



Public opinion in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania about cooperation with Nordic countries

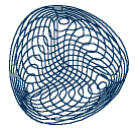
February/March 2018

Commissioned by



**Nordic Council of Ministers'
Office in Estonia**

General information about polling



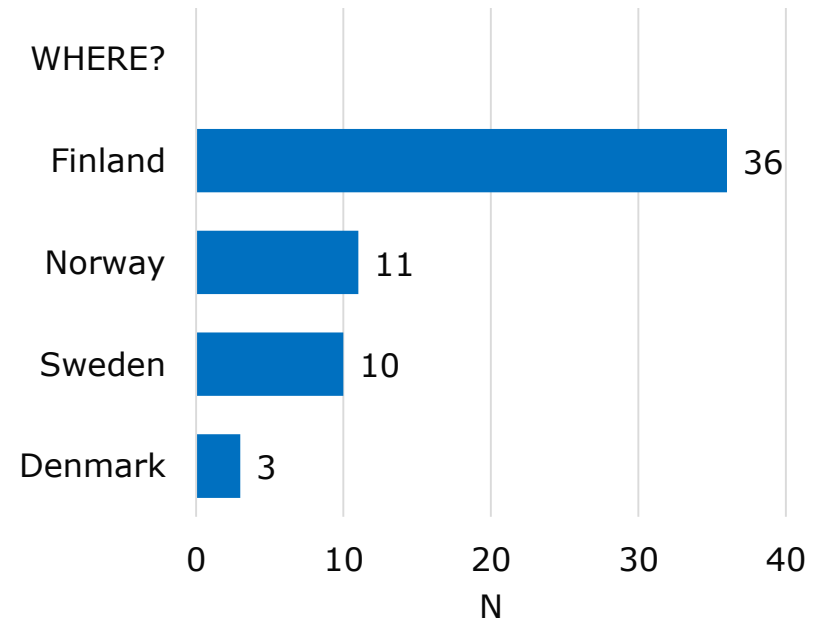
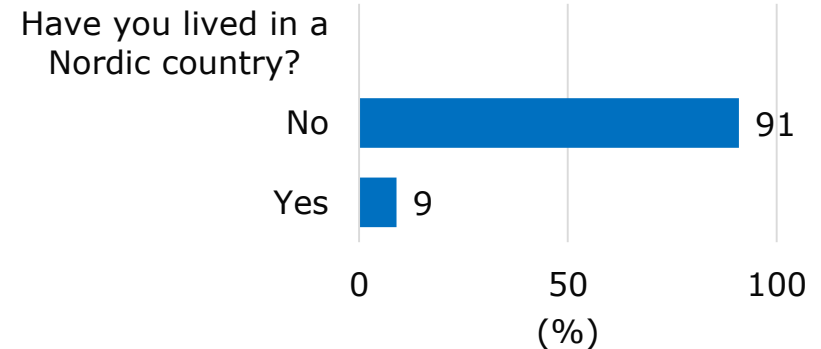
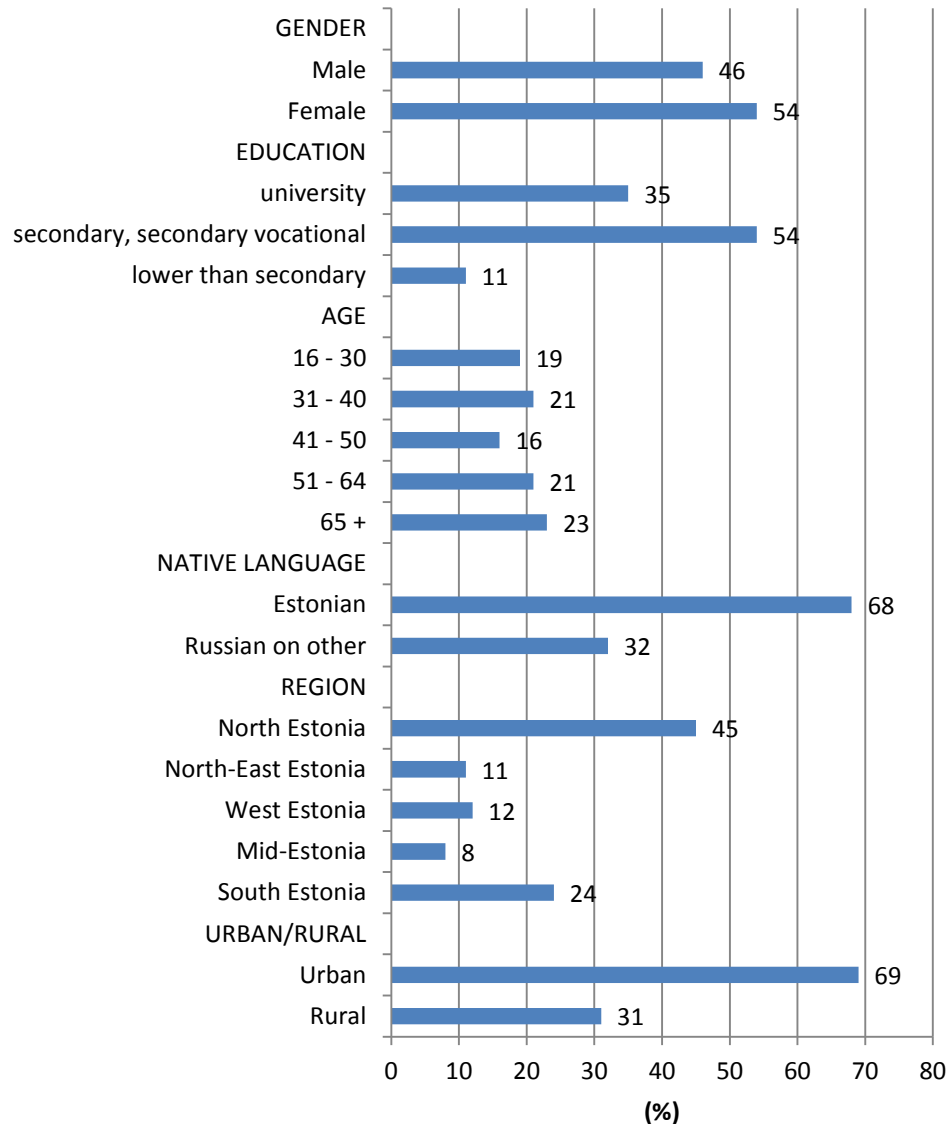
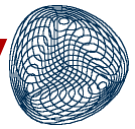
The Nordic Council of Ministers commissioned a telephone survey in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

In Estonia the poll was conducted from 19 February to 3 March, 600 Estonian residents aged 16 and over were interviewed.

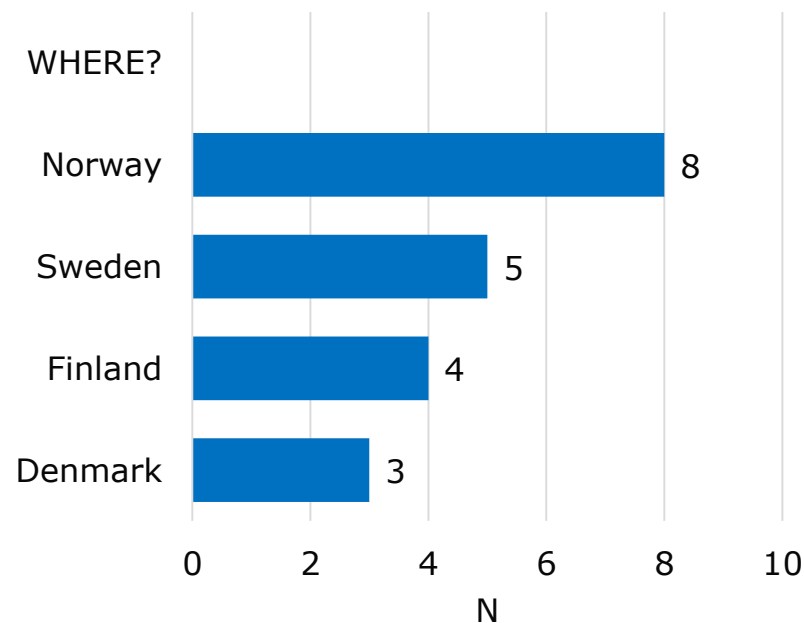
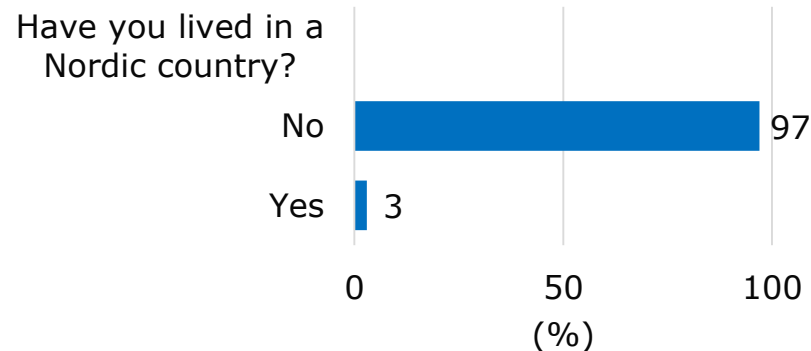
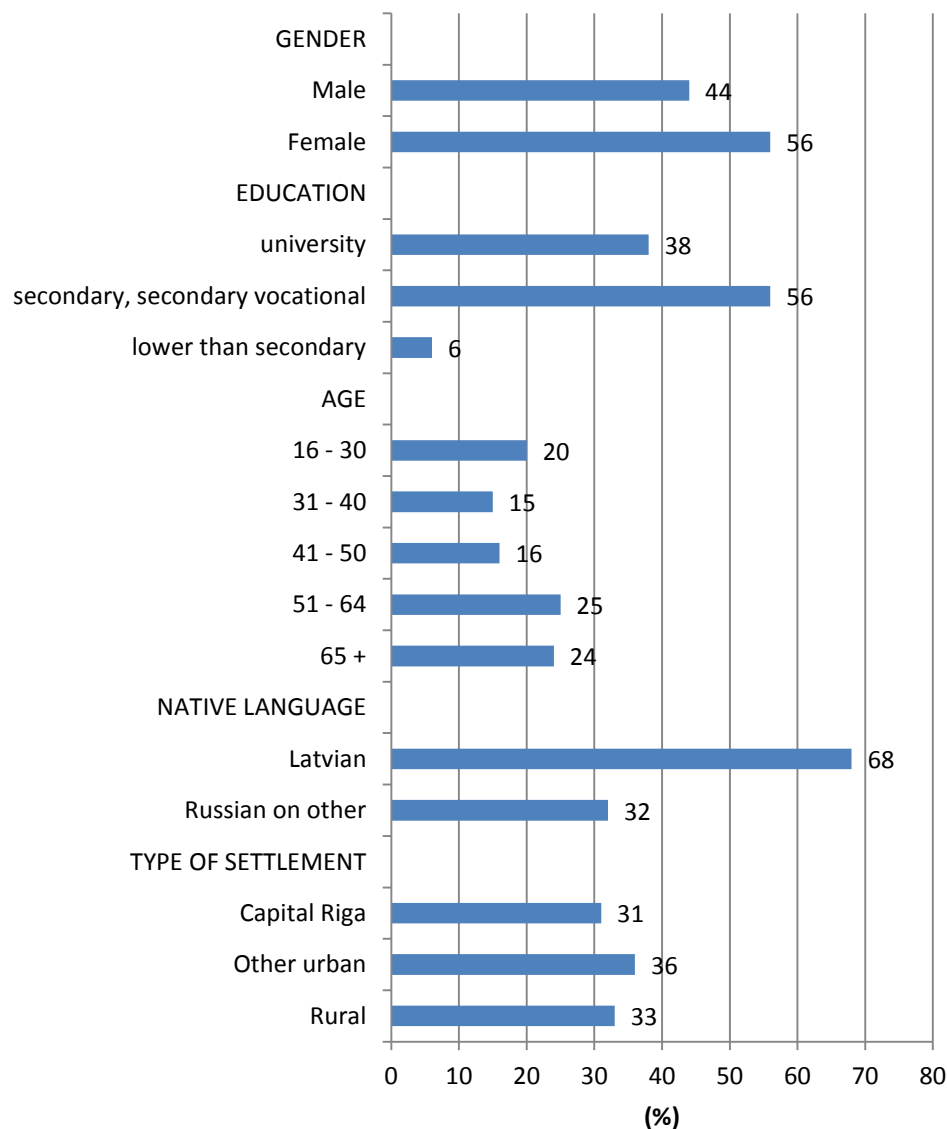
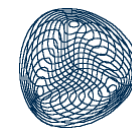
In Latvia the poll was conducted from 16 to 22 February, 602 Latvian residents aged 16 and over were interviewed.

In Lithuania the poll was conducted from 19 February to 9 March, 603 Lithuanian residents aged 16 and over were interviewed.

