Baltic Sea Region history: awareness among youth, national syllabi, and education
Preface

Unitas Foundation together with the Latvian Museum of Occupation started the project ‘Different Nations-Shared Experiences (DNSE)’ in 2010. The project aim was to examine the volume of Baltic Sea Region history taught at schools in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden. This was done in three stages: studying the awareness of the students, the content of the national syllabi and teachers’ approach to regional history.

The authors that finalised the report come from various disciplines related to history, education and identity studies. Each of the three separate research papers involved an expert from each of the four project countries. The research process lasted for three years, therefore besides the authors mentioned above, there were other researchers who temporarily participated in the discussions and writing of this paper. The authors would like to thank Maris Vainre, Jonas Lindström, Johanna Oljemark, Marko van den Berg, Joakim Peimer, Lisa Kings, and Tove Linden who all contributed with their expertise.

This report analyzes youth’s awareness of the region, high school history syllabi and teachers’ approach to regional history in Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Sweden. The aim of the research is to establish the level of Baltic Sea Region (BSR) history knowledge among secondary school students; to what extent the national curricula allow for regional history topics; and how teachers focus on BSR history. The overall results suggest that the students know quite a little about the region but remain somewhat interested. The syllabi differ: while the Finnish and particularly Estonian syllabus state concrete regional history topics, the Latvian and Swedish syllabi include no reference to neighbouring countries. The teachers seem interested in teaching regional history and do mention it quite frequently, however there is no structured approach.
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1st Study: Students’ awareness: Introduction

The research was initiated by Unitas Foundation within the project “Different Nations- Shared Experiences” that aims to foster a sense of unity and neighbourliness in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden. All in all, the study explored three areas: the perception of oneself and others in the region (identity); knowledge and association with historical events and the region; and the preference for different teaching materials in history lessons.

The overall goal of the research was to specify the levels of awareness, knowledge and understanding of neighbours among the youth of Latvia, Estonia, Finland and Sweden. We aimed to map the existing attitudes as well as measure and compare the knowledge of neighbours in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) to generate input for educational materials and outreach activities.

Youth (aged 15-20) of different educational backgrounds (secondary education and secondary vocational education) participated in the study. In Estonia and Latvia the biggest minority (Russian-speaking students) was sampled purposefully including the schools with Russian as one language of tuition while in Sweden and Finland the similar selection could not be done and therefore we approached the differences between majority and minorities based on the collected data.

Literature review

Ethnic, national and regional identities are most often conceptualised as the parts of social identity that is defined as a part of individuals’ self-concept deriving from one’s knowledge of membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Tajfel, 1981).

Identity is a social phenomenon developed through upbringing, education and media. The majority of social science research views identities as constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed by people. The content and relevance of different identities can be and have been changed throughout the history. Historically people probably felt mostly in common with others from their tribe and close surrounding. Past two centuries have seen “inventing of nations” (Gellner, 1983) merging (sometimes forcefully) more or less similar ethnicities and areas. After the painful experiences of the World War II, several countries whose identity was earlier based on one (majority group’s) ethnic culture have tried to de-ethnicize the national identities and create the unity for different ethnicities based on common values, laws and sometimes language and ideology. Creating Soviet people was one of the examples that besides other aims tried to diminish the relevance of ethnic differentiation.

There are more successful examples of creating pan-identities that unite people from different groups without endangering their lower level belongings. Nordic identity is certainly one of them. The success of creating a European identity has been widely discussed. Although these examples may seem very different, they usually have common grounds: reducing prejudice and discrimination, enhancing solidarity and promoting collective action. The common in-group identity model (Gaertner et al. 1993, Hewstone et al. 2002) shows that superordinate identities counteract discrimination between the groups, because they will give the groups the shared in-group boundaries. It has been claimed, however, that this effect may be limited to certain groups and conditions – for instance, in the case of groups with unequal social status, the superordinate identity will often be constructed around the dominant group’s attributes and will as such be resisted by minority group members (Lipponen et al. 2003, Mummendey and Wenzel 1999, Sidanius et al.).
The success or failure of these kinds of initiatives depends on different factors that can be probably best described via identity motives. How well does the identity support our self-esteem, needs for feeling of distinctiveness, continuity and efficacy, need for belonging somewhere and also how meaningful is it (Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Thorpe and Scabini, 2004)? In addition, the mutual intergroup differentiation model (Hewstone and Brown 1986) emphasizes the importance of preserving the original group boundaries while developing a superordinate identity.

The need for meaningful identity offering the feeling of continuity states that identities are not created in test tubes, but in material historical conditions (Davis, Nakayama & Martin, 2000) and that the construction of an identity should draw on a variety of authentic elements held in common within a group including the myths and knowledge of the past (Kelman, 2001). The importance of shared past and feelings of solidarity are represented in almost all definitions of collective identities. According to Phinney (1990), a secure, confident sense of one's ethnic group membership is based on an understanding of the group's history and culture. This is also supported by the findings of Andrews, McGlynn, and Mycock (2009) who showed that understanding the national history and culture is regarded important by the majority group when immigrants seek citizenship (see also (Grever, Haydn, & Ribbens, 2008). In many countries, it is an on-going discussion of what should be taught in history classes and what defines a nation (e.g., Britishness, Dutchness, etc) (see (Andrews & Mycock, 2008), (Andrews, McGlynn, & Mycock, 2010; Stearns, Seixas, & Wineburg, 2000) as cited in (Andrews, et al., 2010).

**Identity in the Baltic Sea Region**

It is arguable whether a common Baltic Sea Region identity exists. In a recent survey, about 1000 Swedish students of 15-20 years were asked several questions on Baltic Sea Region history and geography (UOK, 2007). Only half of the respondents were aware that Berlin was the capital of a country on the Baltic Sea; even fewer were aware that Warsaw was one such capital, despite both Germany and Poland being only a short ferry trip from Sweden. Furthermore, 90 per cent did not know that Tallinn is the foreign capital city located closest to Stockholm. These results may show that the term ‘Baltic Sea Region’ could be restricted to some countries only. It remains, however, unclear who identifies themselves as a Baltic Sea country and who are identified as such by others. As argued by Tajfel (1981) and Phinney (1990), for such regional identity to be developed, a group must feel that the region is important to them and they must have an understanding of its cultural heritage.

**Identity and history teaching**

History teaching has an important role in creating and strengthening national identity all over Europe. The bases for national educational systems were set up in the 19th century, when the wave of national awakening spread through Europe. History's position in this process was undeniable. Strong national identity and respect towards the history of own nation became the objective of history teaching at school.

Whereas creating a history narrative to foster national identity is seen as crucial to preserve one's country (see (Andrews, et al., 2010)), it is also important that the minorities could identify themselves with the narrative. Grever ( et al., 2008) showed that immigrant children are less interested in the history of the country they live in and would like to know more about their country of origin and the relations between the two countries (see also (Saar, 1997). In addition, Ahonen ( 2001) illustrates how a narrative can exclude minorities and cause them to find their own interpretation of past events.

Different countries and regions teach history through their perspective which can differ from another nation's interpretation of the past (Low-Beer, 2003). Teaching history and selecting the curricula to be taught is a powerful tool to shape a nation's understanding of their past, present and future (Nielsen, 1997). For example, Ott (2008) studied Swedish history text books and concluded that the totalitarian regimes in Germany and in the Soviet Union are explained from different perspectives. When a bottom-up framework is used for depicting life during the Third Reich in Germany, including photos and stories of people who suffered from repressions, a top-down
line of explanation is used as regards the Soviet Union. The latter concentrates on the leaders – Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky and therefore focuses primarily on social and economic developments, not sufferings of people in the Soviet work camps. The different focus in teaching is reflected in Swedish pupils knowledge: they underestimate Soviet regime crimes but have an accurate comprehension of those of the Nazi Germany (UOK, 2007).

Historical development of history teaching in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden has been very different from the 19th century to our times. Content-based, national perspective was strong till 1990s in Finland, Estonia and Latvia. The new national core curriculum for basic education in 1994 in Finland changed the aims of history teaching from content-based approach towards understanding the nature of history. Nevertheless the change from the aims of curriculum to classrooms has been slow (Rautiainen & Saukkonen 2005).

The importance of history in school has never been disputed in Finland, like in Sweden. There was a proposal in Sweden to combine history, religion and social studies as a new subject in the early 2000 in general upper secondary school. After all, proposal was overruled and history stayed as a separate subject in general upper secondary school in Sweden. (Ulmhed 2013). Compared to Finland, the development of history teaching in Sweden has been very different. Sweden needed multicultural and multidimensional history teaching since 1970s because of the immigration and democratisation of the society. The idea of participatory citizenship made a breakthrough into schools in the 1970s (Englund 1986, 318-325). The 1960s and 70s in the west were generally a time of powerful social justice and participation in schools and this became a catalyst for democratic education, either through radical change or more restrainedly as part of the old structure (Goodson 2005, 121, 127).

Estonia and Latvia got their independence after the First World War, but lost it to the Soviet Union in the Second World War. In the early 1990s both countries got their independence back. Naturally, the change in history teaching was as revolutionary as it was in the whole society. The national perspective strengthened. The public debate of history's role in the school arose in Latvia in the early 2000. In Latvia the history was divided for two separate subjects in 2011 in basic education – history of Latvia and world history. In general upper secondary school history is not divided subject and history of Latvia is taught together with the world history (Liepina 2011.). In Estonia approach is different and Estonia’s history is integrated to world history in basic education. In the upper secondary school, approach is thematic and one of the courses is history of Estonia. The model is similar with Finland. The objectives in teaching are also similar. Focus is more on skills (interpretation and different viewpoints) as earlier (Oja et al. 2007).

The current study explores whether there are signs of regional identity; what kind of associations with the region and knowledge the students have (that would constitute as the basis of common identity); and what their study process is like to determine the best ways to advance better knowledge of the other and teaching materials that would take their preferences and level of knowledge into account.

**Method**

**Instrument**

The online questionnaire was compiled by the authors of this report; where it is not marked otherwise, the authors of this report developed the questions. The questions are described in more detail below.

First, demographic data was asked together with whether the respondent had any friends or relatives having studied in the other countries and whether they have been to any of the countries and how many times. The assumption is that such links may establish a closer sense of togetherness with those countries and could therefore influence one's responses to other questions.
Second, associations to the Baltic Sea region were measured. The measurement included a list of different factors (climate, political decision, history, traditions) which were presented either as joining or separating the Baltic Sea region. The respondents could then agree or disagree with the statement on a 4-point scale (completely disagree...completely agree), additionally the respondent had the option of replying that they do not know. The answers are expected to show which associations dominate amongst youth, it will also indicate how the region is generally viewed.

Third, it was investigated to which extent the respondent identifies themselves with various groups (geographic, ethnic, political, etc.) (see also Valk, Karu-Kletter, Drozdova, 2011). On a Likert scale, the options to reply were either to oppose oneself to a group, state the group is not valid for the respondent, or to indicate the importance of belonging to the group (not important, important, very important). Also, for some of the items, the respondents were asked to assess to which extent they regarded Estonians, Finns, Latvians and Swedes as good representatives of the groups provided (5-point scale, not a good representative...very good representative).

Fourth, several items used in a questionnaire developed by (Angvik & von Borries, 1997) were used to measure historical narrative of one's own and others’ countries. Specifically, the students had to rate on a 5 point scale (not at all... very much) to what extent different factors like social movements, political reforms etc. changed the life of the people in their country in the past 20 years and how these factors will influence people in the next 20 years. Additionally, associations with the medieval period and the USSR were inquired about (on a 5 point scale from very much to not at all); and lastly a question about life standard in the four countries was proposed where again on a 5 point scale (very much... not at all) the respondents had to evaluate different factors like peacefulness, prosperity, democracy, etc.

Fifth, general knowledge about Estonian, Finnish, Latvian and Swedish history was measured. The task was to assess the time period at which a certain event had taken place, or in regards to Latvia the students were asked to name countries that have ruled the country.

Sixth, questions concerning how much historical sources are enjoyed and trusted were posed (like in Angvik and von Borries (1997)). The participants could reply on a 5-point Likert scale from (I enjoy/trust) not at all...very much). Additionally, as in Angvik & von Borries (1997), several items describing teaching methods were enlisted. The respondents had to assess again on a 5-point scale how often these methods are used (never...all the time). As this question was also posed to teachers, the results were compared.

Seventh, respondents' attitudes towards all nations around the Baltic Sea were measured with a socio-metric measure Street (Valk, 1998). The task given was to place families of each nation to live on a street where the respondents' own house was marked. Nine houses to be inhabited were on the right side of the respondent's house, each one a bit further away. Each family was to be assigned to one house, alternatively, an option of allowing several families to live in one house was given. This provides input on how close or separate the respondents feel with other nations of the region. The distance (no of houses) between one's own house and the house of the family from the respective nation is used as an indicator of how positive (close) or negative (far) the attitude towards the respective nation is.
Sample

The sample was based on national databases of secondary education institutions in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden. The sample was grouped into schools in the metropolitan area and other schools. This was based on the population dispersion in the countries. In Estonia and Latvia, Russian-speaking schools were separately sampled while in Finland and Sweden the minority groups formed later in the study taking into account the respondents’ native language, ethnicity and national belonging.

All in all 56 schools were approached in Finland while in the end there were respondents from 22 schools. In Sweden we approached 48 schools (received answers from 9 schools) but failed to receive the 400 answers per country as hoped. A private data collection company was contracted to collect the missing 231 answers through web panel system which means the variety of schools is much higher in Sweden. In Estonia we contacted 15 schools with Estonian as the language of instruction of which 11 schools are represented and 5 schools (of which all are represented) with Russian as the language of instruction. In Latvia the respective numbers were 14 for Latvian (10 participated) and 15 (5 schools participated) for Russian as the instruction language.

The questionnaires were filled online. The school administration and history teachers were contacted to assist with data collection. Some teachers organised the answering in their classes while some teachers forwarded the questionnaire link. We also asked for students’ e-mail address in case they wanted to participate in the lottery to win an iPod.

Pilot testing

Prior to data collection, pilot studies in all four countries were carried out. As a result, a number of items were removed from the questionnaire and the wording of others was changed to ensure unambiguous understanding. In each country 4-8 students tested the online survey. We asked one history teacher in each country to carry out the tests and note the students’ comments. After pilot testing the questionnaire was modified (shortened).

Findings: Associations with the Baltic Sea Region (BSR)

What students generally associate with BSR

In order to see which associations the secondary school students have with the Baltic Sea Region (BSR), we asked them two questions. One focused on their general associations with the region and the other inquired more specifically about which countries they associate with the BSR.

The open answers were coded and categorised. The categories included:

1) States and territories
2) Baltic Sea and Nature
3) Combination of several categories
4) Culture, language, and history; people and connections

Additionally there was a category for jokes, meaningless or empty answers. In total 211 responses were received in this category with 114 answers (54%) from Sweden, which could be interpreted as slight indifference when compared to other respondents.
Figure 1. What comes to mind with the concept ‘Baltic Sea Region’?

![Bar chart showing the number of responses from Estonia, Finland, Latvia, and Sweden for different categories of associations with the Baltic Sea Region.]

Note. The data labels represent the number of respondents answering with options that belong under one of the four categories.

- The first category of states and territories was the most popular association with the region. 47% of all answers included some mention of countries around the BSR. Estonian and Latvian students were especially generous in associating countries around the Baltic Sea while this was clearly less relevant in the Swedish and Finnish case.

- The second most popular category of association was Baltic Sea and Nature. Answers relating to the pollution of the sea, islands, coasts, shipping, boats, fishing, and climate belonged to this category. 24% of the answers mentioned something in relation to the sea and nature. This was a very common association among the Finnish and Swedish students who point out pollution and other environmental issues clearly more than Estonian or Latvian students. Combination of different categories was relevant in the Estonian case where 94 answers had to do with different categories (94). This was less so with other countries.

- The category relating to history and culture and to people and connections was the most unpopular category. Trade, economy, family, friends, values, travelling, recreation, history and culture belonged under this category with economy and trade being the most frequent associations within the category. This topic has equally little relevance for students from different countries.

- In terms of minorities there are no great differences in the answers (the proportions are the same).

Additionally, we asked whether students can list nine countries that belong to the BSR. The vast majority of students couldn’t list all the countries: in total 1406 out of 1764 (79.7%) respondents did not know the countries that belong to the region. Therefore, we divided the answers into different categories that were mentioned. Generally, Estonians, Finns and Latvians have an equal share of answers in each category. What regards the Swedes, the rate of “I don’t know”, meaningless or empty answers make up for their lack of answers in other categories.
Figure 2. The number of mentions about the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea

Note. The figure represents categories of answers and the number of respondents under each category.

- There were only 80 (4.5%) respondents who could correctly list all nine countries. In respect to Estonia, Finland and Latvia it ranges between 23-27 correct answers, while in Sweden only 6 students could list the 9 countries.
- There were lots of general answers like “countries that are around the Baltic Sea” as well, in total 105 respondents gave a comparable answer. A rather high proportion of Estonian students consider Norway as a Baltic Sea Region country: 124 students believe that. Together with mentions of “Baltic countries”, “Scandinavia” and territories in those countries the category included 147 answers.
- Most common was to list 4-5 countries and 113 students listed the exact project countries. 435 students named 6-8 countries, 431 students named 1-3 countries.
- There were 175 respondents answering 9 or more countries while 186 didn’t name any country.

Figure 3. The percentage of mentions of each country.
The countries that received the most mentions were the countries where the students were from. Therefore Estonia topped the list with 1342 answers, followed by Finland (1312), Sweden (1256) and Latvia (1155).

All other countries received less than 1000 mentions with Lithuania being mentioned 873 times. Denmark also received many mentions (567), more than Poland (420), Russia (396) and Germany (379). These were therefore the countries that were most often forgotten in the list of BSR countries.

While Estonian, Finnish and Latvian students mentioned these countries quite equally, then Sweden sticks out as it mentions the BSR countries visibly less often.

Also, Latvian students seem to mention different countries a bit less while Estonian and Finnish students are seemingly more eager to name BSR countries with Estonians being especially generous.

### Are BSR countries similar or different?

In order to analyse and compare the views of the youth in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden, the respondents were asked to rate the relevance of 24 statements about history, values, political and social affairs, cultural ties and youth topics (see the full list of the statements and the mean scores across the countries and in total in Table 1).

**Table 1.** To what extent do you agree with these statements? The average score for each option by all respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Estonia</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Latvia</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared responsibility for BSR</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All in BSR are spending lot of time on social media</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality is important in all BSR countries</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanseatic League unites BSR</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will make friends from BSR in future</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After collapse of USSR BSR is getting closer</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience with USSR makes us different</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth dress the same</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSR will be more similar over time</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children read similar books</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth watch same movies</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legends from Viking era unite BSR countries</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relations with Russia in past unites BSR</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion is different in BSR</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish power period unites BSR</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of education is similar in BSR</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life tied to nature more in BRS than elsewhere</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO creates gap in BSR</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional holidays are same</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSR has same approach to economic crisis</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of well-being in BSR is same</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security and crime levels are same in BSR</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Main findings

- 69.1% of the youth in BSR totally agreed to the statement about shared responsibility for the BSR, 20.3% of the youth agreed to an extent and only 4.6% of the youth disagreed. This was the topic most agreed upon.
- The statement about everyone in BSR spending a lot of time on Facebook, MSN, Skype or computer games received a high score as well. 48.5% of the youth completely agreed and 37.5% agreeing to a certain extent to that statement. 5.5% of the youth completely disagreed with the statement.
- The other statements that received a higher average score than 3 (out of 4) were: equality is important in all BSR countries; experiences with USSR makes us different; I will make friends in BSR in the future; and after collapse of USSR, BSR has become closer.
- Youth agreed the least to the following statements: bad traffic opportunities keep us from communicating with each other. 37.6% of the youth totally disagreed with that statement, and 32.7% somewhat disagreed (altogether 70.3%); and people eat similar food in BSR - 17.5% completely disagreed and 37% somewhat disagreed with it (altogether 54.5%).
- There were topics that most of the youth rated similarly. These were: youth watch the same movies, life is tied to nature more in BSR than elsewhere, religion is different in BSR countries, people eat similar food and the statement about shared responsibility for BSR.
- The topics that had very different values among the four countries were: traditional holidays are the same; Hanseatic League unites BSR; and bad traffic leads to bad communication between the countries in BSR.

Next we will give an overview of the results based on the categorisation of the topics (see Table 2 with the categories and statements). The initial factor analysis did not display clear results, therefore the current division is somewhat based on the factor analysis but mainly on the researchers’ common sense.

Table 2. The categorisation of 24 statements posed in the questionnaire.
Baltic Sea Region history: awareness among youth, national syllabi, and education

Does the past unite or separate us?
There were six statements belonging to the history category. These were:

- Legends from the Viking era bring the Baltic Sea region countries together.
- Belonging to the Hanseatic League in the 14th century unites the Baltic Sea region.
- Belonging to the Swedish Kingdom (during the 17th century) created a mutual heritage in the Baltic Sea region.
- Experiences with the Soviet Union (1945-1991) made the countries in the Baltic Sea regions different.
- Relation to Russia in the past unites the Baltic Sea region.
- Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Baltic Sea region countries have been growing closer together.

Table 1 and Figure 4 give an overview of the questions and the average scores across the countries as well as average mean score rated to the topics.

Figure 4. Views about the past across the countries.

Note. Mean scores range from 1 (completely disagree) to 4 (completely agree).

- The statement about belonging to Hanseatic league in the 14th century uniting BSR had the highest average score (average m=3.18), Estonian mean score was significantly higher (Est m=3.36) and Swedish score was the lowest (Swe m=2.82).
- The lowest score was given to Swedish power period creating a mutual heritage in the BSR (average m=2.66). Swedish youth gave that statement a somewhat higher score compared to others (Swe m=2.88; Lat m=2.59).
- Young people mostly agree that the experience with the Soviet Union is making BSR different (average m=2.99), but after the collapse of USSR these differences are getting smaller (average m=3.03).

Values of the BSR youth
Secondly, we will look how the youth across the countries rated statements related to the values in the Baltic Sea region. The value related statements in our questionnaire were:

- Equality is important to people in every BSR country.
- Countries in BSR differ in to what extent their inhabitants practice religion.
- We, the inhabitants of the countries at the Baltic Sea, are all together responsible for the pollution in the Baltic Sea.
- Life in the Baltic Sea region is more tied to the nature than in the rest of the world.
See Table 1 for the mean scores of the categories and statement across the countries as well as in total and the Figure 5 to get an overview of the comparison between the countries under this category.

**Figure 5.** Similarities and differences in values of BSR youth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Average mean</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Latvia</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Estonia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared responsibility for BSR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality is important in all the BSR countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion is different in BSR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life tied to the nature more in BSR than elsewhere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Mean scores range from 1 (completely disagree) to 4 (completely agree).

- The statement about the shared responsibility for the pollution in the Baltic Sea received the highest average mean score in this category as well as compared to all the other categories (average m=3.54, lowest Swe m=3.44 and highest Lat m=3.64).
- Also the statement about equality is an important value in all the BSR countries and received a very high score (third in the general comparison, average m=3.19, highest Lat m=3.23 and lowest Swe m=3.07).

**Views on politics and social affairs**

The statements in our questionnaire under this category were:

- Bad traffic opportunities between the Baltic Sea region countries keep me from communicating with the people in other Baltic Sea region countries.
- The level of welfare is more or less the same in the Baltic Sea region, allowing people to enjoy similar lifestyle.
- Attitudes towards participating NATO initiated military actions in the world, creates a gap between the relations of the countries in the Baltic Sea region.
- The Baltic Sea region countries solve problems with economic crisis and unemployment similarly.
- The security and crime level are more or less the same in all Baltic Sea region countries.
Figure 6. Similarities and differences across the countries when looking at the views on politics and social affairs.

Note. Mean scores range from 1 (completely disagree) to 4 (completely agree).

Main findings under the category of politics and social affairs were (see the table 1 and figure 6 for more detailed information):

- Politics and social affairs related statements received the lowest scores compared to other categories.
- The highest average score under this category was given to the statement about NATO initiated military action creating a gap between the relations of the BSR countries (average m=2.48, highest Fin m=2.66 and lowest Lat m=2.35).
- The lowest score was given to the statement about bad traffic keeping youth from communicating with the people in other BSR countries (average m=1.99, Lat m=1.8 and Fin m=2.23).
- The statements about the level of wellbeing and the level of crime and security in BSR countries being similar received an average mean score 2.37.
- In statements about bad traffic means being the reason for less communication and the statement about NATO creating a gap we can see a clear distinction between the views of former Soviet countries (Est and Lat) and Nordic countries (Fin and Swe). Finnish and Swedish students tend to agree more with these two statements.

Cultural ties

The statements in our questionnaire under the category of cultural ties were:

- In all Baltic Sea region countries, people traditionally eat similar food/dishes.
- Traditional holidays, like the Midsummer´s day, are common to the countries in the BSR.
- People in the BSR countries have an average similar level of education.
- We, people living in the BSR, are all spending a lot of time in Facebook, MSN, Skype, on computer games.
- The countries in the BSR will grow similar over time.

In table 1 and figure 7 you can take a look at the detailed data based on the mean scores of each country and compared to average mean.
Figure 7. Similarities and differences across the countries when looking at the views on culture.

