from politics after democratization (Reinsalu, 2009). Online



opportunities might encourage a more positive civic culture, breaking the cycle of powerlessness and apathy that currently exists.

Because this is the first study of Internet use and civic activism among Lithuanian youth, research questions are presented rather than hypotheses. Foundational areas of inquiry include the relationships between Internet engagement and perceived structural features, civic attitudes, and civic behaviors offline, as online action may either substitute for offline activities or support their development. Internet engagement is embedded in the socio-psychological context of Lithuanian society, and youth who engage online may be less trusting of institutions and therefore use new media as an alternative to traditional participation (Gibson, et al. 2005; Reinsalu, 2009). However, others may be able to translate online tools into offline action. Demographic characteristics, such as gender and age, may also influence tendencies to participate actively in Internet activities (Lenhart et al., 2010). Research questions include:

- Q1.** To what extent do self-selected Lithuanian 18- to 30-year-olds participate online in activities related to *social networking*, *information exchange*, and *political expression*?
- Q2.** What demographic differences exist among self-selected Lithuanian young adults regarding Internet engagement in *social networking*, *information exchange*, and *political expression* activities?
- Q3.** How are *government responsiveness* and *trust in institutions* related to engagement in *social networking*, *information exchange*, and *political expression* online?

**Q4.** How are *social networking, information exchange, and political expression* online related to self-selected Lithuanian young adults' values of

*interpersonal trust, trust in groups, political efficacy, and self-expression?*

**Q5.** To what extent does frequency of Internet engagement in *social networking, information exchange, and political expression* predict offline *participation in*

*organizations, community action, and political discourse?*

### **Summary**

Chapter Two presented Welzel and Inglehart's (2008) human empowerment model as a theoretical framework to examine the effects of Internet social networking, information exchange, and political expression on civic activism in Lithuania. The chapter reviewed research literature regarding Lithuanian civil society development, including opportunities for action through traditional democratic structures and values for action based on mass beliefs. It also reviewed research literature regarding links between different types of Internet use and civic engagement variables. A logic model for the study was offered, and the chapter ended with a presentation of research questions based on testing the framework. Chapter Three presents the design and methodology for the study of Lithuanian university students' Internet engagement and how it relates to their civic attitudes and offline activism.

## CHAPTER THREE

### DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine the nature and frequency of Lithuanian youth Internet use and the types of online activities and civic norms that contribute to offline participation in organizations, community action, and political discourse. The study was exploratory and used a cross-sectional design to target 18- to 30-year-old college students at five major universities and colleges in Lithuania: Vilnius University (VU), Vytautas Magnus University (VDU), Lithuanian University of Education (LEU), Klaipeda State College (KVK), and Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (VGTU). Because there was only one data collection period, and the study lacked random sampling and random assignment, the design did not allow for conclusions of causality. Still, it established foundational knowledge regarding the nature and extent of Internet use and associations between Internet engagement and civic attitudes and behaviors among a self-selected sample of Lithuanian students.

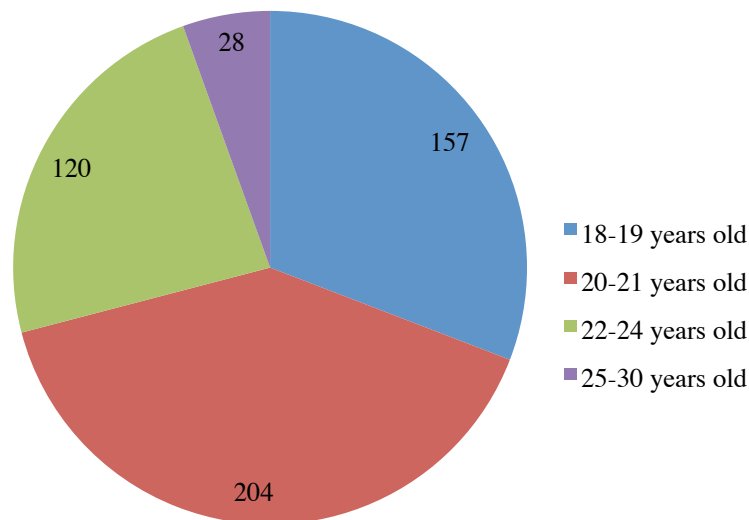
#### **Participants**

The study targeted 18- to 30-year-old Lithuanian students because they are at a critical stage for identity formation. Larson (2002) argued that the increasing complexity of life in a globalized world demands that young adults learn more skills, integrate new systems of meaning, and make more deliberate plans to attain competencies required for success in a multicultural world, all of which lengthen adolescence and emerging

adulthood. In total, 590 participants filled out the questionnaire. The majority were on the younger side of the age continuum: 31%<sup>1</sup> were 18- to 19-years-old, 40% were 20- to 21-years-old, 24% were 22- to 24-years-old, and 5% were 25- to 30-years-old, as shown in Figure 3.1. Although there were also 10 respondents who were over 30, these cases were excluded from analyses because the sample size already provided sufficient power.

**Figure 3.1**

**Number of Participants by Age Group**



The sample was predominately female: 429 women (81%) and 102 men (19%) completed the questionnaire. Gender imbalance is consistent with the response rate and non-response bias literature, which indicates that survey respondents are much more likely to be female than male (Porter & Whitcomb, 2005). Because of the exploratory nature of the research, the data were not weighted to correct for the gender imbalance.

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<sup>1</sup> All percentages reported are percentages of valid data, excluding missing cases.

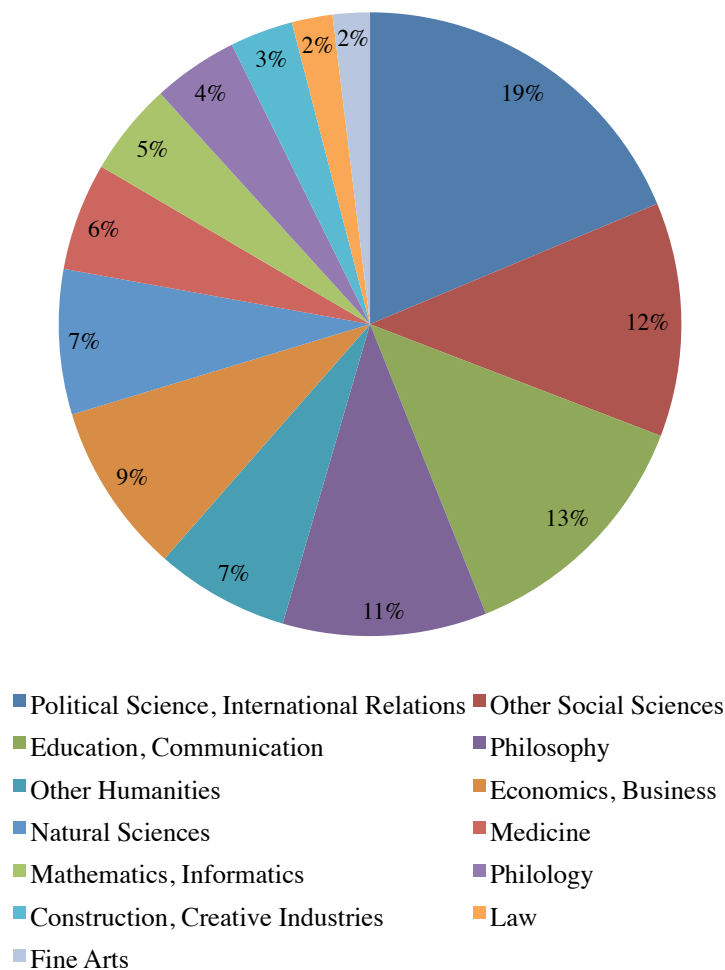
The faculties targeted, including social sciences and education, may have contributed to the larger proportion of female respondents as well.

More than half of the sample (62%) lived in Vilnius, the capital city of Lithuania ( $n = 326$ ). Accordingly, 253 respondents reported studying at VU, 58 at LEU, and 22 at VGTU, universities in Vilnius (7 respondents studied at these universities based in Vilnius but reported living in another town or village). About 29% of the sample lived in Kaunas ( $n = 153$ ), the second largest city, with 165 studying at VDU. A small fraction (3%) lived in Klaipeda ( $n = 15$ ), with 18 studying at KVK. In addition, a few participants were enrolled at other nearby colleges and universities: the Vilnius College of Design, Mykolas Romeris University, Kaunas University of Technology, and the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theater. About 6% of the participants responded that they lived in cities or towns other than Vilnius, Kaunas, or Klaipeda, mostly villages ( $n = 31$ ).

Survey participants came from a wide variety of faculties or departments. About 19% were students in Political Science or International Relations, 12% were in other Social Sciences, 13% were in Education or Communication, 11% were in Philosophy, 9% were in Economics or Business, 7% were in other Humanities, 7% were in Natural Sciences, 6% were in Medicine, 5% were in Mathematics or Informatics, 4% were in Philology (e.g., Linguistics, Literature), 3% were in Construction or Creative Industries, 2% were in Law, and 2% were in Fine Arts (e.g., Art, Music, Theater). The percentage of students in each of these faculties or departments are shown in Figure 3.2 below.

**Figure 3.2**

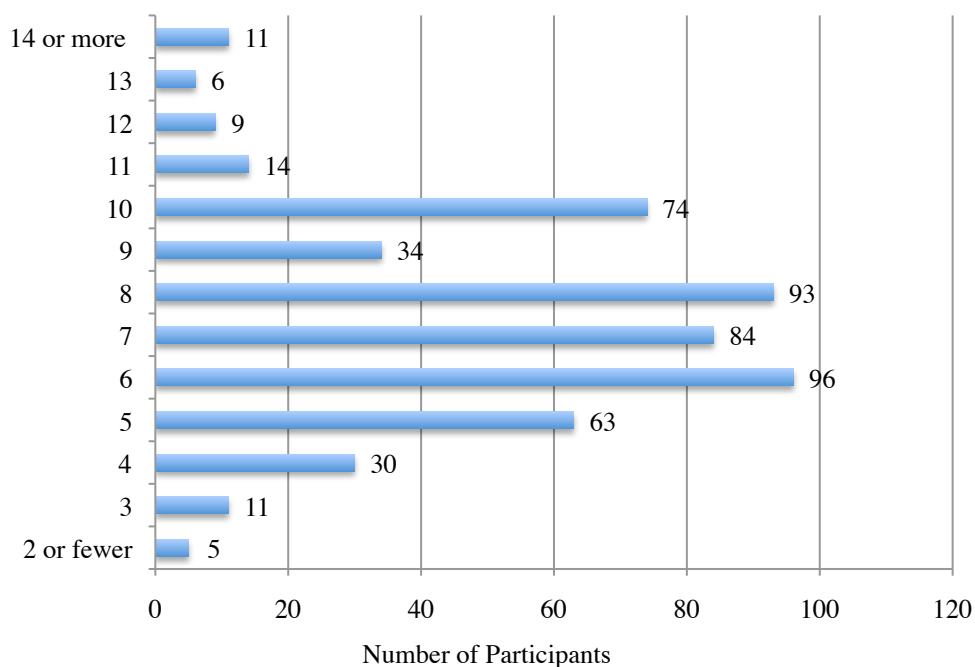
**Percentage of Participants by Faculty**



Almost the entire sample reported having Internet service at home, with only 2 respondents reporting not having service at home and 530 reporting having service. The majority of respondents had been using the Internet for 5 to 10 years, as displayed in Figure 3.3. Only a small minority had used the Internet for 2 or fewer years, and 40 participants reported using the Internet for 11 or more years, as shown below.

**Figure 3.3**

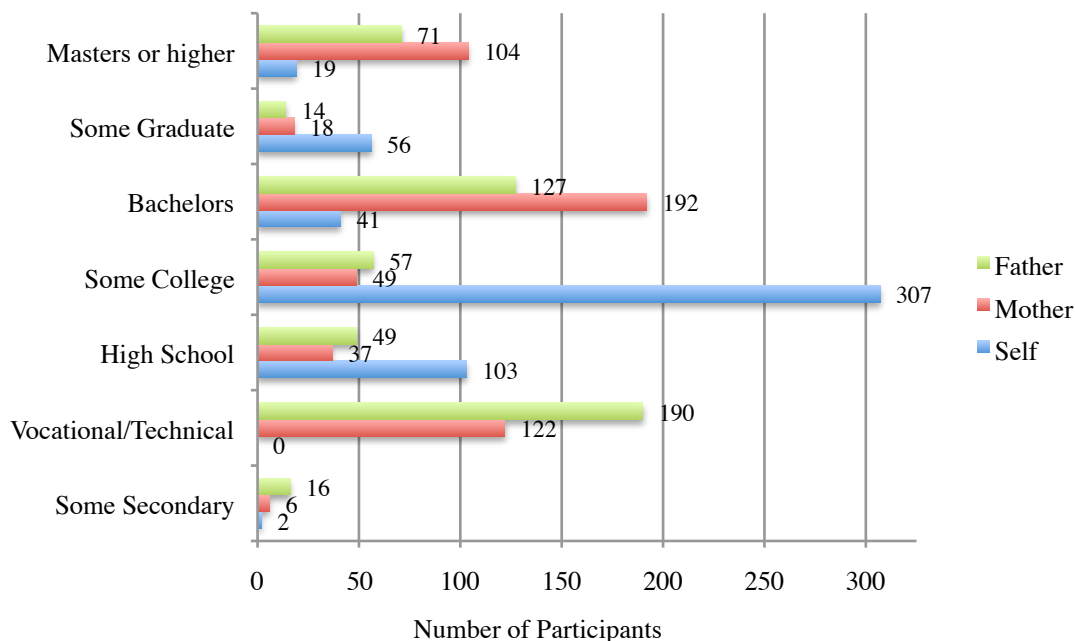
**Number of Years Participants Have Used the Internet**



Most of the sample reported having completed some college education (58%) or having received a high school diploma (20%), as shown in Figure 3.4. This is not unexpected, as most of the sample was 18- to 21-years-old, the typical ages of undergraduate students. Smaller proportions reported having received a Bachelor's degree (8%), having some graduate education (11%), or having received a Master's degree (3%). Respondents reported that their mothers were more educated than their fathers, with higher percentages of mothers attaining Bachelor's degrees (36%), some graduate education (3%), and Master's degrees (20%) than fathers (24%, 3%, and 14%, respectively). The most common level of educational attainment of fathers was vocational or technical school degrees, which were attained by 36% of fathers.

**Figure 3.4**

**Education Levels of Participants and Their Parents**



The majority of the sample represented moderate to high socioeconomic status (SES). The number of books present in a home has been an effective indicator of socioeconomic status in international studies of educational achievement, interpreted as a proxy for resources available to acquire and support literacy (Beaton et al., 1996; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). Overall, almost half of respondents (46%) reported that they had more than 100 books at home when they were growing up ( $n = 243$ ). About 32% reported 51 to 100 books ( $n = 168$ ), 20% reported 11 to 50 books ( $n = 106$ ), and only 3% reported 0 to 10 books at home ( $n = 15$ ).



## Sample Size

Studies of Internet use and civic engagement tend to have small effect sizes, so power analyses were carried out to determine the necessary sample size for detecting significant effects for constructs of interest. To determine the appropriate level of power (the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis given that it is false), national population data were considered. Research with adult samples in Lithuania indicated low levels of civic participation (Degutis et al., 2008), making differential effects difficult to detect. Therefore, the level of power for the proposed study was set at .90, higher than the common .80 level. This increase in power decreased the chance of a Type II error (a false negative or missing an effect that exists), from 20% to 10%. To determine the appropriate alpha level (the probability that the detected effect could occur by chance), previous studies of Internet use and engagement were considered. Researchers often reported small effect sizes with alpha levels of .05, so alpha was set to .05. This significance level is two-tailed, testing for both positive and negative effects, and this decreases power.