Background data for respondents /ESTONIA/ *weighted*

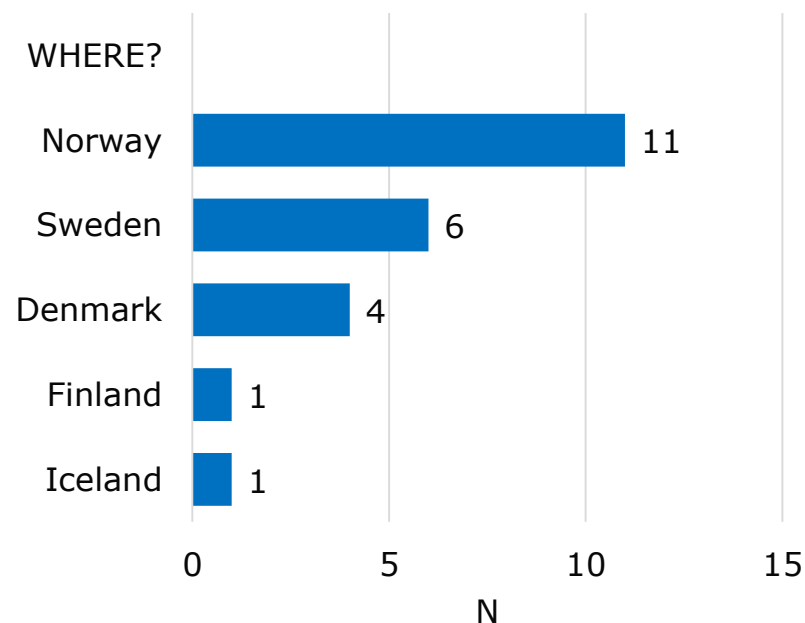
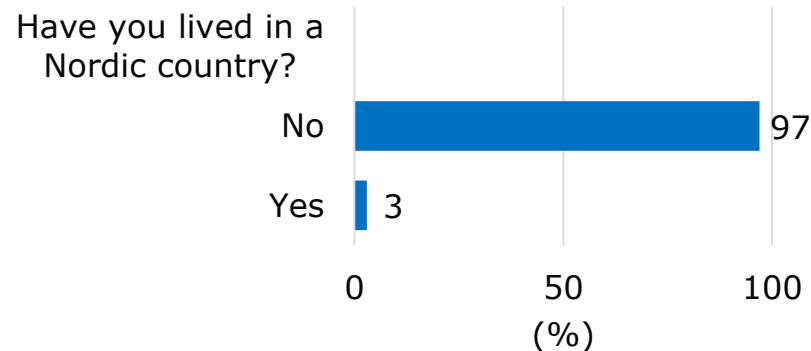
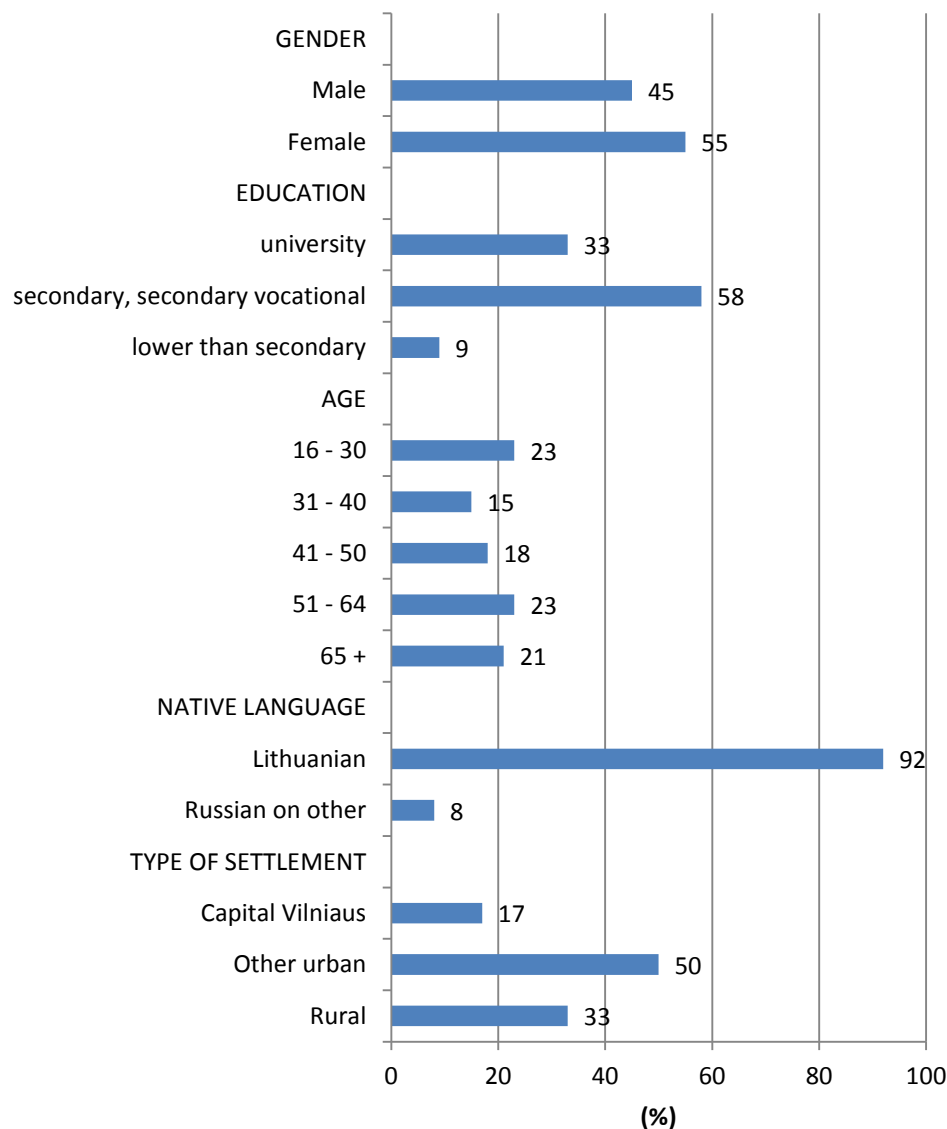
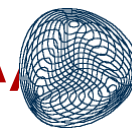


Background data for respondents /LATVIA/ *weighted*



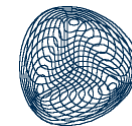
Background data for respondents /LITHUANIA/

weighted



SUMMARY

Summary



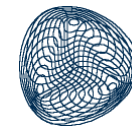
It was quite expected, that all three Baltic countries has a positive attitude towards closer cooperation with the Nordic countries.

The study revealed that good cooperation with the Nordic countries is considered as important and people would like to see even more cooperation between the Baltic and the Nordic countries.

Talking about institutions and meetings that constitute Nordic cooperation, the overall majority of residents in Baltic countries would like to have closer integration of with these institutions.

When evaluating most important base for cooperation with the Nordic countries, the majority of the respondents agree, that small countries need to cooperate. But beside that the geographical proximity is also important, as well as sharing the same values and having cultural similarities.

Summary

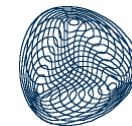


In the people's opinion, the most important directions /sectors for cooperation with Nordic countries are economy, education and science, tourism, culture, innovation and new technologies.

From seven potential benefits that Baltic countries could get from cooperation with the Nordic countries the respondents have chosen most often the possibility to learn from each other, to increase trade and competitiveness and to move around for studies and work.

According to the public opinion the most typical values for the Nordic countries are social welfare, environmental awareness and freedom of expression and speech.

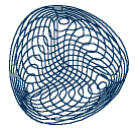
Summary



People in Baltic countries believe that they could contribute to the Nordic countries with labor force and human resources, with opportunities for tourism; with cultural heritage, cultural values and services. Because Estonian people are convinced that Estonia is a leading IT-country, the main thing to offer to Nordic countries would be IT-development and digital services. Lithuanians would like to provide to the Nordic countries with their innovations and science achievements, but also with natural resources.

The Nordic countries also have their negative side. The liberal immigration and refugee policy is not very popular. People also find too liberal attitudes towards sexual minorities and support for same-sex marriages problematic. Exaggerated gender equality and gender-neutral education is also criticized.

Summary



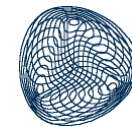
Giving a spontaneous answer about persons or characters that come first into the mind, Estonian respondents differ from respondents in Latvia and Lithuania. If in Latvia and Lithuania different characters from literature or mythology prevail, then in Estonia people first of all mention politicians, especially from Finland.

In Latvia and Lithuania we got most often the answers like “trolls”, “Santa Claus”, “Karlsson”. In Estonia Sauli Niinistö, Tarja Halonen and Urho Kekkonen are frequently mentioned, in addition to the King of Sweden, who have played an important role in Estonian history.

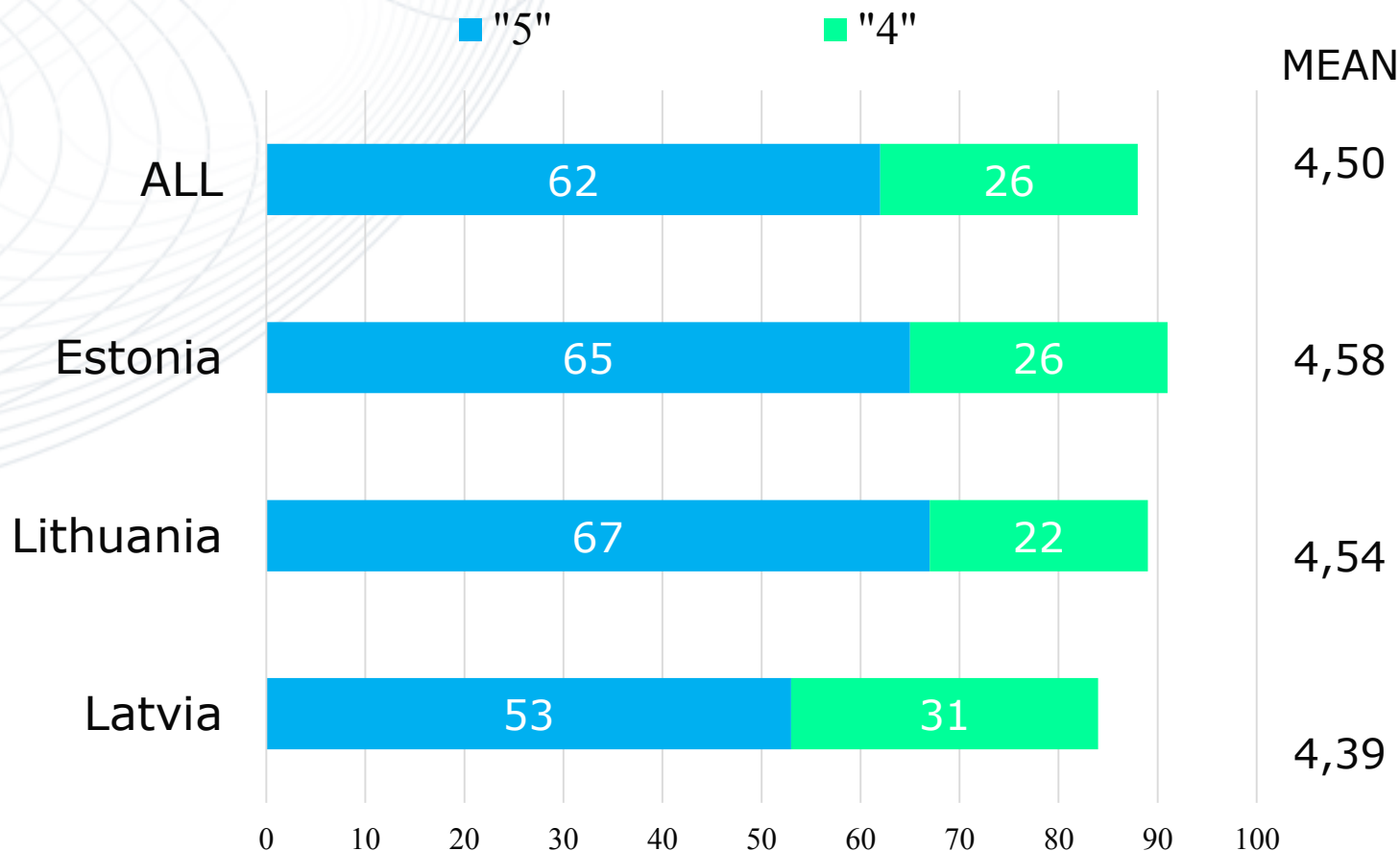
Astrid Lindgren is well-known in all three Baltic states and people also remember the former prime minister of Sweden, Olof Palme.

ATTITUDES ABOUT COOPERATION WITH NORDIC COUNTRIES

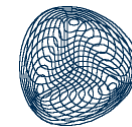
How important is good cooperation with the Nordic countries?