Note. Mean scores range from 1 (completely disagree) to 4 (completely agree).

- The statement about everyone spending a lot of time in social media in BSR received the highest average score under this category (average mean score 3.29, Estonians rating it the highest m 3.49 and Swedish the lowest m 3.09).
- The youth disagrees with the statement that people eat similar food in BSR (average m 2.35).
- Latvian youth differed significantly when compared to Estonia, Finland and Sweden when rating the statements about BSR growing more similar over time (average mean 2.83, Lat m 2.63) and traditional holidays being more or less the same (average m 2.44 compared to Lat m 2.05).
- The Estonian and Latvian youth answered similarly about the level of education by considering it being more similar (Est m 2.76, Lat m 2.74) than Swedish and Finnish youth (Swe m 2.54 and Fin m 2.43). Finns have here the lowest mean of all (average m 2.64 and Fin m 2.43).

Youth

The category of youth included the following statements:

- Young people in other Baltic Sea region countries dress more or less the same way than we do here.
- Children in the BSR countries read children’s books by the same authors e.g. Astrid Lindgren or Tove Jansson.
- Young people on the BSR generally like to watch the same movies.
- I believe I will make new friends in other BSR countries in the future.

The detailed overview on the figures and numbers has been provided in the table 1 and figure 8.
Figure 8. Similarities and differences across the countries when looking at the views on youth themselves.

Note. Mean scores range from 1 (completely disagree) to 4 (completely agree).

- Although the youth in all countries agree to a certain extent to all of these statements related to youth and its culture, the most significant difference is seen when asking about making friends in the future. Estonian and Latvian youth agree to the statement to a much larger extent (Est $m=3.32$ and Lat $m=3.23$) than Finnish and Swedish youth (Fin $m=2.83$ and Swe $m=2.73$).

The same kind of differentiation occurs when comparing country means of all the statements in this category. Swedish and Finnish youth rate similarity higher when reading children’s books and watching films. Estonian and Latvian youth, rate the same clothing amongst the youth in the region higher than Finns and Swedes.

The past and the future of the Baltic Sea region

The results of the data analysis are presented in three subsections: 1) What kind of factors have influenced the life in the past and what will influence the life in the Baltic area in the future according to the youth in general; 2) A comparison of the views between the countries; 3) An overview of the factors influencing past and the future in each country.

The aim of the first section is to give a short general overview how the young people view the past and future. The second section aims to establish an understanding about the differences in each country and the third will analyze each country separately.

Comparison of factors influencing the past and the future of the BSR

- Looking at the past, young people rank the development of science having had the biggest impact on the lives of the people in their countries.
- According to the respondents, development of science and knowledge will also be the most important factor influencing people in the Baltic Sea area also during the next 20 years. Altogether 68.2% of the young people rated this factor having a lot or very much influence and 69.5% stated the same about the future.
- According to the youth, dictators have had and will have the least influence in the countries. Dictators were considered as being not at all important or having only little importance by 55% of the youth when looking at the past and 56.3% when thinking about the future. 23% of the youth rated dictators having very much influenced the lives of the people in their country and 22% of the respondents considered it to have an important meaning also for the next 20 years.
• The biggest change when comparing past and future, according to the rankings of the youth in Baltic Sea area, will be the growing importance of changes in nature on people’s lives. Youth consider the changes in nature and nature catastrophes having much more influence on the people living in the Baltic Sea area in the future than it was in the past. 25.9% of the youth rated it having a lot or very much influence in the past and altogether 33.1% of the respondents considered changes in nature as having a lot or very much influence in the future. 45.4% of the youth thought that changes in nature and catastrophes had little or no importance for their people in the past, the number decreased to 30.9% when ranking the influence of nature in the future.

• While “ordinary people”, as a factor, is gaining higher ranking in the future than it had in the past, “creative people” and “political leaders” are estimated to become a bit less influential.

• “Economic interest and competition”, “mass migration”, “social movements and conflicts”, “diseases” are gaining slightly higher importance in the future than they had in the past (see Figure 9).

In conclusion, one might say that the differences between the ratings of factors influencing our past and future are quite small. The development of science and knowledge has had and will have the most influence in the next 20 years. Only “changes in nature and natural catastrophes” have a remarkable difference when comparing the future and the past, as it is seen more important in the future. Even so, in students’ minds, it will not be one of the top five factors influencing the future of the people of the countries.

Figure 9. Comparison of mean scores between factors in the past and in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of science</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political reforms and systems</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic interests and competition</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political leaders</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass migration</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social movements and conflicts</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative people</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary people</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wars and conflicts</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in the nature</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictators</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 1 indicated “not at all”, 5 indicated “very much”. For better visibility the chart uses the scale from 1-4.

Comparison of the views between the countries
Secondly we looked at how the respondents from Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden differ in their views when rating the fore-mentioned factors. The views about the past and future will be analyzed separately.

Opinions about the past
• In general, young people share the same view about the past when rating factors like political reforms and movements; economic interests and competition; and changes in the nature (see Figure 10 for more detailed view). The two first factors are also very important factors for the youth.
• The views differed the most when respondents rated the influence of ‘wars and conflicts’, and ‘dictators’ (to their people). In both cases the Estonian youth stated the two factors having much higher importance than the Latvians and the Swedish. The Finnish respondents considered both of these factors having much less influence than actually rated by the other three groups. Even inside each of the four groups the views differed the most when rating these two factors. “Wars and conflicts” had an average standard deviation 1.3 and ‘Dictators’ 1.35.

• ‘Social movements and conflicts’ and ‘creative people’ were also valued as less influential by Finnish youth than by the others.

• Latvians responded slightly differently when rating the influence of the development of science and knowledge, stating it having less, and mass migration to have more importance in the past than the others did.

• Estonians, at the same time, considered mass migration having had less influence on the people living in their country in the past 20 years when compared to the other four.

• Swedish youth’s answers were diverse when rating the influence of diseases and ordinary people in the past: they considered both factors having more influence than the youth from Estonia, Latvia and Finland did.

**Figure 10.** Comparison of opinions about the factors that influenced the people in their country in the past 20 years.

![Chart comparison of opinions about the factors that influenced the people in their country in the past 20 years.](image)

*Note. The chart is based on mean scores from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For better visibility the chart uses the scale from 1-4.5.*

**Opinions about the future**

• When asking the respondents about the factors that will influence the people in their country during the next 20 years, the youth from all countries agreed that the development of science and knowledge will be very important.

• Also the opinion about the position of political leaders on this list was considered to be quite influential by everybody (average mean 3.48).

• **Youth from Finland had a somewhat different view from others on the future (see Figure 13)** rating altogether 7 of the 12 factors lower than the others. These factors were: dictators, changes in nature, wars and conflicts, social movements and conflicts, political reforms and systems, economic interests and competition, creative people, political leaders.
• The factors ‘wars and conflicts’ and ‘dictators’ reflected the results of the factors concerning the past.
• Finnish students rated ‘wars and conflicts’ and ‘dictators’ the lowest, and Estonian respondents rated them highest (see figure 10).
• Latvian youth stated that mass migration had somewhat bigger influence on Latvia than the youth from other countries rated it.
• Estonian and Latvian youth did not rate diseases being as influential in the future as the Swedish and the Finnish did.
• The same pattern but reversed characterised the factors “political reforms and systems” and “economic interest and competition”. Swedish and Finnish youth considered these having a little bit less influence than Estonians and Latvians.

In conclusion, the youth agreed more about the factors that will influence the future than they agreed about the factors influencing the past. The development of science and knowledge was seen as having the most important place in the lives of the people of BSR in the future. Finnish youth differentiated in their ratings compared to others.

Figure 11. Comparison of opinions about the factors that will influence the people in their country in the next 20 years.

Note. The answers are based on mean scores from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For better visibility the chart uses the scale from 1.5-4.5.

Finally, we present a short overview of each country separately. That allows us to take a closer look at the answers from each country and highlight some of the more specific features.
Past and future in the minds of Estonian youth

Figure 12. The factors influencing past and future rated by Estonian youth.

Note. The answers are based on mean scores from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.5.

- Estonian youth, similarly to others, rated development of science and knowledge to be the most important factor influencing people in the past as well as in the future (see Figure 12). The mean of Estonian rating was significantly higher than the average mean.
- Other important factors influencing the future as well as the past were political reforms and systems; economic interests and competition; and political leaders.
- The least influential factors were diseases, dictators and changes in the nature.
- Diseases and changes in nature, mass migration, economic interest and competition, and ordinary people are considered more influential when looking at the future.
- Political systems and reforms, dictators and creative people are considered less influential in the future than in the past.
- In comparison to the average mean the answers of Estonian respondents were similar to others when rating the development of science and knowledge, political reforms and systems, social movements and conflicts and creative people.
- Wars and conflicts as well as dictators were in the past as well as in the future rated much higher by Estonian students than the youth in other countries.
- The influence of mass migration was rated lower by Estonian students than in average. Mass migration and diseases were the factors that had most variations in answers among all respondents.
Past and future in the minds of Finnish youth

Figure 13. The factors influencing past and future rated by Finnish youth.

Note. The answers are based on mean scores from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.5.

- **Finnish youth rated development of science and knowledge to be the most influential factor for the people in Finland in the past and future** (see Figure 13 for more detailed information). 72% per cent of the youth considered that factor of having had very much or a lot influence in the lives of Finnish people in the past and 70.4% stated the same about the future. Only 7.9% of the respondents noted the development of science having little or no influence.

- 57% of youth rated economic interest and competition having very much or a lot of influence in the past. That factor continues to hold the second position when thinking about the future with 61.4 % of the responses rating “very much” or “a lot”.

- “Dictators” but also ‘wars and conflicts’ were the least important factors: these were rated rather low compared to others and especially to Estonian youth.

- Dictators were considered having no or very little impact on Finnish lives by 74.2% of the Finnish respondents when thinking about the past and 71.8% when looking to the future.

- 56.6% of the youth stated wars and conflicts had no influence on Finnish people during the last 20 years and 56.1% of the respondents rated the same about the future.

- **Diseases were seen as having the biggest leap in the impact on the Finnish people’s lives. This factor will be somewhat more important in the future than it was in the past.**

- Also the social movements and conflicts, ordinary people as well as economic interest and competition will have a slightly bigger importance within the next 20 years.
Past and future in the minds of Latvian youth

**Figure 14.** The factors influencing past and future by Latvian youth.

- **The most important factor influencing the lives of Latvian people according to the respondents of our survey** (see Figure 14) **were political reforms and systems in the past.** 71.9% of the young people considered political reforms having had the highest impact in the past and 73% rated that factor to have very much or a lot influence also in the future.

- **When thinking about the future the most important factor is ‘economic interests and competition’.** Economic interest and competition was an important factor in the past for 62.5% of the respondents and 71.5% rated it of having very much or a lot of influence in the next 20 years. Only 8.2% rated political reforms in the past to have little or no impact and 8.8% were suggesting that for the future.

- If looking at the average mean the Latvian youth’s ratings more or less match the overall mean. Wars and conflicts, creative people, political leaders and dictators in the past as well as in the future are rated nearly the same as average mean.

- Somewhat different than the average mean are the Latvian answers about the development of science and knowledge (rated as first in all the other cases), mass migration (rated as less important in other countries) and diseases (rated as more important than especially in Sweden and Finland). The average rating given to changes in nature differs the most when comparing future and past similarly to other countries.

- Latvian youth rates dictators, changes in the nature, ordinary people and social movements and conflicts having more influence in the lives of Latvians in the future than in the past. 54.9% of the respondents suggested development of science and knowledge to have a high impact on the Latvian people in the past; 65.6% rated that factor to have a high or very high importance in the future.

- Mass migration was rated as having very much or a lot of impact on the lives of Latvians by 63% of the responses about the past and 64.3% said that about the future.

- 26.2% of the respondents rated ordinary people having a lot of influence in the past; it was rated much higher when looking at the future – 37.1% thought ordinary people will have impact on Latvian life in the future. Therefore Latvian students expect ordinary people to be more influential in the future than they were in the past.

Note. The answers are based on mean scores from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.5.
Past and future in the minds of Swedish youth

Figure 15. The factors influencing people in the past and future by Swedish youth.

Note. The answers are based on mean scores from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.5.

- **The Swedish youth gave the highest ranking to the factor about the development of science and knowledge considering the past (mean 4.06) as well as the future (mean 4.2)** (see Figure 15 for detailed information).
- The following 3 factors are political reforms and systems (mean past 3.62 and future 3.59); economic interests and competition (mean past 3.55 and future 3.63); and social movements and conflicts (mean past 3.52 and 3.64).
- **Dictators and wars and conflicts were according to Swedish youth the factors with least influence the past as well as the future.**
- The biggest difference when comparing the past and the future was presented by diseases that got much higher ranking for the future than it did for the past.
- Changes in the nature, social movements and conflicts, ordinary people and economic interests and competition were seen as more important in the future than in the past.
- The overall mean scores and the mean scores of Swedish answers are quite similar. The main difference between the overall mean score and the scores of Swedish youth responses are related to the factor about diseases. The Swedish youth considers this to be much more important in the past and in the future than the other respondents do.
Associations with historical periods

The questionnaire included two questions aiming at reveal similarities and differences in associations that the students of the four countries have been regarding two different historical periods: the Medieval Age and the time of the Cold War.

Associations with the medieval period

The respondents were asked “What do you associate with the medieval period?”, they marked if they agree to the offered associations “not at all”(1), “little”, “somewhat”, “a lot” or “very much”(5). Overview of the mean answers by country group is displayed in Figure 16.

Figure 16. What do you associate with the medieval period?

![Figure 16](image)

Note. The scores vary from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1.5 to 4.

In general, Latvian and Estonian groups expressed their associations more strongly than their peers in Finland and Sweden. Especially Russian-Latvians and Russian-Estonians expressed stronger agreements to given categories.

In the group of respondents as a whole (see Table 3) the dominating association with medieval times is dark and restless period, closely followed by beautiful architecture and Vikings. The least supported associations are era of glory, good international trade and relations and foreign rule.

Table 3. What do you associate with the Medieval period?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EST</th>
<th>EstEst</th>
<th>EstRus</th>
<th>FIN</th>
<th>LAT</th>
<th>LatLat</th>
<th>LatRus</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dark, restless time</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td><strong>3.10</strong></td>
<td>1621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful architecture</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td><strong>3.08</strong></td>
<td>1590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vikings</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td><strong>2.95</strong></td>
<td>1616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era of suppression</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td><strong>2.89</strong></td>
<td>1565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign rule</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td><strong>2.78</strong></td>
<td>1541</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Baltic Sea Region history: awareness among youth, national syllabi, and education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good international trade and relations</th>
<th>EST</th>
<th>EstEst</th>
<th>EstRus</th>
<th>FIN</th>
<th>LAT</th>
<th>LatLat</th>
<th>LatRus</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Era of glory</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>1531</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Mean scores (1-5) by all country and language groups.

### Estonia
- For Estonian students **the main association with the medieval times is beautiful architecture followed by foreign rule.**
- Dark and restless time and era of suppression have received equal score in Estonia in total; but era of suppression is more strongly expressed association among Estonian speaking students, while dark and restless time – among Russian speaking students.
- **The least prominent associations with medieval period among students in Estonia are Vikings, good international trade and relations and era of glory.**
- Era of glory is the association where views of Estonian and Russian speaking students differ the most: for Estonian students this is the least association, but for Estonian Russian students– the third most popular association.

### Finland
- For Finnish students **the main association with medieval period is darkness and restlessness.**
- Beautiful architecture, Vikings and foreign rule share the middle position with practically equal scores.
- **The least prominent association for Finnish students is era of glory.**

### Latvia
- **Darkness and restlessness is the main association with medieval period** for students from Latvia.
- Beautiful architecture that follows as the second most popular answer in Latvia in total at the same time is the one association where scores given by Latvian and Russian speaking students differ the most. It is not only the most popular association by Russian Latvians but also the highest mean score across the whole question.
- **Foreign rule, international trade and relations and era of glory are among the least popular associations in Latvia.**

### Sweden
- For Swedish students **Vikings are the main association** with medieval period; dark and restless time follow closely.
- Beautiful architecture, trade and good international relations and era of suppression share the middle position.
- **Era of glory and foreign rule are among the least prominent associations** among Swedish students.

However, there are differences among the country groups. Dark and restless time is the main association with Medieval Era for Latvian students with Latvian language of instruction and in Finland. Beautiful architecture is the most associated characteristics for Latvian students with Russian language of instruction and Estonian students. For Swedish students the dominating association is Vikings. Era of glory was the least popular association in all groups but Estonian schools with Russian language of instruction; in this case era of glory was the third most supported option.
The following categories were seen most differently by different country groups:

**Dark and restless time**
Latvian students with Latvian language of instruction have the highest regard for this characteristic of Middle Ages thus standing out from the whole group. This result contrasts to Finnish, Swedish and Estonian students with Estonian language of instruction that have the lowest scores. Students with Russian language of instruction in Estonia and Latvia in the middle do not differ from any groups.

**Vikings**
When it comes to Vikings Swedish students who see Vikings as the main characteristics of Middle Ages differ significantly from all other groups. Closest to Sweden are Latvian students from schools with both Russian and Latvian language of instruction. Finnish students rate Vikings the lowest from all country groups.

**Era of suppression**
Associating or not associating medieval ages with era of suppression is another division line among the country groups: Latvian students stand out with comparatively high scores. In contrast for Finnish and Swedish students Middle Ages represent suppression to a lesser extent. Estonian students are in the middle and do not differ significantly from either extreme.

**Associations with the Soviet period**
The respondents were asked “What do you associate with the Soviet period?”, they marked if they agree to the offered associations “not at all”, “little”, “somewhat”, “a lot” or “very much”.

Overview of the mean answers by group is displayed in Figure 15. The scores vary from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much).

**Figure 17.** What do you associate with the Soviet period?

![Chart showing associations with the Soviet period](image)

*Note. Mean scores (1-5). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 2 to 4.5.*
Negative associations with the period of the Soviet Union prevail among the whole group of respondents: closed borders, violation of human rights, Cold War and fear dominate; pollution of the environment follows, leaving peace and stability, social justice, economic prosperity at the end. Freedom of speech seems to be the least prominent association among the youth.

Table 4. „What do you associate with the Soviet period?” Mean scores (1-5) by all country and language groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EST</th>
<th>EstEst</th>
<th>EstRus</th>
<th>FIN</th>
<th>LAT</th>
<th>LatLat</th>
<th>LatRus</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closed borders</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violations of human rights</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>1643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold War</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological pollution</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>1476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace and stability</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established social justice</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>1537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guaranteed freedom of speech</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1597</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Estonia**
- For both groups of Estonian students the main association with the Soviet period is the same: **closed borders**.
- Both groups share also the least prominent association: guaranteed freedom of speech.
- Other answers were seen differently by Russian and Estonian speakers. Violations of human rights were the most differently evaluated association; it was the second most agreed association among Estonian speakers while among the Russian speaking Estonians it was one of the least popular associations.

**Finland**
- For Finnish students the main association with the Soviet period is the Cold War, closely followed by fear, violations of human rights and closed borders.
- The least popular association was guaranteed freedom of speech, also social justice, peace and stability and economic prosperity were among the unpopular associations.

**Latvia**
- For both groups of Latvian students **closed borders was the main association with the Soviet period**.
- Besides that among Latvian speaking youth violations of Human Rights and fear were the most often expressed associations, while the Cold War and economic prosperity dominate within the Russian speaking group.
- Fear was also the most differently evaluated association in Latvia; while for Latvian speakers it was the third most popular association, for the Russian speakers it was the third least popular option.

**Sweden**
- For Swedish youth the dominating association with the Soviet period is fear, closely followed by the Cold War and violation of human rights.
- Established social justice, guaranteed freedom of speech and economic prosperity were the least prominent associations for Swedish pupils.
Figure 18. What do you associate with the Soviet period?

Note. Mean scores for Estonia’s and Latvia’s language groups (1-5). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1.5 to 5.

Again, the mean scores show that there are some differences among the different country groups. E. g. closed borders was the main association for both Estonian and both Latvian groups while for Swedish and Finnish students it was just the fourth most prominent association. Fear was the main association for Swedish students and Cold War – for their Finnish peers. On the other hand the least prominent association – freedom of speech – was exactly the same for every single national group.

Estonians and Latvians stand out when it comes to rather negative associations with USSR, e. g. violation of human rights and fear. On the other hand their peers from schools with the Russian language of instruction associate the USSR more with positive features like prosperity, social justice and stability.

Conclusions

The students of the Baltic Sea region have more distinguished associations about the 20th century than about the Middle Ages. Associations with the period of the USSR are expressed more strongly which demonstrate larger differences in how students see life in that period. Although expressed more moderately, the associations with the Middle Ages are more alike among different country and language groups.

Certain associations do not necessarily mean that students have similarly good or poor understanding of the period; however the fact that students of all four countries have relatively similar associations regarding the Middle Ages can be used as common grounds for international collaboration and thus for fostering mutual understanding in the future. On the other hand, the fact that associations with the USSR differ to such extent can be explained as a sign of a very different understanding and perhaps even knowledge of the history of the period. In that case common educational activities, tools and international youth exchanges would be suggested.

In some categories the difference in associations among the citizens of the same country is larger than compared to other countries. Especially the students from the schools with the Russian language of instruction stand out when it comes to associations with the USSR and have more in common with each other than with the majority of their own country, despite attending schools within the same education system.
The comparison of how similar or different he opinion is among the students of the Baltic States is displayed in Figure 17.

Associations regarding the Middle Ages are rather similar, and some options have been rated almost exactly the same (see Figure 19); only in two cases (“Era of glory” and “International trade and relations”) a gap between the language groups can be observed. The opposite can be said regarding the associations with the USSR; in most categories one can see a clear difference between the views of students from the schools with the Russian language of instruction on one hand and those of the Estonian or Latvian language of instruction on the other. In most cases the associations of Swedish and Finnish students are more moderate. This leads to assumption that the students of more moderate views could serve as mediators; thus international youth projects would foster mutual understanding not only among different nations, but also within different groups of the same nationality.

**Figure 19.** What do you associate with the Middle Ages? (Estonian, Latvian language groups comparison)

![Chart](image)

*Note. Mean scores for Estonia’s and Latvia’s language groups (1-5). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 2 to 4.*

**How good or bad life is in Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Latvia?**

Next we asked the participants how they see life currently in 4 participating countries. Respondents were given 9 characteristics, including 4 positive: (1a) peaceful, (1b) prosperous and wealthy, (1c) democratic, (1d) good, and 4 negative: (2a) exploited by a foreign state, (2b) polluted, (2c) torn by conflicts between rich and poor, (2d) torn by conflicts between ethnic groups. One of the characteristics - ‘overpopulated’- was controversial. Overpopulation is a global problem but in the respective countries under-population is an issue. First we analyze how the life is seen in 4 countries by the students in the respective countries and by others.
Estonia

- For Estonia we made the analyses separately for Estonian Estonians and Russian Estonians for two reasons: the opinions of these groups differed and the subgroups were big enough for comparison.
- **Estonian Estonians value most peacefulness and democracy** in Estonia.
- In average Latvians and Finns saw life in Estonia in more positive light than the Estonian students themselves.
- **Estonian Russians have a more negative view about life in Estonia** compared to Estonian Estonians but also other groups.

**Figure 20.** What do you think life is like in Estonia?

![Chart](image)

*Note. The respondents could rate the statements from 1-5. For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.5.*
Finland

- **Finns stand out with a very positive self-image.** They have clearly the most positive view of the life in their own country compared to others’ opinions of the life in Finland as well as others’ opinions of the life in their own country.
- The Swedes have the most negative view of the life in Finland.

**Figure 21.** What do you think life is like in Finland?

*Note. The respondents could rate the statements from 1-5. For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.5.*
Latvia

- Similarly to the Estonian case, local minority - Russian Latvians have most negative view about the life in Latvia.
- Most variegated picture is about wealth in Latvia: while Finns estimate it with the middle score (3) of the 1-5 scale, Russian Latvians are very pessimistic and see it much lower (below 2).

Figure 22. What do you think life is like in Latvia?

Note. The respondents could rate the statements from 1-5. For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.
Sweden

In case of Sweden (as we did in case of Finland) the analysis is done jointly for the students with Swedish as their home language and others. The students with 2 home languages were very similar to Swedish speakers and the group with non-Swedish home language were rather small (10 people) and had statistically significantly more negative opinion compared to the Swedish speakers only in case of estimating how good life is in Sweden.

- **Life in Sweden is considered to be very good by all groups**: all positive aspects are rated on a five (1-5) point scale around 4, while negative aspects are rated between 2 and 3.
- Comparing the Swedes' own and others' opinions: the Swedes value more democracy and others value their wealth.
- Regarding negative aspects: the **Swedes are mostly more critical of themselves than others are about them**.

**Figure 23.** What do you think life is like in Sweden?

![Chart showing life evaluations in Sweden](chart)

*Note. Mean scores (1-5) given by 4 groups. For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.5.*

To sum up, the composite scores for 'Good Life' and 'Bad Life' were computed. 'Good Life' index consists of scores for (1a) peaceful, (1b) prosperous and wealthy, (1c) democratic, and (1d) good life divided by four. 'Bad Life' index consists of scores for (2a) exploited by a foreign state, (2b) polluted, (2c) torn by conflicts between rich and poor, and (2d) torn by conflicts between ethnic groups divided by four. See results in Figures 24 and 25.