Conducting a power analysis a priori requires knowing effect sizes from previous studies for the constructs identified in research questions. Power analyses for this study were limited to effect sizes for Internet use studies and variables used in previous Internet and civic participation studies: organizational participation, civic activism, political discourse, and interpersonal trust. Because different studies reported different types of effect sizes (regression coefficients, correlation coefficients, explained variance), separate power analyses were carried out for each type of effect size. Although it is possible to convert effect sizes from one kind of statistic to another, different types of analyses

require different amounts of power. Therefore, separate power calculations produce the most accurate estimates.

Boulianne's (2009) meta-analysis of 22 studies and 85 effect sizes regarding Internet use and civic engagement yielded an average effect size of  $r^2=.07$ , with a standard deviation of .10. This effect size refers to a standard regression coefficient. Because the meta-analysis does not report an average sum of squares (required for a manual power calculation for a regression analysis using beta values), Faul and colleagues' (2009) G\*Power 3.1 software was used to conduct power analyses to determine sample size. To calculate the sample size required to detect the linear regression effects Boulianne (2009) reviewed, Cohen's  $f^2$  (the ratio of explained variance to error variance) was calculated from the partial  $r^2$  of Internet use effects that Boulianne estimated at 2%. The following sample size results were found using an effect size of  $f^2=.02$ , an alpha level of .05, a power level of .90, and one predictor, Internet use.

**Input:**

Effect size  $f^2 = .02$   
 $\alpha$  err prob = .05  
Power (1- $\beta$  err prob) = .90  
Number of tested predictors = 1

**Output:**

Noncentrality parameter  $\lambda = 10.55$   
Critical F = 3.86  
Numerator df = 1; denominator df = 515  
Total sample size = **517**  
Actual power = .90

Thus, the estimated sample size required to accept an outcome of a linear multiple regression analysis in which Internet use explained 2% of the variance in civic engagement is 517.

Based on the same procedure, Table 3.1 displays the studies reviewed for political discourse effect sizes and the power analysis input and output. The output column

provides the sample sizes required to detect the given effect sizes. The average sample size required is given in the last row, in this case 157.

**Table 3.1**

**Political Discourse Effect Sizes**

	<i>Effect size</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Output</i>
Kenski & Stroud, 2006	N = 7650, partial $r^2 = .07$ , 7 predictors, 19 total	Discussion & traditional media predict political participation	Linear multiple regression: $r^2$ increase $f^2 = .08$ Tested predictors = 7 Total predictors = 19	$\lambda = 18.90$ Critical F = 2.05 df = 7; df = 220 Sample size = <b>240</b>
Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005	N = 1468, $r^2 = .11$ , 2 predictors	Online & offline media predict communication	Linear multiple regression: fixed $f^2 = .12$ Predictors = 2	$\lambda = 13.10$ Critical F = 3.08 df = 2; df = 103 Sample size = <b>106</b>
Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001	N = 30211, $r^2 = .07$ , 1 predictor	Asynchronous Internet use predicts political discourse	Linear multiple regression: fixed $f^2 = .08$ Predictors=1	$\lambda = 10.70$ Critical F = 3.91 df = 1; df = 138 Sample size = <b>140</b>
Xenos & Moy, 2007	N = 584, $r^2 = .14$ , 11 predictors	Background, campaign & political interest, online info predict political talk	Linear multiple regression: fixed $f^2 = .16$ Predictors=11	$\lambda = 22.95$ Critical F = 1.86 df = 11; df = 129 Sample size = <b>141</b>
Average sample size = <b>157</b>				

Effect sizes for the civic activism literature regarding Internet use are reviewed in Table 3.2. Two studies were left out because the statistics presented could not be used for power analyses. Driskell and Embry (2008) reported only pseudo- $R^2$  values. Lin and colleagues' (2005) study presented only a Chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2(1) = 12.16, p < .001$ ) of Internet use cross-tabbed with civic engagement. The G\*Power 3.1 software was used to calculate the noncentrality parameter ( $\lambda = 10.51$ ), but could not calculate sample size a priori. The average sample size required for the given civic activism effect sizes was 181.

**Table 3.2**

**Civic Activism Effect Sizes**

	<i>Effect size</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Output</i>
Jennings & Zeitner, 2003	N = 860, r = .17, p < .001	Volunteer activities correlated with Internet access	Correlation: bivariate q H1 = .17 q H0 = .01	Lower critical r = 0.10 Upper critical r = 0.10 Sample size= <b>330</b>
Moy, Manosevitch, Stamm, & Dunsmore, 2005	N = 301, incremental r <sup>2</sup> = .104, 6 predictors, 20 total	Non-information Internet use predict community involvement	Linear multiple regression: r <sup>2</sup> increase f <sup>2</sup> = 0.12 Tested predictors = 6 Total predictors = 20	λ = 18.34 Critical F = 2.17 df = 6; df = 137 Sample size = <b>158</b>
Pasek, Kenski, Romer, & Jamieson 2006	N = 1478, incremental r <sup>2</sup> = .101, 1 predictor, 15 total	Using Internet for information predicts civic activity	Linear multiple regression: r <sup>2</sup> increase f <sup>2</sup> = 0.11 Tested predictors = 1 Total predictors = 15	λ = 10.79 Critical F = 3.96 df = 1; df = 80 Sample size = <b>96</b>
Shah, Kwak, & Holbert, 2001	N = 2769; r <sup>2</sup> = .1175; 15 predictors	Background & media use predict civic engagement	Linear multiple regression: fixed f <sup>2</sup> = 0.13 Predictors = 15	λ = 25.30 Critical F = 1.72 df = 15; df = 174 Sample size = <b>190</b>
Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009	N = 1727, partial r <sup>2</sup> = .099, 10 predictors	Background, trust, & intensity of Facebook use predict civic engagement	Linear multiple regression: fixed f <sup>2</sup> = 0.11 Predictors = 10	λ = 21.65 Critical F = 1.88 df = 10; df = 186 Sample size = <b>197</b>
Xenos & Moy, 2007	N = 584, r <sup>2</sup> = .17, 11 predictors	Background, attention, political interest, & online info predict civic participation	Linear multiple regression: fixed f <sup>2</sup> = 0.20 Predictors = 11	λ = 23.35 Critical F = 1.88 df = 11; df = 102 Sample size = <b>114</b>
Average sample size = <b>181</b>				

Next, effect sizes for the organizational participation literature regarding Internet use are reviewed in Table 3.3. The average sample size required for detecting effects in organizational participation was 155.

**Table 3.3**

**Organizational Participation Effect Sizes**

	<i>Effect size</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Output</i>
Jennings & Zeitner, 2003	N = 860; r = .29; p < .001	Organizational membership correlated with Internet access	Correlation: bivariate $\rho$ H1 = .29 $\rho$ H0 = .01	Lower critical r = .17 Upper critical r = .17 Sample size = <b>105</b>
Moy, Manosevitch, Stamm, & Dunsmore, 2005	N = 301, partial $r^2$ = .161, 6 predictors, 20 total	Non-information Internet use predicts group membership	Linear multiple regression: $r^2$ increase $f^2$ = .19 Tested predictors = 6 Total predictors = 20	$\lambda$ = 19.00 Critical F = 2.17 df = 6; df = 78 Sample size = <b>99</b>
	N = 301, partial $r^2$ = .05, 1 predictor, 20 total	Information-seeking predicts group membership	Linear multiple regression: $r^2$ increase $f^2$ = 0.05 Tested predictors = 1 Total predictors = 20	$\lambda$ = 10.65 Critical F = 3.89 df = 1; df = 205 Sample size = <b>226</b>
Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001	N = 30211, $r^2$ = .07, 1 predictor	Asynchronous Internet use predicts organizational participation	Linear multiple regression: fixed $f^2$ = 0.07 Predictors=1	$\lambda$ = 13.14 Critical F = 3.89 df = 1; df = 187 Sample size = <b>189</b>
Average sample size = <b>155</b>				

Finally, effect sizes for the interpersonal trust literature regarding Internet use and civic engagement are reviewed in Table 3.4. The average sample size required for detecting effects in interpersonal trust was 176.

**Table 3.4****Interpersonal Trust Effect Sizes**

	<i>Effect size</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Output</i>
Shah, Kwak, & Holbert, 2001	N = 2787, r <sup>2</sup> = .09, 15 predictors	Background & media use predict social trust	Linear multiple regression: fixed f <sup>2</sup> = .10 Predictors=15	λ = 24.81 Critical F = 1.71 df = 15; df = 244 Sample size = <b>260</b>
Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009	N = 1935, partial r <sup>2</sup> = .06, 1 predictor, 8 total	Intensity of Facebook use predicts social trust	Linear multiple regression: r <sup>2</sup> increase f <sup>2</sup> = .06 Tested predictors = 1 Total predictors = 8	λ = 10.66 Critical F = 3.90 df = 1; df = 158 Sample size = <b>167</b>
Welzel, 2010	N = 52404, r <sup>2</sup> = .18, 9 predictors	Background, membership in groups, predict generalized trust	Linear multiple regression: fixed f <sup>2</sup> = 0.22 Predictors = 9	λ = 21.72 Critical F = 1.98 df = 9; df = 91 Sample size = <b>101</b>
Average sample size = <b>176</b>				

Taking the overall average of sample sizes required to detect effect sizes for each construct (157, 181, 155, 176), the sample size required for the proposed study is 167. This number is much lower than the 517 called for from Boulianne's (2009) estimated effect size, so it is possible that the constructs targeted in this study have higher effect sizes, or that the most recent studies (e.g., Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009) display stronger effects than earlier studies included in Boulianne's (2009) meta-analysis. To be on the safe side, a sample size of 400 18- to 30-year-old Lithuanian young adults was selected in order to detect potentially smaller effects in the Lithuanian population that might exist compared to the American populations studied.

## Procedures

In the spring of 2010, the researcher conducted a pilot study among Lithuanian-American young adults in the United States. The purpose of the pilot study was to develop and validate an Internet engagement measure for research in Lithuania. Results of the study in a small sample ( $N = 60$ ) of 17- to 27-year old Lithuanian-Americans provided a foundation for the current study. Factor analyses<sup>2</sup> of the theoretical types of Internet activities measured provided insight into the dimensions underlying online engagement, and correlation analyses with civic attitudes and behaviors provide a basis for construct validity of scales. The survey measures were refined based on pilot study results, as detailed below (see Measures).

The pilot study provided a foundation for a larger scale study in Lithuania. In the fall of 2012, all documents for the current study were submitted to the Clemson University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. A Youth Affairs Chair of the Lithuanian American Community, with expertise in Lithuanian studies, was consulted regarding cultural appropriateness of the study and potential risks to young adults in Lithuania. She found no risks and the study was approved. None of the targeted Lithuanian universities had an organization equivalent to an IRB, but department heads at five universities supported the study and partnered with the researcher to disseminate the survey instrument to their students.

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<sup>2</sup> Although some researchers recommend a minimum absolute number of cases for factor analysis (i.e.,  $N = 100$ ), others argue that the subjects-to-variables (STV) ratio is more important (i.e., 5:1 STV) (Bryant & Yarnold, 1995). To reach an acceptable STV ratio, the pilot test's exploratory factor analyses were conducted on each theoretical factor rather than on the entire Internet engagement measure.

## **Recruitment**

One department head or professor from each college and university, VU, VDU, LEU, KVK, and VGTU, partnered with the researcher to disseminate the survey. The participating faculties were sent informational letters, detailing the purpose of the research, potential risks and benefits of participation, the protection of confidentiality, the voluntary nature of the study, and contact information for questions and concerns, as presented in Appendix A. They were asked to forward the invitation, which included a message for students and a link to the survey, to their students. A follow-up email was sent to the faculty partners two weeks after the initial communication, so that they could remind students about the opportunity to participate in the research study.

## **Confidentiality and Consent**

The informational letter, shown in Appendix A, explained the purpose of the study and the nature of participation, the potential risks and benefits of participation, the protection of confidentiality, the voluntary nature of the study, and who to contact with questions or concerns. Students were informed that they would not be penalized if they chose not to participate, and that they could withdraw at any time during the survey. The survey did not collect participants' names and the data were stored electronically without identifiers. Only the researcher had access to the data. When potential participants accessed the web-based questionnaire, they were asked to provide their consent by checking a box labeled "Yes, I would like to participate in this study" before proceeding, in place of signed consent.



## **Incentive to Participate**

Upon completing the questionnaire, respondents were invited to participate in a raffle for seven iPod shuffles (priced at \$40 each). They were instructed to email the researcher, providing the code displayed on the last page of the questionnaire (“PilietinisDalyvavimas” i.e., “CivicEngagement”). This procedure ensured that respondents’ names and email addresses could not be associated with their individual responses to the survey, which remained confidential. In all, 262 participants emailed the researcher (49%), out of 530 who completed the entire questionnaire. Their names and email addresses were entered into a spreadsheet. When the one-month data collection period ended, the researcher printed the names of raffle participants, and picked seven names out of a bowl. The seven randomly selected winners were contacted so that they could indicate their desired iPod color and mailing address. The researcher mailed the iPod shuffles to Lithuania—four to Vilnius, two to Kaunas, and one to Raseiniai.

## **Measures**

As discussed in Chapter Two, the structural features examined in this study were government responsiveness and trust in institutions. Internet engagement factors examined were social networking, information exchange, and political expression. Civic values included trust in groups and interpersonal trust, political efficacy, and self-expression, and civic behaviors included organizational participation, community action, and political discourse. The major constructs are presented in Table 3.5.

**Table 3.5****The Study's Major Constructs**

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Operational Definition</i>	<i>Source</i>
Government Responsiveness	Perception that government leaders understand and respond to the opinions of ordinary people	IEA Civic Education, National Election Studies
Trust in Institutions	Degree of trust in government, courts, police, political parties, parliament, media, etc.	IEA Civic Education, European Values Study
Social Networking	Frequency of online social networking, from keeping in touch to finding others with similar interests	Created
Information Exchange	Frequency of online information searching/receiving about political issues, organizations, and events	Created
Political Expression	Frequency of expressing opinions online about political issues and current events	Created
Internet Opportunity	Perception of opportunity to build social networks, find information about politics, and express opinions online	Created
Trust in Groups & Interpersonal Trust	Degree of trust in a variety of groups, & trust that people would try to be fair instead of take advantage	European Values Study, World Values Survey
Political Efficacy	Feelings of competence to understand and participate in politics	National Election Studies
Self-Expression	Perception of importance of protecting freedom of speech and giving people a voice in government and community	World Values Survey
Organizational Participation	Number of memberships in a variety of civic organizations, weighted for degree of activism	IEA Civic Education, World Values Study
Community Action	Frequency of engagement in community activities	IEA Civic Education study
Political Discourse	Frequency of face-to-face political discussions with classmates, friends, parents, teachers, & others	IEA Civic Education study

The survey measures drew on the International Educational Achievement's (IEA) Civic Education Study (Torney-Purta et al., 2001), the World Values Survey (2005), the European Values Study (2008), and the National Election Studies (Niemi, Craig, &

Mattei, 1991) to assess major constructs as well as demographic characteristics, life satisfaction, and socioeconomic status. Although not all of the measures had established psychometric properties, most of them had been used with Lithuanian populations in previous studies. The Internet engagement measures and an Internet opportunity measure were constructed based on the literature and the scales were modified after a separate pilot test study was conducted (see Measures for details).

Overall, the survey instrument contained 110 items (Appendix B). The survey and invitations to participate were translated into Lithuanian by the researcher. These documents were then back-translated into English by professional Lithuania translators. Discrepancies in the English versions of the questionnaire and informational letter were resolved by working with the translators to adjust the Lithuanian version so that it had the same meaning as the English version. The researcher worked with the translators to finalize wording to ensure that concepts were appropriately expressed in contemporary Lithuanian terms (e.g., in Lithuania, “blogs” are known as “internetiniai dienoraščiai,” or “Internet diaries”). The final English and Lithuanian versions of all documents are presented in Appendices A and B.