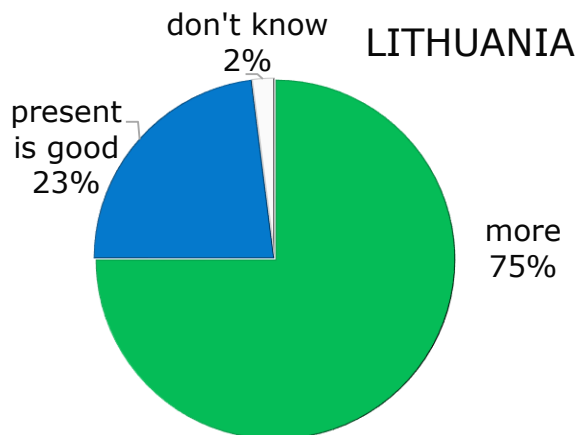
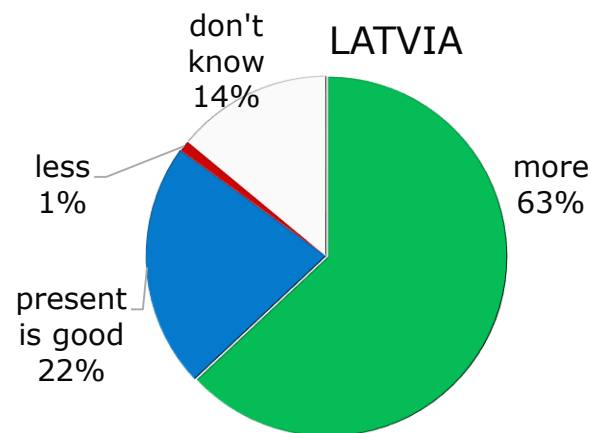
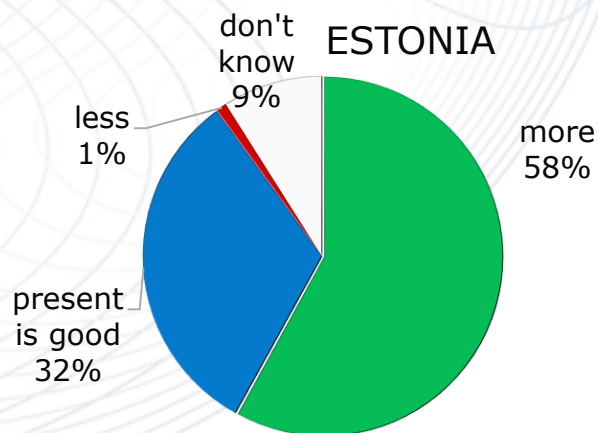
on a five-point scale, where "1" is "not at all important" and "5" - "very important"



How do you evaluate the current level of cooperation with the Nordic countries?

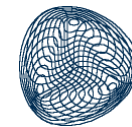


Do you want to see more or less cooperation between Estonia/Latvia/Lithuania and Nordic countries or you find the current situation is good?

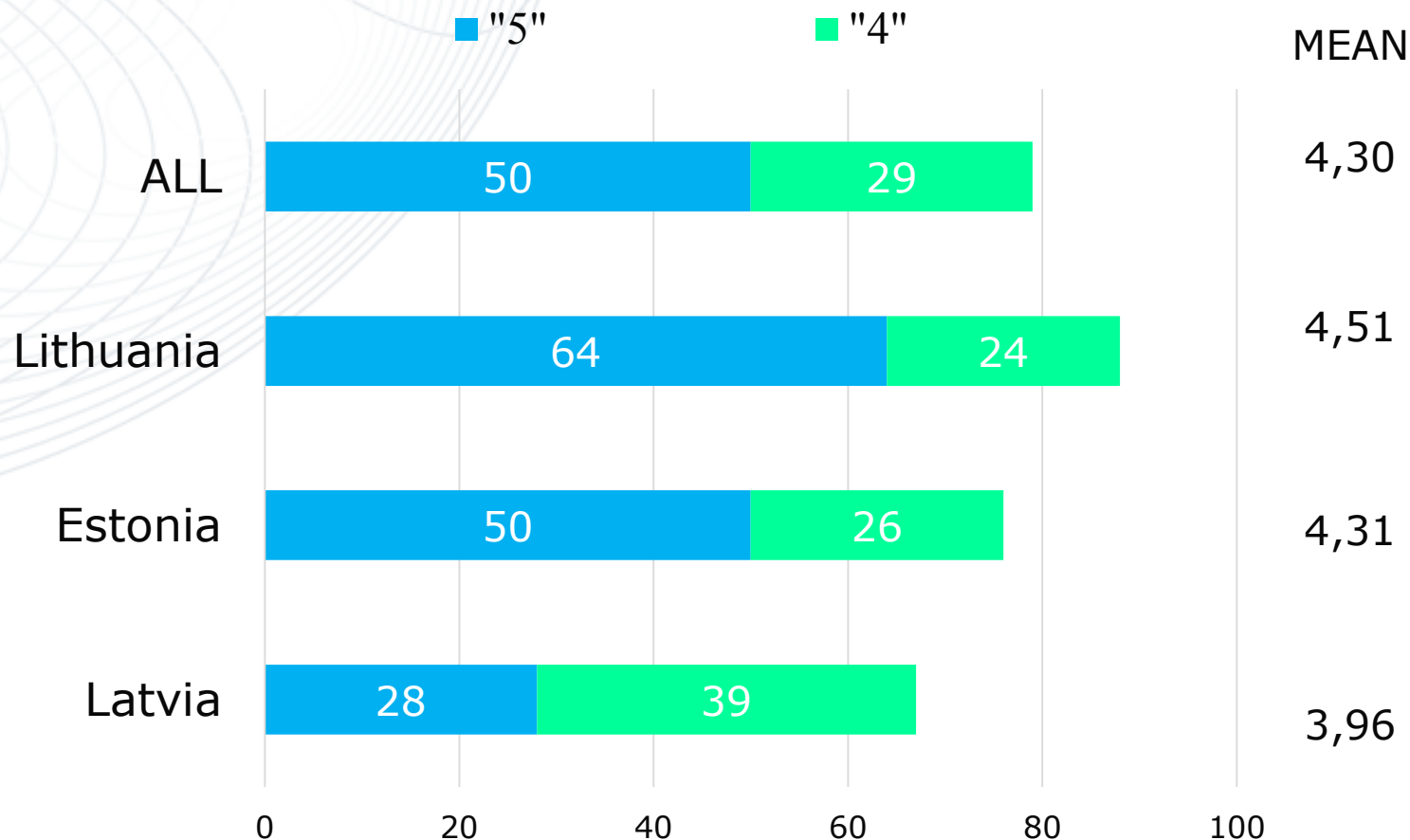


	ALL
More	67%
Present is good	25%
Less	1%
Don't know	7%

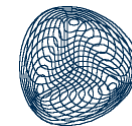
Would you like more close integration to Nordic institutions and meetings?



on a five-point scale, where "1" is "not at all" and "5" - "absolutely yes"



Comments

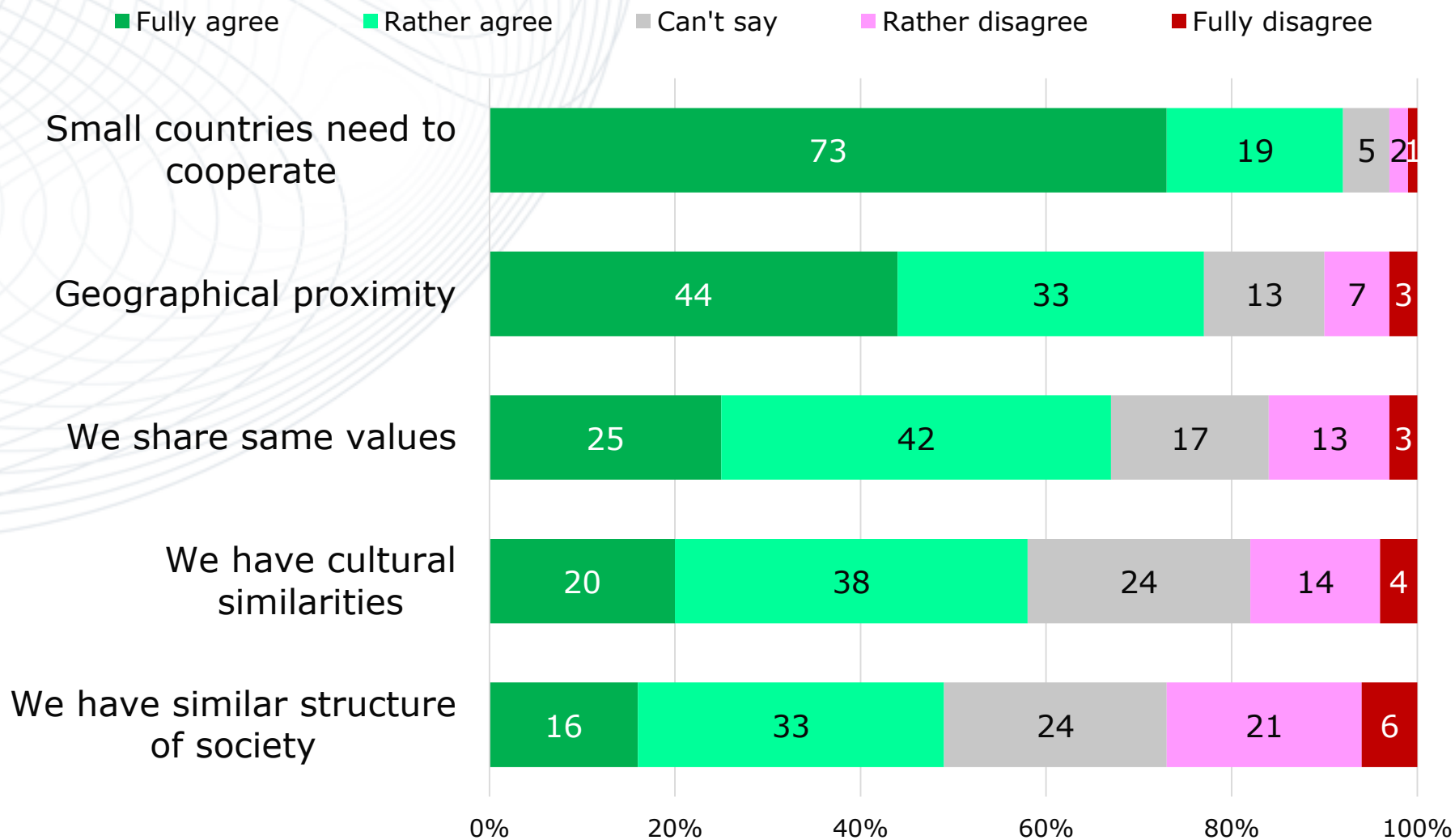
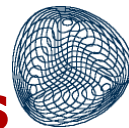


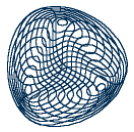
- ❖ The society of all three Baltic countries has a positive attitude towards closer cooperation with the Nordic countries:
 - ❑ For dominant part of residents in Baltic countries a good cooperation with the Nordic countries is considered as important: in Estonia 91% evaluate it as very or rather important (65% give five points and 26% four points on the five-point scale). In Lithuania the respective percentage is 89% (67% - “5” and 22% - “4”) and in Latvia 84% (53% - “5” and 31% - “4”);
 - ❑ 75% in Lithuania, 63% in Latvia and 58% in Estonia would like to see more cooperation between own country and Nordic countries; 32% in Estonia, 23% in Lithuania and 21% in Latvia find the current level of cooperation good enough.
 - ❑ Overall majority of residents in Baltic countries would like to have closer integration with Nordic countries and their institutions: in Lithuania 88%; in Estonia 76% and in Latvia 67%. On the 5-point scale 64% in Lithuania answer “5” and 24% “4”; (in Estonia 50% and 26%; in Latvia 28% and 39% respectively).