The best life in others’ opinion is in Sweden, in own group opinion in Finland. The life is considered by both themselves and others to be least good in Latvia, although the mean estimations in case of others’ view is above arithmetic average (3.0).

In case of evaluating the goodness of life in Sweden, the opinion of the students from other countries and the opinion of the Swedish students overlap. In case of Finland, the Finnish students value the various aspects of life in Finland more than the students in other countries. **In case of Estonia and Latvia the situation is vice versa: local students are more critical than the students in other countries.** As shown in the previous analysis, this is mainly due to the more critical opinions of the ethnic Russians living in Estonia and Latvia. In this
analysis the groups (Estonians and Russian-Estonians in case of Estonia, and Latvians and Russian-Latvians in case of Latvia) were merged.

**Figure 24.** Own and others’ (from three other participating countries) views of how good (democratic, wealthy, peaceful, in general good) the life is in four countries.

![Graph showing views of life in four countries](image)

*Note. Statistically significant differences between own and other’s views. The scale was from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.5.*

Regarding the estimations of how bad the life is Finns are again most optimistic: they see the least of the negative aspects in their country. Next are Swedes, followed by Estonians and Latvians. All differences in own views are statistically significant. **Students from three other countries have equal opinions about the negative aspects in Finland and Sweden, but are little more pessimistic about life in Estonia and even more pessimistic about life in Latvia.** In all cases, except for Finns, students are more critical about their own country than the others are about the respective country.

The mean estimations are below arithmetic average (3.0) in all cases.

**Figure 25.** Own and others’ (from three other participating countries) views of how bad (exploited by a foreign state, polluted, torn by conflicts between rich and poor, and torn by conflicts between ethnic groups) the life is in four countries.

![Graph showing views of life in four countries](image)

*Note. Statistically significant differences between own and others’ views. The scale was from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 1 to 4.*
In addition to comparing the views given by students themselves and others about particular country, we also compared the views given altogether to different countries. When compiling the own and others’ views, the life is considered to be the best in Sweden, followed by Finland, Estonia and Latvia. All country differences were statistically significant.
Students’ attitudes towards their own and other Baltic Sea Region nations

For an estimate how the neighbouring nations are valued by students, we used socio-metric measure “Street” in which the respondents are asked to choose a house for 9 families from different nations on a Street. The respondents should imagine that the following families are planning to move in their neighbourhood: an Estonian family, a Danish family, a Finnish family, a German family, a Latvian family, a Lithuanian family, a Polish family, a Russian family and a Swedish family. Aside from their nationality no information about the families is given. Students are asked to imagine that as they have been living on the street for a very long time, and that they can choose where these families will be living on that street. They are also instructed that if they cannot decide or find it impossible to place the families into houses knowing only their nationality, one can place several families in one house or all the families in the same house.

Altogether 58 students refused to do the task and 83 students put all families into the same house. About half of the students who either refused or decided to put all families into the same house were from Sweden. The rest divided the families quite equally between three other countries.

As the specific number of respondents varied slightly from one particular family to another, the approximate number of respondents per group is given below. The variation from the given number does not vary as a rule more that ±5. Only in case of Swedish respondents, the situation is different: while 363 respondents gave their opinion about Swedish family, 308-318 about other groups. Least opinions (209) were given about Lithuanian family but this was due to the measurement mistake – in one version of the Swedish questionnaire Lithuanian family was not mentioned.

The analysis for Estonia and Latvia was performed separately for the ethnic Estonians and Russians as their attitudes varied significantly. For the reasons given above, the same approach was not followed for Finland and Sweden.

Table 5. Overview of the mean scores (M) with the standard deviations (SD) given by six groups of students to nine nations in the socio-metric measure Street.
Baltic Sea Region history: awareness among youth, national syllabi, and education

Note. The mean score shows how far in average the respondents from the particular group placed the family from the given nation. The families from nine nations were marked as follows EE –Estonian, DK- Danish, FI-Finnish, DE-German, LV-Latvian, LT-Lithuanian, PL-Polish, RU-Russian, SE-Swedish. The total score refers to the mean average distance given by the students from 4 countries (6 groups). The results are sorted by the total score.

Since own views of one’s group are always more positive, the total scores for 4 participating countries (and Russia since RusLat and RusEst groups preferred family from this nation as a neighbour) may look little more positive than for the other nations.

**Figure 26.** The results of the socio-metric measure Street among six groups.

Note. The results are show separately for six groups: EstEst – Estonian students studying in Estonian language schools; RusEst – Estonian students studying in the schools where the language of tuition is both Estonian and Russian; LatLat – Latvian students studying in Latvian language schools; LatRus – Latvian students studying in the schools where the language of tuition is both Latvian and Russian; Swe – Swedish students; Fin – Finnish students. The place of the respective sign of the nation shows how far in average the particular group placed the family from the given nation. The nations were as follows EE –Estonian, DK- Danish, FI-Finnish, DE-German, LV-Latvian, LT-Lithuanian, PL-Polish, RU-Russian, SE-Swedish.
In average most positive views were expressed about Swedish and Finnish families, followed shortly by the Estonian ones. The most distant neighbours were Russian and Polish families.

All groups saw the families from their own nation as the closest, placing them in average 1.8-1.9 houses apart from their own house.

Russian Latvians and Russian Estonians had most positive views about Russian families. In case of Russian Latvians the difference between Russian and Latvian families was small. In case of Russian Estonians, the scores refer to bigger tension between and/or separation from local majority group Estonians.

The most preferred neighbours for Estonian students were Estonians, Finns and Swedes.

The most preferred neighbours for Russian-Estonian students were Russians, Finns and Estonians.

The most preferred neighbours for Finnish students were Finns, Swedes, Danes and Germans.

The most preferred neighbours for Latvian students were Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians.

The most preferred neighbours for Russian Latvian students were Russians, Latvians and Danes.

The most preferred neighbours for Swedish students were Swedes, Danes and Finns.

Self-identifications of young people in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden

In order to analyze and compare the identity of young people across 4 countries, they were asked to rate the relevance of 19 groups and categories for themselves and then the validity of the same categories of four nations (Estonians, Finns, Latvians and Swedes). The identification categories started with wider groups like ‘world citizen’; and ended with ‘the student of my class’. For full list see Table 3. The rating scale ranged from -1 (I oppose myself to this group) to 3 (I belong to the group and belonging to the group is very important to me). In between values being 0 (the group is not valid for me), 1 (I belong to the group but belonging to the group is not important to me), and 2 (I belong to the group and belonging to the group is important to me).

Below we analyze the data by the percentage of respondents in each group who considered particular category either important or very important (rated 2 or 3). If interesting and reasonable we analyze the data comparing also subgroups within one country. In case of Estonia and Latvia this is done in most cases as the data was gathered deliberately in schools where the language of tuition is either Estonian or Latvian vs Russian in combination with either Estonian or Latvian. For Finland and Sweden the minority groups were much more heterogeneous and the classification was based on pupil’s home language. The resulting groups were: (1) majority forming of the pupils whose home language was respectively Finnish (n=350) or Swedish (n=306); (2) minority with home language something else than Finnish in Finland (n=7) or Swedish in Sweden (n=12); (3) minority with multiple home languages usually including the majority’s language, n (in Finland)=43, n (in Sweden)=68. As the minority groups with multiple home-languages did not differ significantly in most aspects from the respective majority group, the data is presented for these countries jointly. In case of interesting differences the results are highlighted in the text. Although the students with the single home language – different from the majority language – differed in their mean scores from the majority group, the subsamples were too small to analyse their results separately.

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1 For reasons of clarity we differentiate between identity and identifications. Identity is defined following Social Identity Theory (Tajfel 1981: 225) as “that part of individuals’ self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership”. Identification is usually measured only as a fact of defining oneself as a group member. In the current study we define identity as a combination of different identifications by measuring in addition to knowledge also the value (importance) of the membership.
Table 6. Identifications and the percent of students who considered particular identification important or very important across 4 countries and 6 groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification (abbreviation)</th>
<th>Average mean score</th>
<th>Mean scores across groups (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EstEst (389)</td>
<td>EstRus (134)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student of my school/class</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhabitant of my region</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen of European Union</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World citizen(s) – Global</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of some society or movement</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>39.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person living at the Baltic Sea</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltic</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of my ethnic group</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern European(s)</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with liberal views</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavian(s)</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finno-Ugric</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person belonging to several cultures – multicultural</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western European(s)</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern European(s)</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with conservative views</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ex-)Soviet person</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altogether</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, we compared the relevance of different identifications across the groups, see Tables 3 and 4.

- The average across all groups and identifications was very close to the arithmetic average – 0.89. In percentages – 27.2% of students across all groups considered the given categories important or very important. However, the groups varied considerably: EstEst and LatLat groups identified in average more strongly with all groups, followed by Finnish and Russian-Latvians. Swedish students valued the given categories clearly less than others.
- For young people in 4 countries three most important identifications were locally oriented: being ‘citizen of [the country of the respondent]’, ‘student of my school/class’ and ‘inhabitant of my region’. The first most relevant supranational identification varies across countries being European in Estonia, Nordic in Finland, Baltic in Latvia and Scandinavian in Sweden.
- National identification is the most valued identification for all majority groups, only minority
groups – EstRus and LatRus value it slightly less. **EstRus is in this respect especially vulnerable** group, possessing the lowest national identification. Their Estonian citizen-identification is lower than European-citizen and regional identification and equal to Baltic Sea region identification.

- It is interesting to note that being **‘the person living at the Baltic Sea’** is valued quite highly, similarly to being **‘Nordic’ or ‘Baltic’**. When Latvians and Russians living in Latvia and Estonia consider the first more important, then Estonians, Finns and Swedes rate ‘Nordic’ identification more highly. These two are the most valued when compared to other supranational-regional identifications. Young people identify less with being Northern-European and Baltic, even little less with Scandinavian and least with West- or East-European.

- Comparing different identity-levels (global, European, national, ethnic and regional) to each other, the results show that young people value national identification the highest, then follow local-regional, European and global identifications. Surprisingly **low importance is given to ethnic identification**.

- Least important or even opposing identifications differ more across groups. The identifications that young people in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden see in average as **not valid for them are ‘(Ex-)Soviet person’, ‘person with conservative views’, and ‘East European’**. Ex-Soviet is the least valued by Finns and Estonians. Scandinavia seems to be far away from both Latvian groups as well as Russian-Estonians who together with Russian-Latvians also devalue West-European identification.

Taking each group separately and comparing it to others the following particularities could be noticed.

**Estonia**

- Estonians have very high identity scores. **Similarly with Latvians they value global and European identifications highly, similarly with Finns they look to the North and value being Nordic and North-European.** Also Finno-Ugric identification connects Estonians to Finns and differentiates from others.

- **Estonians and Russian Estonians identifications differed in most aspects** except for (de)valueing living on the BSR coast, being ex-Soviet, conservative and East-European. Estonians valued all other identifications higher.

- **Russian Estonians are in most of their identity-preferences more similar to Russian Latvians than Estonians.** Only in case of national and local identifications Russian Latvians scored higher than Russian Estonians, the rest of their identifications did not differ.

**Finland**

- **Together with Swedes, Finns are oriented to Scandinavian identification and together with Estonians towards North-European and Finno-Ugric identification.** Together with both Estonians and Swedes they’re inclined towards Nordic identification. Their Baltic identification is clearly lower than average.

- Comparing students whose home language is Finnish to those with multiple home languages, only two differences in the relevance of proposed identifications appeared. Finnish speakers had stronger national identification while others had stronger multicultural identification.

**Latvia**

- Latvians' self-identifications are generally very high. **Compared to other groups they stress strongly Baltic and Baltic Sea identifications and have also surprisingly high ethnic identification.**

- **Latvians have lower than average Nordic and Northern European and logically also Scandinavian and Finno-Ugric identifications.**

- Similarly to Latvians and differently from others, Russian Latvians value Baltic/Baltic Sea also relatively highly and Nordic identifications relatively low.

- **Russian Latvians consider themselves more multicultural than other groups** and oppose
themselves less than others to Ex-Soviet identification.

- The differences between Latvians and Russian Latvians are in global, Baltic, Baltic Sea region, liberal, ethnic and national identifications – all being stronger among Latvians.

**Sweden**

- **Swedes identify very weakly with the proposed groups and categories.** None of the groups is considered (very) important by more than half of the students. Although they rate most of the groups lower than participants in other three participating countries, they have especially low ratings compared to other groups for European, Baltic, Baltic Sea and Finno-Ugric identifications.
- Compared to other groups they value highly Scandinavian (similarly to Finns) and Nordic identification which is, however, lower than among Finns and Estonians.
- Comparing students whose home language is Swedish to those with multiple home languages, the only difference appeared in multicultural identification that was less important for the majority group.

**Table 7. Three most important and three least important identifications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Most important identification</th>
<th>II most important identification</th>
<th>III most important identification</th>
<th>III least important</th>
<th>II least important</th>
<th>Least important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EstEst</td>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>European</td>
<td>E-European</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Ex-Soviet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RusEst</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>European</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Scandinavian</td>
<td>W-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fin</td>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>Nordic</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>E-European</td>
<td>Ex-Soviet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LatLat</td>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Baltic</td>
<td>Ex-Soviet</td>
<td>Finno-Ugric</td>
<td>Scandinavian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RusLat</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>Finno-Ugric</td>
<td>W-European</td>
<td>Scandinavian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swe</td>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Scandinavian</td>
<td>Ex-Soviet</td>
<td>Baltic</td>
<td>Finno-Ugric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altogether</td>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>E-European</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Ex-Soviet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. % of students who considered this identification important or very important for themselves*
National-level identifications across four countries

Next we asked all participants to decide whether the enlisted 4 nations are a good example of the above-mentioned groups or not. The list of groups was slightly shorter including 14 groups and the scale was also slightly different ranging from 1 (does not represent the group at all) to 5 (is a very good representative of the group) with 2 (does not represent the group well), 3 (hard to tell), and 4 (is a relatively good representative of the group) being in-between values.

While in case of individual identifications the groups differed quite significantly then in case of national-level identifications the differences across groups were smaller. We analyzed each group separately and compared the scores given to the groups in general by the students of the country with the scores by the students from three other countries; and with the students’ self-identification scores.

Estonia

- Estonian students characterise their group first of all via European (also North- and East-European), Baltic (incl. also BSR), and Finno-Ugric identifications. Also Ex-Soviet and Northern-European and Nordic identifications are quite characteristic.
- Differently from Estonian students’ description of their group, respondents from other countries describe Estonians as more global (world citizens) than Nordic and more Ex-Soviet than Finno-Ugric.
- The biggest differences between self-identification (I belong ...) versus group identification (Estonians are...) are in Ex-Soviet, Baltic Sea Region and Finno-Ugric identifications: students consider themselves much less than Estonians altogether to be good representatives of these groups.

Figure 27. Estonian identifications

Note. Percent of respondents who considered the respective groups/ categories important or very important for themselves (I belong to the group) and Estonians to be relatively or very good representative of the group (Estonians are ...). The latter percentages are compared by groups: estimates given by Estonian students (by Estonians) vs estimates given by others (by others).

a – estimation of the validity of identification given by Estonian students to Estonians in general differs significantly (p<0.05) from the estimation of the validity of identification given by other students to Estonians in general; b- Students’ self-identification differs significantly from the estimation of the validity of identification given by Estonian students to Estonians in general.
Finland

- Finnish identity in the view of themselves and others is rather compatible: there are statistically significant differences in case of only half of the identifications which is much less than among other groups.

- **Compared to other group’s views Finns stress in their group-level identity more Nordic and Ex-Soviet identifications, while others see Finns more as global and Baltic.**

- In most cases young people identify themselves with the respective groups and categories less strongly than they consider Finns in general to be good representative of the group. The gaps are the largest in case of the Baltic Sea region identification and Ex-Soviet identification.

**Figure 28.** Finnish identifications

![Graph showing Finnish identifications](image)

*Note. Percent of respondents who considered the respective groups/categories important or very important for themselves (I belong to the group of ...) and Finns to be relatively or very good representatives of the group (Finns are ...). The latter percentages are compared by groups: estimates given by Finns vs estimates given by others. a - estimation of the validity of identification given by Finnish students to Finns in general differs significantly (p<0.05) from the estimation of the validity of identification given by other students to Finns in general; b - Students’ self-identification differs significantly from the estimation of the validity of identification given by Finnish students to Finns in general.*
Latvia

- **Most characteristic identifications for both young Latvians themselves as well as Latvians as a nation are Baltic, Baltic Sea and European identifications.** Latvians as a group is characterised also by ex-Soviet identification, while this is one of the least valued identifications for respondents themselves.

- Another bigger discrepancy between self-identification and national-level identification concerns North- and East-European identifications. Only around 15-17% of Latvian students consider these identifications important for themselves while around 40% consider these characteristic to Latvians on a group level.

- Latvians’ identifications are very similar to Estonians except that Estonians are considered by themselves and others to be more North-European vs East-European, and Estonians value more Nordic and Finno-Ugric identifications.

- As seen also before in the case of Estonians and Finns the national-level identification as seen by the group members is in most cases stronger and more variable, compared to the estimates given by others. Characteristic groups are considered to be more characteristic and groups that are opposed to are opposed more strongly.

**Figure 29. Latvian identifications**

Note: Percent of respondents who considered the respective groups/ categories important or very important for themselves (I belong to the group) and Latvians to be relatively or very good representative of the group (Latvians are ...). The latter percentages are compared by groups: estimates given by Latvian inhabitants vs estimates given by others. a - the estimation of the validity of identification given by Latvian students to Latvians in general differs significantly (p<0.05) from the estimation of the validity of identification given by other students to Latvians in general; b - Students’ self-identification differs significantly from the estimation of the validity of identification given by Latvian students to Latvians in general.
Sweden

- **Nordic, Scandinavian, European and global identifications are seen to be most representative for Swedes by themselves. Very similar picture is given by others.** except they also emphasize strongly Baltic Sea and North-European identifications.
- Swedes are seen by themselves and others as more liberal than conservative.
- While Swedes think, compared to others, that they are more multi-cultural and West-European, then others connect them more to Baltic, Baltic Sea Region, North- and East-European and also Finno-Ugric identifications.

**Figure 30.** Swedish identifications.

![Swedish identifications chart](chart.png)

**Note.** Percent of Swedish students who considered the respective groups/categories important or very important for themselves (I belong to the group of …) and Swedes to be relatively or very good representative of the group (Swedes are …). The latter percentages are compared by groups: estimates given by Swedish students (by Swedes) vs estimates given by students of other countries (by others). a - estimation of the validity of identification given by Swedish students to Swedes in general differs significantly (p<0.05) from the estimation of the validity of identification given by other students to Swedes in general; b - Students’ self-identification differs significantly from the estimation of the validity of identification given by Swedish students to Swedes in general.

In total of 4 groups, the most controversial identification is ‘Baltic Sea Region’ – in all groups it is considered to be much more characteristic on the group level compared to personal level. In Latvia and Estonia but also in Finland, one of the most controversial identifications is ‘ex-Soviet’ – again young people find that their group is better representative of this group than they are themselves. Estonian and Latvian students’ self-image matches better their picture of their nation compared to Finns and in particular compared to Swedes.
Predicting common identity

Following the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1964; Pettigrew, Tropp, 2006) we finally tested whether students who have more friends among another groups, and who have visited other countries more often, and who have better knowledge of these countries, also have stronger Baltic-Nordic regional identifications. As the study was neither experimental nor longitudinal, the relationships between these variables cannot be interpreted as causal. However, there is proof from theory and numerous earlier studies (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, 1998; Gaudet and Clément, 2005) that more contact and especially friendship (Pettigrew, 1997; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Turner, Hewstone, Voci, Vonofakou, 2008) with out-group members lead to more positive attitudes and stronger respective identity.

Knowledge and identity

The knowledge of one’s own and other countries history varied quite a lot. As the questions about historical facts varied as to difficulty, it is not possible to draw conclusion about which country students had the best knowledge. The grades for each country’s history varied between 0 and 2. Resulting from these scores a new variable was computed measuring how well students know the history of three other countries. Thus, for e.g. Latvians (including Russian Latvians) this is the sum of their grades they got for knowing Estonian, Finnish and Swedish history. The respective scores are given in table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Grade for Estonian history</th>
<th>Grade for Finnish history</th>
<th>Grade for Latvian history</th>
<th>Grade for Swedish history</th>
<th>Sum score for other countries' history</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latvians (L)</td>
<td>.32=E</td>
<td>.49=E,F</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonians (E)</td>
<td>.39=L</td>
<td>.45=L</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.80=F</td>
<td>1.75=F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish (F)</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.56=L</td>
<td>.35=S</td>
<td>.78=E</td>
<td>1.78=E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedes (S)</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.29=F</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. E, F, L, S – the letters refer to the scores of respective countries with which there is no statistically significant difference.

Latvians had clearly the best knowledge of other countries’ histories. Besides getting the best score for knowing their own history they also got equally good scores with Estonian students for knowing Estonian history, knowing Finnish history as good as Finnish students did and Swedish history even better than Swedish students.

Swedish students got lowest grades for all history questions including knowing their own history.

Following the hypothesis that the knowledge of the group is one of the basic building blocks of identity, we tested how knowledge about neighbours’ history relates to the strength of regional identifications that possibly connect people in these countries. These identifications were as follows: Nordic, Baltic, North-European, and the person living at the Baltic Sea.

Pearson correlation coefficients across groups as well for all students together have been provided in Table 7.
Table 9. Correlations between knowledge of three neighbouring countries’ history to the strength of four identifications among students from Estonia (EST), Finland (FIN), Latvia (LAT) and Sweden (SWE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baltic</th>
<th>Nordic</th>
<th>North-European</th>
<th>Person living at the Baltic sea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
<td>0.12**</td>
<td>0.14***</td>
<td>0.11**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.17***</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAT</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
<td>0.18***</td>
<td>0.17***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altogether</td>
<td>0.32***</td>
<td>0.10***</td>
<td>0.14***</td>
<td>0.30***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Since the scores for knowing neighbours’ history as well as the identification with the Baltic Sea and Baltic identifications were clearly higher among Latvian and slightly also among Estonian students, then the correlations for all groups together (row ‘Altogether’ in Table 7) reflect also country differences not just individual differences. Therefore it is more meaningful to look at the correlations country by country.

Among the students from all countries the correlations between knowing neighbours’ history and the strength of identifying oneself as a Nordic person, North-European and a person living at the Baltic Sea were positive and statistically significant. There was only one exception: the correlation to Baltic Sea-identification was positive but statistically not significant among Latvian students. However, this identification was anyway very important for Latvian students compared to others. The correlations with Baltic identification were similar among Latvians and Estonians but close to zero among Swedes and Finns. Thus, we can conclude that knowing more about neighbours’ history contributes slightly to stronger joint identifications or vice versa: stronger mutual identification support obtaining better knowledge about each other.

Friends and identity

Next we analyzed whether having friends in neighbouring countries is related to the same four regional identifications: Nordic, Baltic, North-European and the person living at the Baltic Sea.

Altogether 43% of students have friend(s) from at least one neighbouring country, including 30% having friend(s) in one country. Estonians have more friends than Finns, who have more friends than Latvians. No statistically significant difference appeared between the percentage of Swedish and Latvian students having friends in neighbouring countries. See details in Table 8.
Table 10. Percent of students from 4 countries having friends in three particular neighbouring countries and percent of students having friends from respectively 0, 1, 2, 3 countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students from ...</th>
<th>Friends from ...</th>
<th>Percent of students from the respective country who have friends from 0-3 neighbouring countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EST</td>
<td>FIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAT</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of student from three neighbouring countries who have friends from the respective country
13% 29% 8% 29% 57% 30% 10% 3%

Table 11. T-test for mean scores for 4 regional identifications among students having (YES) vs not having (NO) friends in three neighbouring countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baltic</th>
<th>Nordic</th>
<th>North-European</th>
<th>Person living at the Baltic Sea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.46*</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAT</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altogether</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.07*</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. T-test compares the relevance of particular identification among students who have any friends from three neighbouring countries (YES) vs students who do not have any friends in three neighbouring countries (NO). Statistically significant (p<0.05) differences are marked with *

The relevance of four regional identifications among students having versus not having friends in neighbouring countries is as a rule higher. Analyzing four countries altogether there is a statistically significant difference in case of all four identifications. Students who have a friend at least in one country identify themselves stronger with being Nordic, Baltic, North-European and the person living at the Baltic Sea. However, when looking at the results across countries the statistically significant differences appeared only among Estonian and Swedish students. See detailed results in the Table 9.

Visits and identity
Although there are more visits to neighbouring countries than friends in these countries, still every fourth student has never visited any of the three neighbouring countries. The experience of visiting neighbours varies, however, considerably across countries. Estonian students seem to be most internationally oriented. They had most friends and also visited more neighbouring countries than others. 60% of the Estonian students have been in all three neighbouring countries. Finnish students are the second in travelling: most of them have visited 2 countries – Sweden and Estonia. Quite few have been in Latvia. Latvians go to Estonia as often as Finns but visit Sweden less. Swedish students visit other countries surprisingly little: 60% have never been to any of the three neighbouring countries. However, Sweden is the most popular destination – 67% from Estonia, Finland and Latvia have been there.
The correlation between having friends in no of countries (0-3) to having visited no of countries (0-3) varies from $r=0.18$ in Latvia to $r=0.34$ in Sweden.