### **Government Responsiveness**

Government responsiveness was assessed using three political system items developed by Torney-Purta and colleagues (2001) for the IEA Civic Education study (marked with <sup>I</sup> in Appendix B) and two external political efficacy items used by Niemi and colleagues (1991) in the National Election Studies (marked with <sup>Y</sup> in Appendix B).

Statements exploring attitudes toward government were rated on a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Three items, regarding political power, participants' say in government, and public officials' caring, were reverse coded so that all items were scored positively. In the IEA Civic Education and National Election studies, single items were used in analyses. In this study, items were tested for internal consistency reliability, and four items formed a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .70$ ). The lower cut-off for acceptable reliability was set at  $\alpha = .70$  (Brace, Kemp, & Snelgar, 2009). One item, regarding political power in the hands of a few, was omitted to increase reliability. Scale characteristics are provided in Table 3.6.

### **Trust in Institutions**

Trust in national public institutions was assessed using the trust in institutions scale developed by Torney-Purta and colleagues (2001) (marked with <sup>L</sup> in Appendix B). During pilot testing, response categories for how much participants can trust institutions were revised from 1 (*never*), 2 (*only some of the time*), 3 (*most of the time*), and 4 (*always*), which some participants found confusing, to 1 (*do not trust at all*), 2 (*do not trust very much*), 3 (*neutral*), 4 (*trust somewhat*), and 5 (*trust completely*). In the IEA study, five items formed a trust in government-institutions scale ( $\alpha = .78$ ), which was replicated in the pilot study ( $\alpha = .90$ ). For the current study, three items were added for comparison, including trust in the armed forces, the education system, and the healthcare system (European Values Survey, 2008) (marked with <sup>M</sup> in Appendix B). The eight items formed a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .78$ ) Additional details are provided in Table 3.6.

**Table 3.6****Psychometric Properties of Major Constructs**

	<i><math>\alpha</math></i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Government responsiveness	.70	2.61	.71	534
Trust in institutions	.78	3.01	.60	537
Social networking	.80	4.06	1.25	580
Information exchange	.83	5.58	1.22	580
Political expression	.73	2.34	1.09	580
Internet opportunity	.70	8.34	1.90	515
Trust in groups	-	3.62	.49	537
Interpersonal trust	-	5.52	2.27	533
Political efficacy	.82	3.14	.75	534
Self-expression values	-	8.56	1.28	531
Organizational participation	-	3.17	3.20	558
Community action	.73	2.47	1.00	562
Political discourse	.85	3.34	1.43	558

**Social Networking, Information Exchange, and Political Expression**

Although previous studies have examined Internet use for various purposes, no scale has been published that measures the range of new opportunities online. Therefore, an Internet engagement scale was developed to include activities related to the creation and strengthening of social capital (marked with <sup>A</sup>), the development of interests through information exchange (marked with <sup>B</sup>), and the exploration of identity through creative self-expression (marked with <sup>C</sup>). To test the dimensionality of the construct, a large

number of items (52) was generated. The researcher constructed 14 items for each social networking, information exchange, and political expression, as well as 10 items related to entertainment (marked with <sup>D</sup>). The measure was refined based on responses from a group of experts comprised of the researcher's committee and prominent scholars in the field, who examined the items for theoretical validity. The scale was then pilot-tested in a small sample ( $N = 60$ ) of 18- to 30-year old Lithuanian-Americans living in the U.S.

The pilot study's analysis of reliability and validity provided a foundation for the current study. Items that were unreliable or unnecessary were eliminated, and the three engagement dimensions, social networking ( $\alpha = .80$ ), information exchange ( $\alpha = .91$ ), and political expression ( $\alpha = .86$ ), were scaled. Correlation analyses supported convergent validity, as scales were positively related to political participation, civic activism, and political discourse. As reviewed, Internet use for a variety of goals has been linked to political participation (Moy et al., 2005; Valenzuela et al., 2009), civic engagement (Jennings & Zeitner, 2003; Lin et al., 2005), and political discourse (Shah et al., 2005). Analyses of divergent validity between online entertainment ( $\alpha = .74$ ) and civic constructs indicated that Internet use for recreation was not significantly related to civic attitudes or behaviors, as found in previous studies (Shah, et al., 2001).

The current study's larger sample size ( $n = 580$ ) allowed for exploratory factor analyses to investigate the latent structure of the data and establish factorial validity of scales. Principal axis factor analyses revealed that the majority of items loaded on the first three factors, which explained 36% of the total variance. Factors were grouped according to magnitude of beta loadings, indicating common variance, and logic, as

shown in Table 4.2. The three factors formed reliable scales related to social networking, ( $\alpha = .80$ ), information exchange ( $\alpha = .83$ ), and political expression, ( $\alpha = .73$ ), and scale characteristics are provided in Table 3.6. The four items of Internet entertainment ( $\alpha = .82$ ) also proved internally reliable.

Convergent validity of the Internet engagement scales was established through correlation analyses with civic attitudes, as displayed in Table 4.5, and with civic behaviors. As found in previous studies, Internet use for social networking, information exchange, and political expression was strongly associated ( $p < .001$ ) with all civic activism measures: organizational participation (Jennings & Zeitner, 2003; Moy et al., 2005), civic engagement (Lin et al., 2005; Pasek & Kenski, 2006; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009), and political discourse. Divergent validity of online entertainment was supported by a lack of correlations with almost all civic attitudes and behaviors. Internet entertainment correlated only with Community Action  $r(560) = .10, p = .01$ .

### **Internet Opportunity**

The researcher's pilot study investigated opportunities for expression through specific online activities. However, substantial proportions of participants indicated that they did not know how to respond to whether they perceived opportunities for expression through activities such as Twitter (36%), political campaigns (31%), and online groups (26%). Therefore, the measure was revised to ask respondents more generally whether the Internet provides opportunities for them to build social networks, find information about political issues, and express opinions (marked with <sup>R</sup> in Appendix B). Response

categories ranged from 1 (*no opportunity at all*) to 10 (*very much opportunity*). The three items formed a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .70$ ), as shown in Table 3.6.

### **Trust in Groups and Interpersonal Trust**

Trust in groups was assessed using the items developed by Welzel (2010) for the fifth round of the World Values Survey (marked with <sup>N</sup> in Appendix B). Response categories indicating degree of trust in various groups included 1 (*do not trust at all*), 2 (*do not trust very much*), 3 (*neutral*), 4 (*trust somewhat*), and 5 (*trust completely*). The first three items referred to familiar people, indicating particularized trust, while the next three items referred to people who were unfamiliar or dissimilar in belief and origin, indicating generalized trust. Following Welzel (2010), the researcher applied a formative index logic, adding scores for each group and dividing by six, to create an index of trust in groups. Index results are shown in Table 3.6.

An interpersonal trust item from the European Values Study (2008) was added for comparison. The item investigated whether respondents thought that most people would try to take advantage of them if given the chance, or whether they would try to be fair (marked with <sup>O</sup> in Appendix B). Response categories ranged from 1 (*most people would try to take advantage of me*) to 10 (*most people would try to be fair to me*). The characteristics of the interpersonal trust item are displayed in Table 3.6.



## **Political Efficacy**

Feelings of personal competence to understand and participate in politics were assessed following the National Election Studies (Morrell, 2003; Niemi et al., 1991). Respondents were asked to rate agreement regarding four statements of confidence in political abilities on a Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) (marked <sup>J</sup> in Appendix B). Based on 1988, 1992, and 2000 NES data, the four-item scale proved to be both internally reliable and externally valid, as correlations with psychological involvement, participation, and external efficacy established convergent validity (Morrell, 2003). In the current study, two items from the IEA Civic Education Study (Torney-Purta et al., 2001), regarding interest in politics and having something to say when politics are discussed, were added for comparison (marked with <sup>K</sup> in Appendix B). The six items formed a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .82$ ), and details are provided in Table 3.6.

## **Self-Expression Values**

Self-expression values were assessed using the three-item expressive value orientation developed by Welzel and Inglehart (2010). Respondents were asked how important it was for Lithuania to protect freedom of speech and give people more say in government and local community decisions (marked <sup>Q</sup> in Appendix B). To increase the likelihood of detecting differences, respondents were asked to rate each goal on a scale from 1 (*not at all important*) to 10 (*very important*), rather than choosing the most important goal for the country, as participants did in World Values Surveys (Welzel &

Inglehart, 2010). One item regarding expression of opinion was added for comparison. Results of the 4-item index are shown in Table 3.6.

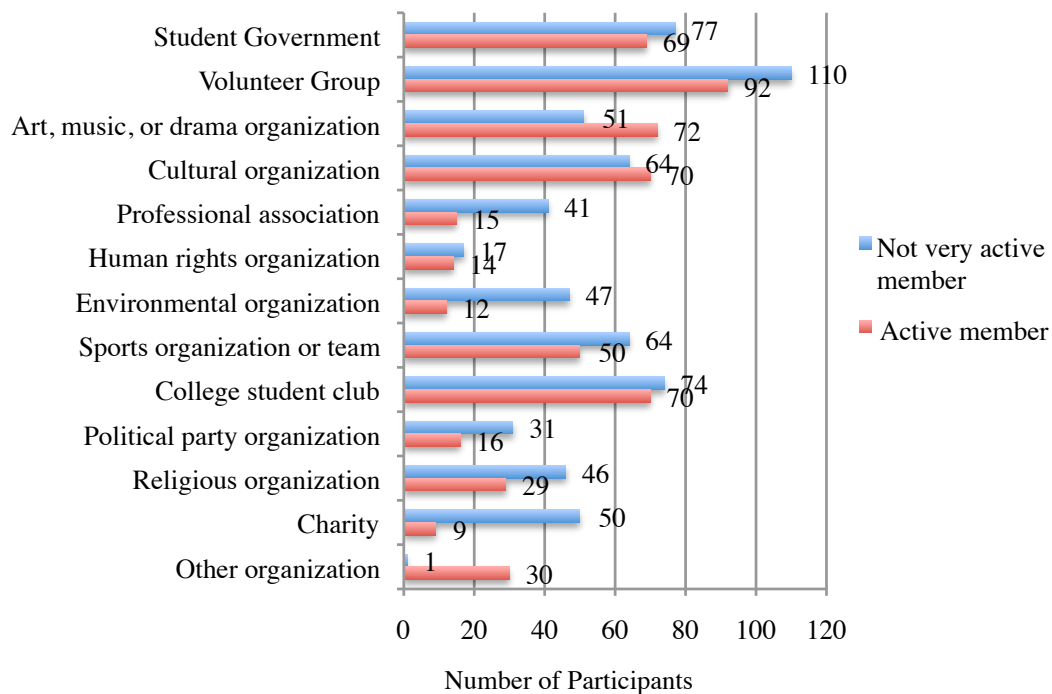
### **Organizational Participation**

Organizational participation was assessed using 12 items from Torney-Purta and colleagues' (2001) membership items and the European Values Study's (2008) belonging to voluntary organizations items (marked <sup>H</sup> in Appendix B). In the pilot study, response options were limited to 0 (*no*) and 1 (*yes*), and responses were summed to measure the number of organizations to which each respondent belonged. In the current study, respondents were asked whether they had participated in voluntary organizations on a regular basis, as opposed to not very actively or not at all. Response categories included 0 (*not a member*), 1 (*not very active member*), and 2 (*active member*), to take into account participants' membership and their degree of participation. Respondents' levels of participation in different voluntary organizations are displayed in Figure 3.5.

Respondents also had the opportunity to add engagement in other organizations that were not listed. They wrote in youth civic NGOs, organizations for people with disabilities, Scouts, health organizations, academic and career-specific groups, an emotional support organization, an underground press, an animal rights organization, a student corporation, a home-repair charity, and an IT club. Scores on items were summed to create a scale of organizational participation from 0 to 26 where 0 was no participation and 26 was active participation in all types of organizations. Most scores were on the low end of the continuum, as shown in Table 3.6.

**Figure 3.5**

**Participation in Organizations**



**Community Action**

Frequency of participation in community activities, groups, and charities was measured using items from the second part of Torney-Purta and colleagues' (2001) political action measure. Answer choices in the pilot study measured frequency of behaviors using 1 (*never*), 2 (*rarely*), 3 (*sometimes*), and 4 (*often*), and the items formed a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .79$ ). To more accurately gauge the frequency of community participation, the civic activities in which people may participate on a regular basis were selected for response choices that were more specific, including 1 (*never*), 2 (*less than once a month*), 3 (*about once a month*), 4 (*a few times a month*), 5 (*about once a week*), 6

(*a few times a week*), 7 (*about once a day*), and 8 (*more than once a day*) (marked <sup>F</sup> in Appendix B). The six items formed a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .73$ ), as shown in Table 3.6.

### **Political Discourse**

Face-to-face discussions about politics were assessed using items from the IEA Civic Education study (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). The items explored how often respondents had political discussions with peers, parents, teachers, and others (marked <sup>E</sup> in Appendix B). An additional item, political discussion with friends, was added for comparison. In the IEA study, answer categories utilized a four-point Likert-type scale, including 1 (*never*), 2 (*rarely*), 3 (*sometimes*), and 4 (*often*). Because participants in the pilot study indicated that the answer choices were ambiguous, the response choices were revised to be more specific, including 1 (*never*), 2 (*less than once a month*), 3 (*about once a month*), 4 (*a few times a month*), 5 (*about once a week*), 6 (*a few times a week*), 7 (*about once a day*), and 8 (*more than once a day*). In the pilot study, items formed a reliable Political Discourse scale ( $\alpha = .76$ ). The scale was replicated in the current study ( $\alpha = .85$ ). Further details are provided in Table 3.6.

### **Demographics and Socio-Economic Status**

Demographic questions were based on items from the IEA Civic Education study (Torney-Purta et al., 2001) and the European Values Study (2008). Questions targeted background information including age, sex, citizenship, and city of residence, as shown in Appendix B. Additional items, created by the researcher, included the university and

department where each student studied, as well as the presence of Internet service at home and the number of years respondents have used the Internet.

Socio-economic measures explored participants' and their parents' levels of educational attainment (marked <sup>W</sup> in Appendix B) and the number of books present in respondents parents' homes when they were growing up (marked <sup>V</sup> in Appendix B). The number of books present in a child's home has been used as an effective indicator of socio-economic status (SES) in international studies of educational achievement, interpreted as a proxy for resources available to acquire and support literacy (Beaton et al., 1996; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). A final SES measure asked participants to think back to when they were about 14-years-old, an important age for youth development, and rate whether their parents liked to read books, discussed politics at home, followed the news, and whether they had problems making ends meet (reverse-coded) (marked <sup>U</sup> in Appendix B). Response categories were on a Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) (European Values Study, 2008).

## **Approach to Analysis**

### **Data Preparation**

Before analyses were conducted, the data were cleaned and prepared. This involved examining response distributions to assess outliers, missing values, and skewness. Because the initial sample size ( $N = 590$ ) provided sufficient power, outliers (e.g., respondents who were over 30-years-old) were excluded from analyses. The dataset contained missing values, and 48 participants did not complete the entire questionnaire.

However, these cases were retained to maximize sample size for factor analyses of the constructed Internet engagement measure, which was completed by all respondents. Data preparation is elaborated in Chapter Four, Results.

Skewness of scales, indexes, and items of interest was assessed, and non-linear transformations were conducted on skewed measures to improve response distributions for use in analyses that assume normality. Measures with skewness more extreme than + or -.8 and less extreme than + or -1.5 were recoded through square root transformations, and those with skewness more extreme than + or -1.5 were recoded through logarithmic transformations. Although some skewness for these measures could be expected given low rates of activism and civic attitudes in Lithuania, the transformations improved the variables' response distributions for use in analyses.