BASE FOR COOPERATION,
MOST IMPORTANT SECTORS FOR COOPERATION
AND GREATEST BENEFITS FROM COOPERATION

Base for cooperation with the Nordic countries

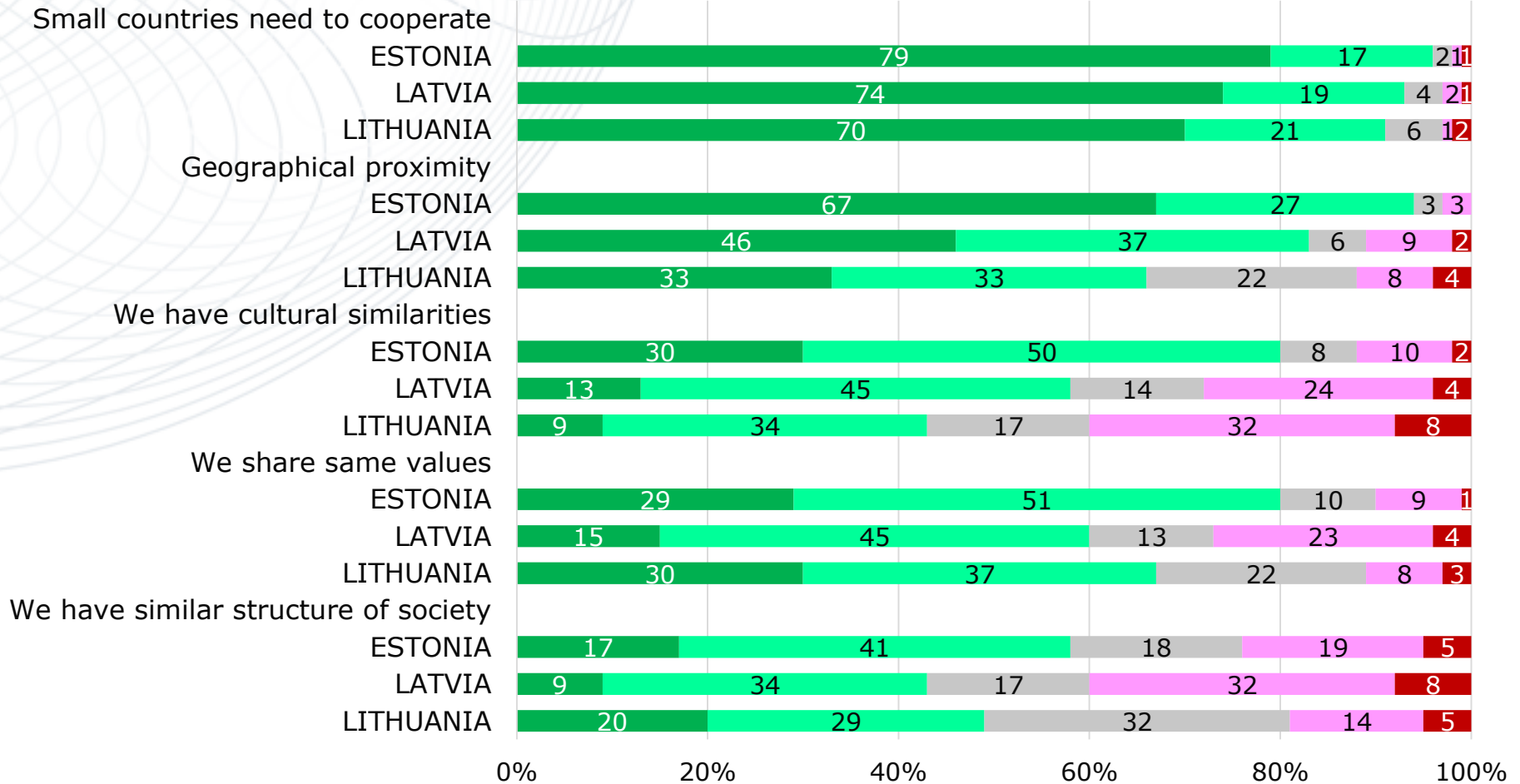
/ALL 3 COUNTRIES/



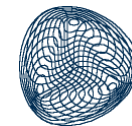


Base for cooperation with the Nordic countries

■ Fully agree ■ Rather agree ■ Can't say ■ Rather disagree ■ Fully disagree



Comments

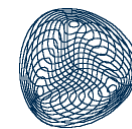


- ❖ When evaluating most important base for cooperation with the Nordic countries, the majority of the respondents agreed with the following statements:
 - *Small countries need to cooperate* (96% of respondents in Estonia, 93% in Latvia and 91% in Lithuania fully or rather agreed with the statement);
 - *Geographical proximity* (agreed 94% in Estonia, 83% in Latvia and 66% in Lithuania);
 - *We share same values* (agreed 80% in Estonia, 67% in Lithuania and 60% in Latvia);
 - *We have cultural similarities* (agreed 80% in Estonia, 58% in Latvia and 48% in Lithuania);
 - *We have similar structure of society; similar social order* (agreed 58% in Estonia, 48% in Lithuania and 43% in Latvia).

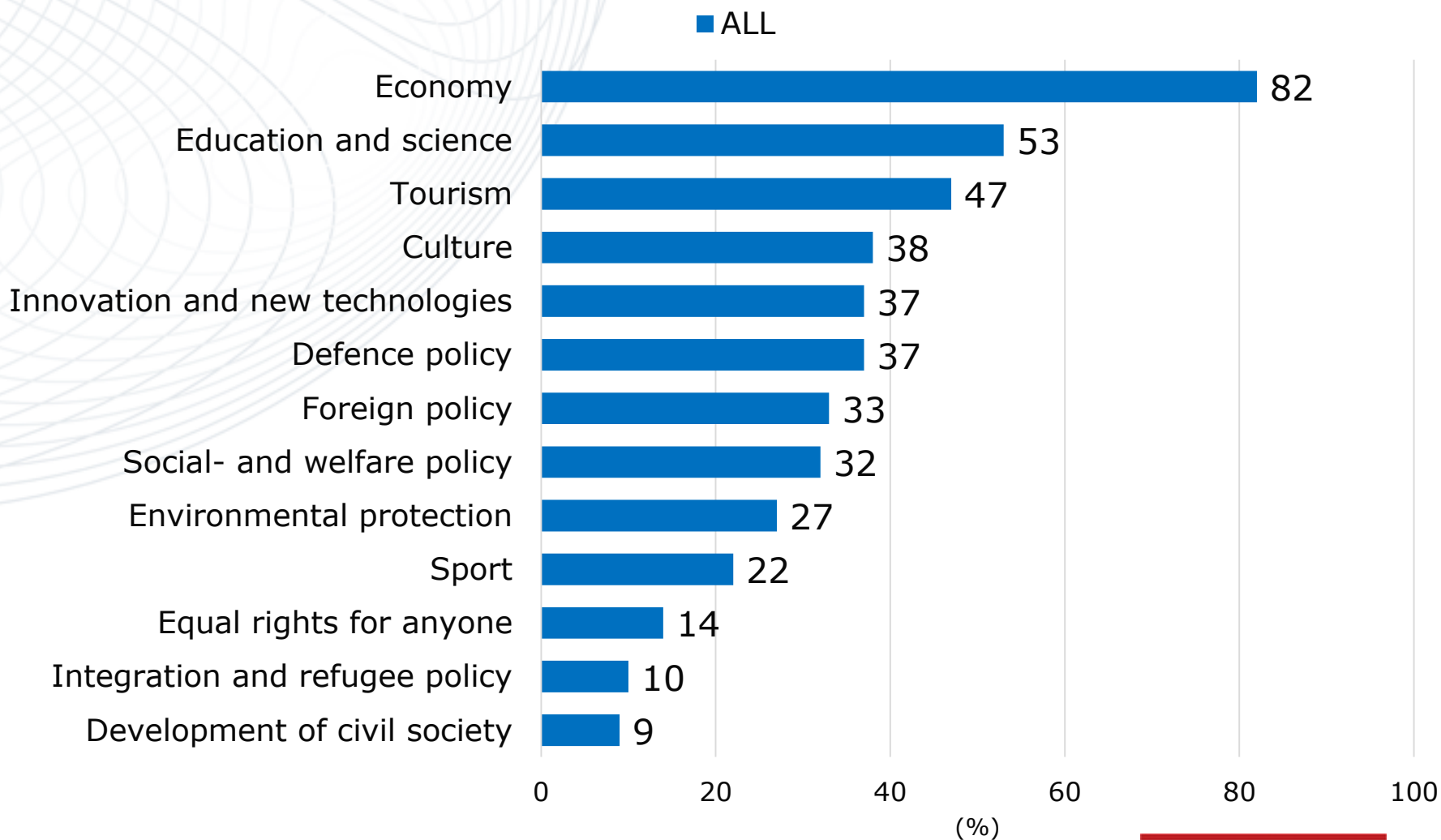
Respondents estimate geographic proximity correctly: Estonia is closest to the Nordic countries and Lithuania the farthest. Nordic culture and values are the closest to the people of Estonia.

The statement that we have similar structure of society, gets the least acceptance.

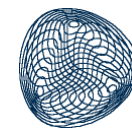
The most important sectors for cooperation with the Nordic countries



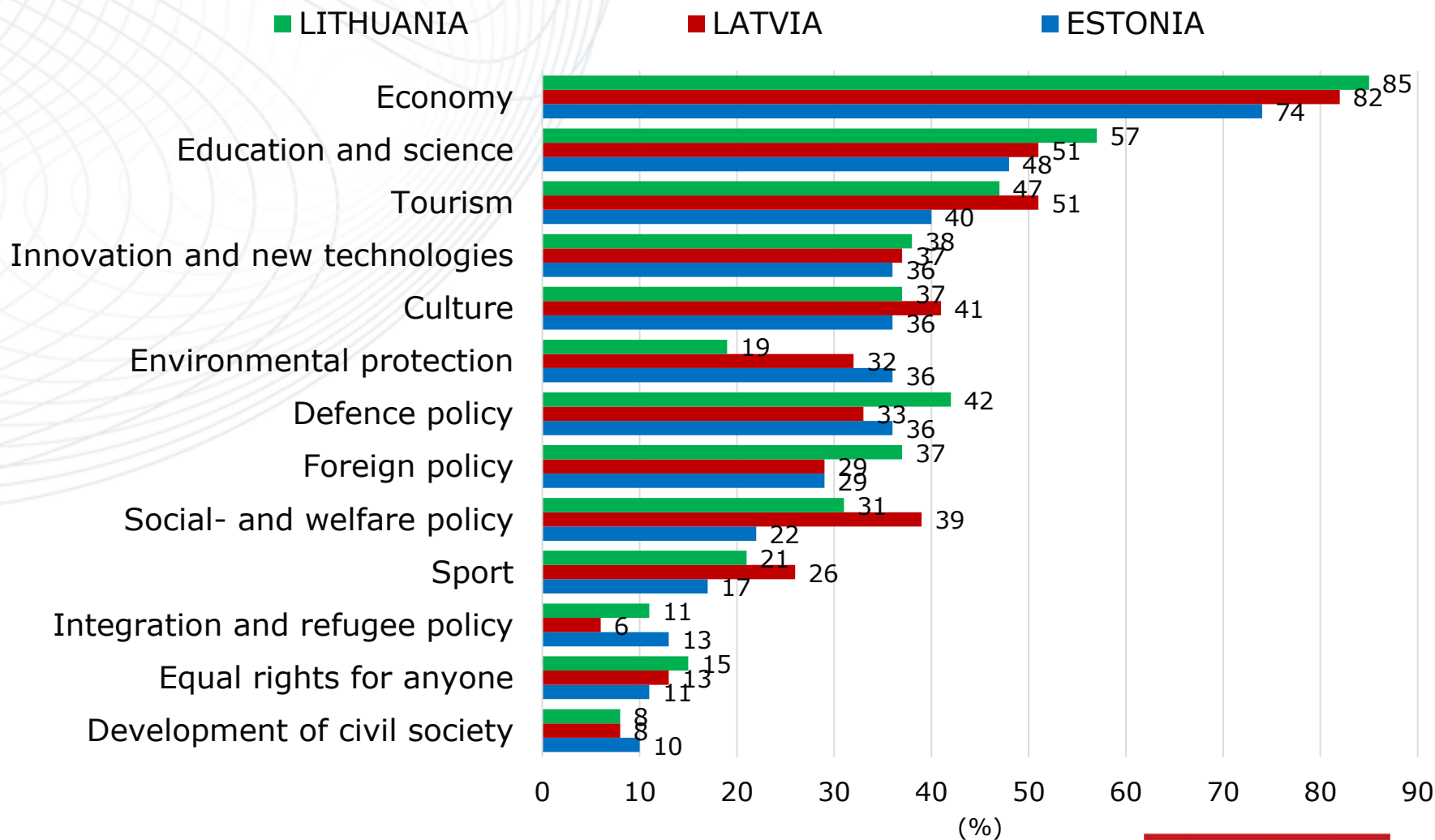
Respondents could choose a maximum of five responses



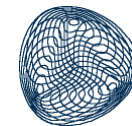
The most important sectors for cooperation with the Nordic countries



Respondents could choose a maximum of five responses



Comments

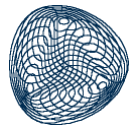


- ❖ The most important cooperation directions / sectors with Nordic countries are:
 - Economy (mentioned by 85% respondents in Lithuania, 82% in Latvia and 74% in Estonia);
 - Education and science (57% in Lithuania, 51% in Latvia and 47% in Estonia);
 - Tourism (51% in Latvia, 47% in Lithuania and 40% in Estonia);
 - Culture (41% in Latvia, 37% in Lithuania and 36% in Estonia);
 - Innovation and new technologies (38% in Lithuania, 37% in Latvia and 36% in Estonia);