**Table 12.** Percent of students from 4 countries having visited three neighbouring countries and percent of students having visited respectively 0, 1, 2, 3 countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students from ...</th>
<th>Visited ...</th>
<th>Percent of students from the respective country who have visited neighbouring countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EST</td>
<td>FIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAT</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Per cent of student from three neighbouring countries who have visited the respective country: 48% 49% 40% 67% 24% 24% 27% 25%

**Table 13.** T-test for mean scores for 4 regional identifications among students having (YES) vs not having (NO) visited any of the three neighbouring countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baltic</th>
<th>Nordic</th>
<th>North-European</th>
<th>Person living at the Baltic sea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.41*</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAT</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>1.98*</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altogether</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>1.11*</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. T-test compares the relevance of particular identification among students who have visited any of the three neighbouring countries (YES) vs students who have not visited any of the three neighbouring countries (NO). Statistically significant ($p<0.05$) differences are marked with *.

The mean scores for the relevance of four regional identifications in case of students who have versus who have not visited neighbouring countries are similar to the respective analyses across students with versus without friends in these countries.

**The relevance of four regional identifications among students having visited neighbouring countries is as a rule higher compared to students who have not visited any of the three countries.** Analyzing four countries altogether there is a statistically significant difference in case of all four identifications. Students who have visited at least one country identify themselves more strongly with being Nordic, Baltic, North-European and the person living at the Baltic Sea. However, if looking at the results across countries, the statistically significant differences appeared only among Swedish students and in case of two identifications also among Latvian and Estonian students. No differences appeared among Finnish students. See detailed results in the Table 11.

Finally we performed linear regression analyses for the composite score of 4 regional identifications (Nordic, Baltic, North-European and person living at the Baltic Sea) as a dependent variable and three factors (knowledge,
friends and visits) as independent variables. The results were not very strong – 19% of the relevance of these identifications was predicted by the three factors in the total group. History knowledge and visiting experience had the strongest effect. Comparing those who have visited to those who have not, the relevance of the Baltic-Nordic identifications was almost double in the first group among the total group of students and more than triple among Swedish students. Among Estonian, Finnish and Latvian students history knowledge in predicting the importance of Nordic-Baltic identifications was stronger compared to the experience of visiting neighbouring countries. The effect of the three factors in predicting the importance of Nordic-Baltic identifications was interestingly strongest among the Swedish students who had the lowest scores in these identifications. 18% of the relevance of Baltic-Nordic regional identifications was predicted by the three factors among Swedes while only 4-5% among students from other countries. Thus, if one wants to support the regional identification, better knowledge about other countries and more visits to neighbouring countries especially among Swedish students would certainly be of help.

Table 14. Regression coefficients (standardized β-s) for predicting the importance of Nordic-Baltic identifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EST</th>
<th>FIN</th>
<th>LAT</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>Altogether</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History knowledge about the three neighbouring countries</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.25*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having any friends in the three neighbouring countries (YES-NO)</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.05*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited any of the three neighbouring countries (YES-NO)</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * p<0.05
Teaching history: ethos and methods

All kinds of presentations of history are acceptable

Even if schools have an important role how individual’s historical consciousness is constructed, modern technology offers a lot of history and historical experiences: visits to museums’ virtual collections, films, TV-series, documents and other historical materials with different aims. In global virtual world supply is huge but what kind of presentations of history the youth in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden like? Is there a demand for this supply among youth?

Figure 31. Which presentations of history do you enjoy?

Note. Mean scores (1-5) given by 4 groups. For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 2.5 to 4.

- According to our survey respondents enjoy watching films more than reading textbooks, novels and articles but they also enjoy listening to the stories told by parents and other adults. As seen from Figure 37, all presentations are rated above the arithmetical average (2.5).
- Differences between countries were small. Finns and Latvian-Latvians enjoy more films than others.
- As a summary it can be said that the respondents enjoy all kinds of presentations of history somewhat but not a lot. This means they experience different kinds of presentations in their study environment.
To trust or not to trust?

However, the most enjoyed presentation of history doesn’t mean it is the most trusted presentation. As apparent from the answers of the respondents, the most enjoyable presentations, historical films and plays, are less trustworthy. The result is not surprising. The upper secondary student has to have analytical skills to evaluate reliability between fiction, fact and interpretation.

Figure 32. What kind of historical sources do you trust?

Note. Mean scores (1-5) given by 4 groups. For better visibility the chart is based on scale from 2.5 to 4.5.

- **According to the respondents, museums, historical places and original, first-hand sources, like archives are the most reliable historical sources.** Films, plays and novels are the most unreliable sources.
- Differences among the countries were small. Like in the previous question, there weren’t big differences between countries in the current case.
- Textbooks have an important role in learning process in Finland, which explains the difference compared to Estonia, Latvia and Sweden.
- Traditionally the role of newspaper has been the transmission of knowledge in Finland and that could be the reason why Finnish students rely on newspapers more than others.
Teaching and learning culture in the classroom

Teaching and learning cultures have changed a lot during the last two decades. There has been extensive discussion of basic concepts associated with learning and the status of schools, like the idea of collaboration and co-operation between teachers and teachers in its various forms. The new teaching-related strategies and forms were put into practice slowly but it was 1990s a new orientation to learning began. For example in Finland it became especially popular in in-service education programmes but such programmes did not necessarily guarantee a very deep understanding of collaborative learning, which is basically not one method amongst others but a broader view of learning – guideline for teacher’s profession and teaching philosophy (Saloviita 2006, 23).

**Figure 33.** Comparison between use of methods in class; ratings by teachers (green) and students (orange)

The findings suggest that

- Teacher-centred orientation is still very strong in the school. Teacher’s lecturing is the most used method in the school.
- Visits to museums and historical places, local projects, role plays are rare in the schools of Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden.
- The biggest discrepancy between students’ and teachers’ opinions can be seen in relation to studying original sources: teachers admit the using of this method much more than the students acknowledge.

Even if the traditional teacher-centred orientation seems to be strong in the school, there are signs of new student-centred methods. In questions – we study original sources of history; we retell and interpret history based on our viewpoint and arguments in essay and research activities – variances were over 1.3, which means some teachers are using these methods a lot and some rarely or never. The results can be seen in Tables 13 and 14. The minority groups did not differ in their answers so the comparison is done taking four country groups into account.
Table 15. Percentages in the claim “we study original sources of history”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never or rarely</th>
<th>About half the time, often or all the time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonians</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>56.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvians</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16. Percentages in the claim “we retell and interpret the history based on their viewpoint and arguments in essay and research activities”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never or rarely</th>
<th>About half the time, often or all the time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonians</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvians</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>66.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The claim “we are informed what was bad or good, wrong or right in history” is especially interesting. 42 percentages of the answers are between 3-5 (about half the time, often, all the time). The exact results are provided in Table 15. This means teacher is providing students with specific viewpoints and these viewpoints seem to be more dominant when talking about more recent historical periods (see associations with historical period in this survey).

Table 17. Percentages in the claim “we are informed what was bad or good, wrong or right in history”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never or rarely</th>
<th>About half the time, often or all the time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonians</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
<td>71.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvians</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher’s pedagogical autonomy is strong in the classroom and this autonomy allows different ways of teaching and studying, sometimes even contrary to the curriculum. For example Finland’s national core curriculum for basic education and upper secondary school has been stressing student-centred teaching and understanding the nature of history since 1994 (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004, 220; National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003, 180). But as usual, teaching culture is changing slowly.

Teachers’ answers weren’t exceptionally different compared to students’ answers, even if they admitted more to student-centred methods than the students did.
According to teachers

Figure 34. During the past year, how often has the following happened? The students...

Note. The teachers rated the options from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always). For clarity, the figure uses the scale from 1.5 to 4.5.

- History teachers in Finland and Latvia use a lot of presentations and textbooks.
- Latvians also study primary sources more than others.
- Swedish teachers’ answers are all under the average mean, which means they use the methods less than others, except the first one (listen teacher’s explanation about the past), which was 4.05. The biggest difference was in the claim: use textbooks and/or worksheets, which was in Sweden 2.91. This means textbooks are considered less important by Swedish teachers than others.
- Also the difference compared to others was big regarding the claim ‘we study original sources of history’, which was in Sweden 2.84 (average mean 3.44).
- Estonian teachers answer in line with the overall averages.

There are some bigger differences between teachers and students. According to teachers, they are using more different teaching methods than students think. Especially big difference can be seen regarding ‘students study original sources of history’ (see Figure 39). On the contrary, according to students teachers are using more teachers’ presentations and telling more often what is good and bad in history than teachers think (see Figure 39).

Recommendations for future materials and methods

History is not a value neutral subject but instead of teacher offering meanings, teaching should provide students with tools and skills to understand those meanings.

The new history, where focus is on understanding the nature of history should be strengthened in the schools. Instead of providing specific values, students should study and research history and through this process independently interpret the relationship between the events and phenomena. According to our study, this
kind of approach is not dominant in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden. Instead of student-centred (students researching history from different viewpoints), teacher-oriented lecturing still dominates in schools, even if the teachers are using additional methods.

In England change towards understanding the nature of history was made in 1970s. The aim of history teaching was to approach it like a historian: pupils should research history as historians do (Husbands 1996, 131-132). The change divided professionals into two camps, and conservatives were afraid of losing the contents of history of England. The debate is still acute in England, but the good results of learning outcomes in history have partly reduced the critique against teaching based on the understanding of history. Nowadays history is one of the key subjects at schools in England and studying historical sources is in the centre of the learning process. (Cooper 2000, vi; Noyes & Turner 2009, 206-207; Hoodless 2008, 2-3).

When teaching is teacher-centred and based on teacher’s lecturing, conceptual thinking and understanding the nature of history as knowledge is not possible (Vygotski 1987). Even if traditional methods are dominant in history teaching in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden, teachers also use other methods including studying historical sources. The use of these methods should be strengthened in schools, both in basic education and in general upper secondary school. There should also be more interaction and discussing of the different meanings of history in the classroom. In practice, this means more questions like why and how instead of what and when. New learning environments (ICT) make it possible to do this across the borders, together.

Conclusions

The overall goal of the research was to determine the levels of awareness, knowledge and understanding of neighbours among the youth of Latvia, Estonia, Finland and Sweden. We aimed to map existing attitudes, identifications, as well as measure and compare knowledge about neighbours in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). Besides history we tackled other aspects that may connect or disconnect young people around the Baltic Sea.

Awareness about the Baltic Sea Region

There were shared values among the youth living in the BSR. One fourth of the young people participating in our survey referred to nature and sea when asked about the associations with BSR. Many mentioned pollution, boats and fishing, especially youth from Finland and Sweden. Altogether 89.1% of the youth in BSR agreed to the statement about shared responsibility for the BSR, while only 4.6% of the youth disagreed. It shows that young people are very conscious about common issues in the region that have to be solved together.

Most of the respondents think that the history concerning the USSR has made us different but the people living in the BSR will grow more similar over time. Also, analyzing the views of the youth about the past and future showed that the views of the youth in Latvia, Estonia, Sweden and Finland are more similar concerning the future than they are concerning the past. Equality was considered to be important in all BSR countries.

Young people agreed that development of science and knowledge will be the most important factor influencing people in the Baltic Sea area during the next 20 years. Altogether 68.2% of the young people rated this factor having had a lot or very much influence in the past and 69.5% stated the same about the future.

Social media is equally important to youth across the countries, 86% of the youth stated that everyone in BSR spends a lot of time on Facebook, MSN, Skype or on computer games. Young people believe that they will make new friends within BSR in the future, especially youth in Estonia and Latvia.
As Estonia and Latvia have rather significant minority groups that speak Russian, and as earlier studies have emphasised how differently Estonians and Russian Estonians, Latvians and Russian Latvians identify themselves and understand the past of their own country, we compared their answers. This study allowed us to compare these groups in a regional context.

In most questions the responses of citizens of the same country (Estonians and Russian Estonians; Latvians and Russian Latvians) were rather similar and it was possible to analyze them as one group. However, regarding the recent past one can see a difference between the views of students from schools with Russian language of instruction on one hand and those of Estonian or Latvian language of instruction on the other. When it comes to associations, the USSR students from schools with Russian language of instruction have more in common with each other than with youth of their own country, despite attending schools within the same education system. In most cases associations of Swedish and Finnish students are more moderate.

This leads to assumption that international youth projects and exchanges could contribute to better mutual understanding both regionally but also on a national level. Having more moderate views Swedish and Finnish students could serve as mediators in a dialogue about the contemporary history of the region.

**Are there signs of common identity?**

BSR identity is very unequally shared across the 4 countries included in the current study. This is related to the differences in the content of this identity – students have different views that constitutes as BSR. They also have very different knowledge of the neighbouring countries, they have visited the countries unequally and have a varying amount of friends from neighbouring countries.

BSR identity is quite strong in Latvia (as important as European identity) moderate in Estonia and Finland, and very weak in Sweden. Altogether 37% of students in these 4 countries consider this identity important or very important for them. Nordic identity is equally strong (important for 40%) but it is somewhat more equally shared. Nordic identity is strongest among Estonians and in Finland and weakest in Latvia and among Russian Estonians.

In general less important (28%) but most equal across different groups is the North-European identity. The BSR identity is also controversial when comparing its relevance on group-level and personal level. To describe the groups - then being people living at the Baltic Sea is the first or second most valid category among 14 different categories when describing the national groups in general, around 80% of respondents agree with that. This holds true for describing Estonians, Finns and Latvians by students in these particular countries and by students from other countries and for Swedes when described by students from other countries. But this identification is much less important when students describe themselves individually, especially in Sweden, followed by Finland and Estonia. As identity is a collective phenomenon: defined both by self and by others then there seems to be clear controversy. The ambiguity of this identity is also reflected in the way young people see the content of BSR: Latvian and Estonian students associate BSR rather with states and territories while Finns and Swedes with sea and nature. Altogether 60% of students could name 4-9 BSR countries when asked to name the states around the Baltic Sea showing that the topic is not well understood with Swedish students having especially poor knowledge.

The strength of BSR identity (and other regional identities) is related to the knowledge of neighbouring countries and visits to these countries. Latvians have the best history knowledge (followed by Finns and Estonians), Estonians have most friends in neighbouring countries, followed by Finns. Estonians also have visited the neighbouring countries most, followed by Finns and Latvians. Swedish students have again the fewest friends, least knowledge and have made fewer visits to neighbouring countries.

In order to strengthen BSR identity more shared understanding of the meaning and content of this identity is needed. Previous research has shown that better knowledge and more visits to neighbouring countries support common identity.
History teaching as a method to connect the youth

Together with the aim described above, there is a need to develop further materials to study about the BSR history in interactive ways. Interactive methods are preferred both by teachers and students but perhaps little provided for. Textbook and lecturing approach that concentrates on political history is still very dominant in history classes and international relations are mostly seen via nation states, not via everyday-life. If there were more everyday-life content in history teaching that would employ different activities, it would provide a way to see history from a multidimensional perspective and from a perspective which is easy to relate with. The approach towards teaching regional history could be comparative, where materials used in history classes would describe the similarities and differences of how people lived. This seems to be enjoyed by students as they claim they like to hear teachers’ and other people’s telling of events. Materials could be related with the questions of what people ate, where they lived, what children played with or what kind of clothes they wore, so students could easily relate to the people living in the past. If these questions were studied in different historical periods, it would also strengthen the learning of formal concepts of history, especially change and continuity.

Limitations

It is obvious that the results would have been different if other BSR countries would have been included. The lack of some BSR countries is certainly one of the limitations of the study that does not allow us to make conclusions about the whole BSR region. Differing from the other countries where data was collected in certain schools with the help of teachers, the data in Sweden was collected with the help of the data collection agency. Although we do not have clear hypothesis how this may have influenced the results, we shall admit that it may have had an effect on the motivation of students and effort they put in responding to questions related to history. Also the sample for Latvian Russians was rather small.

References

Baltic Sea Region history: awareness among youth, national syllabi, and education


Hewstone, M. & Brown, R. (1986). Contact is not enough: An intergroup perspective on the contact hypothesis. In M. Hewstone & R. Brown (Eds.) Contact and conflict in intergroup encounters (pp.3-44). Oxford: Blackwell


Annexes

Annex 1. The Questionnaire

Different Nations – Shared Experiences

Introduction

Dear participant,

We invite you to partake in an international study on young people's attitudes towards their neighbouring countries in Sweden, Finland, Latvia and Estonia. Filling in the questionnaire should take about 40 minutes. Any information you provide will be anonymous.

We kindly ask you to rely on your own personal knowledge and not use any supplementary materials or the help of your peers when answering. It is very important because it guarantees the reliability of this survey.

When you complete the questionnaire you have a chance to win an iPod. To participate, please write your e-mail address in the box below. Your e-mail address will not be associated with your answers but is only used to contact you in case you win.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact FirstName LastName (email address).

Thank you in advance!

Please write your e-mail address here:

Demographic Data

First we would like to know some things about you. When replying to some of the questions, you can click and choose the most appropriate answer, in other cases, you can type in your reply. We kindly ask you to provide responses to all questions.

1) Which year were you born?
( ) 1990 ( ) 1991 ( ) 1992 ( ) 1993
( ) 1994 ( ) 1995 ( ) 1996 ( ) 1997
( ) 1998 ( ) 1999

2) What is your sex?
( ) Female
( ) Male
3) **How big is the settlement you live in?**
Please pick the option that is best represents your hometown or village.
( ) Up to 1000 inhabitants
( ) 1001 – 10 000 inhabitants
( ) 10 001 – 100 000 inhabitants
( ) 100 001 – 1 000 000 inhabitants
( ) More than 1 000 000 inhabitants

4) **Name of your School**

.....................................................................................................................................................

5) **What language(s) do you speak at home?**
Enlist one or more languages you use at home with your family.

.....................................................................................................................................................

6) **What is your citizenship?**

.....................................................................................................................................................

7) **How do you define yourself in terms of ethnic/national belonging(s)?**

.....................................................................................................................................................

8) **Do you have any (virtual) friends and/or relatives in any of the following countries?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9) **Have you visited or spent some time in the following countries?**
Please calculate the time you have spent in each country altogether.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes, some days</th>
<th>Yes, some weeks</th>
<th>Yes, some months</th>
<th>Yes, more than half a year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Baltic Sea region**

10) **What (if anything) comes to your mind when you hear the concept/phrase Baltic Sea region?**

.....................................................................................................................................................
11) **Which (if any) countries do you associate with the Baltic Sea region?**

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

**Similarities and differences in the Baltic Sea region**

This study is conducted in Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Sweden. Please answer the following questions bearing these countries in mind.

12) **To what extent do you agree with these statements?**
For each statement, tick the number that best corresponds with your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Completely disagree</th>
<th>Disagree somewhat</th>
<th>Agree to an extent</th>
<th>Completely agree</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legends from the Viking era bring the Baltic Sea region countries together</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging to the Hanseatic League in the 14th century unites the Baltic Sea region</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences with the Soviet Union (1945 - 1991) made the countries in the Baltic Sea region different</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging to the Swedish Kingdom (during the 17th century) created a mutual heritage in the Baltic Sea region</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relations to Russia in the past unites the Baltic Sea region</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Baltic Sea region countries have been growing closer together</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We, the inhabitants of the countries at the Baltic Sea, are all together responsible for the pollution in the Baltic Sea</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life in Baltic Sea region is more tied to the nature than in the rest of the world</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad traffic opportunities between the Baltic Sea region countries keep me from communicating with people in other Baltic Sea region countries</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of welfare is more or less the same in the Baltic Sea region, allowing people to enjoy similar lifestyle</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards participating in NATO initiated military actions in the world creates a gap between the relations of the countries in the Baltic Sea region</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Baltic Sea region countries solve problems with economic crisis and unemployment similarly</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The security and crime level are more or less the same in all Baltic Sea region countries</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people in other Baltic Sea region countries dress more or less in the same way than we do here in [my country].</td>
<td>Completely disagree</td>
<td>Disagree somewhat</td>
<td>Agree to an extent</td>
<td>Completely agree</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In all the Baltic Sea region countries, people traditionally eat similar food/dishes.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional holidays, like the Midsummer’s day, are common to the countries in the Baltic Sea Region.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in the Baltic Sea region countries read children’s books by the same authors e.g., Astrid Lindgren or Tove Jansson</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people in the Baltic Sea region generally like to watch the same movies.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality is important to people in every Baltic Sea region country.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countries in the Baltic Sea region differ in to what extent their inhabitants practice religion.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in the Baltic Sea region countries have in average similar level of education.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We, people living in the Baltic Sea region, are all spending a lot of time in Facebook, MSN, Skype, on computer games.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The countries in the Baltic Sea region will grow similar over time.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe I will make new friends from other Baltic Sea region countries in the future.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Identities**

13) **In the following section, we present you a list of different social, regional and cultural groups. Please decide about each group how important it is to you personally.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I oppose myself to this group</th>
<th>The group is no valid for me</th>
<th>I belong to the group but belonging to the group is not important to me</th>
<th>I belong to the group and belonging to the group is important to me</th>
<th>I belong to the group and belonging to the group is very important to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World citizen(s)</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen of European Union(s)</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltic</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavian(s)</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West-European(s)</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East-European(s)</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14) Now, we will present you a similar list of different social, regional and cultural groups. Please decide about each group whether you think the enlisted nations are a good example of the group or not.

To reply, please type in a number that best corresponds to your opinion.

1 = Does not represent the group at all
2 = Does not represent the group well
3 = Hard to tell
4 = Is a relatively good representative of the group
5 = Is a very good representative of the group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National identities</th>
<th>Estonians</th>
<th>Finns</th>
<th>Latvians</th>
<th>Swedes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World citizens</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens of European Union</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltic</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavians</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West-Europeans</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East-Europeans</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-Europeans</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finno-Ugric</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People living at the Baltic sea</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### History

We now have some questions on what do you think is important for life and society in the history, in the present and in the future.

15) **How much these factors occurring anywhere in the world changed life for people in your country in the past 20 years?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social movements and social conflicts</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political reforms and systems</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of science and knowledge</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wars and armed conflicts</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic interests and competition</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative people: artists, writers, musicians, philosophers etc.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political leaders</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictators</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary people</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass migration</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in the nature, natural catastrophes</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16) **How much these factors occurring anywhere in the world will change life for people in your country in the next 20 years?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social movements and social conflicts</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political reforms and systems</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of science and knowledge</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wars and armed conflicts</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic interests and competition</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative people: artists, writers, musicians, philosophers etc.</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political leaders</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Associations

**17) What do you associate with the medieval period?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event/Phrase</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign rule</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era of glory</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era of suppression</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vikings</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark and restless time</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good international trading and relations</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful architecture</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**18) What do you associate with the Soviet period?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event/Phrase</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Severe violations of human rights</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold War</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace and stability</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established social justice</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed borders</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guaranteed freedom of speech</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological pollution</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**19) What do you think life IS like in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Estonians</th>
<th>Finns</th>
<th>Latvians</th>
<th>Swedes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peaceful</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overpopulated</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploited by a foreign state</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosperous and wealthy</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polluted</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Estonians | Finns | Latvians | Swedes
--- | --- | --- | ---
Torn by conflicts between rich and poor | | | |
Torn by conflicts between ethnic groups | | | |
Good | | | |

---

### History

How much do you know about history of Estonia, Finland, Latvia, and Sweden?

20) **Estimate (with an exactitude of a decade) when Estonia...**

...was first occupied by the Soviet Union: .................................................................

...restored its independency from Soviet rule: .............................................................

21) **Make a rough guess how many centuries Finland...**

...belonged to Sweden: ....................................................................................................

...belonged to Russia: ....................................................................................................

22) **Which Baltic Sea countries have possessed Latvia (or parts of Latvia) in the course of history?**

........................................................................................................................................

23) **Estimate when (exactitude of a century) in history Sweden was a regional major power and extended its authorisation almost all over the Nordic Baltic Sea region?**

........................................................................................................................................

24) **Please name 3 important events or persons in the history of Estonia***

In case you do not know 3 events/persons, please write: “I do not know”.

1: ........................................................................................................................................

2: ........................................................................................................................................

3: ........................................................................................................................................

25) **Please name 3 important events or persons in the history of Finland***

In case you do not know 3 events/persons, please write: “I do not know”.

1: ........................................................................................................................................

2: ........................................................................................................................................

3: ........................................................................................................................................
26) **Please name 3 important events or persons in the history of Latvia***
In case you do not know 3 events/persons, please write: “I do not know”.

1: ................................................................................................................................................

2: ................................................................................................................................................

3: ................................................................................................................................................

27) **Please name 3 important events or persons in the history of Sweden***
In case you do not know 3 events/persons, please write: “I do not know”.

1: ................................................................................................................................................

2: ................................................................................................................................................

3: ................................................................................................................................................

**Studying History**

Now we would like to know about your thoughts and experiences in learning history.