Correcting for univariate skew does not necessarily correct for multivariate skew, which takes into account the inter-relationships among variables. However, multivariate normality is extremely difficult to test for, given large numbers of linear combinations (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Therefore, as suggested by some scholars (e.g., Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), the researcher only tested and corrected for univariate skew.

### **Nature and Extent of Internet Engagement**

Research Question 1, regarding the nature and extent of Lithuanian young adult participation in social networking, information exchange, and political expression, was addressed through analyses of Internet engagement scales. Principal axis factor analyses investigated the latent structure of the Internet use data and provided information on the

types of activities that Lithuanian university students participated in online. Direct oblimin rotation was used to allow for some covariance among items. Items with very low communalities (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), which indicated small percentages of variance explained by the analysis, were dropped. Almost all items loaded on the first three factors, and they were grouped according to magnitude of beta loadings and logic. Several items loaded on unexpected factors, and scales were created accordingly. Descriptive statistics of the three constructed scales provided information on the average frequency of engagement in each group of activities.

Descriptive statistics were provided for all corrected scales, indexes, and individual items of interest. Means, standard deviations, and sample sizes were presented, along with internal reliability scores for scales and skewness statistics. Research Question 2, concerning the relationship between demographic variables and Internet engagement measures, was addressed through Pearson chi-square and Pearson correlation analyses. Correlation analyses were conducted to explore socio-economic status (SES) differences between participants who engaged in social networking, information exchange, and political expression frequently, and those who did not engage in these activities often.

### **Structural Features, Civic Attitudes, and Civic Activism**

Research Questions 3 and 4, regarding the relationships between structural features and Internet engagement and civic attitudes and Internet engagement, were addressed through Pearson correlation analyses. The associations between government responsiveness and trust in institutions (structural features) and Internet social

networking, information exchange, and political expression were presented. Correlations between Internet engagement scales and civic attitudes, including trust in groups, interpersonal trust, political efficacy, and self-expression values, were also displayed.

Research Question 5, concerning the effects of Internet engagement on offline activism, was addressed through three hierarchical multiple regression analyses. Criterion variables in analyses were organizational participation, community action, and political discourse. Based on correlations, the analyses investigated the unique contributions of family socio-economic status, perceived structural features, Internet engagement, and civic values on respondents' offline civic activism. Thus, the analyses assessed the relative contributions of up to four blocks of predictor variables for each of the three civic activism constructs. Because the sample size afforded sufficient power, cases were excluded listwise, so those with missing values for any of the variables in a regression analysis were dropped. Results were used to evaluate the theoretical model's ability to predict Lithuanian students' civic activism offline. However, findings were interpreted with caution, given methodological limitations.

### **Methodological Limitations**

Because the study targeted self-selected university students, the sample was not random or nationally representative, so results cannot be generalized to Lithuanian young adults as a whole. Furthermore, online surveys created self-selection bias, as those who had access to the Internet came from higher SES backgrounds and may have had more time and resources to engage in civic activities than others. Therefore, results



characterized the tendencies of youth who used the Internet, and not average youth tendencies. However, because the study's purpose was to investigate relationships between online engagement and civic participation, it made sense to target youth who do use the Internet. Furthermore, Internet use did not guarantee engagement in social networking, information exchange, or political expression online, and the sample included a range of students who exhibited low and high engagement.

Given the cross-sectional nature of the study, the causal directions between constructs remained unclear. Those who already engaged more in civic activities and organizations offline may have been more likely to engage in social networking, information exchange, and political expression activities online. A longitudinal study that could track changes in Internet activism and civic attitudes and behaviors over time, using a random sample or random assignment to account for person characteristics, could address this limitation. Finally, a potential limitation is measurement bias, as some of the constructs of interest, including Internet engagement, political efficacy, and community activism, may not have widespread currency in Lithuania. However, the researcher consulted with civil society scholars at Vytautas Magnus University regarding the meaning of these terms in Lithuanian and revised the questionnaire during pilot testing based on feedback from local researchers, academics, and student leaders.

### **Summary**

Chapter Three presented the design and methodology of the conducted study. The survey population was described and power analyses were conducted to determine the

required sample size for detecting effect sizes for constructs of interest. Procedures for carrying out the study were explained, including recruitment strategies, protections for participants, and incentives to participate. The study's variables and construction of measures were described. Finally, the approach to data cleaning and bivariate and multivariate analysis was presented, including the methods for exploring research questions. The chapter ended with a summary of methodological limitations of the study, which require that results be interpreted with caution. Next, Chapter Four presents the results of data analyses.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### **Data Preparation**

Before examining research questions, the data were cleaned and prepared through assessments of outliers, missing values, and skewness. The only outliers in the data were respondents who were over 30-years-old. Because the sample size ( $N = 590$ ) provided sufficient power, the ten cases of older respondents were excluded from analyses.

Another peculiarity of the data involved the ratio of female to male respondents, which was over 4 to 1. As discussed in Chapter Three (see Participants), women are more likely to respond to surveys than men, and the faculties targeted, including social sciences and education, may have had larger proportions of women. Of the 580 cases in the data set, 532 reached the end of the questionnaire. The researcher retained the 48 cases where respondents failed to complete the survey, in order to maximize sample size for factor analyses of the constructed Internet engagement measures.

Several of the scales, indexes, and items representing constructs of interest indicated skewed data (more extreme than + or -.8), as displayed in Table 4.1. Non-linear transformations were conducted to improve the distribution of the data for use in analyses that assume normality. Political expression online, organizational participation, and community action were positively skewed, indicating that most of the responses fell on the lower end of the frequency continuum. Self-expression values, on the other hand, was negatively skewed, indicating that the great majority of respondents reported very high

levels of prioritizing freedom of expression. Negatively skewed constructs were reflected, and square root transformations and logarithmic transformations were performed. The improved scales, shown in Table 4.1, were used in subsequent analyses.

**Table 4.1**  
**Skewness Corrections in Transformed Scales**

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skew</i>	<i>n</i>
Political expression	2.34	1.09	.83	580
Political expression transformed	1.49	.34	.58	580
Self-expression values	8.56	1.28	-1.28	531
Self-expression values transformed	1.51	.39	.65	531
Organizational participation	3.17	3.20	1.38	558
Organizational participation transformed	1.45	1.04	-.02	558
Community action	2.47	1.00	.96	562
Community action transformed	1.54	.31	.49	562

**Internet Engagement: Social Networking, Information Exchange,  
and Political Expression**

To address Research Question 1 (to what extent do self-selected Lithuanian 18- to 30-year-olds participate online in activities related to social networking, information exchange, and political expression?), analyses of Internet engagement items were conducted. Most of Internet engagement items correlated above .3, suggesting reasonable factorability (Brace, Kemp, & Snelgar, 2009). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy, indicating the amount of variance in the data, revealed excellent

factorability, KMO = .87, above the recommended value of .6. Finally, Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant,  $\chi^2 (276, n = 570) = 4021.25, p < .001$ . Principal axis factor analyses with direct oblimin rotation revealed very low communalities, explaining only 15% of the variance each for "Facebook" and "Twitter," and these items were dropped from the analysis. The final analysis revealed seven factors with eigenvalues greater than one, which explained 47% of the total variance.

The majority of items loaded onto the first three factors, which explained 36% of the total variance. Factors were grouped according to magnitude of beta loadings, and logic, as shown in Table 4.2. The three factors were related to social networking, information exchange, and political expression. Although two items had low loadings of .22, they were retained because they fit logically with factors and they improved scale internal reliability. Several items had stronger loadings on unexpected factors: "local events," "organize/ invite," and "talk issues" loaded on social networking rather than information exchange or political expression (Table 4.2). One item, "keep in touch," did not load on any of the first three factors, so it was omitted from scale development, along with "Facebook" and "Twitter." Keeping in touch online may be such a common practice that little variance exists.

**Table 4.2****Selected Factor Loadings for Internet Engagement Items**

	<b>Social Networking</b>	<b>Information Exchange</b>	<b>Political Expression</b>	<b>Communi- nalities</b>
Keep in touch with friends or relatives				.32
Bond with people you know	.45			.40
Find others who share your interests	.48			.46
Communicate with new friends	.51			.53
Interact with a group or community	.52			.55
Keep in touch with clubs or organizations	.61			.64
Follow current events		.37		.43
Read newspapers online		.43		.57
Look for information about political issue		.43		.60
Learn more about an important topic		.35		.55
Become interested in an issue		.31		.66
Look for information about a company or product		.27		.46
Receive information from an organization		.22		.56
Look for information to attend local events	.59			.47
Organize or invite people to an event	.54			.51
Work on your own web page or blog			.22	.31
Express an opinion about an issue			.30	.65
Post to a blog or discussion board			.30	.52
Contact leaders about important issues			.43	.44
Participate in a campaign			.43	.33
Share political information with friends			.47	.59
Talk to others about important issues	.58			.37

*Note.* Values are factor loadings based on a principle axis analysis with oblimin rotation. Factor loadings < .2 are suppressed.

## Variable Statistics and Demographic Differences

Descriptive statistics for constructs of interest are presented in Table 4.3. The great majority of respondents had access to the Internet at home, had experience using the Internet, and perceived vast opportunities to engage online in social networking, information exchange, and political expression; yet, engagement in these activities was not a daily or weekly occurrence for most participants. Of the three forms of Internet engagement, information exchange was the most common, with an average frequency of a couple times a week, about the same frequency as engaging in entertainment online (Table 4.3). Respondents engaged in social networking activities only a few times a month, on average. The least common type of engagement was political expression, with an average rating of less than once a month.

To address Research Question 2 (what demographic differences exist among Lithuanian young adults regarding Internet engagement?), chi-square and correlation analyses were conducted. Results indicated that respondents' engagement in social networking, information exchange, and political expression did not differ significantly by age, gender, city of residence, university, department, time using the Internet, mother's education level, or respondents' own education level. However, significant differences were found for father's education level in online social networking,  $\chi^2(390, n = 524) = 450.57, p = .02$ , and political expression  $\chi^2(264, n = 524) = 308.72, p = .03$ . Respondents whose fathers reached higher levels of education scored highest on the online activity measures. In addition, significant differences were found in information exchange for number of books at home when respondents were growing up,  $\chi^2(168, n = 532) =$

211.64,  $p = .01$ . Respondents whose homes had the most books scored the highest on information exchange, while those whose homes had the fewest scored the lowest. These findings suggest that key SES indicators affected frequency of Internet engagement.

**Table 4.3**

**Descriptive Statistics of Scales, Indexes, and Items**

	<b>Measure</b>	<b>No. of items</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b><i>Skew</i></b>	<b><i>n</i></b>
Structural features	Government responsiveness	4	.70	2.61	.71	.06	534
	Trust in institutions	8	.78	3.01	.60	-.32	537
Internet engagement	Social networking	8	.80	4.06	1.25	.25	580
	Information exchange	7	.83	5.58	1.22	-.35	580
	Political expression (transformed)	6	.73	1.49	0.34	.58	580
	Entertainment	4	.82	5.51	1.41	-.36	580
Civic attitudes	Trust in groups	6	-	3.62	.49	-.49	537
	Interpersonal trust	1	-	5.52	2.27	-.01	533
	Political efficacy	6	.82	3.14	.75	-.13	534
	Self-expression values (transformed)	4	-	1.51	.39	.65	531
Civic activism	Organizational participation (transformed)	13	-	1.45	1.04	-.02	558
	Community action (transformed)	6	.73	1.54	.31	.49	562
	Political discourse	5	.85	3.34	1.43	.43	558

Pearson correlation analyses were run between family SES items and Internet engagement scales to explore the relationship between socioeconomic status when respondents were growing up and their Internet behaviors. The SES items referred to statements that respondents' parents liked to read books, discussed politics at home, liked



to follow the news, and were able to make ends meet. All of these items correlated positively with at least one Internet engagement scale, as shown in Table 4.4. The item regarding parents making ends meet had the weakest correlation. Still, the findings suggest that family upbringing was strongly associated with Internet activism.

**Table 4.4**

**Correlation Coefficients between Internet Engagement and Family SES**

	<b>Social networking</b>	<b>Information exchange</b>	<b>Political expression</b>
Parents Read Books	.12**	.13**	.12**
Parents Discussed Politics	.18***	.30***	.23***
Parents Followed News	.10*	.18***	.14**
Parents Made Ends Meet	.09*	.08	.02

*Note:* Values represent Pearson's r coefficients. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (2-tailed).

**Structural Features and Civic Attitudes**

Research Questions 3 (how are government responsiveness and trust in institutions related to engagement in Internet social networking, information exchange, and political expression?) and 4 (how are social networking, information exchange, and political expression online related to values of interpersonal trust, trust in groups, political efficacy, and self-expression?) were addressed through Pearson correlation analyses. Table 4.5 displays these associations. Greater perceptions of government responsiveness were associated with more frequent social networking, information exchange, and political expression online, and higher confidence in public institutions was associated with more frequent information exchange. Thus, young adults who were more optimistic about government and public institutions were those that engaged more online.

**Table 4.5****Correlation Coefficients between Internet Engagement and Structural Features and Civic Attitudes**

		Internet Engagement		
		Social networking	Information exchange	Political expression
<b>Structural features</b>	Government responsiveness	.10*	.14**	.13**
	Trust in institutions	.07	.14***	.03
<b>Civic attitudes</b>	Trust in groups	.08*	.18***	.04
	Interpersonal trust	.09*	.12**	.05
	Political efficacy	.08*	.41***	.29***
	Self-expression	.06	.14***	.02

*Note:* Values represent Pearson's r coefficients. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (2-tailed).

To better understand these associations, Pearson correlation and chi-square analyses were run between structural variables and demographic and SES characteristics. Analyses indicated that both government responsiveness,  $r(530) = .14, p < .01$ , and trust in institutions,  $r(530) = .14, p < .001$ , were significantly associated with respondents' parents making ends meet. In addition, chi-square analyses revealed that perceptions of government responsiveness,  $\chi^2(90, n = 526) = 131.36, p < .01$ , and trust in institutions,  $\chi^2(215, n = 528) = 466.29, p < .01$ , differed according to respondents' education level. Those with a Master's degree or higher rated both measures highest, while those with only some secondary education rated the measures the lowest.

Analyses also revealed positive associations between Internet social networking, information exchange, and political expression and civic attitudes (Table 4.5).

Information exchange online had the strongest relationships with attitude measures,

correlating significantly with each variable. Social networking online was significantly associated with trust in groups, interpersonal trust, and political efficacy, but the associations were not as strong as those between information exchange and civic attitudes. Political expression online correlated significantly only with feelings of political efficacy.

### **Offline Civic Activism**

To address Research Question 5, concerning the extent to which Internet engagement activities contribute to offline participation, multiple regression analyses were carried out. Analyses utilized hierarchical blocks of independent variables to explore the relative contributions of family SES, structural features of society, Internet engagement, and civic attitudes on specific civic behaviors, based on the theoretical model. The socioeconomic, structural, Internet, and attitudinal variables that correlated with organizational participation, community action, and political discourse were entered into the models. Variables that did not contribute significantly to each model's explained variance were removed one at a time in order to create parsimonious models.

### **Organizational Participation**

A significant model predicting respondents' levels of organizational participation contained two blocks of independent variables. The total variance in organizational participation explained by the model was 20%, as shown in Table 4.6. Respondents' perceptions of government responsiveness accounted for 4% of the variance, while social

networking and political expression online accounted for about 16% above and beyond that. Standardized beta values indicated that online social networking had the greatest impact on organizational participation. Online political expression and perceived government responsiveness had smaller but significant impacts on the criterion.