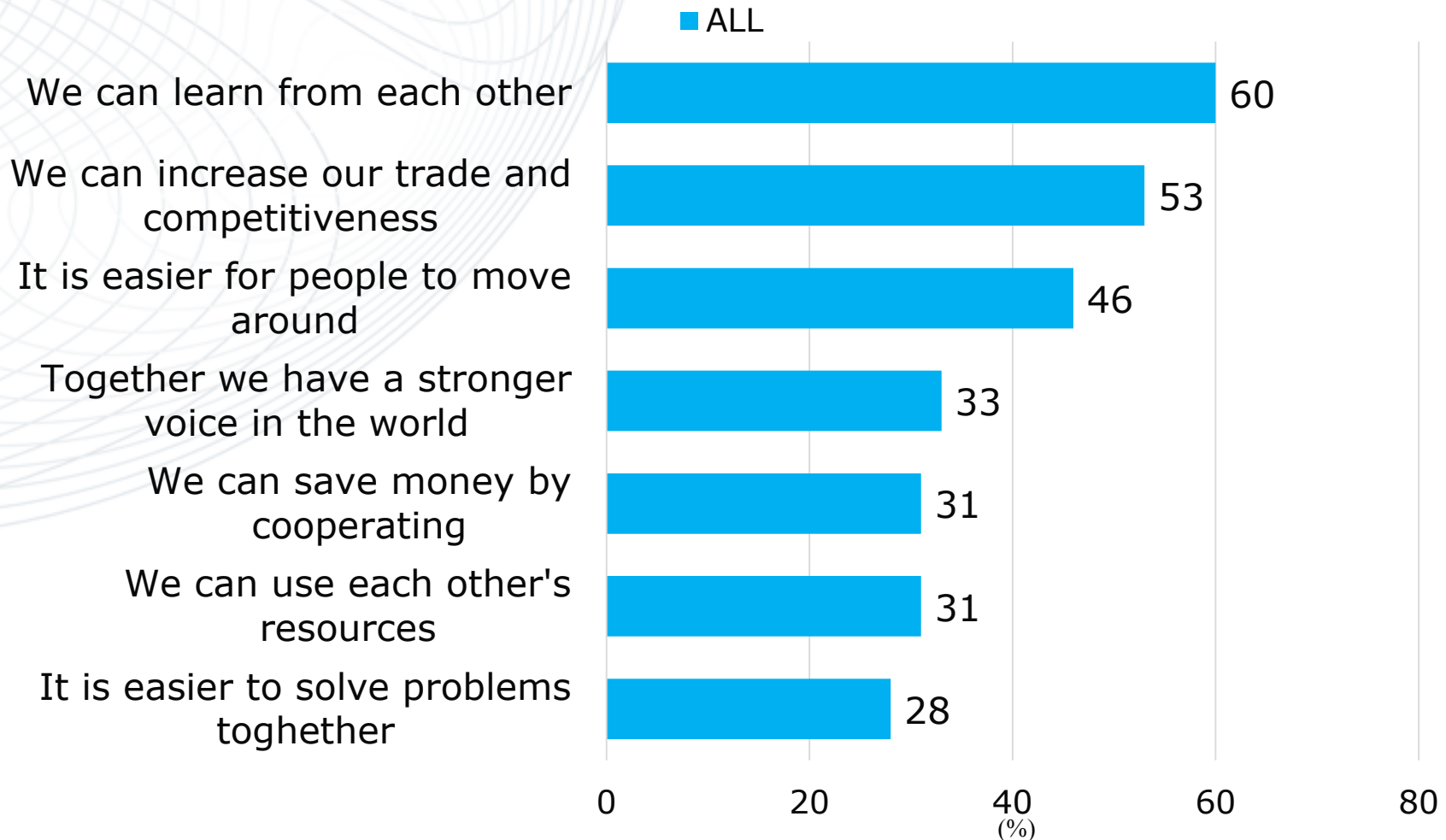
Comparing with other Baltic neighbours Lithuanian people consider foreign (37%) and defence policy (42%) more important, in Latvia - social- and welfare policy (39%) and sport (26%), in Estonia - environmental protection (36%).

Women value more the cooperation in education and science, social- and welfare policy and culture; men prefer more innovation and new technologies and defence policy.

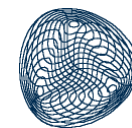
The greatest benefits from a cooperation /ALL 3 COUNTRIES/



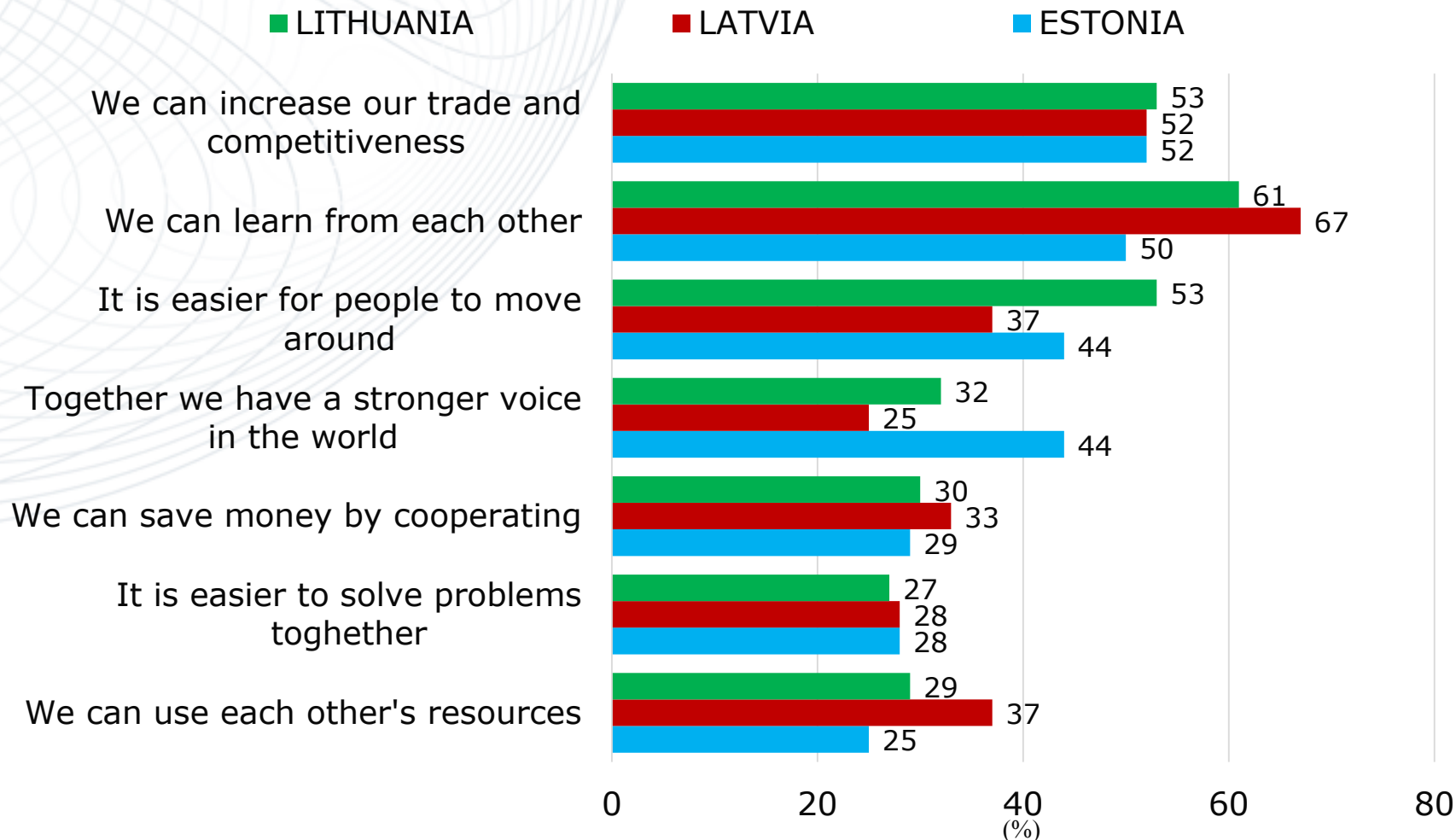
Respondents could choose a maximum of three responses from seven alternatives



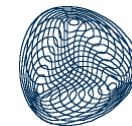
The greatest benefits from a cooperation



Respondents could choose a maximum of three responses from seven alternatives



Comments

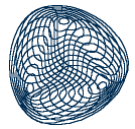


- ❖ The seven potential benefits that Baltic countries could get from cooperation with the Nordic countries were presented to the respondents. They had three alternatives to choose. Respondents most often named the following as the most important benefits:
 - *We can learn from each other (Latvia 67%, Lithuania 61%, Estonia 50%);*
 - *We can increase our trade and competitiveness (Lithuania 53%, Estonia and Latvia 52%).*
 - *It is easier for people to move around for studies and work (Lithuania 53%, Estonia 44%, Latvia 37%);*
 - *Together with Nordic countries we have a stronger voice in the world (Estonia 44%, Lithuania 32%, Latvia 25%).*

TYPICAL VALUES FOR THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

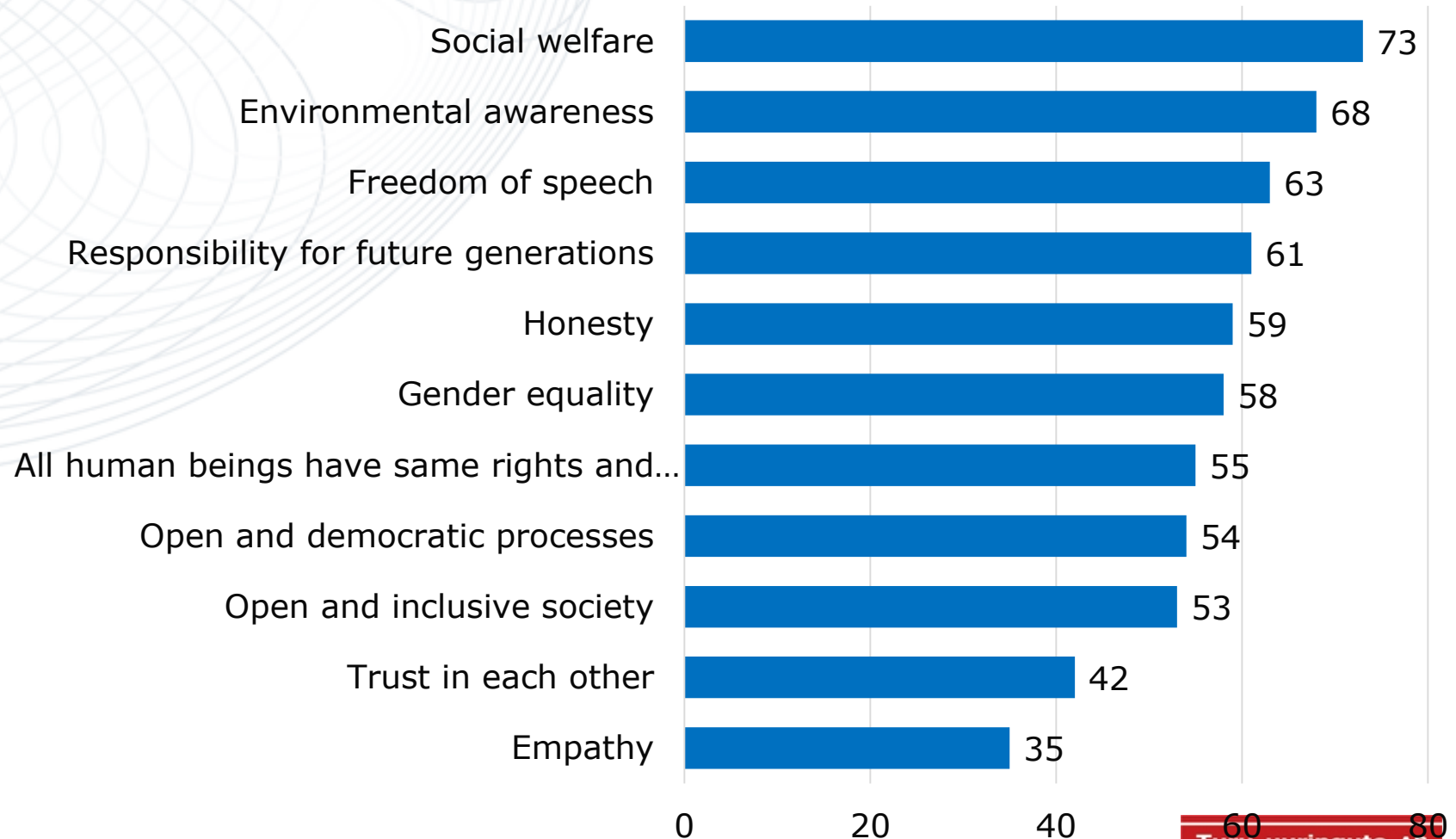
Typical values for the Nordic countries

/certainly, %/



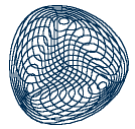
Evaluated on a three-point scale: certainly, to some extent, no