28) **To what extent do you enjoy following presentations of history?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School text books</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical sources (documents,</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>archives, original film clips)</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Historical) novels</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fictional films and theatre</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performances</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV-documentaries</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers telling</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adults (e.g., parents,</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandparents) telling</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums and historic sites</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles in journals and</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspapers</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet articles</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29) **To what extent do you trust the following kinds of presentations of history?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School text books</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical sources (documents,</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>archives, original film clips)</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Historical) novels</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fictional films and theatre</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performances</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV-documentaries</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
<td>()</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Studying History

30) **Do you study or have you studied history at school?***

( ) Yes  
( ) No

### History Lessons

31) **How often do following activities happen in your history lessons?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>About half the time</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>All the time</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher explains the subject</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are informed of what is good or bad, right or wrong</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We discuss different explanations of historical events</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We study original sources of history e.g. documents, archives, photos, videos, audio material</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We retell and interpret the subject</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We listen to radio programs or watch TV documentaries</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We use textbooks and/or worksheets</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We visit museums and historical sites</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We organize local projects</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We use role plays and other activities</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your Street

32) Imagine that the following families are planning to move in your neighbourhood: an Estonian family, a Danish family, A Finnish family, a German family, Latvian family, a Lithuanian family, a Polish family, a Russian family, and a Swedish family. **Aside from their nationality, you do not know anything else about them. As you have been living on your street for a very long time, you will be able to choose where these families will be living on that street. How would you choose?**

Type in the abbrevations according to which house you would put the families to live in. House number 1 is closest to you and house number 9 the furthest.

If you cannot decide or find it impossible to place the families into houses knowing only their nationality, you can place several families in one house or all the families in the same house.

*EE = an Estonian family*
*DK = a Danish family*
*FI = a Finnish family*
*DE = a German family*
*LV = a Latvian family*
*LT = a Lithuanian family*
*PL = a Polish family*
*RU = a Russian family*
*SE = a Swedish family*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your house is here</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank You!

Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us.

If you have any questions, please contact FirstName LastName email@address
2nd Study: Secondary school history syllabi: Introduction

Carl-Johan Ivarsson
Danute Dura
Juha Juntunen
Mare Oja
Hanna Jemmer

Research and project aims

Cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region is an aim mandated by both the EU Commission’ Regional Policy and the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). However, as past events have divided the Baltic Sea Region, many misrepresentations remain. Therefore, this project aims to study the gaps and misrepresentations in student knowledge. As perceptions of other countries are often created by formal education (Stradling 2005: 25-26), then this report focuses on how the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) history is taught in Estonian, Latvian, Finnish and Swedish schools. Therefore the history syllabi of these countries are analysed to identify the importance of BSR history in each syllabus; and to support the wider goal of regional cohesion through suggestions to the history curricula. It is however useful to bear in mind that history education is not only about what the curriculum suggests students should learn. Very often national exams, text books, teacher’s interests and school profile determine what topics are mentioned in history classes. It should be pointed out that this report does not focus on that aspect of history classes but can only analyze formal curricula together with supporting documents for teacher plans and derive results and suggestions from there.

The terms syllabus and curriculum are used interchangeably. Both terms refer to the history subject programme and guidelines created by national governments and experts; the document that is used as a reference material to teach students the topics and skills they need to acquire in history classes in secondary school. In addition to the thematic syllabus, supporting documents that help teachers prepare history lessons have been studied.

Role of the history curriculum and why states should regulate it

Secondary level school history curriculum is important on two levels. It provides an opportunity to encourage distinctive identity. Mainly, it aims for tolerance in the society and for cohesion amongst different nations and cultural groups. Furthermore, the curriculum builds students’ skills, values and knowledge.

The student skills related goals are studied in this paper. Therefore, the purpose is not to compare the aims of what the national curricula suggest in terms of national identity but rather address how Baltic Sea Region history is representing topics (events and people in neighbouring countries) and student skill wise. The aim is to discover what topics in relation to BSR are suggested in the curricula and what skills and knowledge relating to BSR history are required from students.

In previous literature, history syllabi in relation to BSR in the respective countries (Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden) have not been analysed. However, in addition to topics represented in the curriculum, the more direct aims of a history curriculum are:

- To understand the present in the context of the past
- To arouse interest in the past, raises fundamental questions
- To help to give pupils a sense of identity and an understanding of their cultural roots and shared inheritances, diversity in the society
- To contribute to pupils’ knowledge and understanding of other countries and cultures in the modern world (tolerance and respect for cultural variety)
- To train the mind by means of disciplined study (systematic analysis, argumentation, logic, evaluation, search for truth)
- To introduce pupils to the distinctive methodology of historians (testing of evidence, critical thinking)
- To enrich other areas of the curriculum (can draw upon and inform other areas of the curriculum), integration with other subjects to form a wider perspective (cross-curriculum topics, key competences)
- To prepare pupils for adult life (framework to make sense of current affairs, prepare for citizenship and work by approaching issues from different angles)

(Bourdillon 1994: 27-28)

It mentions both enforcing a sense of identity and what the skill set of a history student should be. Therefore the four curricula can be understood better in a more theoretical context as it presents commonly understood basics of what the curriculum is for in a state.

**Differences in curricula**

Though there are commonly understood aims of teaching national, regional or world history (in terms of student skills and mind set mentioned previously), there are differences in how a curriculum is set up. However, there are also similarities in the aims and set up of curricula in Europe. Joke van der Leeuw-Roord on behalf of EURCLIO\(^2\) has summarised this in more detail (2003).

Based on this summary, active learning requirements are a growing component in history curricula throughout Europe (Leeuw-Roord 2003: 20). Aims and objectives are similar everywhere in Europe: to enhance citizenship, democracy and critical thinking skills; students should understand the world they live in. Traditional aims of strengthening national identity and patriotism have lost their prime position (ibid.).

In terms of methods the traditional lecturing is retreating while active methods and enhancing critical thinking skills are in the process of implementation. Human rights and inquiry based learning are aspects that are increasing. There could still be a difference between the curriculum and the classroom practice (ibid. 24-25) because lack of time to implement active learning strategies is mentioned by teachers; and because history as a subject has been reduced in overall secondary school curriculum. Skills descriptions have increased in all (except Finland) since 1989 (ibid. 29) as has change on emphasis on skills in history curricula.

However, these developments were explored ten years ago and there are no recent studies to map recent tendencies in history teaching. The EUROCLIO and Council of Europe projects from the last ten years have focused on commonalities in Europe and its sub-regions. For example, there are programmes to deal with controversial history topics in the former Yugoslavia and also the Black Sea region.\(^3\) Therefore the focus on regional cohesion has grown more prominent and is therefore also reflected in most secondary school history syllabi in Europe.

**Research question**

What do secondary school history syllabi in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden require themes-, and skills wise when teaching history regarding Baltic Sea region, more specifically the neighbouring countries)?

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\(^2\) European Association of History Educators

Method

Secondary school history curricula were analysed in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden. The analysis included both compulsory and optional courses while data was collected by a native researcher in each country. The following was recorded:

- The topics and periods in relation to which the curriculum (and example teacher or course plan) explicitly suggests and/or demands to teach Baltic Sea region history.
- Competences and skills required to obtain to achieve the average grade.
- Suggestions in relation to which topics the Baltic Sea history could be taught.
- Length of the courses in hours.

Secondary school syllabi were observed in their full length without concentrating on specific eras. To have a clearer overview of what it suggests, there is a division between what the curriculum explicitly suggests in terms of BSR history in Estonia. As this is the only country with a rather specific topic list for its high school history courses in combination with supporting material for teachers, it was useful to categorise whether topics were explicitly linked to other Baltic Sea Region countries (explicit link) or whether the country topics were more nation based, or local and therefore less distinct (implicit). Other curricula were not that detailed, so in those cases all the links are mentioned.

Results

History courses

In Estonia and Finland, curricula offer compulsory and optional courses. In Latvia, only one course obligatory to all high schools is offered whereas in Sweden, a variety of different courses is offered and the schools can decide based on the school profile which one they teach, and students can choose one according to their choice. See the list of history courses in the four countries in Table 18.

Table 18. Titles of official history courses in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compulsory courses</th>
<th>Optional courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General History¹</td>
<td>World History: Civilisations outside Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian History I²</td>
<td>History of European Countries and the United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian History II³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary History I – Estonia and the world in the first half of the twentieth century</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary History II – Estonia and the world in the second half of the twentieth century</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary History III – Principal features of progress in the twentieth century: Estonia and the world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Finland

**Compulsory courses**
- Man, the environment and culture (HI1)
- European man (HI2)
- International relations (HI3)
- Turning points in Finnish history (HI4)

**Optional courses**
- Finland from prehistoric times to autonomy (HI5)
- Meeting of cultures (cultures outside Europe) (HI6)

### Latvia

- Compulsory course: History of Latvia and the World

### Sweden

- History 1a1
- History 1a2
- History 1b
- History 2a
- History 2b Cultural History
- History 3

**Notes.**
1. World history;
2. until the turn of the 17th century;
3. until the end of the 19th century;
4. schools can offer optional courses as they like and almost every school has their own optional courses;
5. common in all vocational programs and technical degree, see Appendix A;
6. common in all vocational programs and technical degree (continuation of 1a1 and mostly optional);
7. common to ES, HU, ES, NA and SA, or as a single course instead of 1a1 and 1a2, see Appendix A;
8. common in university preparatory courses, mostly optional (read after 1a2 or 1b);
9. common to ES and HU, see Appendix A;
10. common in university preparatory courses for HU, ES, NA, SA (optional after 2a or 2b).

### History course load and duration of courses

Estonia, Finland and Latvia calculate their curricula in lessons (45 min, although some schools can have 40 minutes as the length of one lesson). In Finland the lesson in most schools is 75 minutes long.

The high school curriculum in Estonia consists of 96 courses minimum (no upper limit exists). All schools teach 63 common courses including 6 compulsory history courses. It is possible to have further two optional history courses or more if the school so decides. Since secondary schools must offer 11 optional courses of their own choice, it is possible that in some cases the amount of optional history and social studies related subjects exceed 70 lessons.

The Finnish pupils could have 76 lessons worth of optional history courses. For each country's history curriculum allocation from the whole high school curriculum, see Figure 35. In Latvia the duration of a lesson is 40-45 minutes and there are two history lessons per week. Generally the school year consists of 35 weeks (in the 12th
grade it is 38), which accounts to 210 (together with the 12th grade extra weeks 216) lessons. Altogether the absolute maximum number of lessons in Latvian secondary schools is 3888 lessons. Thus the number of history lessons per all lessons is around 5.5 per cent in Latvia. To consider the minimum required history lessons per minimum amount of total lessons in Estonia, the percentage is 6.25 but does not have a lot of significance as there are several options how courses can be set up.

The Swedish high school education is based on credit points, where a degree equals 2500 credit points, making it an average of 22 credit points per week. Most history courses are worth 100 points, except for 1a1 and 1a2 which give 50 each. Some of the courses available are overlapping (for example, 1a1 and 1a2 are similar to 1b which means a student has to either choose two of the former or the latter. Likewise, 2a and 2b rule each other out as the credit score is equal but topics differ.

**Figure 35.** Allocation for compulsory and optional history curricula from the general high school curriculum. %

![Diagram showing allocation percentages for Estonia, Finland, Latvia, and Sweden.](image)

**Talking about neighbours: Prescription by curricula**

In the studied countries, the curricula suggest teaching some kind of a link to neighbouring countries but the extent varies. Yet, it cannot be assessed to which extent the Baltic Sea region is covered in lessons based only on the curricula. The teachers have the liberty to choose the focus of their teaching while the official curriculum offers only a general direction or a framework. The results here only depict what the curricula more or less explicitly state to be taught in relation to Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden. The mentions that concern only the references related to the country under scrutiny have largely been omitted.

**Estonia**

The Estonian curriculum offers several topics what might be taught with links to the Baltic Sea region consistently made across all historical eras. The curriculum prescribes outcomes and topics, which include certain keywords (referring to events, people, concepts, phenomena and such) often without indicating to what extent the student should be familiar with these. In many cases, the goal is to know them and to be able to place them in the correct context. There is also stress on students’ skills and these study outcomes are listed in a rather detailed way but
methods to achieve them are open for teachers’ interpretation. Also, there is a lot of stress on integrating history courses with other subjects.

In addition to the syllabus, there are documents that describe the teaching process (teacher plan). It helps teachers to interpret the syllabus. It is not a regulation but teachers can use it. It was written by the curriculum development group (experienced teachers). These assisting documents for creating teacher plans present explicit and implicit links to the region.

For every time period from prehistory to contemporary history there are several links and topics that relate to BSR. The most notable examples include Old Livonia, Estonia under the Swedish rule, the events of the Second World War, the collapse of the USSR and the ensuing re-independence.

From prehistoric tribe relations, Baltic crusades, Hanseatic League, Livonian war and Swedish era to the Great Northern War, the 20th century World Wars, the ensuing Cold War and collapse of the Soviet Union, the relation to BSR is frequent and explicit. There are also numerous implicit links that connect local events to neighbouring countries and territories. These include trade routes, spread of Christianity, foreigners who influenced socio-political development in Estonia, reformation, Swedish influence on the local life, cultural relations and the power changes. Also, the 20th century events that divided the region, regaining of independence and its consequences are mentioned.

Therefore, the curriculum mentions links but the depth of the links in relation to understanding neighbouring countries is hard to assess. Table 19 summarizes both, the parts of the curriculum where connections to Finland, Latvia and Sweden are explicit, and those where the connections are rather implicit.
### Table 19. Explicit and implicit links to regional history in the Estonian history curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Explicit link</th>
<th>Implicit link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prehistory</strong></td>
<td>• Estonians’ relationships with their neighbouring nations (Baltic tribes, Eastern Slavic People, Vikings) and mutual influences, their location on map</td>
<td>• Oldest records of the spread of Christianity in Estonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Development of international trade routes and Estonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Baltic crusades, the reasons, course and consequences from the point of view of different participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hanseatic League</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Modern Era</strong></td>
<td>• Formation of strong states with centralized power in the Baltic Sea region, influence of powerful states in the area in the 16th century</td>
<td>• People: Melchior Hoffmann, Hans Susi, Hermen Rode, Michel Sittow, Balthasar Russow, and Wolter von Plettenberg and their activities. Bernt Notke’s “Dance of Death”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Livonian War: cause, course and consequences, the activities of the participants according to sources; changes in the organisation of governance and the political map during the wars;</td>
<td>• Reformation and counter-reformation, their effect and importance to Estonian cultural history and spiritual life, iconoclasm, Wanradt-Koell catechism, beginning of translation of Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• International relations in the Baltic Sea area in the 16th century</td>
<td>• Development of culture: Balthasar Russow’s chronicle as a historical source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• People: Martin Luther, Herrmann Marsow, Ivan IV</td>
<td>• Estonia in the possession of three kingdoms (Sweden, Denmark, Poland): organization of state and political map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era</td>
<td>Explicit link</td>
<td>Implicit link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Modern Era</td>
<td>• People: Gustav II Adolf, Johan Skytte, and Charles XI and their activities&lt;br&gt;• The Great Northern War: causes of the Great Northern War, its course and consequences, analyse the conditions that affected population processes</td>
<td>• People: Bengt Gottfried Forselius&lt;br&gt;• Gradual establishment of Swedish rule across Estonia, the change in the legal and economic status of peasants&lt;br&gt;• Centralized Swedish chronicle as a historical source, politics of Sweden in Estonia on the basis of sources and texts and assessing the credibility of the sources&lt;br&gt;• Reduction of manors 1 and its results&lt;br&gt;• Growth of manufacturers&lt;br&gt;• Trade&lt;br&gt;• Spiritual life and culture: Lutheranism as a state religion, its influence to the development of Estonian culture and education, in the past and today, Bible conferences, the New Testament&lt;br&gt;• First upper secondary school&lt;br&gt;• Folk education&lt;br&gt;• The spread of the Estonian written word: Tax book&lt;br&gt;• Governance of Estonia and Livonia: power management, Court Order, and knighthood, the Baltic-German gentry&lt;br&gt;• Foundation of the University of Tartu, Academia Gustaviana&lt;br&gt;• Importance of the Swedish era in the development of Estonian culture and education in the past and today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia in the 18th century</td>
<td>• The Great Northern War: causes of the Great Northern War, its course and consequences, analyse the conditions that affected population processes</td>
<td>• The influence of wars, disease, everyday conditions and famine on the population&lt;br&gt;• Special administrative arrangement and its effect on the development of Estonia&lt;br&gt;• Economic situation and legal status of peasants&lt;br&gt;• Spiritual life: Baltic-German culture and peasant culture&lt;br&gt;• People: Charles XII, Anton Thor Helle&lt;br&gt;• Folk education&lt;br&gt;• Analyse the effect of European Enlightenment ideas on Estonia’s spiritual life: Pietism and enlightenment, collectives of brethren&lt;br&gt;• The Baltic Landestaat: Russian centralised power and Baltic-German government based on social order, restitution, special administrative arrangement&lt;br&gt;• People: August Wilhelm Hupel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Baltic Sea Region history: awareness among youth, national syllabi, and education

### Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Explicit link</th>
<th>Implicit link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary history</td>
<td>• WW I: birth of new nation states in Europe, its effects and its influence on the development of the world</td>
<td>• The collapse of the USSR and the Communist System and its reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The fall of the Berlin Wall and economic and political reforms in the USSR, describe and show on a political world map the changes that took place after the Cold War</td>
<td>• Explain and know how to use in context the following concepts: February Revolution, autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The influence of the collapse of the Communist Bloc and communist ideas on value judgements</td>
<td>• Estonian Independence War (help from Sweden and Finland), Latvian Riflemen, Landeswehr, The battle of Võnnu, the events of the Estonian War of Independence and its course on a map, the importance of the War of Independence and the Peace Treaty of Tartu in securing the Republic of Estonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The Baltic Chain</td>
<td>• The Baltic Chain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. *The state claimed manors as an economic policy*

### Finland

Regarding the Baltic Sea region, the Finnish curriculum explicitly states that pupils should learn the links of Finnish history to the Baltic Sea region in the medieval period (Hi5). Another rather explicit link is in the Hi4 (turning points in Finnish history) where a reference is made to the teaching of “The Swedish Legacy”. Swedish legacy in Finnish historical context means how Finland obtained governing institutions from the west through Sweden (through religion, law, social order). It is therefore reasonable to assume that Sweden is mentioned rather often.

More implicit links to the other BSR states are further present in course Hi5 (Hi5: Finland from prehistoric times to autonomy). It is suggested that during the course Finland’s role on the borderline of East and West is discussed. This is done in relation to Finland being integrated into the Western European cultural community during the Middle Ages. Other than that, references to neighbouring countries are not stated.

There is no supporting material to teachers in Finland that would relate to BSR history. However, a new mentoring system will come into force to help young teachers prepare their plans and lessons. However, it is doubtful that without any supporting activities any special stress on BSR history besides the mentioned references are present.

The Finnish syllabus is similar to the Estonian syllabus since it lists specific events and topics to mention but lacks the same amount of detail. Other two curricula are rather vague in terms of topics but more thorough in terms of student competencies.

### Latvia

The main periods of the Baltic political map should be taught to the Latvian high school students throughout history lessons. In addition, specific learning goals are defined. Those involving the Baltic Sea region are reproduced in More specific requirements are listed in Table 2. However, as links are rather sporadic and indirect there is no reason to categorise them under explicit and implicit links. Therefore the table presents implicit links to neighbouring countries.

Table 19. There seems to be more stress on student skills rather than specific topics or events. The skills that are mentioned are rather vague stating understanding, analysing, evaluation and explaining with no reference to what extent this should be done in order to achieve a pass grade.
In terms of themes, the curriculum suggests topics that have very indirect connections to BSR (formation of national identities, impact of industrial and post-industrial society on the environment; events after World War II; globalization; the role of geographical location; and development of trade) and therefore these belong under implicit links to neighbouring countries. It is therefore for the teachers to decide on which level of involvement they deal with BSR history in their classes. The teachers have freedom to concentrate on BSR history if they have the motivation and materials to do so.

More specific requirements are listed in Table 2. However, as links are rather sporadic and indirect there is no reason to categorise them under explicit and implicit links. Therefore the table presents implicit links to neighbouring countries.

Table 20. Requirements for Latvian pupils’ knowledge involving the Baltic Sea region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Learning goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modern era</td>
<td>Understanding the formation of ethnic and national identities in Latvia, Europe and the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary history</td>
<td>Understanding the impact of industrial and post-industrial society on the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary history</td>
<td>Understanding causes, manifestations and consequences of the divided world after WW II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All periods</td>
<td>Understanding the role of the geographical environment in the formation and development of different types of civilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding the tendencies and significance of the development of trade in the history of Latvia, Europe and the world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of supporting material, there are two example teacher plans prepared by the government education authorities. At the moment the suggested programs mention links to the Baltic area in relation to the Pre-Christian societies, spread of Christianity and Lutheranism. It also mentions Vikings, ethnic and social situation in the Baltic Sea region from the 9th to 13th century. The Swedish power period, Russian Empire, independence of Baltic States after WWI, Molotov-Ribbentrop pact with WWII and the Baltic States in the USSR are also mentioned as suggested topics. Therefore the recommended teacher plan makes rather explicit connections to the region. However, it is difficult to assess how much this programme is used by teachers as it is also up to the schools to decide on a specific teacher plan. It can be however assumed that when the teacher uses the suggested teacher plan examples, frequent references within different history periods are made in relation to neighbouring countries.

Sweden

The Swedish curriculum focuses on broader topics that can be applied to most regions of the world according to the teacher’s preferences. The curriculum does not list any specific topics in relation to BSR history. The topics in the Swedish curriculum are rather broad (for example democratization, renaissance, enlightenment, dictatorship) and more stress is on student skills. There are very detailed descriptions on achieving grades relating to their skills of explaining, relating events and developments, knowing historical concepts, expressing personal opinions, etc. However, it seems possible that within these broad topics BSR relations could be discussed as the teacher has the freedom to develop students’ analytical and critical thinking skills focusing on any events relating to the broad topics. These broad topics can be related to BSR history and therefore the student competencies can potentially be achieved also by concentrating on BSR history.

Similarly to Finland, Sweden lacks supporting material that would suggest BSR topics in history classes. There is a web site lektion.se that presents many example teaching plans but links to the region are non-existent.
Conclusion: Addressing BSR history in the current curricula

In conclusion it can be said that BSR history is most explicitly addressed in the Estonian curriculum and supporting documents. These state rather specific topics and events where neighbouring countries should be mentioned, and thus it is assumed these topics are frequently taught. In the Finnish curriculum there are a few references to BSR related topics but not as many as in the Estonian curriculum. Latvian and Swedish curricula differ in the setup. Student skills are more specifically stated and references to themes and topics are rather general. This gives the teachers in Sweden and Latvia freedom to focus on BSR history if there is enough motivation and materials. However, in Latvia the extra material suggesting teacher plans for history courses has several explicit links to the region and neighbouring countries mentioning concrete events. It can also mean that when the region's history is not familiar to the teachers or when their school uses other sources for teacher plans, they will most probably pick examples from other parts of the world to explain historical links and concepts. However, if the example plans are used, it suggests frequent references to neighbouring countries are made across history lessons.

Suggestions to underline common history

Using the possibilities the curricula offer, the research group provided some suggestions on how to introduce neighbouring countries' history to secondary school curricula of that particular country. As every curriculum offers different possibilities, each country is viewed separately. Also, it is aimed to suggest options how and where in the courses BSR history could be mentioned; and possible approaches to how changes could be implemented. It should be kept in mind that the suggestions enlisted here are not exhaustive and are inevitably influenced by, among others, the reviewer's culture, historical narrative, values and knowledge.

Estonia

Suggestions of further BSR history topics

As shown in the table below Estonian history curricula could contain more links to its neighbouring countries. To further students' concept of the cohesion of the Baltic Sea Region, the topics mentioned could be discussed more thoroughly introducing links between neighbouring countries and analysing their consequences and implications. To see all topics that could be addressed see Table 21.
Table 21. Proposals for new topics to further Estonian students’ knowledge about Finland, Latvia and Sweden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Theme in curricula</th>
<th>Proposal for additional topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-history</td>
<td>Estonia in the end of Prehistory</td>
<td>• Sources of neighbours about history of Estonia (Scandinavian sagas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hanseatic League</td>
<td>• Position of the old Livonia in the Baltic Sea region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ancient war of independence</td>
<td>• Foundation of Riga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Christianisation of Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Livonian Brothers of the Sword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Masters of Livonian order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Swedish fighters at Lihula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The situation of coastal Swedes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Ages</td>
<td>Spiritual life and culture</td>
<td>• The New Testament as the basis for development of local native languages in the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between the world wars: democracy and</td>
<td>• Foreign relations of Estonia: endeavour to create Baltic union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dictatorships</td>
<td>• Scandinavian union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Authoritarianism in Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Economic relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Development in Estonian compared to Scandinavian and Baltic countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary</td>
<td>The USSR and the Communist system</td>
<td>• Estonians living abroad (in Sweden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>history</td>
<td>The world at the turn of the century</td>
<td>• Finland’s influence on Estonia (a window to Europe and personal contacts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Re-gaining independence in Latvia. Relations with Baltic Sea Region countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implementing the changes in Estonia
As the Estonian history curriculum mentions links to BSR countries rather frequently and several courses cover events, people and developments in the region, it is suggested that the whole BSR history topic could be further structured and formalised. It is not necessary or achievable to make regional history a compulsory course in high schools, as compulsory curriculum is rather strictly planned in terms of time and topics already. However, as each secondary school needs to prepare 11 optional courses for their students, it can be an option to prepare a full 35-hour course for a regional history course. This would be supported by study materials and teacher trainings to ensure active use of the materials and motivation to teach the topic. Having the option to rely on existing materials, trainings, and course structure is expected to motivate teachers to focus on BSR history in a more organised manner.