**Table 4.6**

**Multivariate Regression Coefficients Predicting Organizational Participation**

Predictor variables		Step 1		Step 2	
		B (SE)	$\beta$	B (SE)	$\beta$
Step 1	Government responsiveness	.30 (.06)	.21***	.27 (.06)	.16***
Step 2	Social networking			.26 (.04)	.32***
	Political expression			.41 (.14)	.14**
R <sup>2</sup> =		.04		.21	
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> =		.04		.20	
F =		23.34***		45.53***	
df =		1/532		3/530	

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (2-tailed).

Most family SES items and trust in institutions were not correlated significantly with organizational participation. Although parents discussed politics, information exchange online, and the majority of the civic attitude measures correlated with the criterion, they did not contribute to the model and were omitted. The effects of these variables may have been suppressed by the more dominant effects of government responsiveness, social networking, and political expression. Collinearity statistics indicated that the predictor variables were not overly correlated. Tolerance values close

to zero indicate strong relationships between a variable and other predictors, and those with a tolerance level of less than .01 should be excluded (Brace, Kemp, & Snelgar, 2009). Tolerance for each predictor in the model was above .71, indicating no problems.

### **Community Action**

A significant model of community action with four blocks emerged. The total variance explained by the model was 41%, as displayed in Table 4.7. As before, the largest predictors of the criterion were social networking and political expression online. In this case, the unique contribution of these two Internet engagement variables was about 32%, above and beyond the effects of parents discussing politics and perceived government responsiveness. Social networking provided the largest contribution to the model by far. The explanatory power of government responsiveness was small but significant, and trust in groups and interpersonal trust made significant contributions above and beyond the effect of Internet engagement variables. In the final model, the contribution of parents discussing politics fell to near-significance ( $p = .1$ ).

Although a number of other variables, including parents read books, parents made ends meet, trust in institutions, information exchange online, and political efficacy correlated significantly with community action, they did not contribute to the regression model and were omitted. Again, the effects of the significant variables in the model may have overshadowed the effects of these variables. As before, collinearity diagnostics indicated that the predictor variables were not overly correlated. Tolerance for each of the predictor variables was above .93.

Table 4.7

Multivariate Regression Coefficients Predicting Community Action

Predictor variables	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3		Step 4	
	B (SE)	$\beta$	B (SE)	$\beta$	B (SE)	$\beta$	B (SE)	$\beta$
Step 1 Parents discussed politics	.05 (.01)	.21***	.05 (.01)	.18***	.02 (.01)	.07*	.01 (.01)	.06
Step 2 Government responsiveness			.07 (.02)	.17***	.05 (.02)	.12***	.04 (.02)	.09*
Step 3 Social networking					.11 (.01)	.46***	.11 (.01)	.45***
					.16 (.04)	.18***	.16 (.04)	.18***
Step 4 Trust in groups							.08 (.02)	.12***
							.01 (.01)	.09*
R <sup>2</sup> =		.04	.07	.39	.42			
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> =		.04	.07	.38	.41			
F =		24.16***	19.95***	82.22***	61.72***			
df =		1/523	2/522	4/520	6/518			

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (2-tailed).

## **Political Discourse**

Finally, a significant model of political discourse was created with four blocks. The total variance explained by the model was about 45%, as shown in Table 4.8. In this analysis, parents discussed politics initially explained about 16% of the variance, and information exchange and political expression online explained about 17% of the variance above and beyond the background and structural variables. Feelings of political efficacy had the largest effect on political discourse, and feelings of interpersonal trust had a near-significant contribution ( $p = .07$ ). These two civic attitude variables explained about 10% of the variance in political discourse above and beyond all other predictors. Information exchange and political expression online followed political efficacy as the largest influences on the criterion in the model.

Although parents followed news, trust in institutions, social networking online, trust in groups, and self-expression values correlated with political discourse, they did not contribute significantly to the model and were omitted. As in the previous models, the effects of the significant variables may have overshadowed the others in predicting the criterion. Again, collinearity diagnostics indicated that the predictor variables were not overly correlated. Tolerance for each of the predictor variables was above .73.

**Table 4.8**

**Multivariate Regression Coefficients Predicting Political Discourse**

Predictor variables	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3		Step 4	
	B (SE)	$\beta$	B (SE)	$\beta$	B (SE)	$\beta$	B (SE)	$\beta$
Step 1 Parents discussed politics	.48 (.05)	.40****	.44 (.05)	.37****	.29 (.05)	.24****	.17 (.04)	.14****
Step 2 Government responsiveness			.37 (.08)	.18****	.28 (.07)	.14****	.16 (.07)	.08*
Step 3 Information exchange					.36 (.05)	.31****	.24 (.05)	.21****
Step 3 Political expression					.84 (.17)	.20****	.70 (.15)	.17****
Step 4 Interpersonal trust							.04 (.02)	.06*
Step 4 Political efficacy							.69 (.07)	.36****
R <sup>2</sup> =	.16		.19		.36		.46	
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> =	.16		.19		.36		.45	
F =	101.07****		62.48****		72.92****		72.94****	
df =	1/519		2/518		4/516		6/514	

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (2-tailed).



## Summary

Chapter Four presented the results of the study. Regarding the extent of Lithuanian 18- to 30-year-olds' participation in online activities (Research Question 1), results indicated three primary factors, related to social networking, information exchange, and political expression. Of these dimensions, information exchange was the most common and political expression the least common. Regarding the effects of demographic and SES variables on Internet engagement (Research Question 2), family SES items, father's education level, and number of books at home while growing up were associated with more frequent Internet activism in the sample.

Correlation analyses were also used to explore the relationships between perceived structural features of society and Internet engagement (Research Question 3), and between Internet engagement and civic attitudes (Research Question 4). Positive perceptions of government responsiveness were associated with more frequent Internet engagement, and higher confidence in public institutions was associated with more information exchange. Some Internet engagement dimensions were positively associated with some of the civic attitude measures.

Finally, hierarchical multiple regression analyses investigated the contributions of Internet engagement on offline civic behaviors (Research Question 5). Significant background characteristics, structural features, Internet engagement dimensions, and civic attitudes explained 20% of the variance in the sample's organizational participation, 41% of the variance in community action, and 45% of the variance in political discourse. Chapter Five will present a discussion based on these results.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

Although democratization via new media technologies has received considerable attention in recent years, theoretical discussions are much more common than articles based on empirical data. The opportunities offered by Internet engagement must be studied at the user-level (Banaji, 2011; Collin, 2008), looking at individuals' own grassroots participation, within the political and cultural contexts of society. Given that the development of civic culture in a democratic Lithuania is occurring simultaneously with the spread of new information technologies, Lithuania serves as an interesting case study. The purpose of this research was to examine the types of Internet participation and the civic norms that contribute to offline engagement in organizations, local community activities, and political discussions among Lithuanian university students.

Results of survey data from students at five colleges and universities in three major cities of Lithuania provided evidence that positive associations exist between three dimensions of Internet engagement and perceived structural features of society, levels of civic attitudes, and frequency of civic activism offline. Even when controlling for significant background characteristics and perceptions of structural features, patterns of Internet engagement displayed powerful relationships with respondents' rates of organizational participation, community action, and political discourse offline. This finding was consistent with recent literature on the effects of social, informational, and

identity-forming Internet activities, which can contribute to users' social capital and real-world participation (e.g., Hampton et al., 2011; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009).

### **The Nature of Lithuanian Young Adult Engagement Online**

This study resulted in several important findings. First, it put forth a more comprehensive, multi-dimensional conceptualization of Internet engagement based on a variety of interpersonal and interactive online activities. Internet activities are incredibly versatile and continuously evolving, providing a myriad of opportunities to connect with others, learn and share, and creatively contribute to discourse. Findings from this study highlighted the need to examine diverse types of Internet use for effects on civic engagement, as networking, learning, and expressing opinions online create opportunities for decentralized and individualized politics. Although many of these activities may not seem political in the traditional sense, they have been found to increase social support (Hampton et al., 2011) and expand users' knowledge of dissonant views (Garrett, 2006), which can lead to civic and political activism.

Therefore, Internet engagement includes a variety of activities not commonly understood as political. The boundaries between political and social or personal activities online are porous, and strengthening values, sharing knowledge, and developing identities through self-expression may all fit into an expanded definition of political engagement, as young people become active players in defining what politics means for their lives (Coleman, 2008; Collin, 2008). Creative and social uses of the Internet often represent new forms of activism in participatory communities that are missing from

conventional channels of political communication (Harris, 2008). Unregulated public spaces provide opportunities for youth to communicate with others and express interests and concerns outside of traditional political mechanisms. Such activities may contribute to agency and activism through a rejection of traditional power structures.

### **Defining Dimensions of Internet Engagement**

This study provided some insight into the complex array of online activities. Items within three primary dimensions of online engagement (social networking, information exchange, and political expression) were developed, pilot tested, and used successfully in analyses. Principal axis factor analyses supported the factorial validity of these three primary dimensions. However, several items with low loadings were not meaningful: keeping in touch, using social networking sites like Facebook, and using update services such as Twitter. These items may have lacked adequate variance for significant contributions—keeping in touch may be too common, and using Facebook and Twitter too rare in Lithuania. Facebook and Twitter are specific platforms used for a variety of activities, many of which were still included in the social networking scale, such as finding others who share interests, interacting with a group or community, and keeping in touch with organizations.

Several items loaded on factors other than those hypothesized: looking for information to attend local events, organizing and inviting others to events, and talking to others about important issues all loaded on social networking. Given the social nature of these activities, it made sense that they shared common variance with social networking

items, despite their conceptual overlap with information exchange and political expression. Internal reliability analyses and correlations with theoretically related constructs supported the reliability and convergent validity of revised scales. As in previous studies, Internet use for specific purposes was associated with organizational participation (Jennings & Zeitner, 2003; Moy et al., 2005), civic engagement (Lin et al., 2005; Pasek & Kenski, 2006; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009), and political discourse (Shah et al., 2005; Wellman et al., 2001; Xenos & Moy, 2007).

### **Differences in Extent of Engagement**

Although nearly all of the Lithuanian young adults in the sample had Internet access at home, engagement in social networking, information exchange, and political expression was not daily or even weekly occurrences for many respondents. Unlike many American young adults, Lithuanians have not necessarily grown up with the Internet as an integral feature of their social lives. The young adults in the sample were not new to the world wide web—most had been using the Internet for five to ten years—and yet engagement in most activities was not common. Of the three dimensions, information exchange was the most common, with an average frequency of a couple times a week. Respondents engaged in social networking activities only a few times a month, on average. The least common dimension was political expression, with an average rating of less than once a month. Given that young adults, especially students, are the most active Internet users in Lithuania (Statistics Department of Lithuania, 2011), it seems that engagement in these types of expressive activities was not widespread.

The study also examined demographic characteristics of Lithuanian young adult Internet users. Interestingly, the three dimensions of Internet engagement did not differ significantly by age or gender, as research of American populations has shown (Jennings & Zeitner, 2003; Lenhart et al., 2010). Nor did frequency of Internet engagement differ by city, university, department, mother's education level, or respondents' own education level. The only significant demographic correlates of Internet engagement were father's education level, number of books at home when respondents were growing up, and family socioeconomic status (SES) indicators, including parents read books, discussed politics, followed the news, and made ends meet when respondents were growing up. Higher levels of education, more books at home, and higher ratings of family SES were associated with greater online engagement. This finding complements previous research that linked SES with civic and political participation (Smith et al., 2009). However, this was considered to be only a small piece of the puzzle concerning active participation.

### **Positive Structural Features Support Engagement**

A second contribution of this study was the inclusion of perceived structural features of society, including government responsiveness and trust in institutions, in analyses predicting engagement. These variables added nuance to Welzel and Inglehart's (2008) democratization theory's human empowerment sequence, which consisted of action resources, self-expression values, and democratic institutions. Structural features, including government unresponsiveness and distrust of public institutions, can decrease opportunities for action (Žiliukaitė et al., 2006). Although previous research indicated

that the majority of the Lithuanian population believed that government was very unresponsive (Mačiulytė & Ragauskas, 2007), this sample was somewhat more optimistic. Similarly, research suggested that three-quarters of the broader population did not trust local governments (Piasecka, 2010). However, this sample displayed a more positive view of national institutions.

Differences in perceived government responsiveness and trust in institutions affected Internet engagement. More positive perceptions of government responsiveness were associated with more frequent social networking, information exchange, and political expression online, and higher confidence in public institutions was associated with more information exchange. Thus, those who perceived less supportive governments and institutions were less likely, not more likely, to engage online. Internet engagement was not necessarily used by respondents as an alternative to traditional institutional participation when government is perceived to be unresponsive, as some scholars in Estonia (e.g., Reinsalu, 2009) and the United Kingdom (e.g., Gibson, 2005) have suggested. Instead, young adults who were already less alienated from government and public life were those that engaged more online.

Furthermore, the relationship between government responsiveness and offline civic activism was robust across analyses. Perceptions of government responsiveness accounted for significant proportions of the variance in organizational participation, community action, and political discourse, and remained a significant predictor even when family SES, Internet engagement, and civic attitudes were modeled. Higher levels of perceived government responsiveness were also associated with higher levels of civic

attitudes: trust in groups, interpersonal trust, political efficacy, and self-expression. Self-selected Lithuanian young adults who engaged more online and offline were confident in the government's responsiveness to citizens. These findings have important implications for power imbalances and youth engagement.

### **Disengaged Young Adults**

Almost all respondents perceived great opportunity online for social networking, information exchange, and political expression, and yet young adults from lower socioeconomic backgrounds did not take advantage of these opportunities as often as did others. Family SES indicators were positively associated not only with rates of Internet engagement, but also with government responsiveness and trust in institutions. Young adults whose parents had trouble making ends meet had the lowest scores on these measures. Thus, those who were more alienated from government and national institutions remained marginalized, despite physical access to the Internet.

Barriers to online participation may include low digital or information literacy, anxieties about the risks of new media, fear of surveillance, or other negative stereotypes of Internet engagement (Banaji, 2011). As some producers of civic websites have pointed out, it is difficult to reach those on the fringes of society, and online social networks may actually deepen "the participation divide by giving the already active more access to public space and more practice at developing institutional, intercultural civic skills" (Banaji, 2011, p. 138). These issues challenge the notion that the spread of new media technologies have a universal democratizing effect, as suggested by cyber-optimists.



Instead, increasingly individualized online environments can lead to social exclusion, challenging the Internet's democratic potential (Gerodimos, 2012).

### **From Online Engagement to Offline Activism**

The relationships between Internet participation, civic attitudes, and offline activism are dynamic. It is important to examine a range of civic attitudes and behaviors, to allow for specific assessments of the potential impact of Internet activities. A third contribution of this study was the large effect sizes found for offline activism: hierarchical multiple regression analyses using background characteristics, structural features, Internet engagement, and civic attitudes as predictors explained 20% of the variance in the sample's organizational participation, 41% of the variance in community action, and 45% of the variance in political discourse. These effects were much larger than those found in a Boulianne's (2009) meta-analysis of Internet use and civic engagement studies. Perhaps contemporary engagement had greater effects on the selected constructs than those found in earlier studies included in the meta-analysis.

In addition, the study's sample from higher education institutions was more highly engaged than average respondents in national samples. Compared to Lithuanian data from World Values Survey (2006) studies, this study's sample rated higher on trust, self-expression values, and organizational participation. For example, the World Values Survey showed that only 1% of respondents participated in an organization affiliated with a political party, while 8% of respondents in this study did. Compared to 14-year-olds in the IEA Civic Education Study (2001), this study's sample displayed higher rates of participation in volunteer groups (36% vs 7%). Still, the sample was not exceptionally

active offline. Although most Lithuanian 14-year-olds in the IEA Study (2001) reported that they would likely participate in community activities, most respondents in this sample actually participated once a month or less often.