■ ALL

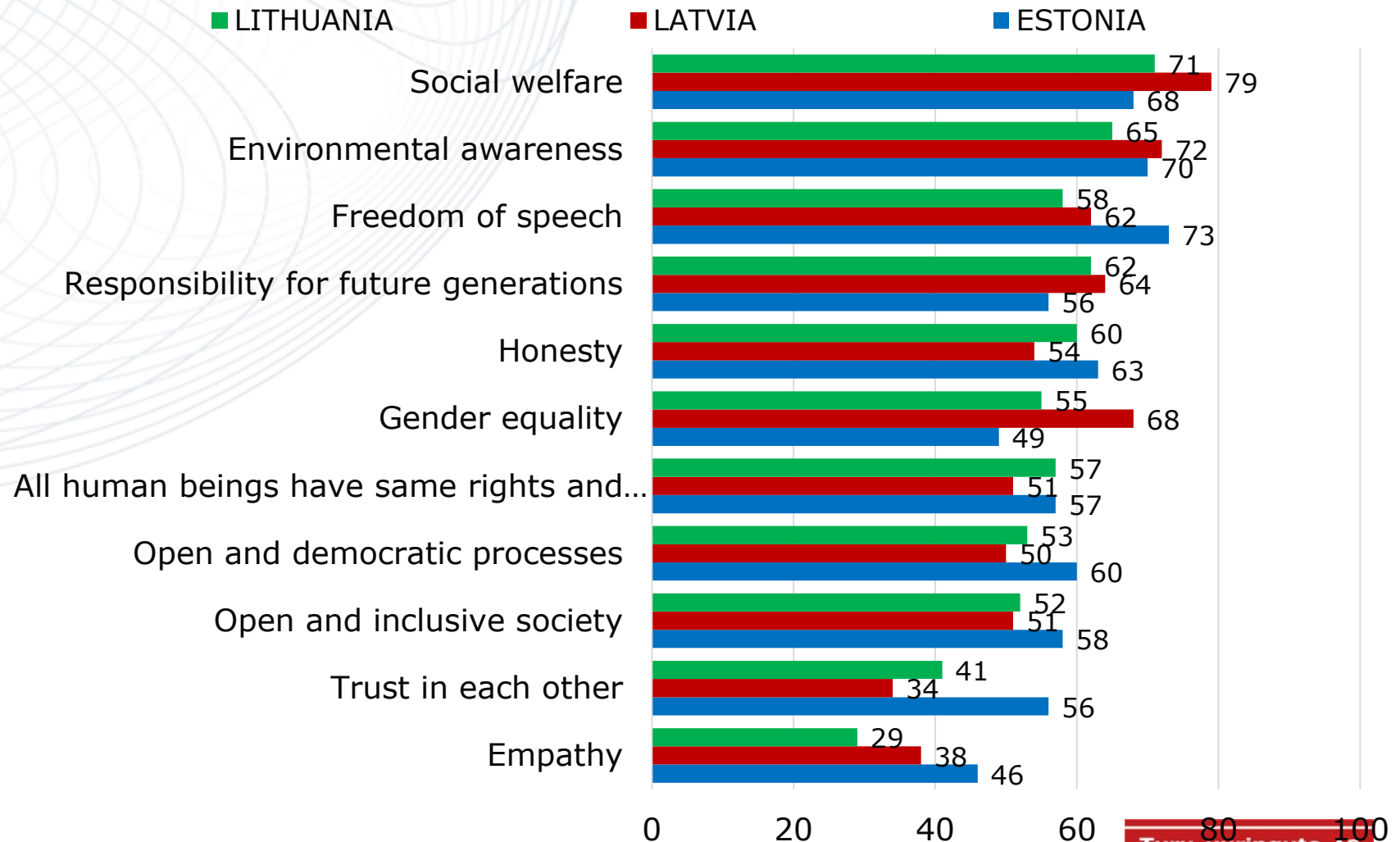


Typical values for the Nordic countries

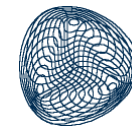
/certainly, %/



Evaluated on a three-point scale: certainly, to some extent, no



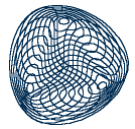
Comments



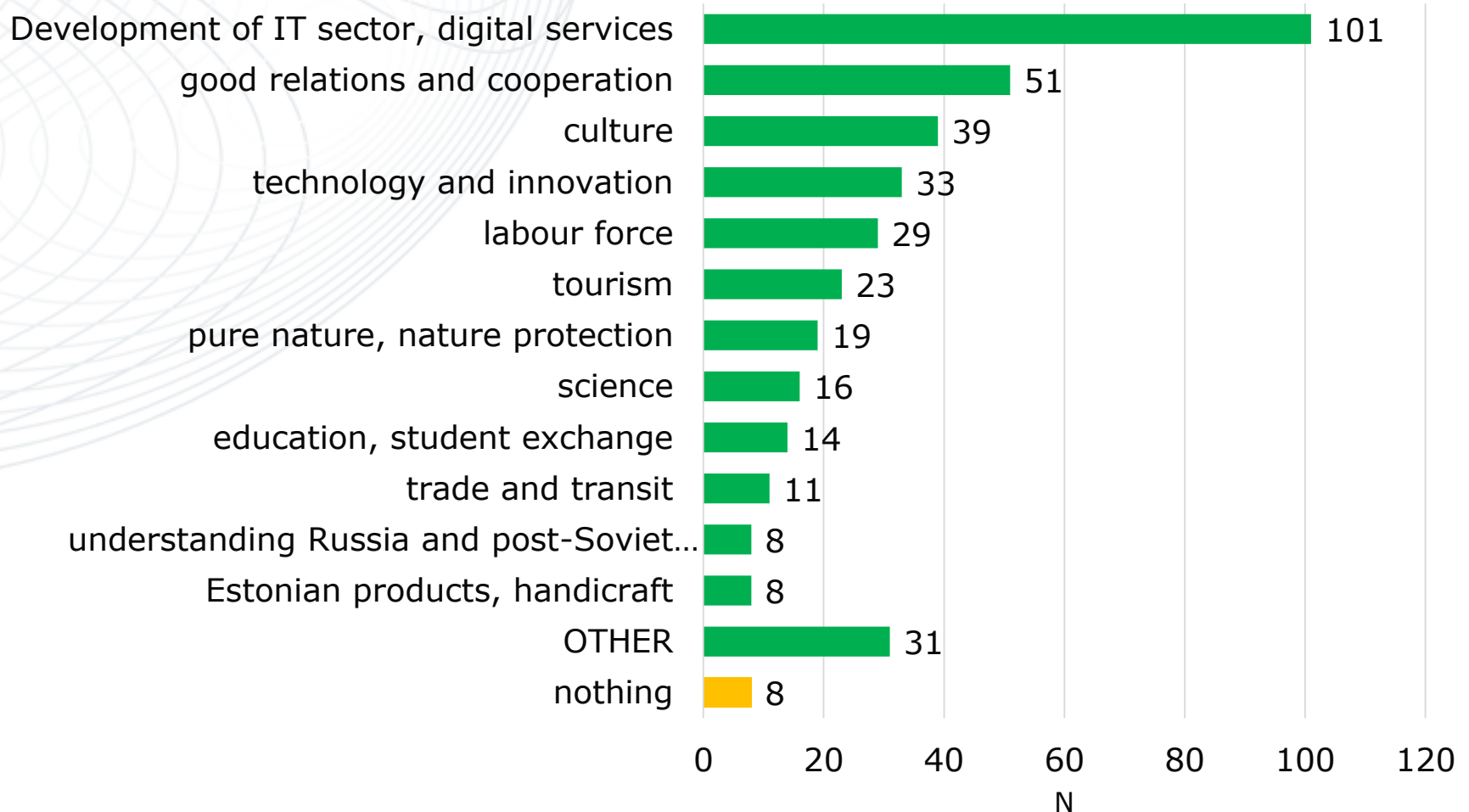
- ❖ **Overwhelming majority of the respondents find all listed values certainly or to some extent typical for the Nordic countries. The dominant values are:**
 - **Social welfare (79% in Latvia, 71% in Lithuania, 68% in Estonia);**
 - **Environmental awareness (72% in Latvia, 70% in Estonia, 65% in Lithuania);**
 - **Freedom of expression/ speech (73% of respondents in Estonia, 62% in Latvia, 58% in Lithuania);**
- ❖ **Less typical values are:**
 - **Open and inclusive society (58% in Estonia, 52% in Lithuania and 51% in Latvia);**
 - **Trust in each other (56% in Estonia 41% in Lithuania and 34% in Latvia);**
 - **Empathy (46% in Estonia, 38% in Latvia and 29% in Lithuania).**

WHAT CAN ESTONIA/LATVIA/LITHUANIA
CONTRIBUTE TO THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

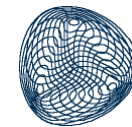
What can Estonia contribute to the Nordic countries?



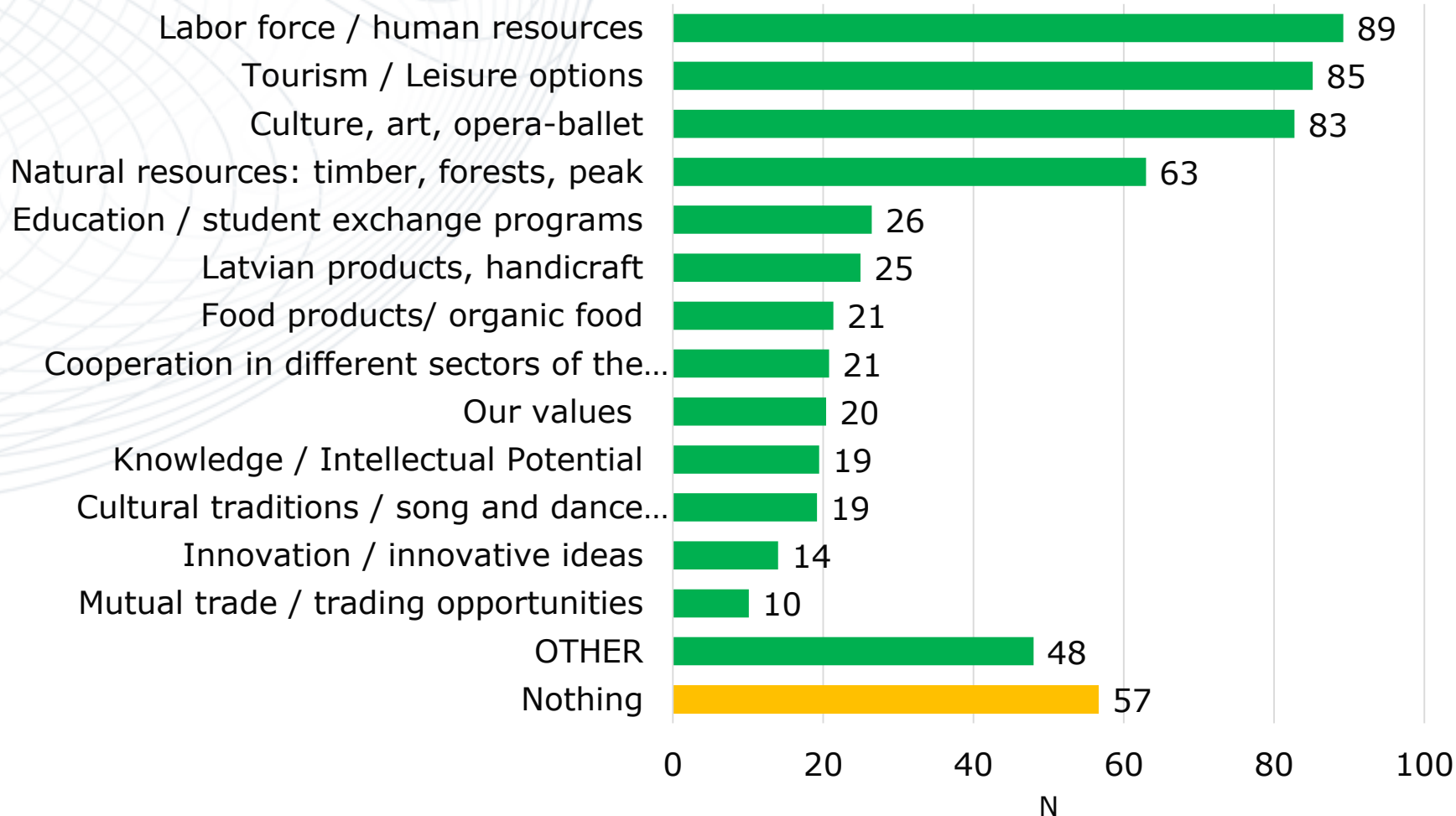
336 respondents gave the answer (56% from all)



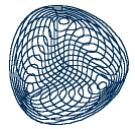
What can Latvia contribute to the Nordic countries?