The curriculum has rather thorough mention of educational outcomes related to selected topics in history courses and skills. There are grading guidelines. It does not list specific teaching methods to develop student skills, therefore the syllabus gives teachers great freedom to develop students’ skills according to the required study outcomes. When it comes to specific topics related to BSR, the main obligation is to know and analyze the events. By clarifying how this knowledge could be acquired through different teaching methods, suggestions might be of further use. New teaching materials, trainings could provide a basis for that.
In relation to talking more about BSR history, the interdependencies and differences in development of the countries and their regimes give options for developing social skills through groupwork, and other active learning methods. The contentious 20th century gives many options to develop analytical skills including critical thinking, research, interpretation and presentation skills on themes of regime change, human rights, democracy and dictatorship for example. Common Swedish power period gives options to talk about similarities in the religious and cultural affairs. Trade relations through Hanseatic League can increase students’ knowledge of common past and economic affairs in general. All in all, there are links, shared and dividing experiences in BSR history that can support advancing student skills and increase their knowledge on the region. The diversity of cultures, for example manners, traditions, and behaviour of people can be focused on when talking about BSR history.

Finland
While Finnish history syllabus does not foresee focusing on the Baltic Sea region’s history in any such detail as in Estonia, Sweden is a likely topic to be discussed. Additionally, also the history of Estonia and Latvia could be introduced, as suggested in Table 22. Mainly, it suggests that customs and differences throughout time periods could be focused on: political developments and contrasting patterns within the region for example. At the moment, only in connection to the Swedish power period a common cultural and political past is suggested to be addressed. Correspondingly, Hanseatic League, Vikings, and belonging to the Russian Empire together with Estonian and Latvian areas provide the examples of similarities that could be further explored.

Contemporary topics stand out with proposing themes related to the 2nd World War, and the events that followed which defined and refined the different fates of the people in BSR. In Hi4 where turning points in Finnish history since early 19th century are discussed, BSR region could be addressed around 1918-1920 when the countries became independent, and during 1920 when discussions about a military alliance between Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Poland occurred. Furthermore, BSR is mentioned in relation to 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and the subsequent mutual assistance agreements which the Baltic countries signed. The course also addresses their fate in WWII. BSR area is also discussed during cold war era and present day, providing further regional topics.
Table 22. Proposals for new topics to improve Finnish students’ knowledge about Estonia, Latvia and Sweden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course type</th>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Theme in curricula</th>
<th>Proposal for additional topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory courses</td>
<td>Middle ages</td>
<td>European man; European culture</td>
<td>• The world view and customs of medieval people including examples from the Baltic Sea region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modern Era</td>
<td>Turning-points in Finnish history</td>
<td>• The situation in the Baltic Sea region, nations/areas between Swedish and Russian powers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International relations</td>
<td>• Situation in Estonia and Latvia, how they gained independence and how it was connected to international politics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The discussions of a military alliance between Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Poland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• European extremist movements, the crisis of democracy and persecution of people in different countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Second World War and its consequences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of bipolarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The recent changes in Estonia and Latvia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional courses</td>
<td>Middle ages</td>
<td>Finland from prehistoric times to autonomy</td>
<td>• Comparing the situation of Finland to what happened in the Baltic States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Hanseatic league, trading of different products and skills, religion and reformation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• As the medieval architecture is quite rare in Finland, examples from medieval cities and buildings such as Reval and Riga could be taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The world view and customs of medieval people including examples from the Baltic Sea region.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implementing the changes in Finland

As Finland is mentioned as a country between East and West during the Cold War, this could be developed into a topic to focus on the region in more detail. The course Hi5 which addresses the region more than any other course could perhaps use more focus on BSR to explain Finland’s situation now. Also, the compulsory International Relations (Hi3), and Turning Points in Finnish history course could discuss topics throughout BSR history. The 20th century events in the BSR can easily be related to topics of independence; dictatorship versus democracy; development issues, migration, economic development. The relation to Sweden is inevitable when dealing with Finnish history and the influence of that can also be analysed in later periods and in comparison to Estonia and Latvia, for example.

Student skills and competencies can be related to the history of the region. The differences in political developments offer opportunities to discuss various themes of development, similarities, differences and links in the region. As a result, students will have better knowledge of the region while having competencies that help them succeed in the later academic life.

Promoting BSR topics in history classes could be pursued by teaching materials and teacher trainings. There
is a wide network of academic book publishers that also provide supporting material for teachers. Therefore, training teachers to use the region in their history classes could be complemented by co-operation with book publishers providing new practical teaching material. Furthermore, as in Estonia, the schools in Finland can present an optional history course when there is enough student interest. As the school modifies the curriculum provided by the state and creates its own programme, they often have optional history courses (preparatory course for exams; American history for example). When there would be materials on BSR topics; trainings for teachers; co-operation with publishers to provide extra material and student interest for the topic, BSR history could be an optional unit in some Finnish schools. However, it would be unreasonable to add it to the formal history curriculum. Therefore it is mainly up to teachers to focus on BSR history.

Latvia

The Latvian curriculum concentrates on broad topics that dissect all eras allowing several possibilities to introduce the region's history, some of them mentioned in Table 23. The suggested topics include changes in identity; individuals that affected life in BSR; trade relations; shared cultural heritage; and historical links affecting developments in the region. It does require the teacher to approach and dissect the region's history in a broader way as specific time periods or events are not explicitly required. It leaves them with freedom to approach BSR history. Yet, in case of teacher's incomplete knowledge and/or lack of materials on BSR history with the theme not being in the national exam, the topic will most probably not be addressed. Nevertheless, dealing with broader concepts means that students need to use and develop their analytical and critical thinking skills when approaching links spreading over time periods and events. Therefore teaching about BSR history could be included in the curriculum as it will serve the objectives related to student skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme in curricula</th>
<th>Proposal for additional topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diverse and changing identity</td>
<td>• How people saw themselves in different periods (can be taught based of private documents: diaries, letters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual's place in historical processes</td>
<td>• Individuals from Baltic Sea region whose actions affected life in Baltic Sea region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic activity</td>
<td>• Trade within Baltic Sea region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural heritage of civilizations</td>
<td>• Shared cultural heritage of Baltic Sea region, cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of information in history and their use</td>
<td>• Compare documentation of one event and its different reflections in the countries in the Baltic Sea region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of historical developments in various forms of work</td>
<td>• Any form of independent study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implementing the changes in Latvia

The current curriculum does not include direct links to BSR history but the suggested teacher plans do. However, there are several themes that could be mentioned in the BSR context. As with the previous cases, BSR history presents several options to discuss relevant topics such as economic activity in the Hanseatic League; changing identities in communist regimes, and its comparison to democratic countries. As teachers have freedom to choose which examples to use and which cases to analyse, BSR history could be considered as a source of analysing historical events that contribute to knowing certain concepts of history. The curriculum is for all three years of high school, therefore there is time to introduce the necessary concepts through BSR history. Having a helpful teaching material ready for use would increase teachers’ interest and motivation to use BSR history in developing student skills and knowledge of regional history. Furthermore, the active use of government provided teacher plans could increase the BSR related topics in history classes, therefore promotion and popularisation
of these documents would result in more focused BSR studies. Additionally, the third example teaching plan could be prepared that focuses on BSR and the regional links. The additional teacher plan would in combination with materials and trainings that encourage the Latvian teachers to focus on BSR history more.

**Sweden**

There are six different courses in the Swedish curriculum, each of them providing possibilities to introduce Baltic Sea region history (see Table 24). Rather than having a chronological take, the courses focus on specific topic that spans across different eras allowing observing changes in the particular field through time.

As 1a1 and 1a2 have the same requirements as 1b they are discussed together. Within 1a1 and 1a2 (thus also 1b) courses, it is possible to find links to BSR mainly in all history periods. Within the course 3b the topics can either be connected to contemporary history, present day or any time period (the themes extend over time). Within 2a and 2b there are no obvious links to specific eras (the broader topics being on historical questions of importance for individuals, groups and societies; and the importance of history and how it is used in different cultural expressions). These courses also allow references to regional history.

The suggested topics in relation to BSR and neighbouring countries range from trade within Hanseatic League to Swedish Power period; national movements in the 19th and 20th century; independence of Baltic states; migration, occupation; era of communism to source criticism of historical explanations. As the Swedish curriculum does not suggest specific events to discuss, these topics can be approached within the themes of human rights, democratization, nationalism, migration, dictatorship, industrialisation, identity, gender roles, cultural movements and long term historical perspectives. A more detailed overview is provided in Table C3.
Table 24. Proposals for new topics to improve Swedish students’ knowledge about Estonia, Finland and Latvia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Theme in curricula</th>
<th>Proposal for additional topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antiquity</td>
<td></td>
<td>The European time eras: free choice of some processes of change, and more in-depth knowledge of areas covered earlier school years</td>
<td>• Trade within Baltic Sea region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval era</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Hanseatic League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern era</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The development of national and cultural movements in the region in the 19th century and early 20th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Independence of Baltic States independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Perestroika time, struggle for Baltic re-independence, post-Soviet Baltic States development and contacts with Europe, cooperation between the Baltic States and different European countries, organizations and individuals (civil society)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Development of Baltic political systems and civil society, political participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Migration</td>
<td>• The migration of Baltic refugees to Finland and Sweden, as well as the Swedish extradition of Baltic refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dictatorship, genocide, conflicts, human rights</td>
<td>• The occupation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Nazi occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Soviet system, the loss of people from the Baltic States as refugees to West, killings, and people sent to the Gulag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Life and oppression in Soviet Baltic States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Industrialisation and distribution of resources, migration</td>
<td>• Change in the national economic growth of the Baltic States before and after WWII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The influence of collectivisation on agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Industrialisation, importing workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender roles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Changing gender roles in the Baltic Sea region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of history as a tool for wartime or cooperation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Use of history during conflicts and attempts to cooperate. For example how history books often reflect upon how the current regime views the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>Time period</td>
<td>Theme in curricula</td>
<td>Proposal for additional topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a2</td>
<td>Modern era</td>
<td>Free choice of long-term historical processes of change discussed in terms of both continuation and change: State building</td>
<td>• The long-term struggle for Baltic nationhood and independence; Finnish nationhood and independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contemporary history</td>
<td>Importance of history when forming identities - for example different ideas of shared cultural heritage.</td>
<td>• The development of national and cultural movements in Estonia and Latvia during the 19th century, early 20th century, between the world wars and during collapse of the USSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>Any time period when Sweden has had contact with countries in the Baltic Sea region</td>
<td>Thematic in-depth focus on historical questions of importance for individuals, groups and societies: Cultural meetings</td>
<td>• Different cultural meetings that Sweden as a country and Swedes have had with neighbouring countries in the Baltic Sea region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any time period</td>
<td>Different historical world views</td>
<td>• Compare the historical world view of the Baltic Sea region countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Views about gender and human equality</td>
<td>• Discuss the different views on farmers in the Baltic Sea region: The long tradition of independent farmers in Sweden vs. collectivisation in Estonia and Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>People's relationship to nature</td>
<td>• Compare people's relationship to nature in the different Baltic Sea region countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The importance of history</td>
<td>• Comparison of Baltic Sea region countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How history is used in different cultural expressions, such as movies, literature, music and different youth subcultures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Baltic Sea Region history: awareness among youth, national syllabi, and education

Implementing the changes in Sweden

As seen from the table, there are several possibilities to add BSR related topics in the Swedish high school history curriculum. However, the overall set-up is based on very general topics and therefore it is doubtful that references to BSR history could be added without altering the curriculum completely. An option to promote focusing on BSR history would be promoting teaching material on BSR and specify where in the curriculum examples of BSR history can be used. It would contribute to explaining wider topics such as globalisation in the 20th century; cultural meetings; people’s relation to environment and nature; dictatorship; trade and other themes mentioned in the curriculum. Therefore, instead of introducing examples from far parts of the world for dictatorships, the near-by countries can be the basis for information on that.

Other topics can be addressed in a similar manner. However, a structured material on BSR history could motivate teachers to use regional examples in their classes. This also requires proper promotion and training activities to include as many teachers in those activities as possible. In that respect co-operation with the history teachers’ association and book publishers is necessary. Both activities would raise awareness among teachers about the

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Theme in curricula</th>
<th>Proposal for additional topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Any time period</td>
<td>Different notions of art and culture from a historical perspective; meetings between an established culture and different kinds of new cultural movements</td>
<td>- The Central Baltic Sea Region as a cultural region. Cultural expressions for common historical eras like the Hansa time, the Swedish realm during the 17th century. Jugend (Art Nouveau) in Latvia and Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The importance of history: How history is used in different cultural expressions, such as movies, literature, music and different youth subcultures</td>
<td>- History as a tool for nation-building in the different countries: Swedish nationalism in cultural expressions during the 19th century compared to national renaissance in Finland, Estonia and Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thematic in-depth focus on historical questions of importance for individuals, groups and societies from a cultural-historical perspective: world views, mentalities, ideas, differing cultural forms of communication through time</td>
<td>- 20th century history in Sweden, Finland, Latvia, and Estonia. Historical questions of major interest, Swedish connections to the Baltic Sea Region during WWI and WWII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Independence for Finland, Latvia and Estonia. Crimes against humanity in EE and LV: deportations, mass murder, holocaust and warfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The Singing Revolution and the Swedish and Finnish assistance and reactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Estonian and Latvian groups in Sweden and their integration in Swedish society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td>Modern Era</td>
<td>Any global process of change during the 19th and 20th century: it includes concrete political processes and patterns, as well as the consequences for societies, groups and individuals on a regional and local level</td>
<td>- The Central Baltic Sea region divided during the Cold War; The Baltic Sea as a theatre during the Cold War; Cold War consequences in everyday life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contemporary history</td>
<td>Source criticism and method problems connected with working on different kinds of historical source material: political history, social history and environmental history</td>
<td>- How do we understand historical source material from different Baltic Sea region countries?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any time period</td>
<td>How do archives, libraries and museums (etc.) use history from a regional and local perspective?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
possibility to use regional history as a basis to teach wider concepts present in the current syllabus. The topics could further be enforced in lektion.se portal that suggests topics to history teachers. However, these types of education portals are not used by many teachers. Another problem is that a lot of the high school history teachers do not belong or are active in the work of the history teachers' association which makes the promotion of new materials, trainings more difficult. Therefore approaching teachers through the association is not enough and targeting specific schools or regions is an option.

Conclusion: implementing the changes
The overall problem with implementing the changes is that BSR history is a topic and a concept that is still foreign to many. It is important to see links and mutual influence to place national history events in a wider context. Although the history lessons and the students could both increase their analytical and other skills through learning about their neighbours, there are other history courses that are prioritised. However, as an optional unit or a part in international relations, regional history or national history course, BSR could be focused on. In Sweden and Latvia, teachers have the opportunity to explain wider subjects such as democracy, migration, environmental impacts of human activity through BSR countries and therefore they should be encouraged to do so. Teaching materials and trainings should provide a basis for that. In the Latvian case, example teacher plan focussing on regional history could be written as well.

In Estonia and Finland where the BSR topics are more specifically mentioned, their scope in history lessons could be widened. In Finland more emphasis on BSR could be introduced in Hi3 or Hi5 courses. In Estonia, the Estonian history course and contemporary history course already deal with the history of neighbouring countries. As a more tangible effort an optional 35-hour regional history course could be developed based on the teaching materials to be developed. All high schools need to offer 11 elective courses and BSR history course with existing materials, methods could provide an option to better inform the youth about national and regional history. An elective course would be an option in Finland as well. However, as schools decide that individually it would be difficult to enforce it otherwise than with teaching materials and teacher trainings on BSR history.

A second more practical problem is that although the curricula focus on student skills and knowledge, very often the class activities are based on what the national history exam (with the exception of Sweden where such exams do not exist) requires. This aspect has not been analysed in this report but it can be assumed that as long as the national exam does not address any regional topics, it will be difficult to motivate both students and teachers to address BSR history. However, optional courses and teaching materials might eventually alter exam topics and therefore reinforce BSR topics further.

Discussion

Significance of BSR history in the current curriculum
The purpose of including BSR history as a subject in the curricula or as a separate topic in national, regional or contemporary history courses is to educate the youth so they know more about their neighbours and therefore feel closer to each other. As a region aiming for further economic, environmental, cultural and political cooperation having educated and aware youth will in the future contribute to better communication and mutual understanding. Therefore, BSR history topics that explain the similarities, differences and links in the region would greatly contribute to tackle stereotypical thinking and prejudice in the whole region. Education is the key to changing people's perceptions, and therefore BSR history courses could greatly benefit the whole region.

In relation to cohesion, it is desirable that the curricula in the four countries would address the topic of regional history. There are obvious links between the countries that have influenced the overall development in the region. It is important and possible to emphasize the common BSR history in all the curricula and in developing
students’ skills by having them analyse the events in the region, which should lead to an understanding of the differences and similarities within the region.

Estonia stands out as its high school history curriculum and supporting documents rather explicitly mention and suggest topics that relate to the Baltic Sea Region. The specificity level suggests that the topic of neighbouring countries is relevant in the Estonian syllabus. In the Finnish curriculum there are sporadic links to the region's history and the curriculum resembles the Estonian one in terms of set-up where focus is on topics. Both mention student skills and study outcomes but Latvia and especially Sweden have focused on student skills in more detail. In Latvia, the suggested teacher plans have several links to BSR history and therefore, if used, the teacher plans suggest involvement with regional history. The Swedish curriculum has become more concrete since the previous curricula and the main motivation for the new syllabus was increasing the student skills. Therefore the focus on study outcomes can be understood.

From the standpoint of greater cohesion these gaps in materials and teacher’s awareness could be over-come by new teaching materials focusing on BSR. The approaches differ country-wise. In Estonia, an optional BSR course seems reasonable. In Finland promotion of materials, trainings could lead to an optional BSR history course in some schools. In Latvia, the enforcement of the teacher plans and the creation of a new one focusing on the region supplemented by materials and trainings would lead to greater depth in teaching regional history. In Sweden, the co-operation with teachers’ association, book publishers in combination with teaching materials and trainings could encourage more focus on the region. Therefore the changes require more co-operative capacity. Yet, lobbying in relevant education institutions in the respective countries would furthermore encourage teaching BSR history. However, at this moment the alteration of curricula seems difficult as all the countries have during the past couple of years changed their curricula already and thus efforts to raise awareness among teachers, schools, book publishers, teachers’ associations to increase interest and knowledge on this topic would be the first step.

**Reasons and suggestions to improve education on the region’s history**

Estonia and Finland have listed BSR topics in their current curricula. Therefore, an option to structure the BSR topic better would be by adding BSR topics to the current courses. In Estonia, Estonian history and contemporary history courses provide options to concentrate on the region’s history. As an extra option, it is suggested that a full 35-hour voluntary regional history course could be developed for high school level as existing materials and methods would encourage schools and teachers to choose this subject as an elective. In the Finnish case it is possible to draw regional connections in courses Hi3 and Hi5. One of them concentrates on international relations and therefore could use topics from BSR relations, and the other is a course on Finnish national history that also mentions links to neighbouring countries.

Latvia and Sweden have a more general take on the history curriculum. The focus is on student competencies and topics are broad. It would be disproportionate to alter the two curricula in terms of specifying concrete topics to be taught. The history curriculum in Sweden is filled with several voluntary and compulsory courses and changing all those with the aim of adding BSR topics would be senseless and unachievable due to the amount of time and vast effort needed for re-writing the curriculum consisting of six different courses. The solution would be to introduce BSR topics to teachers through materials and trainings so that the examples they use in history classes would be more regional.

Latvia presents a similar case as one history course spreads over three high school years and adding specific BSR topics to a rather general curriculum would be a difficult task. Therefore, the option is to approach the teachers to use BSR related material in their classes. Broad topics in the two curricula present several previously mentioned options to talk about BSR history and provide regional examples for illustration and comprehension. Developing student skills through the inter-linked and varied BSR history could be done by encouraging teachers with BSR history materials, methods and also trainings to concentrate on the topic. Raising awareness among
teachers about new interactive and engaging BSR related teaching materials is the first step towards establishing BSR history as a theme in history courses.

**Restrictions**

Only secondary school curricula and teacher plan related documents were studied as part of this research paper. Consequently, any content of history teachings prior to secondary school or in addition to curriculum and sample teacher plans are not reflected in this document.

Also, this analysis takes into account what the curricula suggest and can therefore not draw conclusions on how intensely BSR history is actually taught by history teachers. This area must be explored further. Specifically, a more complete analysis of what events and topics are taught; the requirements (for example the topics of final exams) to the students should be addressed.

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# Annexes

## Annex 1. Swedish High School Abbreviations

### University preparatory programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Title in English</th>
<th>Title in Swedish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EK</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Ekonomi programmet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Aesthetics</td>
<td>Estetiska programmet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Humanistic</td>
<td>Humanistiska programmet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NV</td>
<td>Nature Science</td>
<td>Naturvetenskapsprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>Samhällsvetenskapsprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TE</td>
<td>Technics</td>
<td>Teknikprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>International Baccalaureate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vocational programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Title in English</th>
<th>Title in Swedish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BF</td>
<td>Child and Recreation</td>
<td>Barn- och fritidsprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Building and construction</td>
<td>Bygg- och anläggningsprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>Electricity and energy</td>
<td>El- och energiprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Vehicle and transportation</td>
<td>Fordons- och transportprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HA</td>
<td>Business and Administration</td>
<td>Handels- och administrationsprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HV</td>
<td>Handicraft</td>
<td>Hantverksprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT</td>
<td>Hotels and Tourism</td>
<td>Hotell- och turismprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>Industrial Technology</td>
<td>Industritekniska programmet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NB</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>Naturbruksprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL</td>
<td>Restaurant and food</td>
<td>Restaurang- och livsmedelsprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VF</td>
<td>Plumbing and real estate</td>
<td>VVS- och fastighetsprogrammet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VO</td>
<td>Health and social care</td>
<td>Vård- och omsorgsprogrammet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The project 'Different Nations- Shared Experiences' was started as it was assumed that the cohesion and integration of this region could be improved. Though culturally rather similar, the countries of the region were divided during the Cold War, thus it was suggested that a sense of togetherness be furthered. Education is one of the tools to raise awareness and thus to test the attitudes towards neighbouring countries of the region, questionnaires for both students and teachers were created. The aim of this research was to investigate:

- How teachers create their course plans;
- What methods and materials teachers prefer and use;
- The availability of technical equipment;
- How they approach Baltic Sea Region (BSR) history

With the results, it would become apparent how teachers in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden approach history of the region in their lessons and also their teaching habits and opportunities. After the overall conclusion summarised country-based implications and suggestions for future methods and materials are listed (in Annex 1). The questionnaire is in Annex 2.

As one of the aims of the project is to develop teaching materials supporting increasing the knowledge of history of the BSR region then this report also presents suggestions as to what focus or approach the materials should employ to ensure that both students and teachers would find the topic interesting and worth studying.

For clarification it needs to be mentioned that the terms curriculum and syllabus are used interchangeably and refer to the specific history syllabus provided by a governmental education board that usually sets the themes, topics and outcomes to be studied.

**Literature review**

Good history teaching entails more than knowing about subject matter, subject-specific pedagogy and students. It requires teachers to address workplace circumstances that inhibit innovation, limit professional learning opportunities and constrain the development of supportive work environments. (Taylor & Young 2003)

(Taylor & Young, 2003) summarise Evans's (1994) research who outlined different views of history that teachers may employ in their teaching:

- The storyteller regards the past as unproblematic, a simple line of snapshots loosely linked with one another and categorised in opposites (good vs bad).
- The scientific historian believes that analysing, challenging, interpreting and questioning are keys to understand past events.
- The relativist/reformer believes past experiences will guide in making future decisions.
- The cosmic philosopher understands history as circular patterns that repeat themselves-- what happened in the past will happen in some form in the future.
- The eclectic believes that that history is best explained in multiple ways for numerous purposes – stories to entertain, a form of intellectual training, means of making sense out of the past etc.
Evans’ (1994, as cited in Taylor & Young, 2003) also showed that teachers’ beliefs and understanding of history is reflected in the way they pass their knowledge to the pupils.

Stradling (2003) added that history teaching is usually divided into two types: traditional teaching and a newer approach taking multiple perspectives and methods into account. Traditional teaching consists of knowledge transmission; the weighting of course content heavily in favour of political and constitutional history; a focus predominantly on events and personalities; the construction of the syllabus around a content-rich, chronological survey of national history; and the underlying assumption that the national historical narrative mainly coincided with the history of the largest national grouping and the dominant linguistic and cultural community. The goal of the new approach is to find a better balance between the two goals of teaching about the past and teach skills that would enable students to think in historical terms. (Stradling 2003: 9-10)

This is expressed by the concept of ‘multiperspectivity’: “a strategy of understanding”, in which we take into account another’s perspective (or others’ perspectives) in addition to our own. That process entails understanding that we too have a perspective which has been filtered through our own cultural context, reflects our own standpoint and interpretation of what has happened and why.