The findings highlighted the importance of distinguishing specific ways in which individuals use technology. Using the Internet for entertainment did not contribute meaningfully to offline activism. Even though engagement opportunities are readily accessible, those who are only interested in recreation may easily avoid political activities (Prior, 2005). Still, positive links between online engagement and civic activism emerged, contradicting expectations of the time displacement hypothesis, first proposed by Putnam (2000), that time spent engaged in media use inevitably leaves less time to devote to civic activities. Scholars have been concerned that as new ICTs allow people to socialize, work, and be entertained online, face-to-face contact can decline. Reduced social contact with neighbors, communities, and the general public could lead to a decrease in trust and activism (see Ray, 2007). However, young adults in this study were active online and offline simultaneously. As found by Kittilson and Dalton (2011), virtual social activity can be as conducive for strengthening citizenship values as participation in face-to-face social groups. Activity online may lead to increased activity offline.

### **Online Empowerment**

Engagement in social networking, information exchange, and political expression online were significantly associated with respondents' political efficacy. As suggested by other scholars, Internet features such as interactivity, personalization, and one-to-many

communication may be uniquely empowering for users (Bimber & Davis, 2003). Empowerment requires opportunities to enhance competence, beginning at the level of the individual and extending through the group, which the Internet provides through a variety of tools, from group reinforcement to decision-making mechanisms (Amichai-Hamburger, McKenna, & Tal, 2008). New media allow and require an active rather than a passive audience, and numerous opportunities to practice skills can have powerful effects on beliefs of self. This is especially meaningful for youth, who may otherwise feel a sense of powerlessness concerning communication with adults and access to resources (Valaitis, 2005). Research suggests that these psychological effects can lead to concrete acts of civic engagement (Xenos & Moy, 2007).

### **Distinct Pathways for Activism**

Findings revealed much stronger relationships between Internet engagement and civic behaviors than civic attitudes. The three dimensions of online engagement complemented offline activism differently. For participation in organizations and community action, only social networking and political expression were significant Internet-level predictors, uniquely explaining about 16% of the variance in organizational participation and 32% of the variance in community action. For political discourse, on the other hand, only information exchange and political expression emerged as significant predictors, uniquely explaining about 17% of the variance. Thus, information exchange was not a meaningful predictor in organizational participation or community action, and social networking was not meaningful in political discourse offline.

Internet users have free choice in interpersonal, informational, and expressive activities. Social networking online, which included bonding with people, finding others who share interests, communicating with new friends, interacting with a group, keeping in touch with organizations, looking for information to attend local events, organizing an event, and talking to others about important issues, displayed the greatest effect sizes in regression analyses predicting organizational participation and community action offline. These findings support previous research of strong connections between intensity of online social networking, such as Facebook group use, and civic activism (Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009). The strong influence of social networking in the models may have overshadowed the effects of information exchange in organizational participation and community action. The findings fit well with theories of human development in which young adults are motivated to engage in social networking.

Political expression online, which included sharing political information with friends, participating in campaigns, contacting leaders about important issues, posting to a discussion board, expressing an opinion about an issue, and working on a web page, had a smaller but significant effect across the three criterion variables. Although engagement in expressive activities was the least common Internet dimension, it was meaningful for all measures of offline activism. This supports the framework developed by Bennett, Wells, and Freelon (2011), regarding youth preferences for expressive styles of citizenship over earlier models of dutiful citizenship. Bennett (2008) suggested the rise of “actualizing citizenship,” involving personal engagement with causes through individual expression and peer networks that organize civic action. The segment of

Lithuanian young adults who used the Internet for expressive activities may have developed stronger feelings of competence to mobilize offline. For example, political efficacy emerged as the strongest predictor of political discourse, above and beyond Internet variables. Individuals who gained experience creating content and sharing opinions online may have been prepared to overcome restrictive environments offline.

### **The Complexity of Trust**

Interestingly, Internet engagement dimensions were not significantly associated with some civic norms in the sample. Political expression online was not significantly correlated with trust in groups, interpersonal trust, or self-expression values. Social networking showed weaker but still significant correlations with trust in groups, interpersonal trust, and political efficacy, but no significant correlation with self-expression values. On the other hand, information exchange online was strongly correlated with all civic norms. These results were somewhat different from Uslaner's (2004) findings that social connections made online did not promote trust. One conclusion may be that Internet users who engage more in political expression and social networking may not be any more trusting than are those who are not as engaged.

Most civic attitudes in this study were not significant predictors of offline activism in regression models. No civic attitudes contributed to respondents' organizational participation, and trust in groups and interpersonal trust explained only about 3% of the variance in community action. Although interpersonal trust and political efficacy explained about 10% of the variance in political discourse, political efficacy was

much more meaningful than interpersonal trust. Traditional theories of civil society development point to interpersonal trust as a prerequisite for the development of civic activities and political institutions (Fukuyama, 2000; Putnam, 2000). However, these attitudes may be slow to develop among Lithuanian young adults, who have grown up in a time of uncertainty and doubt regarding civic action (Degutis et al., 2008).

The development of democracy in Lithuania has been similar to other post-Communist countries, where rapid institutional development outpaced the development of civic culture. Research indicates that experiences with political corruption and distrust can lead to decreases in generalized trust (Rothstein, 2003; Schyns & Koop, 2010; Uslaner, 2001). Because youth internalize values through existing socialization processes, value change does not come about easily (Giddens, 1984; Welzel & Inglehart, 2010). It is possible that structural features of society prevent the expression of norms such as trust among young adults, even though they are already participating in social and civic behaviors online and offline. The spread of civic engagement may bring about more positive civic attitudes in the future, as meaningful civic experiences slowly increase feelings of interpersonal trust.

### **Gender and Family Upbringing**

Findings revealed no significant gender differences in Internet social networking, information exchange, and political expression. Because women did not participate online significantly less than men, it is possible that Internet use flattens some traditional gender barriers, leading to opportunities for increased engagement (Uslaner, 2004).

Indeed, males in this study were significantly more likely to participate in community action and political discourse offline than females, supporting cross-cultural research that indicates that men generally are more politically engaged than women (Schyns & Koop, 2010). Online, those who are marginalized in mainstream political debate, such as women, can find a voice (Harris, 2008). According to Boyd (2008), young women's participation online is rooted in a desire to engage in the public sphere.

The most significant background variable in the predictive models of offline activism was the family SES item regarding parents discussing politics at home when respondents were growing up. This variable explained 4% of the variance in respondents' community action and 16% of the variance in political discourse. These findings point to the importance of family upbringing, which the majority of Lithuanian youth admitted had a very important effect on their understanding of citizenship and engagement (Jaunimo Reikalų Departamentas, 2007). U.S. research indicates that parents can promote political activity through examples set by personal involvement in the community and through reinforcement of their children's interests (Fletcher, Elder, & Mekos, 2000). Parental modeling and civic attitudes create a social atmosphere that promotes youth civic participation (Zaff, Malanchuk, Michelsen, & Eccles, 2003). It is clear that multiple contexts online and offline have strong potential for strengthening activism.

### **Civic Culture and Identity Formation Online**

The study's logic model may be re-conceptualized to take into account the dynamic, multi-level processes that influence civic activism simultaneously, and the

fluidity of relationships between different levels, shown in Figure 5.1. Dasen's (2003) integrated framework of human development, based on Bronfenbrenner's (1992) ecological systems theory, stressed the importance of the many layers of social and psychological experiences that affect development in a cultural context, with individuals as active participants in creating their own environments. In this view, development is embedded in interactions with a set of nested environmental systems, ranging from the immediate physical or social surroundings (microsystem), such as interactions with peers, to the culture's overarching values (macrosystem), including structural features of society, with interactions between different layers (mesosystem) as well as changes over time (chronosystem), as both the individual and the environments undergo change.

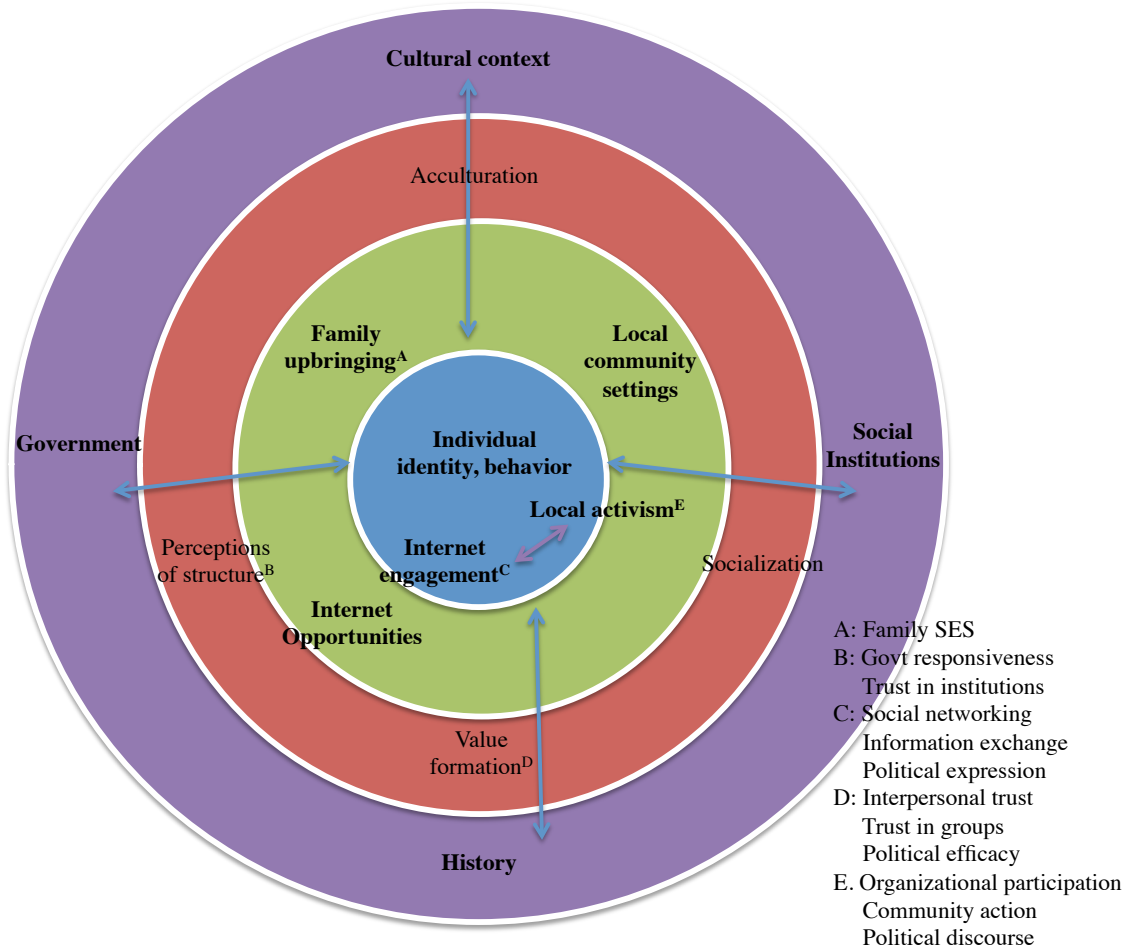
The re-conceptualization recognizes that cultural norms in Lithuania have powerful effects on individuals, so that civic values may be somewhat resistant to change, just as structural features are (Giddens, 1984). As Calhoun (1991) argued, direct offline relationships form the scaffolding for complex online networks, and human social interactions are coordinated on multiple levels of cultural norms, traditions, and new communication opportunities. Although technologically mediated interactions are often impersonal, they are rooted in social networks, shared systems of meaning, and tacit knowledge. Thus, the Internet remains embedded in local cultures and structures. Indeed, Inglehart and Baker (2000) examined the link between economic development and changes in cultural values in 65 societies and found significant change, but not convergence. Instead, industrializing societies shifted toward increasingly rational, tolerant, and trusting values, on "parallel trajectories shaped by their cultural heritages"



(p. 49). Although experiences online can inform new citizenship identities, impacting values in a dynamic process, changes in mass beliefs may be slow to mature.

**Figure 5.1**

**The Study's Revised Logic Model**



Still, online communities play an important role in shaping some young adults' microsystems as they overcome the limits of their particular locations by establishing meaningful social experiences through technology. The Internet enlarges the scope of

social interactions, opens new paths of communication, and provides opportunities for more individualized and creative involvement with news and information. Participation in such activities allows young adults to consider identity alternatives, experiment with interests, evaluate their abilities, and receive feedback that may reinforce or challenge identities, which depend on multiple cultural contexts that are constantly changing through new media (Lull, 2001). As described by Kitayama (2002), each person's psychological processes depend on active efforts to coordinate behaviors with a variety of cultural systems, so identities can shift according to social context.

### **Individuals as Active Agents in Civic Development**

By choosing the ways that they engage online, individuals are active agents in their own civic development. Therefore, identities are “created and recreated on a more active basis than before” (Giddens, 2000, p. 65). Through new ICT opportunities for belonging, learning, and personal growth, young adults construct new systems of meaning and new roles for citizenship, and such creative engagement can increase feelings of agency (Collin, 2008). Gerodimos' (2011) qualitative study indicated that young people's engagement in civic websites was heavily oriented toward consumption and choice, and youth flocked to issues about which they felt passionate. Such personalization allows users to develop a sense of inclusion or differentiation, group membership or self-determination. As youth discover self-defining activities through a wide range of online tools that provide a good fit between their talents and their sense of purpose, they may take on new identities (Waterman, 2004).

This study found that some young Lithuanians actively engaged in social networking, information exchange, and political expression online, as organizers or cultural producers of civic content. These individuals also were more empowered and active citizens, engaging in participation in organizations, community activism, and political discourse offline. As increasing volumes of information and tools move online, the ability not only to access them but also to creatively contribute to them may become crucial to participation in community life. The social systems and political networks that evolve with online engagement can affect local contexts by changing individuals' relationship to the public sphere and increasing their sense of political efficacy. This supports Giddens' (2000) theory that personal goals and voluntary exchange online may begin replacing fixed community norms in scripting youth social behavior.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

Although this study established foundational knowledge regarding the nature and extent of Internet engagement and civic attitudes and behaviors among self-selected students in Lithuania, several important limitations must be considered. The study cannot allow for conclusions of causality between Internet activism and civic attitudes and behaviors. Young adults who are already interested in civic life may use the Internet according to their motivations for social networking, information exchange, and political expression. In this study, online and offline activities seemed to be mutually beneficial, complementing each other. There is a need for long-term analyses or experiments that use random sampling or random assignment in order to investigate the nature and magnitude of these effects as they change over time or across conditions.

The lack of strong relationships between the dimensions of Internet engagement and civic attitudes such as trust was interesting and warrants further study. A lack of strong effects may have been caused by measurement bias and limited variance in the sample's values, as some measures (e.g., self-expression values), had skewed answer distributions, and others were indexes (e.g., trust in groups, self-expression values), or single items (e.g., interpersonal trust). Revised measures of civic attitudes and behaviors may be an important venue for future research, as more nuanced understandings of civic norms and participation may evolve with the next generation of activists. Qualitative research with young adults in Lithuania and other cultures may be useful in re-conceptualizing important indicators of civic health.

Another limitation of this study was the use of an online survey that targeted university students, which limited the ability to generalize findings. The sample was not random or nationally representative, so results could not be generalized to Lithuanian young adults as a whole. The use of an online survey also created self-selection bias, as those who had access to the Internet and those in higher education institutions came from higher socioeconomic backgrounds than average Lithuanians and may have had more time and resources to engage in civic activities (though the sample included more engaged and less engaged students). Using an online survey methodology produced results that characterized the tendencies of youth who used the Internet, and not the tendencies of average youth. In addition, the questionnaire limited analyses to students' self-reports of online behaviors, civic attitudes, and offline participation.