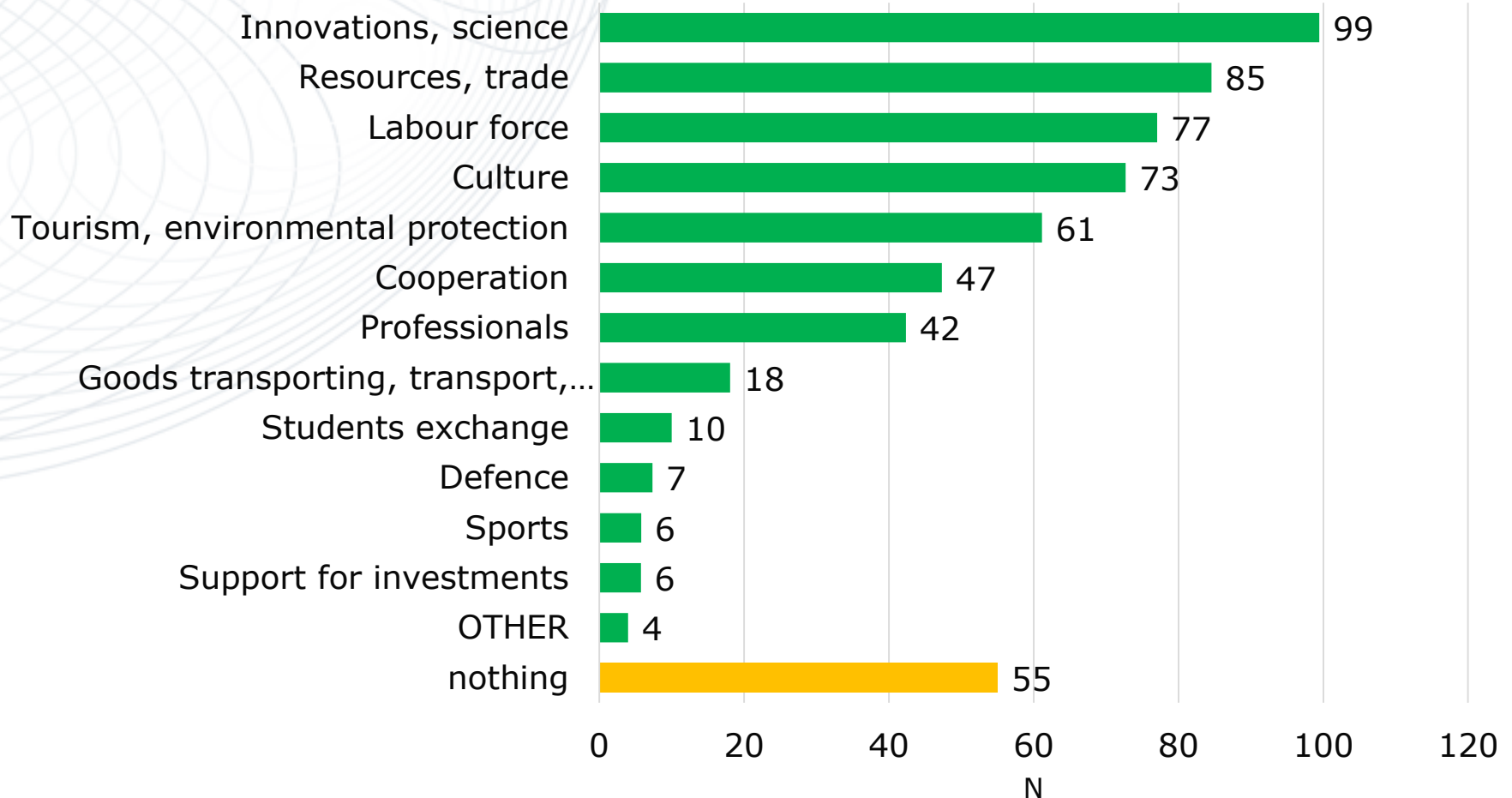
440 respondents gave the answer (73% from all)



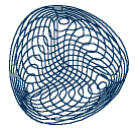
What can Lithuania contribute to the Nordic countries?



423 respondents gave the answer (70% from all)



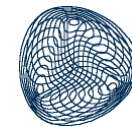
COMMENTS



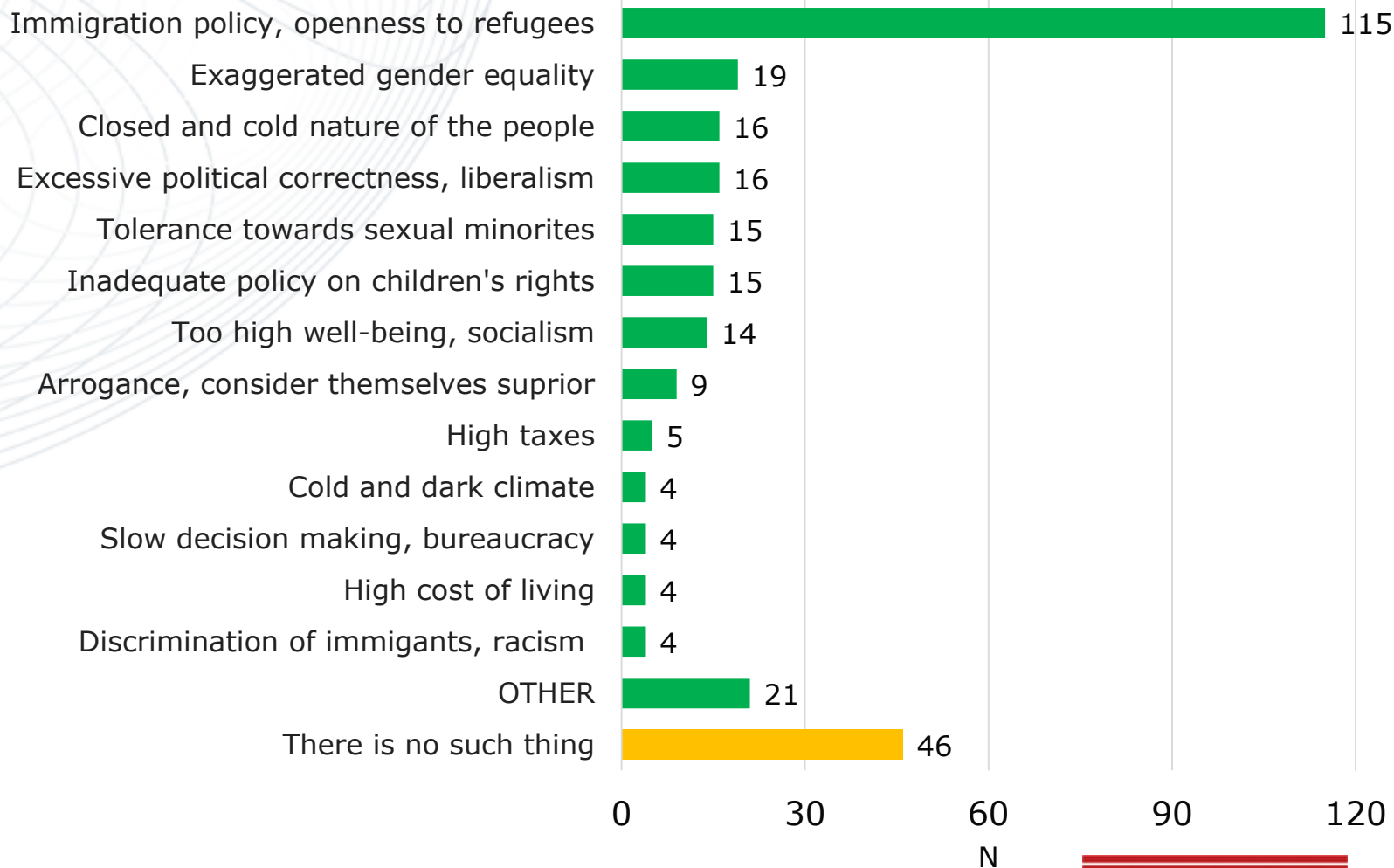
- ❖ People in all three Baltic countries express the opinion that Estonia/ Latvia/ Lithuania could contribute to the Nordic countries with ...
 - Labour force, human resources (5% in Estonia, 15% in Latvia, 13% in Lithuania);
 - Opportunities for tourism (4% in Estonia; 14% in Latvia, 10% in Lithuania);
 - Cultural heritage, cultural values and services (7% in Estonia; 13% in Latvia, 12% in Lithuania).
- ❖ Estonian people are convinced that Estonia is a leading IT-country and the main thing we could offer to Nordic countries is IT-development and digital services (17%).
- ❖ Lithuanians think, that they can contribute most offering Nordic countries innovations and science achievements (16%), but also natural resources (14%).
- ❖ There are about 10 percent of respondents in Latvia and Lithuania and only 2 percent in Estonia who think their country has nothing to contribute with.

WHAT BALTIC PEOPLE DON'T LIKE ABOUT NORDIC COUNTRIES

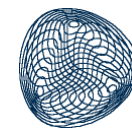
Is there something you don't like about the Nordic countries? /ESTONIA/



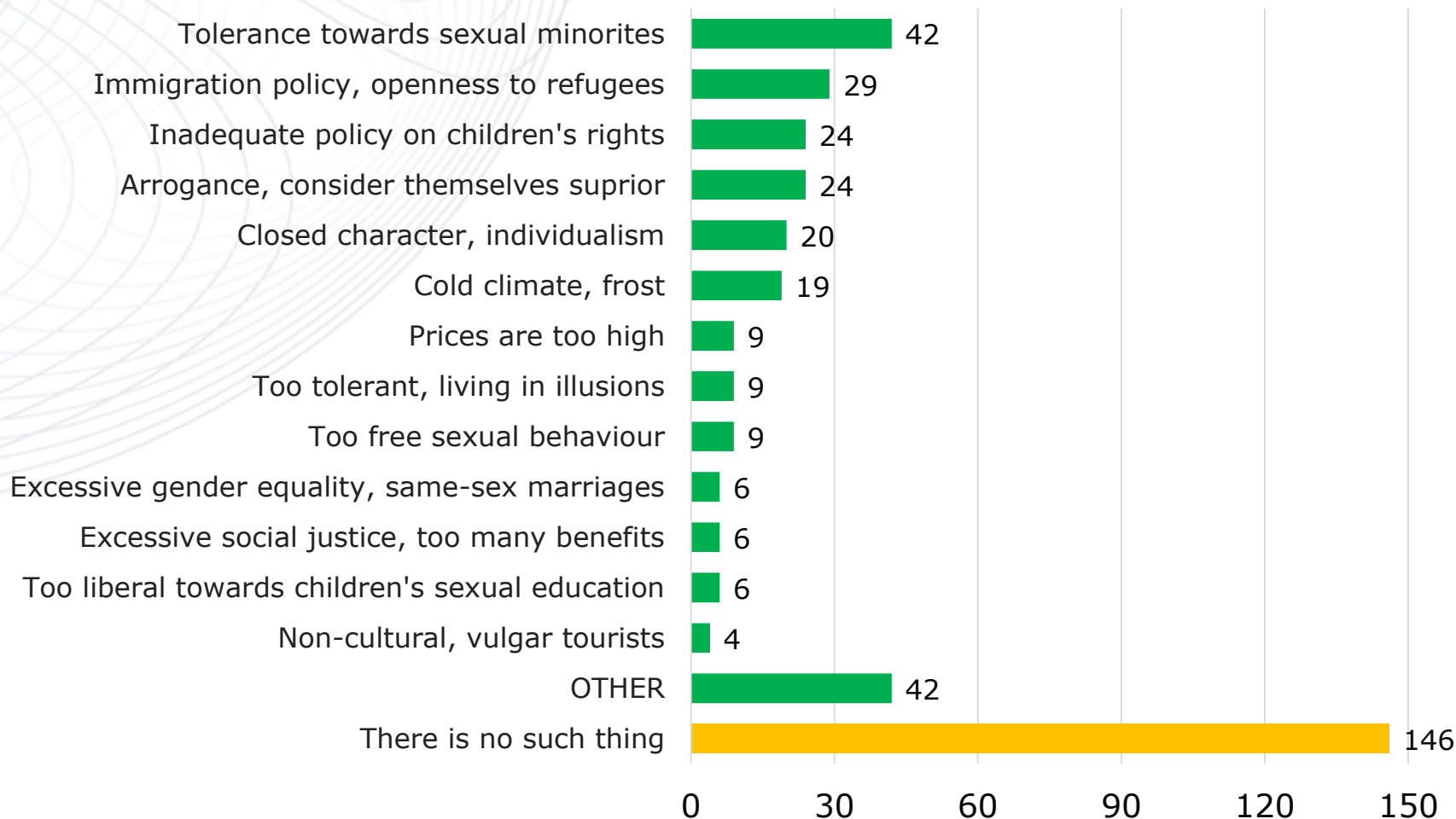
291 respondents gave the answer (48,5% from all)



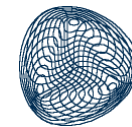
Is there something you don't like about the Nordic countries? /LATVIA/