A somewhat outdated collection of essays (Leinhardt, Beck, & Stainton, 1994) highlights further issues in history teaching. Firstly, much of the textbooks and methodology is rather narrow, not allowing alternative explanations of history events. This leads to the situation where students may not be able to realise the interrelations between historical events and nowadays. An exception is maybe a classroom conversation method used in Sweden where the teacher and the class try to form a shared line of reasoning. Besides knowing the content, history lessons (should) provide students with several skills like analytical thinking, research and group discussion skills, computer-literacy etc. Therefore the traditional talk and chalk method is retreating and active methods enhancing the fore-mentioned skills are being implemented. (van der Leeuw-Roord 2003: 24)

Zhao & Hoge (2005) offer some implications that students still do not realise the connections between the past and the present might still be a problem. The authors interviewed teachers in three districts in Atlanta (Georgia, USA) and found that social studies (incl. history) are taught mainly relying on the textbook. The students in the same study who claimed they did not like the subject because “it is boring and useless”, “it’s reading the textbook”, and “it doesn’t apply” (p. 218). Some teachers also said they would like to help their pupils to cope with contemporary life, understand the news etc., a finding that is in line with the fact that 95% of the interviewed students did not think what they learned in the social studies class was relevant to their personal life. Zhao and Hoge (2005) also found that the teachers recognise the problem – they would like to have more maps, globes, videotapes to make social studies more interesting. The authors suggested that teachers should use materials available in the Internet to make social studies more engaging.

Treadway & Friedman (2009) concluded in their paper that teachers based their selection of materials on a) whether they fit the teacher’s personality, b) what do teachers find regard as more effective and c) what the curriculum suggests. Saglam (2011) investigated teaching materials used by 160 teachers in Turkey (87 female) and found that teachers who had been serving 16 years or more were more likely to use printed materials, experience-giving methods compared to those who had been serving less (1-5, 6-10, and 11-15 years). There were no differences in group averages when it came to using audio-visual materials. Also, the use of materials did not differ between teachers who had a personal computer and those who did not, however those who liked technology were more likely to use audio-visual materials and experience giving methods.

Keveryn & Friedman (2009) concluded after observing and interviewing six teachers in North Carolina that teachers thought utilizing primary source documents would be in the benefit of the students. When primary sources are used, the documents are carefully selected to meet a specific objective.
Further, according to Can (2010) using technology to teach social studies related subjects is said to have a positive effect on the study outcomes of the students. Technology (audio-visual material presented by projectors and overheads) increases creativity when used together with other methods such as textbooks. The main reason for the effectiveness of using technology is that in order to stay motivated in class, the students need teaching methods and materials that address all senses; and that in turn enhances students' achievement and attitude. However, science teachers seem to use technology more in their lessons than social studies teachers (Can, 2010: 46-51), and therefore history teachers might need encouragement to also take advantage of technology in their lessons.

Data collection method

Random sampling method was used to invite teachers to respond to the survey. The aim was to gather 100-115 answers from each project country (Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden). In Estonia and Latvia it was assumed that the answers of teachers from schools with Estonian/ Latvian as the language of instruction and the schools with Russian as the language of instruction could differ, thus the two Russian language school groups were also selected using random sampling method. To shorten, throughout the analysis they will be referred to as Estonian Russian, and Latvian Russian schools. However, the differences in most cases were minor (not significant) so the figures do not reflect the language groups but significant differences are pointed out within the text. Around 205-320 teachers from each country were contacted by e-mail. Their contacts were gathered by phone and from the schools' websites. The teachers were given up to three weeks to fill in the online survey. When half of the answering period had passed, the ones who had not responded received a reminder e-mail or a phone call. Data collection in different countries took place from April 2012 till June 2012. Furthermore, for higher response rates, the help of national history and civics teachers’ unions was used, as requests to fill in the survey appeared on their websites and e-mail lists.

The overall participation rate was around 28.5%. 1010 invitations were sent while 288 responses were received. Thus the results cannot be extended to all high school history teachers from these countries but the study represents a tendency and the specific opinions of the teachers participating. However, as it is the first survey in the Baltic Sea Region that involves that many history teachers, the answers can be considered indicative.

The highest response rate was recorded in Latvia since 100 answers were collected from 241 sent invitations (41.5%). The lowest response rate was in Sweden, where 320 invitations were sent and 64 answers collected (20% rate). However, the least responses were collected from Finland (46) where 205 invitations were sent (response rate of 22.4%). In Estonia, 78 teachers of 244 invitees responded (32%).

Pilot testing

The questionnaires were tested in all four countries by two teachers (in case of Russian language questionnaire, these were tested by two teachers as well). They provided feedback on the clarity of the questionnaire. As a result some questions were rephrased.

Method for analysis

The analysis had four aims:

- Firstly, what influences teachers most when creating a teacher/ course plans
- Secondly, what are the most and least preferred methods for teaching
- Thirdly, the availability of equipment and sources was explored
- Lastly, we studied teachers’ interest in Baltic Sea Region (BSR) history
Those four aims provided the structure of the analysis. As a result, approaches to promote more BSR history teaching among teachers and at schools are suggested.

Most of the questions were analysed using the ANOVA test (analysis of variance). The answers were mostly based on Likert scale. It ranged from never (1), rarely (2), about half of the time (3), often (4) to almost always (5). We compared the significant differences in answers by different groups (Estonia, Finland, Latvia, and Sweden). In Estonia and Latvia, separate groups were established: one represents teachers that instruct in Estonian (later EstEst) or Latvian (later LatLat), and the other group represents teachers from Estonia and Latvia who instruct in Russian or mainly Russian speaking students (EstRus and LatRus). Generally, the differences between the two groups in Estonia and Latvia did not occur often therefore the figures record only four country groups; significant differences in opinions were seen in rare cases and are pointed out in the text. Sweden and Finland are signified by abbreviations Swe and Fin respectively.

When asked about method and material preferences teachers were also tested according to teaching experience to see whether teachers with more experience employ more interactive methods, thus they were categorised into four groups (teaching experience of 1-10; 11-20; 21-30; 30-... years). In relation to availability of technical equipment and use of computers we tested whether teachers from smaller localities have less frequent access. The teachers were thus grouped as belonging to either localities of up to 1000 inhabitants; 1001- 10 000; 10 001- 100 000; 100 001- 1 million; and to localities with more than 1 million inhabitants (5 groups).

In two cases, the teachers had to list options according to the importance to them (in the first case the importance of different study aims; in the second, the most important factors influencing the choice of materials). To establish the most important aims and factors from less important, Friedman test was used. For three questions a descriptive table of frequencies provided illustration. In four cases, open questions were asked, the answers were coded and frequencies recorded based on which they were interpreted.

Creating a teacher plan

Course load

First we asked how many courses of history the teachers teach. The answers to this question varied significantly across the countries. First, this question was not posed to Latvian teachers as they only teach one compulsory history course throughout the secondary school. Second, for Sweden, it is common to teach from one to five courses. Teaching two courses is most common in Sweden (26 teachers). In Estonia, it is most common for a teacher to give between 6-8 courses (40 teachers= 51.3%) where six correspond to the number of compulsory courses and the further two to the number of optional courses from the national curriculum.

In Finland, there is much more variety in the answers. It is most common to teach 20 courses of history and other social studies subjects (10 answers), while options over 20 are also rather common. No Finnish teacher in this sample teaches less than 3 courses. When the Finnish teachers name the courses they teach, they also list different courses of civics, ethics, philosophy and psychology, which exaggerate the number. The number of history courses remains between 3 and 10.

It can therefore be concluded that in Estonia, it is common to teach courses from the state curriculum, and that there are not many optional courses suggested by schools, teachers or municipalities. In Finland, there are more optional courses available than stated in the curriculum (6) and many teachers give more than the compulsory four courses which means the amount of non-state regulated courses is higher. In Sweden, the

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4 In questions 5, 8, 16 it ranged from not at all (1), little (2), somewhat (3), a lot (4) to very much (5)
5 Questions ‘how often is BSR is mentioned in lessons’, ‘Is there interest in new materials’, and ‘Which authority is responsible for creating teacher plans’ (numbers 15, 18 and 4)
curriculum-suggested courses also seem to be the most common ones as the maximum number of courses taught (6) corresponds to the six courses in the curriculum. However, it can be said that in connection to history courses, the teachers follow the curriculum, and there are not a lot of optional courses provided by schools, municipalities, teachers themselves. In Latvia, there is only one compulsory history course taught throughout the secondary school and no optional courses are taught.

Creating a teacher plan

We asked the teachers how their teacher plan was created in order to see how to best fit BSR studies into future teacher plans. The options included ‘myself’, ‘a colleague’, ‘the school’, ‘the state’, and ‘other’ with a possibility to specify.

Figure 36. Who created the teacher plan/program you use?

Note. The figure summarises the results of teachers from all the four countries.
Figure 37. Who created the teacher plan/program you use?

Note. The figure displays the percentages for each teacher group.

• Out of 450 answers by 288 teachers, 41.6 per cent of the teachers answered ‘myself’; 7.8 per cent ‘a colleague’; 10.2 per cent answered ‘the school’ while 34.2 per cent responded that ‘the state’ creates their teacher plan, which probably means that these teachers consult the state provided curriculum when writing a teaching plan.
• 6.2 per cent answers of the teacher responded ‘other’. In the Estonian case the ‘other’ option meant that the teacher creates the plan but also considers the state provided syllabus. In Latvia, some of the answers are the same. However, Latvian teachers also name concrete books, and the examination centre materials.
• Among the Finnish teachers, the municipality was listed several times.
• In Sweden the syllabus and the grades-criteria for the subject, the National Agency for Education were mentioned, also co-operation among teachers, International Baccalaureate system, and students were referred to.

It can be concluded that in all schools, except Latvia, most teachers say they write their teacher plan, whether independently or by using help from the state programme, colleagues or the municipality. However, in Latvia, most teachers refer to ‘the state’ when writing the teacher plan. It is suggested that the curriculum is very general in Latvia and gives teachers a lot of freedom, which is why they might refer to the curriculum influencing the writing of the teacher plan. In the Finnish case, the school seems to be an important influence and to a lesser degree the same is true in Estonia. In general, the teachers write the plans themselves but often rely on the state programme (in all countries), and the school (in Finland and Estonia). The least common option is to write the plan together with a colleague, however, a considerable number (15.5%) of Finnish teachers seem to use that option (in the other countries there are 3-7 teachers that use the help of a colleague).

Finally we asked what factors influence teachers when they create their course plans. It was suggested that factors influencing teacher plans are books, colleagues, existing methods and materials, students’ interest, teacher’s personal interest and school’s profile. The teachers were asked whether these factors influence them not at all (1), a little (2), somewhat (3), a lot (4), or very much (5).
In total (considering all the country groups together) the highest rated influence on preparing a teacher plan is existing materials and methods (M= 3.76), and the lowest rated is colleagues’ suggestions (M= 2.71). However, as apparent from the most and least influential factors, then generally all the factors seem to have rather equal influence on composing a teacher plan. However, some differences are pointed out below.

- Existing materials and methods score the highest in Latvia (LatLat) =4.16. As they also have the highest score for text books (M= 4.23), it can be said that Latvian teachers rely more on written sources when preparing course plans.

- When it comes to using books as a reference for teacher plans, Sweden significantly differs from other countries. Books are significantly less considered in Sweden when secondary school history teachers put together their course plans.

- Also, influence of existing methods and materials scores significantly low in Sweden (3.03). Students’ and teacher’s own interest are in higher regard for the Swedish teacher. Influence of colleagues is the least important factor.

- Students’ interest is taken into account more than teacher’s own interest.

- Estonia stands out as it considers the influence of a school’s profile the highest (mean 3.73). The curriculum, which gives the schools the freedom and the mandate to run voluntary courses. This opportunity is widely used and therefore many of the schools have created specific profiles (science, humanities, etc.)

In conclusion the teachers compose their own teacher plans taking the curriculum strongly into account. In Finland the municipality is included in determining the general direction of history studies while in Estonia the school profile matters. Besides the curriculum, existing methods and materials, textbooks and student interest matter for the teachers.

Note. The teachers could rate the options from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For clarity, the chart uses the scale from 2- 4.5.
Methods and materials (preferences and use)

Teaching aims

First we asked the teachers on which aims they concentrate when teaching history. We asked them to rate different aims from the most important to the least important. Altogether there were nine options. From Table 1 the overall results in order of importance regarding learning aims can be seen.

Table 25. To which extent do you concentrate on the following aims of learning in teaching history?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>To which extent do you concentrate on the following aims of learning in teaching history? (Rank from most important to least important)</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I want my students to acquire knowledge about the main facts and general understanding of history</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I want them to use history to explain the situation in the world today and to find out the tendencies of change</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I want them to imagine what it felt like in the past taking different viewpoints into account</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I want them to acknowledge the traditions, characteristics, values and narrative of our nation and society</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I want them to understand the behaviour of past persons by reconstructing the special situations and contemporary thoughts of the period when they lived (empathy)</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I want them to judge historical events according to the standards of human and civil rights</td>
<td>5.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>I want them to be fascinated and have fun dealing with history</td>
<td>5.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>I want them to internalise basic democratic values</td>
<td>5.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I want them to value the preservation of historical remains and old buildings</td>
<td>6.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most important overall goal is that students acquire knowledge about the main facts and have a general understanding of history. It was considered most important in Estonia, Finland and Sweden, while according to Latvian secondary school history teachers the most important aim for students is to use history to explain the situation in the world today and find out the tendencies of change. The least important aim for students is to value the preservation of relics and old buildings. This was the case according to all teacher groups. In general, it can be said that the answers are rather similar among all teachers. Some slight differences are discussed below.

- For all the groups, the most important goals are general understanding of key facts and explaining history via today while the least important for all is the preservation of relics.
- According to Estonian teachers (EstEst, EstRus) ‘fun with history’ is placed a bit higher (5) than generally (7-8).
- For Finnish and Swedish teachers, evaluating events according to human rights principles is more important (3; 4) than generally (6).
- For Swedish teachers, acknowledging country traditions is less important (7-8) than in general (4).

Class activities

In order to assess how teachers carry out their lessons, they were asked how often certain activities happen in their lessons. The options were ‘the students listen to my explanations about the past;’ ‘the students are informed what was good or bad, right or wrong;’ ‘the students discuss different explanations of historical events;’ ‘the students study original sources of history;’ ‘the students retell and interpret history based on their viewpoint and arguments in essay and research activities;’ ‘the students listen to radio programs or watch TV documentaries;’
‘the students visit museums and historical sites’; ‘the students organise local projects’; ‘the students participate in role plays, debates, group work’; and ‘the students use digital material’. For each of those activities the teachers chose whether they employ these methods never (1), rarely (2), about half of the time (3), often (4), or almost always (5).

The differences in this case are more obvious than in the question about the importance of learning aims. ‘The students listen to my explanations about the past’ has the highest frequency (3.94) within potential class activities. The least frequent activity is ‘the students organise local projects’ (M= 1.95). The complete results by country can be seen below in Figure 39.

Figure 39. During the past year, how often has the following happened? The students...

- ‘Students listening to teacher’s explanations of the past’ scores the highest as the most used activity in lessons. Finnish teachers score this aspect the highest (M= 4.26) and therefore their practice differs significantly from Latvia (LatLat) (3.77). This means that narrative is still highly valued in history classes.
- In the Latvian case listening to teachers’ explanations ranks third after use of books and primary sources, so it is also relevant there.
- Using textbook and worksheets also presents different opinions. Sweden differs from almost all other groups (with the exception of Estonian Russian school teachers) with using this method the least (M= 2.91). Overall it’s a very popular method ranking second in the overall table which suggests that textbook based teaching is rather common. The low result in Sweden can be explained by textbooks being used more at home while in the lessons reading the textbook is rather uncommon and the focus is more on group discussions.
- When analyzing differences among countries then in case of the students discussing explanations of historical events there was a significant difference between Finland and Latvia (LatRus). In the LatRus case it happens most (M= 3.97). This can be explained by the competing contemporary history narratives.
- Latvian teachers rate studying primary sources significantly higher (M= 4.03) than other teachers. This might again be explained by the conflicting views in the society, so using primary sources can be a
rather natural approach in addressing different discourses.

- In terms of using digital materials (websites) it is generally valued similarly by all teachers. Overall, it ranks in the middle.
- The activity of students retelling and interpreting history in research activities shows the lowest occurrence in Estonia (EstEst M= 2.72) and it is significantly lower than in Latvia (both LatLat and LatRus). The highest mean (3.47) is in the answers of Latvian (LatLat) teachers. It implies that in Latvia (and also Finland) more research activities occur in comparison to Estonia.
- **Swedish and Estonian (EstEst) teachers give the least importance to ‘the students participate in role plays, debates, and group work’.** It is therefore interesting that the Estonian Russian school teachers group seem to use this method more than other teachers. Interactive methods such as these have been promoted recently, and teacher trainings have focused on using these methods. The new teaching materials could therefore take it into account to include tasks for group discussions, debates and role plays.
- **In general, use of radio and TV documentaries is not very frequent.** However, Finnish teachers rate it slightly higher than others (M= 3.31). The popularity of this method among Finnish teachers is explained by the ease of access to online audio libraries where important speeches, interviews and other pieces have been collected (the national YLE archive).
- **The method of students being informed by what was good or bad, right or wrong scores quite low** in the overall table pointing this not being a commonly used practice at schools. Providing students with given values goes against the clause in the curricula to teach about different perspectives.
- **Excursion (visits to museums) as an activity is overall not popular.** Swedish teachers rank this the lowest compared to their peers (M= 1.97) while Finnish school teachers rank it the highest (M= 2.67).
- **The last activity in terms of the overall use is students organising local projects** and this activity is the least used by all teacher groups. Project work is time-consuming to organise, which explains the rare use of this method.

What stands out is that in five cases the Swedish teachers give the least prominence to the activities while Finnish and Latvian teachers seem to concentrate more on the variety of activities.

**Method preference and use**

The teachers were asked about which methods they prefer and use. The options for both of these questions included: interactive (debates, role plays, group work); text-based (books, work sheets, work books); image-based (photos, videos, paintings); audio-based (radio programs, music); independent research based (writing an essay, paper, presentation); primary sources based (working with archive documents); out-of-school education (study programs in museums and archives, guided tours, workshops outside school); extracurricular activities (projects in school, between schools, between local community and schools, competitions, simulations).

The two questions were generally answered in similar ways. This can be seen from Figure 40.

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6 This should be approached with caution though because the answer includes three alternative methods that differ in how much time they require. Group work is easier to organise while debates and role plays take more time to prepare and carry out.
Figure 40. Comparison between the total average scores of what kind of materials and methods do you prefer and what kind of materials and methods you use.

Note. The teachers answered on scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For clarity, the figure uses the scale from 1-4.

Visual materials are preferred to text-based materials but are used less than text. Teachers would prefer out of school activities much more than they actually use them. Generally all the methods and materials are more preferred than used (with the exception of text-based materials).

The more detailed differences in answers of the teachers can be seen from Figure 41 (preference of methods and materials) and Figure 42 (use of methods and materials).

Figure 41. What kind of materials and methods for teaching do you prefer?

Note. The teachers answered from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For clarity, the figure uses the scale from 1.5-4.5.
Figure 42. What kind of materials and methods for teaching do you use?

Note. The teachers answered from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For clarity, the figure uses the scale from 1 - 4.5.

- When comparing the countries, Sweden differs from rest of the groups in four cases (interactive, visual, text-based, and extracurricular activities) from which three are significant differences (interactive is an ambiguous case) by giving less relevance to the mentioned methods and materials.
- From Figure 41, it can be seen that the most preferred method to use in teaching is image-based. However, when asked about its actual use in class, then it is less used than text-based methods. Therefore it can be said that teachers would ideally use image-based materials more and the most but in reality do not or are not able to do so. Traditionally the use of narrative and text in history lessons has been dominant and images on their own can be uninformative.
- The second most preferred method is text-based. According to the answers of the teachers, then in reality, it is used most. The answers to this question vary a lot among the countries. The highest preference is displayed by LatLat and LatRus teacher groups (M= 4.23 and 3.91) while Sweden differs as its preference for text-based materials is the lowest (M= 3.2). This shows Latvian teachers’ overall high preference for text based methods. Therefore, for most groups text-based methods are very important while the Swedish teachers display the lowest preference.
- Interactive methods rank on the third place in both preference and actual use. This method is slightly more preferred than actually used. The differences are difficult to identify and generally the teachers from all countries seem to prefer interactive methods rather often and similarly.
- In actual use of interactive methods, there are significant differences. Teachers in Estonian language schools (EstEst) and Swedish teachers use this method significantly less. Estonian teachers might regard interactive methods time consuming but the use could be increased by including more tasks in the teacher books that would suggest practical ways to engage with students.
- In both preference and use, independent research based method ranks fourth. The preference is slightly higher than actual use. Differences between the preference of this method are significant between Estonian teachers and Latvian teachers. The Estonian teachers’ preference (3.17) and use (2.72) of this method is significantly lower than Latvian teachers who show the highest preference (3.72) and use of this method (M= 3.35). It is perhaps interesting to note that in both cases the students of Estonian and Latvian schools are required to write at least one research paper during their secondary level studies.
- Out of school education method is ranked fifth in preference but seventh in actual use which can mean that teachers would like to use this method more but can’t due to lack of opportunities or
other constraints (like time, distance or lack of contact with out-of-school educators). The preference of this method does not display any significant differences in the answers. All groups seem to show a similar preference for this method. However, Swedish teachers show a bit lower interest in preference and use than the others (2.75; 2.02).

- **The preference of primary sources in class activities is placed 6th** and it is equal to the ranking when it comes to the actual use of this method. Again, the method is more preferred than used. When comparing groups, Finland differs significantly from all other country groups as the teachers evaluate this method the lowest in preference (M= 2.04) and in use (1.6).

- **Out of school education is not very popular** among teachers of the four countries.

- **Audio-based materials are not greatly preferred** as they rank only seventh in the overall method preference table. In actual use it ranks fifth. Finland ranks highest in both preference (M= 3.24) and use of audio material. In Finland, audio resources are widely available and easily accessible, which explains the relative popularity of this method among Finnish teachers.

- **Extracurricular activities are evaluated the lowest both in terms of preference (M= 2.75) and use (M= 2.13).** The Swedish teachers differ as their preference for these activities is lower. The use of this method presents a similar case.

Next, the teachers had to rank which features they consider when choosing a method (interest to students, accordance with the curriculum, innovation, ease of use, interest to the teacher, and time for preparation) from the most important to the least important.

**Overall student interest is the most important factor when choosing a method, though for Estonian and Swedish teachers the accordance to the curriculum tops the list** with student interest being the second most important. Preparation time is the least important overall, however in Estonia and Latvia teacher’s own interest is the least influential factor while it places third in both Sweden and Finland. The other factors of innovation and ease of use place in the middle for all teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>To what extent do you consider following features when choosing a method/material for teaching?</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Interest to students</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Accordance with the national curriculum</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ease of use</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Interest to me</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Time for preparation</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore, any new materials should strongly consider students’ interests and the accordance to the national curriculum. It seems that if further promotion on BSR history teaching is to be achieved, then adding BSR examples to the existing curriculum would be an effective way.

In connection to teaching methods and materials it appears that teachers tend to use a variety of methods. They tend to prefer different methods but use them to a lesser degree. Text-based materials are highly used, visual, interactive and research based methods follow with time consuming methods like excursions and local projects are less preferred. Student interest is very important for teachers when choosing a method and also the curriculum. General knowledge and understanding the processes of change are on the top of teaching aims.
Availability of equipment and sources

Availability of methods and materials

In order to find out what the new teaching materials on BSR history should be like, the teachers were inquired about teaching opportunities and obstacles they face. They were asked how often they lacked basic materials (copy paper, text books), additional materials (maps, photos and videos), clear instructions on how to use materials, technical equipment in preparing for class (printer, copier, computer, internet), about access to a library, and about funds to carry out study visits. They also had an option to add other materials they lack. Teachers could decide whether they lacked the materials never (1), rarely (2), about half of the time (3), often (4), and almost always (5). The exact overall results are ranked in Figure 43.

Figure 43. How often do you lack the following?