Future research could apply the Internet engagement scales to more diverse populations, both in Lithuania and in other countries. Given that greater numbers of youth are embedded in multiple contexts online and offline, civic research must reach diverse participants using diverse methods, in order to investigate activities in more fluid social contexts. Content analyses of popular websites in Lithuania may be able to provide a more detailed picture of the types of websites that young adults engage in and the kinds of networking, information exchange, and public discourse that provide meaningful contributions to civic values and behaviors. Such qualitative analyses could target neighborhood forums, public discourse websites, or user's own creative websites and blogs. Both the technological capabilities of the Internet and the actual content accessed may influence students' attitudes and behaviors.

### **Conclusion**

The Internet exists within different social, political, and cultural contexts. Fostering a healthy media culture for young people depends on national and international research on how digital technologies can best serve the goals of democracy and freedom in different cultures. In Lithuania, experiences of oppression were countered historically through underground organizations and protests against tyranny. However, these were not the same activities required for a strong civil society in a democratic state, and the development of effective governance is slow in formation (Fioramonti & Fiori, 2010). Now, with the spread of new information and communication technologies, young adults have increasing opportunities to engage as critical citizens by building connections, taking initiative, and expressing themselves. Although changes in technology by

themselves do not affect democratic practices, they may facilitate opportunities to improve engagement and involve more actors.

Civic empowerment will not occur simply by connecting every citizen to the Internet, unless individuals can and do take advantage of opportunities to participate. Websites cannot transform communities, take action, or regenerate democracy by themselves. The use of the Internet for civic empowerment depends on knowledgeable and active citizens to participate in self-governance and deliberation on an everyday basis. Barriers still exist, preventing marginalized groups of young people from participating even though they have physical access to the Internet, so power imbalances may persist (Banaji, 2011). However, for those who do engage, online public spheres allow citizens to develop new democratic practices. Online, youth can find others who share their interests, contribute knowledge to others around the world, and creatively participate in discourse. In this way, youth participation may act as a catalyst to broader civic reform, as citizens demand more effective and efficient practices (Welzel & Inglehart, 2008). As citizens demand transparency and accountability, institutions may find it harder to be unresponsive to their beliefs and actions.

The online cultures that result from social networking, information exchange, and political expression are important examples of creative construction of identities and peer communities. Understood within the socio-political context of Lithuanian society, this study laid a foundation for future research investigating the ways in which Internet engagement affects attitudes and behaviors over time. Although the impact of Internet use on post-Communist Lithuanian civil society may be rooted in historical context, this

impact may evolve with the technology and the next generation of activists. As the Internet becomes more deeply integrated into the daily lives of youth, online and offline behaviors and attitudes may change. The relationships between Internet engagement and civic attitudes and behaviors will continue to develop with increased access to technology and changes in civic culture in Lithuania. Refining conceptualizations of Internet activities and civic engagement may shed more light on the complex relationships between new media and civic life. As we learn more about effects of Internet use that are the products of specific time periods, and those that are more long-lasting, we may work to facilitate the promotion of civil and political rights in young democracies such as Lithuania.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A

### Invitation to Help Disseminate a Research Study

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am Liepa Gust, a doctoral student at Clemson University, and I am conducting a survey with Dr. Susan Limber about Lithuanian university students' civic attitudes and activism. We thank you in advance for your help in forwarding this information to your students. Here you will find an invitation and informational letter about this study.