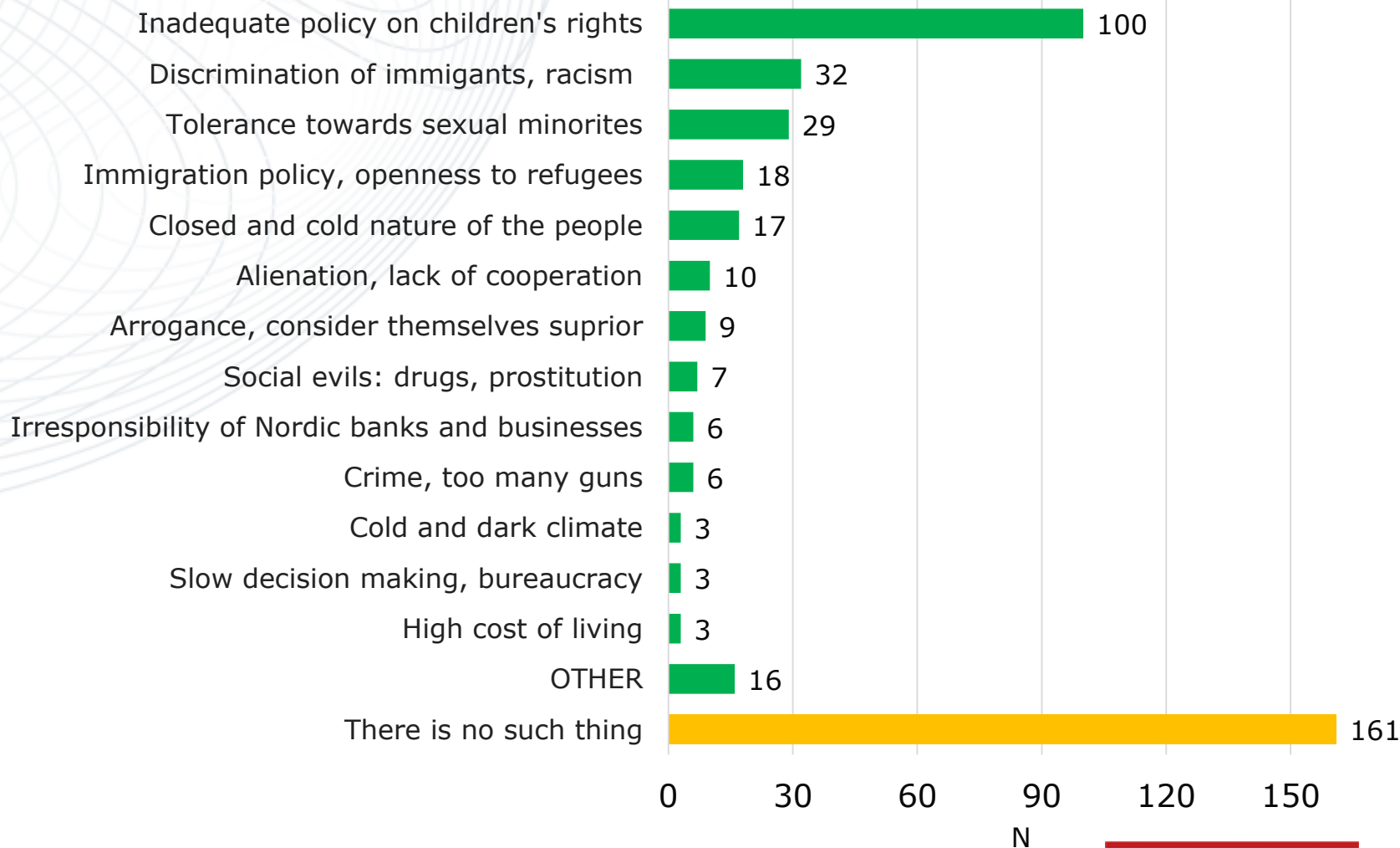
364 respondents gave the answer (60% from all)



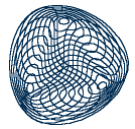
Is there something you don't like about the Nordic countries? /LITHUANIA/



395 respondents gave the answer (65% from all)



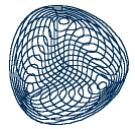
COMMENTS



- ❖ People in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are mainly disturbed by the excessive liberalism and political correctness of the Nordic countries
- ❖ There are 19 percent of respondents in Estonia, 5 percent in Latvia and 3 percent in Lithuania who don't like liberal immigration and refugee policy in the Nordic countries.
- ❖ People also find problematic too liberal attitudes towards sexual minorities and support for same-sex marriages (in Latvia 6%, in Lithuania 5%, in Estonia 3%);
- ❖ Disputes over custody of Russian children have been a persistent issue in the Russian media over the past decade. 17% respondents in Lithuania, 6% Latvia and 3% in Estonia find, that inadequate policy on children's rights and separation of children from their families as negative side of Nordic countries.
- ❖ Also exaggerated gender equality and gender-neutral education will be criticized in Estonia (3%) and Latvia (1%).
- ❖ There are about 24 percent of respondents in Latvia, 27 percent in Lithuania and 8 percent in Estonia who think there is nothing they don't like in Nordic countries.

PERSON OR CHARACTER THAT COMES FIRST
INTO MIND WHEN THINKING ON NORDIC
COUNTRIES

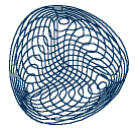
Persons or characters symbolizing Nordic countries /ESTONIA/



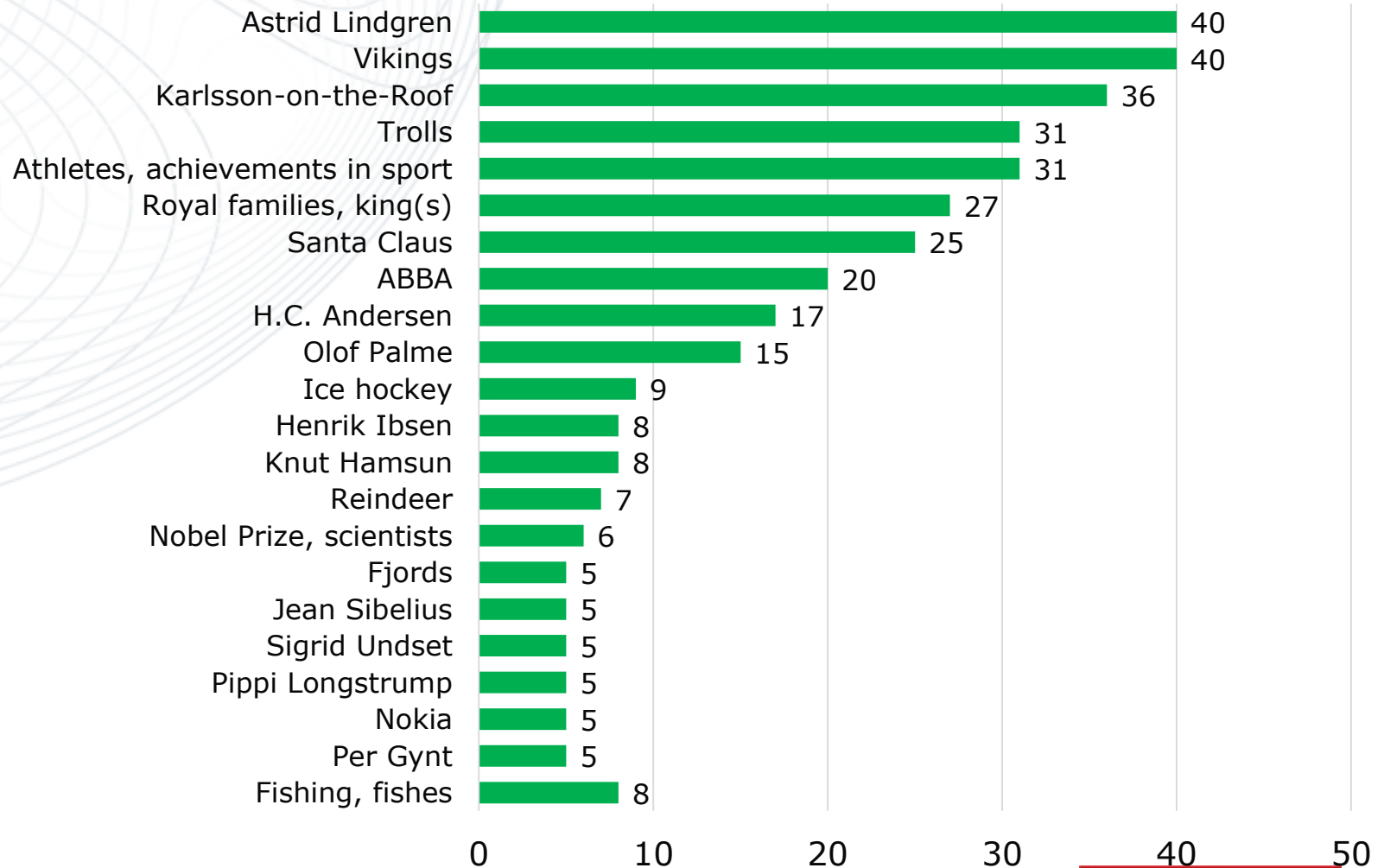
389 respondents gave the answer (65% from all)



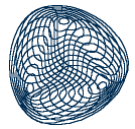
Persons or characters symbolizing Nordic countries /LATVIA/



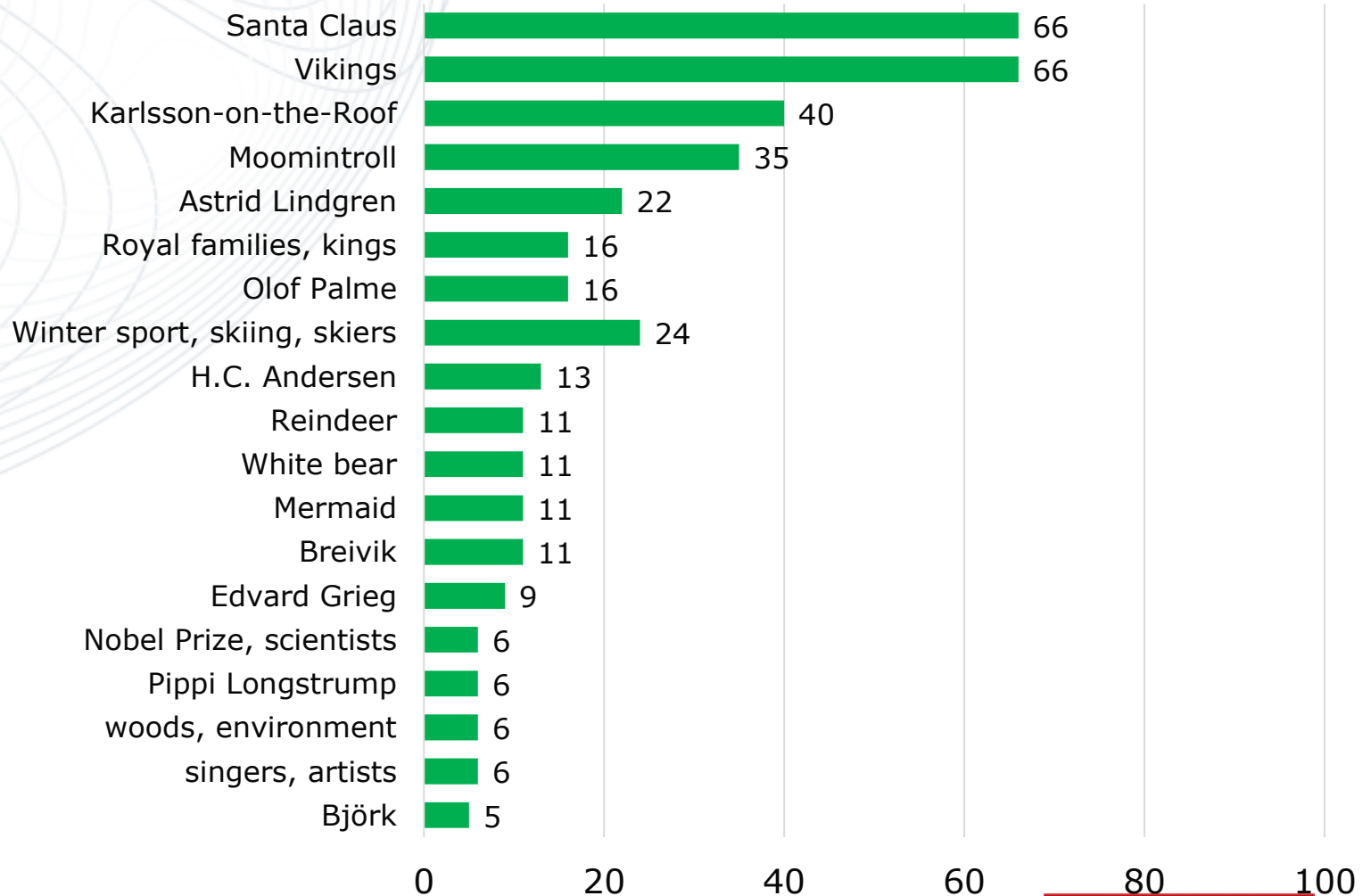
355 respondents gave the answer (59% from all)



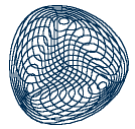
Persons or characters symbolizing Nordic countries /LITHUANIA/



365 respondents gave the answer (60,5% from all)



COMMENTS



- ❖ Answering this question, respondents in Estonia are different from respondents in Latvia and Lithuania. If in Latvia and Lithuania there are mainly different characters from literature or mythology coming into mind to the people, then in Estonia people remind politicians first of all, especially from Finland.
- ❖ So, in Latvia and Lithuania the answers like “trolls”, “Santa Claus”, “Karlsson” prevail. In Estonia people most often mention Finnish political leaders: Sauli Niinistö, Tarja Halonen, Urho Kekkonen and beside them the King of Sweden, that have had important role in Estonian history.
- ❖ Of course, Astrid Lindgren is well-known in all three Baltic states. And people also remember murdered prime minister of Sweden Olof Palme.