Many thanks for your help.

~~~~~  
Dear students,

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study, conducted by PhD student Liepa Gust and Dr. Susan Limber. The study utilizes a short and confidential online survey about students' civic attitudes and activism.

You can read about the study and your rights as a participant below. Then, if you would like to participate, please find the survey here: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/pilietinis>. Completing the survey will take about 20 minutes.

I hope you will decide to participate—the information would be very valuable to us, we would learn about civil society development in Lithuania. To thank you for your participation, we will enter you in a lottery upon completing the survey, and you will be able to win one of seven iPod shuffles.

We thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Liepa Gust

### **Description of the research and participation**

The purpose of this research is to survey Lithuanian 18-30 year olds about their civic engagement and online behavior. With this data, we will explore the ways Internet use predicts civic attitudes and civic activism. Students' participation will involve answering questions online. The amount of time required for participation is about 20 minutes.

**Risks and discomforts**

There are no known risks associated with this research. The survey measures do not collect names or identifiable data, and the survey is confidential and voluntary.

**Potential benefits**

Benefits include being made aware of different kinds of civic participation and being given the opportunity to share thoughts and feelings about citizenship and online behavior. A larger societal benefit is an increased understanding of young adult Internet use and civic attitudes, in a population that has not yet been studied in this field.

**Protection of confidentiality**

We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. The survey does not collect names or identifiable data. Only Liepa Gust will have access to the data.

**Voluntary participation**

Participation in this research study is voluntary. No one will know whether you decided not to participate or whether you started the questionnaire and did not finish it.

**Contact information**

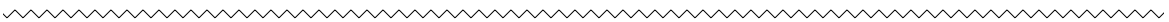
If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Liepa Gust at [lgust@clemson.edu](mailto:lgust@clemson.edu) or Susan Limber at [slimber@clemson.edu](mailto:slimber@clemson.edu). If you have any questions or concerns about the rights of research participants, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at [irb@clemson.edu](mailto:irb@clemson.edu), 001-866-297-3071.

## **Lithuanian Invitation: Kvietimas Padėti Skleisti Tyrimą**

Gerb. \_\_\_\_\_

Aš esu Liepa Gust, Clemson universiteto doktoranto studentė, ir aš bandau atlikti tyrimą su Dr. Susan Limber apie Lietuvos studentų pilietines pažiūras ir aktyvumą. Mes iš anksto labai dėkojame už Jūsų pagalbą paskelbant šią informaciją savo studentams. Čia rasite kvietimą ir informaciją apie šį tyrimą.

Labai ačiū už Jūsų pagalbą.



Mieli studentai,

Aš rašau pakviesti Jus dalyvauti moksliniame tyrime, kurį atlieka doktorantūros studentė Liepa Gust ir Dr. Susan Limber. Tyrimas naudoja trumpą ir konfidencialią internetinę apklausą apie studentų pilietinius požiūrius ir aktyvumą.

Galite paskaityti apie tyrimą ir savo teises kaip dalyvis(ė) žemiau. Tada, jei norite dalyvauti, prašome surasti apklausą čia: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/pilietinis> Apklausą užpildyti užtruks iki 20 minučių.

Tikiuosi, kad Jūs nuspręsite dalyvauti—informacija būtų mums labai vertinga, sužinotume apie pilietinės visuomenės plėtrą Lietuvoje. Atsidėkodami Jums už dalyvavimą, kai baigsite apklausą, mes įtrauksime Jus į loteriją, kurioje galėsite laimėti vieną iš septynių “iPod shuffles.”

Labai dėkojame už Jūsų laiką

Pagarbiai,

Liepa Gust

### **Tyrimo ir dalyvavimo aprašymas**

Šio tyrimo tikslas yra sužinoti iš 18 – 30 metų jaunimo apie jų pilietinį aktyvumą bei internetinę veiklą. Su šią informacija mes tyrinėsime, kaip jaunimo interneto naudojimas prognozuoja pilietinius požiūrius ir pilietinę veiklą. Studentų bus apklausiami per internetinę apklausą. Dalyvavimas užtruktų iki 20 minučių.

**Rizika**

Nėra žinomos rizikos, susijusios su šio tyrimu. Be to, tyrimas nerenka studentų vardų, yra visiškai konfidencialius ir savanoriškas.

**Potencialia nauda**

Dalyviai sužinos apie įvairius pilietinio dalyvavimo būdus ir turės galimybę pasidalinti savo mintimis ir jausmais apie pilietiškumą bei internetinę veiklą. Didesnė nauda tenka visuomenei didinant supratimą apie jaunimo interneto naudojimą ir pilietinį požiūrį.

**Konfidencialumas**

Mes padarysime viską, kad apsaugoti Jūsų privatumą. Apklausa nerenka dalyvių vardą. Liepa Gust yra vienintelis asmuo, galintis prieti prie duomenų.

**Savanoriškas dalyvavimas**

Dalyvavimas šiame tyrime yra savanoriškas. Niekur nebus pažymėta, jog nusprendėte nedalyvauti, arba pradėjote tyrimą, tačiau jo neužbaigėte.

**Kontaktinė informacija**

Jei turite kokių klausimų ar rūpesčių, prašome susisiekti su Liepa Gust [lgust@clemson.edu](mailto:lgust@clemson.edu) ar Susan Limber [slimber@clemson.edu](mailto:slimber@clemson.edu). Jei turite klausimų ar rūpesčių apie tyrimo dalyvių teises, prašome susisiekti su Clemson universiteto Institutional Review Board [irb@clemson.edu](mailto:irb@clemson.edu), 001.866.297.3071.

## Appendix B

### Questionnaire

*People can use the Internet for all sorts of activities. Which of the following activities do you participate in? Please mark the box that best matches how often you engage in each activity.*

Online, how often do you...

| Never | Less than<br>once a<br>month | About<br>once a<br>month | A few<br>times a<br>month | About<br>once a<br>week | A few<br>times a<br>week | About<br>once a<br>day | More<br>than once<br>a day |
|-------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | 2                            | 3                        | 4                         | 5                       | 6                        | 7                      | 8                          |

Keep in touch with friends or relatives?<sup>A</sup>

Bond with people you know?<sup>A</sup>

Use social networking sites like Facebook?<sup>A</sup>

Use Twitter or other update services?<sup>A</sup>

Find others who share your interests?<sup>A</sup>

Communicate with new friends?<sup>A</sup>

Interact with a group or community?<sup>A</sup>

Keep in touch with clubs or organizations?<sup>A</sup>

Follow current events?<sup>B</sup>

Read newspapers online?<sup>B</sup>

Look for information about political issues?<sup>B</sup>

Learn about an important topic?<sup>B</sup>

Become more interested in an issue?<sup>B</sup>

Look for information about a company or product?<sup>B</sup>

Receive information from an organization?<sup>B</sup>

Look for information to attend local events?<sup>B</sup>

Organize or invite people to an event?<sup>C</sup>

Work on your own web page or blog?<sup>C</sup>

Express an opinion about an issue?<sup>C</sup>

Post to a blog or discussion board?<sup>C</sup>

Contact leaders about important issues?<sup>C</sup>

Participate in a campaign?<sup>C</sup>

Share political information with friends?<sup>C</sup>

Talk to others about important issues?<sup>C</sup>

Look for entertainment?<sup>D</sup>

Watch movies or television shows?<sup>D</sup>

Play games?<sup>D</sup>

Listen to music?<sup>D</sup>

Please list any other political or social activity you participate in online [text box].

*Please mark the box that shows how often you discuss politics face-to-face with the following people.*

How often do you discuss politics...<sup>E</sup>

|       |                              |                          |                           |                         |                          |                        |                            |
|-------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | Less than<br>once a<br>month | About<br>once a<br>month | A few<br>times a<br>month | About<br>once a<br>week | A few<br>times a<br>week | About<br>once a<br>day | More<br>than once<br>a day |
| 1     | 2                            | 3                        | 4                         | 5                       | 6                        | 7                      | 8                          |

With your peers in class?

With your friends?

With family members?

With teachers/professors?

With others?

*There are many ways to participate in society. For the following activities, please mark the box that shows how often you participate.*

How often do you...<sup>F</sup>

|       |                              |                          |                           |                         |                          |                        |                            |
|-------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | Less than<br>once a<br>month | About<br>once a<br>month | A few<br>times a<br>month | About<br>once a<br>week | A few<br>times a<br>week | About<br>once a<br>day | More<br>than once<br>a day |
| 1     | 2                            | 3                        | 4                         | 5                       | 6                        | 7                      | 8                          |

Help neighbors or people in the community?

Volunteer with an organization?

Participate in a local community activity?

Donate money to a social cause?

Volunteer to clean surrounding areas?

Participate in a club or interest group?

*Now we would like to know whether you have participated in any of these activities, whether you might participate, or whether you would never engage in them.*



Would you participate in any of the following activities? <sup>G</sup>

| No, I would not do this | Yes, I might do this | Yes, I have done this |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 0                       | 1                    | 2                     |

Signing petitions  
Joining boycotts  
Attending peaceful demonstrations  
Participating in a campaign

*Do you participate in organizations? For each of the following, please indicate whether you are an active member who participates on a regular basis, a member who is not very active, or not a member.*

Do you participate in any of the following organizations? <sup>H</sup>

| Not a member | Not very active member | Active member |
|--------------|------------------------|---------------|
| 0            | 1                      | 2             |

Student government  
Volunteer group  
Art, music, or drama organization  
Cultural organization  
Professional association  
Human rights organization  
Environmental organization  
Sports organization or team  
Student club at college/university  
Organization affiliated with a political party  
Organization sponsored by a religious group  
Charity collecting money for a social cause  
Other organization (please specify) [text box]

*We're interested in your views about politics and government. Please read each statement about the political system and mark the box that corresponds to how much you agree with the statement.*

How much do you agree or disagree?

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |

When political issues or problems are being discussed, I usually have something to say <sup>K</sup>  
 I think that I am as well-informed about politics and government as most people <sup>J</sup>  
 The government is doing its best to find out what ordinary people want <sup>I</sup>  
 I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country <sup>J</sup>  
 In this country a few individuals have a lot of political power while the rest of the people have very little power <sup>I(rc)</sup>  
 I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people <sup>J</sup>  
 When people get together to demand change, the leaders in government listen <sup>I</sup>  
 I consider myself well-qualified to participate in politics <sup>J</sup>  
 People like me don't have any say about what the government does (rc) <sup>Y</sup>  
 I don't think public officials care much what people like me think (rc) <sup>Y</sup>  
 I am interested in politics <sup>K</sup>

*How much do you trust each of the following institutions or groups? Please consider each of them and select the column that shows how much you can trust them.*

Do you trust...

| Do not trust at all | Do not trust very much | Neutral | Trust somewhat | Trust completely |
|---------------------|------------------------|---------|----------------|------------------|
| 1                   | 2                      | 3       | 4              | 5                |

The government? <sup>L</sup>  
 The courts/justice system? <sup>L</sup>  
 The police? <sup>L</sup>  
 Political parties? <sup>L</sup>  
 Parliament? <sup>L</sup>  
 The media?  
 The armed forces? <sup>M</sup>  
 The education system? <sup>M</sup>  
 The health care system? <sup>M</sup>  
 Your family? <sup>N</sup>  
 Your neighbors? <sup>N</sup>  
 People you know personally? <sup>N</sup>  
 People you meet for the first time? <sup>N</sup>  
 People of another religion? <sup>N</sup>  
 People of another nationality? <sup>N</sup>

*Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair? Please mark the box that best reflects your opinion on this scale from 1 though 10.*

|                                                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |                                        |   |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------------------------|---|----|
| Most people would try to take advantage of me <sup>o</sup> |   |   |   |   |   |   | Most people would try to be fair to me |   |    |
| 1                                                          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8                                      | 9 | 10 |

*Some people feel they have complete control over their lives, while others feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them. Please indicate how much control you feel you have over your life.*

|                                |   |   |   |   |   |   |                         |   |    |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------------|---|----|
| No control at all <sup>p</sup> |   |   |   |   |   |   | A great deal of control |   |    |
| 1                              | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8                       | 9 | 10 |

*Here are some goals that people might consider important for Lithuania. How important do you think each of these goals are?*

How important is it to...

|                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |                |   |    |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|---|----|
| Not at all important |   |   |   |   |   |   | Very important |   |    |
| 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8              | 9 | 10 |

Give people more say in government decisions? <sup>q</sup>

Protect freedom of speech? <sup>q</sup>

Give people more say about how things are done in local communities? <sup>q</sup>

Allow people to express their opinions?

*Do you think the Internet provides opportunities to build social networks, find information about politics, or express your opinions? Please select the box that shows how much opportunity you perceive online.*

Online, do you have opportunities to... <sup>r</sup>

|                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |                       |   |    |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------------|---|----|
| No opportunity at all |   |   |   |   |   |   | Very much opportunity |   |    |
| 1                     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8                     | 9 | 10 |

Build social networks?

Find information about politics?

Express your opinions?

*All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole? How satisfied are you with the way democracy is developing in Lithuania?*

|                                     | Completely dissatisfied |   |   |   |   | Completely satisfied |   |   |   |    |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------------|---|---|---|----|
| Your life as a whole <sup>S</sup>   | 1                       | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                    | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Democracy in Lithuania <sup>T</sup> | 1                       | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                    | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

How old were you at the end of 2011? \_\_\_\_\_ years

Are you a woman or a man? Woman          Man

Are you a Lithuanian citizen?          Yes          No

If not, what country's citizenship do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

What city or town do you live in now? \_\_\_\_\_

What college or university do you attend? \_\_\_\_\_

In what faculty do you study? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have Internet service at home?          Yes          No

How long have you been using the Internet, in years? Please write 0 if less than 1 year.  
 \_\_\_ years

*Please think about your parents or caregivers when you were about 14 years old. Read each statement and select the column that corresponds to your opinion.*

Do you agree or disagree?

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |

At least one of my parent(s) liked to read books<sup>U</sup>

I discussed politics at home with my parent(s)<sup>U</sup>

At least one of my parent(s) followed the news<sup>U</sup>

My parent(s) had problems making ends meet (rc)<sup>U</sup>

About how many books were there in your parents' home when you were growing up? <sup>v</sup>

1-10            11-50            51-100            more than 100

What level of education was obtained by your mother, father, and you yourself? <sup>w</sup>

|                                                   | Mother | Father | Self |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|------|
| Finished some high school or vocational education | 1      | 1      | 1    |
| Completed vocational or technical education       | 2      | 2      | 2    |
| Completed high school                             | 3      | 3      | 3    |
| Finished some college or university courses       | 4      | 4      | 4    |
| Completed a Bachelor's degree                     | 5      | 5      | 5    |
| Finished some graduate level courses              | 6      | 6      | 6    |
| Obtained a Master's or higher degree              | 7      | 7      | 7    |
| I don't know                                      | 9      | 9      | 9    |

Many thanks for participating! If you would like to enter the iPod shuffle lottery, please send an email to Liepa Gust (liepa.gust@gmail.com), with the code: "CivicEngagement." The questionnaire is confidential and your name will not be associated with it.

## Lithuanian Questionnaire: Klausimynas

*Žmonės gali naudotis internetu labai įvairiai. Kaip Jūs dalyvaujate? Prašome pažymėti langelį, kuris geriausiai atitinka kaip dažnai Jūs užsiimate kiekvienos veiklos rūšį.*

Internetu, kaip dažnai Jūs...

| Niekada | Rečiau nei kartą mėnesį | Kartą per mėnesį | Kelis kartus per mėnesį | Kartą per savaitę | Kelis kartus per savaitę | Kartą per dieną | Daugiau nei kartą per dieną |
|---------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1       | 2                       | 3                | 4                       | 5                 | 6                        | 7               | 8                           |

Palaikote ryšį su draugais ar giminėmis?

Artimiau susidraugaujate su žmonėmis, kuriuos pažįstate?

Naudojate socialinių tinklų svetaines, pvz. Facebook?

Naudojate Twitter ar kitokias žinių atnaujinimo paslaugas?

Surandate kitus, kurie domisi tais pačiais dalykais kaip ir Jūs?

Bendraujate su naujais draugais?

Bendraujate su grupėmis ar bendruomenėmis?

Palaikote ryšį su klubais ar organizacijomis?

Sekate naujienas?

Skaitote laikraščius?

Ieškoti informacijos apie temas, diskutuojamas politikoje?

Sužinote daugiau apie Jums svarbią temą?

Susidomite naujomis temomis?

Ieškote informacijos apie įmonę arba produktą?

Gaunate informacijos iš organizacijos?

Ieškote informacijos dalyvauti vietiniuose renginiuose?

Organizuojate ar kviečiate žmones į renginį?

Dirbate prie savo tinklalapio arba internetinio dienoraščio?

Išreikštate savo nuomonę apie problemą?

Komentuojate internetiniame dienoraštyje arba forume?

Susisiekiate su politiniais lyderiais išreikšti nuomonę svarbiais klausimais?

Dalyvaujate politinėje kampanijoje?

Dalinate politinę informaciją su draugais?

Kalbate su kitais studentais apie svarbias temas?

Ieškote pramogų?

Žiūrite filmus ar televiziją?

Žaidžiate žaidimus?

Klausotes muzikos?

Prašome įrašyti kitokią politinę veiklą kurioje dalyvaujate internetu ir kaip dažnai \_\_\_\_\_

*Prašome pažymėti langeli, kuris rodo, kaip dažnai Jūs aptariate politiką su šiais žmonėmis.*

Kaip dažnai Jūs diskutuojate politiką...

| Niekada | Rečiau nei kartą mėnesį | Kartą per mėnesį | Kelis kartus per mėnesį | Kartą per savaitę | Kelis kartus per savaitę | Kartą per dieną | Daugiau nei kartą per dieną |
|---------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1       | 2                       | 3                | 4                       | 5                 | 6                        | 7               | 8                           |

Su savo kursiokais?

Su draugais?

Su šeimos nariais?

Su dėstytojais?

Su kitais?

*Yra daug būdų dalyvauti visuomenės gyvenime. Prašome pažymėti langeli, kuris rodo, kaip dažnai Jūs dalyvaujate šiose veiklose.*

Kaip dažnai Jūs...

| Niekada | Rečiau nei kartą mėnesį | Kartą per mėnesį | Kelis kartus per mėnesį | Kartą per savaitę | Kelis kartus per savaitę | Kartą per dieną | Daugiau nei kartą per dieną |
|---------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1       | 2                       | 3                | 4                       | 5                 | 6                        | 7               | 8                           |

Padedate kaimynams ar kitiems bendruomenėje?

Savanoriaujate organizacijoje?

Dalyvaujate vietos bendruomenės veikloje?

Aukojate pinigų labdarai?

Dalyvaujate klube arba grupėje?

Dalyvaujate aplinkos tvarkymo talkose?

*Dabar mes norėtume sužinoti, ar Jūs esate dalyvavę šiose veiklose, ar dalyvautumėte, ar niekada neišitrauktumėte iš šių veiklų.*

Ar dalyvautumėte šiose veiklose?

Ne, nedalyvaučiau

Taip, galbūt dalyvaučiau

Taip, esu dalyvavęs

0

1

2

Peticijų pasirašymas

Prisijungimas prie boikotų

Dalyvavimas taikiose demonstracijose

Dalyvavimas kampanijose

*Ar Jūs esate organizacijų narys? Kiekvienai organizacijai, prašome nurodyti, ar dažnai dalyvaujantis narys, nelabai aktyvus narys, ar nesate narys apskritai.*

Ar Jūs dalyvaujate šiose organizacijose?

Ne narys

Nelabai aktyvus narys

Aktyvus narys

0

1

2

Studentų atstovybė

Savanorių grupė

Meno, muzikos ar dramos organizacija

Kultūrinė organizacija

Profesinė asociacija

Žmogaus teisių organizacija

Aplinkosaugos organizacija

Sporto organizacija arba komanda

Studentų klubas kolegijoje / universitete

Organizacija susijusi su politine partija

Religinė organizacija

Labdara renkanti organizacija

Kita organizacija (prašome nurodyti) [teksto laukelis]

*Norime sužinoti apie Jūsų nuomonę apie politiką ir valdžią. Prašome perskaityti kiekvieną pareiškimą apie politinę sistemą ir pažymėkite langelį, kuris geriausiai atitinka Jūsų nuomonę.*



Kiek Jūs sutinkate ar nesutinkate?

| Visiškai nesutinku | Nesutinku | Neutralu | Sutinku | Visiškai sutinku |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|---------|------------------|
| 1                  | 2         | 3        | 4       | 5                |

Kai yra svarstomi politiniai klausimai ar problemos, aš paprastai turiu ką pasakyti  
Manau, kad aš informuotas(a) apie politiką ir valdžią, kaip ir dauguma žmonių  
Vyriausybė daro viską, ką gali, kad išsiaiškintų paprastų žmonių lūkesčius  
Jaučiu, kad turiu gana gerą supratimą apie svarbius politinius klausimus mūsų šalyje  
Šioje šalyje keli asmenys turi daug politinės galios, o kiti žmonės turi jos labai mažai  
Jaučiu, kad galėčiau sėkmingai dirbti valstybės tarnyboje, taip kaip dauguma kitų žmonių  
Vyriausybės vadovai įsiklauso į žmonių/rinkėjų reikalavimus  
Aš laikau save kvalifikuotu(a) dalyvauti politikoje  
Tokie žmonės kaip aš neturi įtakos vyriausybės veiksmams  
Aš nemanau, kad valdžios pareigūnams rūpi, ką tokie žmonės kaip aš galvoja  
Aš domiuosi politika

*Kiek Jūs pasitikite šiomis institucijomis ar grupėmis? Prašome apsvarstyti kiekvieną grupę ir pažymėkite langelį, kuris rodo, kiek jūs jaučiate, kad galite jomis pasitikėti.*

Ar jūs pasitikite...

| Visai nepasitikiu | Nelabai pasitikiu | Neutralu | Šiek tiek pasitikiu | Visiškai pasitikiu |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1                 | 2                 | 3        | 4                   | 5                  |

Vyriausybė?  
Teismu / teisingumo sistema?  
Policija?  
Politinėmis partijomis?  
Parlamentu?  
Žiniasklaida?  
Kariuomene?  
Švietimo sistema?  
Sveikatos sistema?  
Jūsų šeima?  
Jūsų kaimynais?  
Žmonėmis, kuriuos pažįstate asmeniškai?  
Žmonėmis, kuriuos susitinkate pirmą kartą?  
Kitos religijos žmonėmis?  
Žmonėmis, turinčiais kitos valstybės pilietybę?

*Kaip manote, ar dauguma žmonių, gavę progą, bandytų Jumis pasinaudoti, ar atvirksčiai, jie bandytų būti sąžiningi? Prašome pažymėti langelį, kuris geriausiai atspindi Jūsų nuomonę.*

| Dauguma žmonių pabandytų pasinaudoti mane |   |   |   |   |   |   | Dauguma žmonių bandytų būti sąžiningi |   |    |
|-------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|----|
| 1                                         | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8                                     | 9 | 10 |

*Kai kurie žmonės mano, jog jie visiškai kontroliuoja savo gyvenimą, o kitiems atrodo, kad jų veiksmai neturi realios įtakos tam, kas jiems nutinka. Prašome nurodyti kiek, Jūsų manymu, turite įtakos savo gyvenimui.*

| Jokios įtakos neturiu |   |   |   |   |   |   | Turiu labai daug įtakos |   |    |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------------|---|----|
| 1                     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8                       | 9 | 10 |

*Žemiau yra išvardinta keletas tikslų, kurie gali būti laikomi svarbūs Lietuvai. Jūsų nuomone, kokia yra kiekvieno tikslo svarba, vertinant ją nuo 1 iki 10?*

Kaip svarbu yra...

| Visai nesvarbu |   |   |   |   |   |   | Labai svarbu |   |    |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|---|----|
| 1              | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8            | 9 | 10 |

Suteikti žmonėms svaresnį balsą vyriausybių sprendimams

Apsaugoti žodžio laisvės teisę

Duoti žmonėms svaresnį balsą vietos bendruomenėse

Suteikti galimybę žmonėms išreikšti savo nuomonę

*Ar manote, kad internetas suteikia galimybių kurti socialinius tinklus, rasti informacijos apie politiką, arba išreikšti savo nuomonę? Prašome pažymėti langelį, kuris geriausiai atspindi Jūsų nuomonę.*

Internete, ar Jūs turite galimybių...

| Jokių galimybių neturiu |   |   |   |   |   |   | Turiu daug galimybių |   |    |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------|---|----|
| 1                       | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8                    | 9 | 10 |

Kurti socialinius tinklus?

Rasti informaciją politiniais klausimais?

Išreikšti savo nuomonę?

*Apskritai, kiek esate patenkinti savo gyvenimu? Ar esate patenkinti demokratijos vystimusi Lietuvoje? Prašome pažymėti langelį, kuris geriausiai atspindi Jūsų nuomonę.*

|                            | Visiškai nepatenkinta(s) |   |   |   |   | Visiškai patenkinta(s) |   |   |   |    |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|------------------------|---|---|---|----|
| Jūsų gyvenimas kaip visuma | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                      | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Demokratija Lietuvoje      | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                      | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Kiek Jums buvo metų, 2011 m. pabaigoje? \_\_\_\_\_ metai

Esate moteris ar vyras?      Moteris      Vyras

Ar Jūs esate Lietuvos pilietis(ė)?      Taip      Ne

Jei ne, kokios valstybės pilietybę turite? \_\_\_\_\_

Kokiame mieste ar miestelyje Jūs gyvenate dabar? \_\_\_\_\_

Kokioje kolegijoje ar kokiam universitete studijuojate? \_\_\_\_\_

Kokiame fakultete studijuojate? \_\_\_\_\_

Ar turite interneto paslaugų namuose?      Taip      Ne

Kiek laiko jau naudojates internetu (metais)? Prašome parašyti 0, jei mažiau nei 1 metus.  
\_\_\_\_\_ metai

*Prašome pagalvoti apie savo tėvus arba globėjus, kai buvote maždaug 14 metų.  
Perskaitykite kiekvieną teiginį ir pažymėti langelį, kuris rodo Jūsų požiūrį į teiginį.*

Jūs sutinkate ar nesutinkate?

| Visiškai nesutinku | Nesutinku | Neutralu | Sutinku | Visiškai sutinku |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|---------|------------------|
| 1                  | 2         | 3        | 4       | 5                |

Bent vienas iš mano tėvų mėgo skaityti knygas  
Aš kalbėjau apie politiką namuose su tėvais  
Bent vienas iš mano tėvų sekė naujienas  
Mano tėvai turėjo problemų suduriant galą su galu

Apytiksliai, kiek knygų buvo Jūsų tėvų ar globėjų namuose, kai augote?

0-10            11-50            51-100            daugiau nei 100

Kokį išsilavinimą turi Jūsų mama, tėvas, ir Jūs pats(i)?

|                                              | Mamos | Tėvo | Savo |
|----------------------------------------------|-------|------|------|
| Dalį vidurinės mokyklos ar profesinio mokymo | 1     | 1    | 1    |
| Baigė profesinį ar techninį mokymą           | 2     | 2    | 2    |
| Baigė vidurinę mokyklą                       | 3     | 3    | 3    |
| Dalį studijų kolegijoje ar universitete      | 4     | 4    | 4    |
| Baigė bakalauro studijas                     | 5     | 5    | 5    |
| Dalį magistrantūros studijų                  | 6     | 6    | 6    |
| Įgijo magistro ar aukštesnį laipsnį          | 7     | 7    | 7    |
| Aš nežinau                                   | 9     | 9    | 9    |

Labai ačiū už dalyvavimą! Norėdami dalyvauti iPod shuffle loterijoje, prašome siųsti elektroninį laišką Liepai Gust (liepa.gust@gmail.com), su kodu: "PilietinisDalyvavimas." Klausimynas yra konfidencialius ir Jūsų vardas nebus su juo susietas.