- When considering all the sample groups and options, it became apparent that **teachers in all countries lack funds for study visits the most** (M= 4.00). Lack of other materials and teaching options is less distinctive but differences among groups exist.
- It can be seen that Finland scores the lowest with all the options, therefore they seem to enjoy the availability of the mentioned methods and materials.
- Sweden since it has the second lowest mean for most of the options of the six groups (except for instructions where Est scores second lowest).
- However, funding seems to be a bigger issue in Estonia and Latvia when compared to Finland and Sweden. Therefore, offering paid-for trainings and visiting opportunities could motivate teachers.
- In terms of additional materials such as maps and photos, Finland again stands out positively. It differs significantly from all other groups by displaying the lowest mean (1.83) indicating the lowest lack of these materials. This seems to be the second most relevant problem in terms of lacking materials. **Therefore more photos and maps should be included in study materials in all countries and Finnish materials could be an example as teachers seem to be satisfied with the amount of extra material they have.**
• Access to a library presents a case where Finland and Latvian group significantly differ. Finnish teachers seem to be the least concerned about accessing well-equipped libraries. Teachers seem to be satisfied with the material they find in libraries. Though every school in Latvia also has a library, the low result might reflect dissatisfaction with the materials found in the libraries. Also, compared to Finland, the book markets in Latvia and Estonia are small, so the choice might be somewhat reduced. It can be assumed that for many teachers in all the groups, having access to a well-equipped library can be problematic at times. Therefore providing highly researched and inclusive teaching materials and books to Latvian and Estonian school libraries would very likely help history teachers with preparing their lessons. In Finland and Sweden the markets are more competitive, therefore in order to provide and popularise BSR related history text books and other materials, cooperation with publishers and education boards is necessary.
• Instructions for using materials do not seem to be too problematic for Finnish teachers (M= 1.71, s= 1.291). They differ significantly from other groups that display a bigger lack of instructions. It is suggested that in the Latvian and Estonian case more specific instructions for using the materials are written. Teacher books accompanying textbooks with potential study tasks would be preferred by Latvian and Estonian teachers. Overall it seems that Estonian and Latvian teachers rely more on given guidelines (the curriculum, textbooks).
• The second least problematic issue for all groups was access to technical equipment. Again, Finnish schools seem to be best equipped (M= 1. 41) and thus it differs from other groups. Latvian teachers seem to be significantly more affected by lacking technical equipment (M= 2.68) and with that result they also differ from Swedish teachers (M= 1.97) and EstEst teachers (M= 2.03) who both seem to be equally well-equipped. Therefore, it might be sensible to create teaching materials that employ several technical solutions but a material that also functions as a stand-alone textbook/workbook with options to engage the students.
• Lack of equipment seems to depend on the size of the settlement where teachers teach. The smallest localities have significantly less access to technical equipment.

In Finland and Sweden, the teachers can more easily use electronic devices to plan and carry out their lessons though it varies more in Sweden, so the teaching materials can contain more options to use these devices (internet, smart boards and computers) while in Latvia this approach might not work at all schools, as the level of available equipment is significantly lower and therefore activities might be more text-book, work-book based. Estonia presents an ambiguous case where the EstRus group seems to lack technical equipment more than the EstEst group so a mixed approach with alternate options is perhaps optimal. However, both Latvian and Estonian education authorities aim to use more digital and electronic devices and resources in the future, so these options should be further explored in terms of creating new materials.

• Lack of basic material is the least problematic issue in all countries and sub-groups. However, yet again Finnish teachers display the lowest number of lacking basic materials (M= 1.20) and they significantly differ from all other groups. EstRus, LatRus, and LatLat groups display the highest rate of lacking basic materials. In the Russian school case it might refer to the need of Russian language materials as that wish was expressed by two teachers later. Overall, however, the teachers seem rather satisfied with provision of basic materials by schools and other education authorities.
When asked to list any other sources that teachers lack, the three most frequently listed are interactive board, video and film material, and a projector. Estonian and Latvian groups list the most items, which confirm their higher need for materials and equipment.

In conclusion, Finnish teachers seem not to lack many materials and are well-equipped. They present the lowest rates in each observed case. Sweden also seems to be better off while Estonia and Latvia present more varying cases. Overall the lack of funds for study visits is the biggest obstacle for teachers while there does not seem to be a lack of basic materials.

**Technical equipment**

The teachers answered questions about how often they can use a data beamer, internet, computers for them and their students, CD-ROMs, document camera, smart board and copier (this was not asked in EstEst case). The answering options included never (1), on rare occasions (2), weekly (3) and daily (4).

The overall rankings concerning the use of different technical equipment are presented in Figure 44.

![Figure 44. How often can you use the following technical equipment for teaching?](image)

- It can be seen that the first four items are used almost at the same frequency. Therefore these items can be used weekly or more on average.
- **Computer for teachers themselves ranks the highest; it is followed by use of internet, copier and a data beamer.**
- CD-ROMs, computers for students, and document camera can be used less frequently, while smart board can be used on rare occasions or never on average in all countries and is specifically mentioned by several teachers later in the open question touching upon what resources they usually lack.
- The detailed results comparing teacher’s personal use of computers show that **Finnish and Swedish teachers have almost equally good access to a computer.** The two groups present the highest frequency of computer use among teachers and therefore these groups significantly differ from Latvian teachers with the least frequent use of personal computers. **In terms of new materials, it would**
then be reasonable to bear in mind that in Sweden and Finland, the teachers can access a computer more frequently, and that Estonia and Latvia also present rather high computer use average.

- The second very popular approach to teaching is use of internet. It is highly rated by all groups. However, LatRus group differs significantly from both Finnish and EstRus groups since it evaluates the frequency of internet use the lowest of the groups (M= 3.29) while it is the highest in EstRus (M= 3.95) and in the Finnish group (M= 3.85). LatLat is the second lowest scoring group for internet use (M= 3.61). It might point to the fact that internet use among history teachers in Latvia is less frequent than in the other three countries and new materials should take that into account.
- Copier is widely used by all groups.
- Data beamer is also quite frequently used by all teachers. However, Finnish teachers report the highest use of data beamers (M= 3.89) and it therefore differs from all other groups besides EstRus that displays the second highest use of a data beamer (M= 3.61). Both Latvian groups display the lowest use. Again, it points to Latvian schools being less equipped in comparison to others and should be taken into consideration when developing new materials.
- The access to using CD-ROMs is less frequent. This can be explained by the rather old technology as many new laptops do not support that option. It can also mean that teachers did not evaluate the access to CD-ROM but its actual use in class. It is perhaps because of these reasons why Finnish teachers that previously have reported easy and frequent access to different types of equipment now rate it the lowest of the respondent groups (M= 2.11).
- Swedish teachers seem to have the most frequent access (but perhaps not use) to CD-ROMs (M= 3.02). Finland and Estonia have the lowest access. When creating teaching materials it should be pointed out that this equipment is not very popular in Finland and Estonia but might be of use in Sweden. As both Latvian groups position in the middle but generally the equipment is not frequently used, the development of CD-ROMs in Latvia should also be cautiously approached.
- Use of the document camera is not very frequent. Finland is an exception with the highest access rate (M= 3.67). Also, Swedish teachers have a frequent access to a document camera. These two groups differ significantly from EstEst which reports the least frequent access to a document camera (M= 1.41). Therefore this method could only be used by Finnish teachers and some Swedish teachers while rest of the groups struggle with having access to a document camera.
- The least accessed equipment among the teachers is a smart board. In this case, otherwise well-equipped Finnish teachers score rather low. The overall use of the smart board is also low and no relevant differences occur so it can be said that using this device for teaching is limited at the moment, thus creating teaching materials combining the use of smart boards might not yet be plausible.
- Use of projectors depends on the size of the locality as well. Teachers in smaller localities have less frequent access to the projector.

### Use of computers

The teachers were asked about their computer use habits in regards to teaching. More specifically they answered how much they use computers for grading students, reporting homework, preparing for class, teaching a class, and communicating with students through internet (e-mails, social media). The answering options included never (1), rarely (2), about half of the time (3), often (4), and almost always (5). The detailed results are displayed in Figure 45.
• **The most frequent use of computers among all groups occurs when teachers prepare for class** \((M=4.59)\).

• The second most common occasion for computer use is for grading and homework reporting \((M=4.19)\).

• The other two options are used equally. In both class activities and communication with students the computer is used a bit less than in the other cases (both means are 3.91). Preparation for classes distinguishes the LatLat teacher group from both Estonian groups and Finland as their use of computers is significantly less frequent \((M=4.32)\) than in the other mentioned groups. Estonian and Finnish teachers display the highest use of computer when preparing classes. Therefore the use of computers for preparation is common in all countries but a bit lower in Latvia.

• When comparing the teachers’ use of computers when grading homework it becomes clear that in Latvia the use of computers for grading students and reporting homework on a computer is significantly less frequent than in other countries. Estonian teachers seem to use the computer for this purpose most frequently. It is explained by the regulation that all homework assignments and grades need to be in an online school database where both pupils and parents can access relevant information (E-school system).7

• The rate of use of e-school systems is also high in Finland and Latvia where the systems are used for marking absentees and grades. However, in more remote parts of the countries the use of e-school systems might not be that high. In Sweden 85% of the schools have an option to use the e-school system to advance communication between teachers and students, however it is not known how much the e-school system is used in reality.

• Computer use in class activities presents a similar result to previous cases of computer use. Both Latvian groups have the lowest use rate which distinguishes them from Estonian (both groups) and Finnish groups where teachers seem slightly more accustomed to computer activities during lessons. Swedish teachers also use computers in lessons significantly less than Finnish and Estonian (EstEst) teachers. Therefore, it can be assumed that teachers can access computers in Estonia and Finland quite easily and the teachers seem to take advantage of that. The access to computers during lessons is less frequent in Latvia and Sweden.

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7 It is reported that over 70 per cent of Estonia’s schools use that system, which is why this high score is not surprising. (http://e-estonia.com/components/e-school)
• Communication with students over e-mails and social networks seems quite popular (M= 3.91) though it scores the lowest in the overall purposes of using computers. Finnish, Estonian and Swedish teachers use it in similar frequency while Latvia differs significantly by presenting the lowest use of computers when communicating with students. However, as mentioned previously, for the LatLat group this activity ranks the second from the four options. It presents a similar pattern in computer use where **Latvian teachers have either less opportunity to access computers** or are not using computers for the mentioned purposes as much as their peers though all in all their computer use seems also rather frequent. Again, Finland and Estonia present a similar high use rates.

• Grading homework and communicating with students through use of computers also depends on the size of the locality where teachers work. In this respect the largest localities seem to provide better opportunities for teachers.\(^8\)

In conclusion, it can be stated that Finnish teachers have the most frequent access to technical equipment and use computer for different teaching activities quite often as well. Swedish teachers also have a good access to technical equipment but tend to use computer for class activities less. Estonian teachers have less access to technical equipment but still tend to use the computer more frequently than Swedish and Latvian teachers for different activities. Latvian teachers are in terms of equipment and computer use the least privileged.

### Teaching BSR history

#### Periods when BSR history is mentioned

**Figure 46.** Mark the periods where you talk about BSR history in your classes

![Figure 46](image)

**Note.** The figure represents the percentage of teachers dealing with BSR topics within the suggested historical periods.

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\(^8\) One way ANOVA was used to test the groups (from different size of localities) against the frequency of computer use
From Figure 46 it can be seen that **BSR is talked about in relation to all periods. However, in relation to Prehistoric times, BSR is less mentioned. Also, Swedish teachers seem to share less opportunity or interest to talk about BSR within all periods except perhaps the Early Modern times.** This can be explained by the Swedish Empire’s dominance during that time.

- The period where BSR is mentioned most is Early Modern Era (the Swedish power period). Middle Ages, Modern and Contemporary history follow closely (all with above 88% teachers talking about the region). Teachers are slightly less likely to mention BSR during Prehistory (63.5% teachers claim they mention the region).

All teachers were asked about the reasons for not teaching BSR history in their classes. The question was posed in a negative way to have clear reasons why this might be so. It was assumed that the topic was not that widely presented in history lessons and therefore the answers can offer a bit more negative view of the situation. However, the options included ‘I have no time for BSR history; ‘there are no materials for BSR history; ‘my students are not interested in BSR history; ‘I am not interested in BSR history; ‘BSR history is not a part of the national exam; ‘BSR is not a priority in history lessons’. The answer options included ‘not at all’ (1); ‘little’ (2); ‘somewhat’ (3); ‘a lot’ (4); and ‘very much’ (5). The results are shown in Figure 47.

**Figure 47.** To what extent are these the reasons for not teaching BSR history?

- **The overall low scores indicate that the mentioned reasons do not play a big part in not approaching the topic. It can be assumed that generally teachers do talk about neighbouring countries.** It can also mean that the topic of the survey might have influenced teachers to be more positive.
- Figure 47 includes the scores that do not significantly differ, which means that teachers in different countries view these reasons in similar ways. Therefore, **there is no highly significant reason that prevents teachers from discussing BSR history in lessons.**
However, reasons that influence some of the teachers are discussed below. Also, the mean scores are generally low which means that teachers are interested in teaching BSR history.

- The lack of time is the most frequent problem why BSR topics are not approached while it is closely followed by BSR not being a priority in history lessons; and lack of materials.
- Students’ and teachers’ personal interest and the topic not being in the national exam do not seem to be reasons why BSR history is not taught.

It can be thus stated that according to the respondents there is both student and teacher interest in dealing with BSR history in lessons.

Interest in new BSR history materials

When asked whether the teachers would consider new teaching materials on BSR history if offered, the majority (95.1% or 274 respondents) answered ‘yes’. In Estonia, Finland there were two teachers and in Latvia three teachers per group who responded negatively, thus the interest in new BSR materials seems to be high. In Sweden, there are fewer teachers interested in new materials with seven teachers out of 64 responding negatively.

Therefore, the teachers mention BSR quite frequently in their lessons when talking about different historical periods. In connection to early modern history the BSR is mentioned the most, the least during prehistory (still over 60% of the teachers mention it). There is both the teacher’s interest in new BSR related materials and they believe that students are also interested in the region’s history.

Conclusion

Teacher plan

In all four countries curriculum suggested courses dominate. The currently existing compulsory and optional courses should be approached to integrate BSR topics. It is also an option in Estonia to create an optional 35-hour course and also in Finland history teachers have the authority to provide regional history courses when there is enough student and school interest.

In most schools, except Latvia, most teachers say they write their own teacher plan. In Latvia, the teachers refer to the state when writing the teacher plan. In the Finnish case, the school seems to be an important influence and to a lesser degree the same is true in Estonia. In general, the teachers write the plans themselves but often rely on the state programme (in all countries), and the school (in Finland and Estonia). The least common option is to write the plan together with a colleague.

In total (considering all the country groups together), the highest rated influence on putting together a teacher plan is existing methods and materials followed by textbooks and student interest, and the lowest rated is colleagues’ suggestions. Students’ interest is taken into account more than teachers’ own interest. Profile of the school matters more in Estonia. Books and existing materials matter much less for Swedish teachers when writing a course plan. In Finland, the municipality also plays a significant role when compiling history courses.
Methods and materials

The most important goal overall is that students acquire knowledge about the main facts and have a general understanding of history. Using history to explain the situation in the world today and to find out the tendencies of change; imagining what it felt like in the past taking different viewpoints into account where the next two most important aims stated by the teachers. The least important aim for students is to value the preservation of relics and old buildings. These aims were valued quite similarly by all teachers.

‘Students listening to teacher’s explanations of the past’ scores the highest as the most used activity in lessons. Using textbook and worksheets is also very prominent. Methods like excursions (visits to museums) and organising local projects are not used often because these are time-consuming. What stands out is that in five cases the Swedish teachers give the least prominence to the activities while Finnish and Latvian teachers seem to concentrate more on the variety of activities. Teachers prefer and use visual, text-based, interactive and research activities the most while audio material, primary sources, out-of school and extra-curricular activities are used much less. All methods and materials are preferred more than they are used, except text-based. Latvian and Finnish teachers seem to be more inclined to use these types of materials however the differences are not big. To add, there seems to be no significant link between longer teacher experience leading to preferring and using more interactive methods (visuals, research, and group work). Therefore teacher experience does not seem to affect how much interactive methods are preferred and used.9

Availability of methods and materials

Finnish teachers have the most frequent access to technical equipment and use computer for different teaching activities quite often as well. Swedish teachers also have a good access to technical equipment but tend to use computer for class activities less. Estonian teachers have less access to technical equipment but still tend to use the computer more frequently than Swedish and Latvian teachers for different activities. Latvian teachers are in terms of equipment and computer use the least privileged. Therefore, when new materials are developed different approaches should be used so that activities requiring technical equipment and also more traditional approach of text-based materials are included.

Interest in BSR history and materials

In general, it seems that the majority of teachers talk about BSR in their classes when addressing different historical periods. This is a bit less so with Swedish teachers who also express less interest in new BSR history materials. However, over 90% of the respondents are interested in using new BSR related materials.

Limitations

The respondents represent about 30 per cent of the teachers that were invited to participate which can mean that teachers who were negatively inclined from the beginning did not make the effort to answer to the survey questions. Thus more negative attitudes might be missing from this analysis.

9 One-way ANOVA test was performed where teachers were divided into 4 groups according to their teaching experience (1-10 years; 11-20 years; 21-30 years; and 30+ years) and there were no significant differences when it came to using visuals, research based materials, group work and debate activities.
References


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Taylor & Young (2003). The teacher of history.


Annexes

Annex 1. Conclusions and suggestions by country

Estonia

Conclusions

• Following the syllabus is very important for Estonian history teachers;
• Also, the profile of the school is more relevant than in other countries
• Visuals are preferred and variety in methods as well
• Internet is highly used when preparing classes and also grading;
• Other technical equipment is less available
• Teachers seem to feel lack of clear instructions on how to use materials
• The majority (around 90%) of teachers do mention BSR during different historical eras already
• There is high interest in new BSR related materials if offered

Suggestions

• BSR optional 35-hour course could be created if materials were engaging and well-researched
• BSR topics can be included within the current syllabi as well, however there needs to be pre-existing supporting material, therefore previously written text-books should be reviewed for the content
• Illustrative and easily accessed history materials are highly preferred, and teachers would like to use variety of teaching tools in classrooms thus this should be considered
• Developing different student skills should also be taken into account
• Trainings for teachers and exchange projects for students are good motivators to focus on BSR history more
• Although the availability of technical equipment varies from school to school, it should be kept in mind that digitalising materials and using technology in classes is an education policy priority in Estonia

Finland

Conclusions

• Teachers prefer visuals (either online or DVDs), and a variety of teaching instruments
• Online resources (audio, video, archives) are highly used and easily accessed
• The schools are technically well equipped and there is frequent access to internet
• Finnish teachers seem to use more audio resources than others
• Around 80% of teachers already mention the region when talking about different historical periods (except prehistory where it is around 70%)
• The majority of teachers are interested in BSR related materials if offered

Suggestions

• BSR topics can be fitted into the current syllabus (two courses provide that opportunity)
• The teachers have a lot of freedom when teaching thus they can create optional courses on BSR history if there is enough student, school and municipality interest
• Co-operation with publishers, book authors is necessary to create well-researched and interactive materials
• Study visits could also motivate teachers further
• Creating online, digital material in Finnish is suggested as there are opportunities to use internet rather frequently
Latvia

Conclusions

- Interest of students is very important for teachers
- The syllabus is also an important pointer for the teachers
- Teachers prefer skills-related approaches and materials
- Teachers like various methods, especially visuals but also text and research based teaching instruments
- Internet is quite widely used for preparing and conducting lessons, however other technical equipment is less frequently available
- The majority of teachers are positively minded about using new BSR related materials when offered
- The majority of teachers (around 90%) also mention BSR when talking about different historical eras (except when talking about prehistory, then it is about 70% of the teachers)

Suggestions

- As Latvian teachers like their activities to comply with the syllabus and sample programmes, it is suggested that a sample programme concerning BSR history topics is created so teachers could easily write their plans and include BSR history when talking about different topics mentioned in the syllabus
- The teachers also seem to lack and like methodological material (instructions) to conduct activities in class with students
- Teacher trainings and study visits which teachers are often not able to attend due to financial limits, would provide them with stronger motivation to participate
- Creating online, digital material in Latvian is suggested as there are opportunities to use internet rather frequently; it is also an education policy priority in Latvia

Sweden

Conclusions

- Swedish history teachers prefer image-based materials but also other types of materials and teaching instruments have potential to be used
- Internet and text-based methods are also popular
- Time consuming activities are less preferred
- Internet and technical equipment is widely used
- BSR is mainly mentioned when talking about Early Modern and Modern era (due to the Swedish power period during that time 70-80% of teachers mention BSR), during other eras the region is mentioned less, especially few mentions occur when Prehistory is talked about (around 30% of teachers)
- The majority of the respondents show a willingness to use new BSR related materials when offered

Suggestions

- Following the syllabus is very important for the teachers so providing teachers with concrete examples how BSR history fits in with the currently used syllabus is very important
- This should be supported by existing/ creating material
- Teacher interest is very important so increasing teachers' knowledge through trainings and study visits would encourage them to focus more on BSR history
- Creating online, digital material in Swedish is suggested as there are opportunities to use internet and different technical equipment rather frequently
Annex 2. The questionnaire

Name of the school(s) where you teach
The name of your school will not be used in the analysis. It is used for tracking the response rate. If you write the name of your school, you will not receive a reminder.

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

History lessons
1) How many courses of history do you teach in high school?
Mark a whole number

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2) What are the names of high school history courses that you teach?
Enlist all courses separating them by semicolon (;).

3) Are history lessons you teach in high school...
Select all that apply
[ ] ..compulsory?
[ ] ..optional?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Your teacher plan
4) Who created the teacher plan/program you use?
Select all that apply
[ ] Myself
[ ] A colleague
[ ] The school
[ ] The state
[ ] Other (specify)

5) To what extent do you consider the following when preparing for your teacher plan?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very much</th>
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<tr>
<td>The text book(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colleague(s) suggestions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Existing materials/methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest of students</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>My interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Profile of the school in which I teach</td>
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</table>
6) **To which extent do you concentrate on the following aims of learning in teaching history? (Rank from most important 1 to least important 9)**

- ____ I want my students to acquire knowledge about the main facts and general understanding of history
- ____ I want them to judge historical events according to the standards of human and civil rights
- ____ I want them to imagine what it felt like in the past taking different viewpoints into account
- ____ I want them to understand the behaviour of past persons by reconstructing the special situations and contemporary thoughts of the period when they lived (empathy)
- ____ I want them to use history to explain the situation in the world today and to find out the tendencies of change
- ____ I want them to acknowledge the traditions, characteristics, values and narrative of our nation and society
- ____ I want them to value the preservation of historical remains and old buildings
- ____ I want them to be fascinated and have fun dealing with history
- ____ I want them to internalise basic democratic values

What other aims do you concentrate in your teaching?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History lessons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7) <strong>In the past year, how often has the following happened in your history class?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>About half of the time</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The students listen to my explanations about the past</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<tr>
<td>The students are informed what was good or bad, right or wrong</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The students discuss different explanations of historical events</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<tr>
<td>The students study original sources of history (e.g., documents, archives, photos, videos or audio material)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<tr>
<td>The students retell and interpret the history based on their viewpoint and arguments in essay and research activities</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The students listen to radio programs or watch TV documentaries</td>
<td>(</td>
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<tr>
<td>The students use the textbook and/or worksheets</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The students visit museums and historical sites</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<tr>
<td>The students organize local projects</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<tr>
<td>The students participate in role plays, debates, group work</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
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<tr>
<td>The students use digital material (e.g., websites, e-books, online databases, computer programs)</td>
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<td>(</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8) **What kind of materials and methods for teaching do you prefer?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactive (debates, role plays, working in groups)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text-based (text books, working sheets, workbooks)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image-based (photos, paintings, videos)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-based (radio programs, music)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent research based (writing an essay, paper, presentation)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary sources-based (working with archive documents)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of school education (study program in museums and archives, guided tours, workshops outside school)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular activities (projects in school, between schools, between local communities and school, competition, simulations)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9) **What kind of materials and methods for teaching do you use?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>About half of the time</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactive (debates, role plays, working in groups)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text-based (text books, working sheets, workbooks)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image-based (photos, paintings, videos)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-based (radio programs, music)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent research based (writing an essay, paper, presentation)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary sources-based (working with archive documents)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of school education (study program in museums and archives, guided tours, workshops outside school)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular activities (projects in school, between schools, between local communities and school, competition, simulations)</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10) **To what extent do you consider following features when choosing a method/material for teaching?**

- Ease of use
- Time for preparation
- Interest to students
- Interest to me
- Accordance with the national curriculum
- Innovation
11) **How often do you lack the following when preparing for your classes?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic materials (copy paper)</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>About half of the time</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional materials (maps, photos, videos)</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear instructions on how to use materials</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical equipment in preparing for class (printer, copy machine, computer, internet)</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to a well-equipped library</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds to carry out study visits</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide other examples of the materials you lack...

12) **How often can you use the following technical equipment for teaching?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data beamer</th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>On rare occasions</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer for myself</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers for all students</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD-ROM</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document camera</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart board</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copier</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13) **How much do you usually use computer in your work for the following purposes?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading students, reporting homework</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>About half of the time</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparing for class</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching a class</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating with students through internet (e-mails, social media)</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14) **Name 3-5 of your favourite information sources when preparing for lessons (books, databases, internet pages, audio or video library, primary material, map collections, picture-photo sources)**

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Baltic Sea History

15) **Mark the periods where you talk about BSR history in your classes**

By Baltic Sea Region, we mean countries around the Baltic Sea other than your own. Countries around the Baltic Sea are: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and Sweden.

- [ ] Prehistory
- [ ] Middle ages
- [ ] Swedish era (early modern era)
- [ ] Modern era
- [ ] Contemporary history

16) **To what extent are these the reasons for not teaching BSR history?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have no time for BSR history</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are no materials for BSR history</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My students are not interested in BSR history</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not interested in BSR history</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSR history is not in the national exam</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSR is not a priority in history lessons</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>(</td>
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<td>(</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17) **What (if any) are other reasons for not teaching BSR history?**

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

18) Would you consider using new material about the history in the Baltic Sea Region from the perspective of regional cohesion and togetherness if it was offered to you?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No

About you

19) **Are you**

- ( ) female?
- ( ) male?

20) **How big is the settlement you work in?**

Please pick the option(s) that best represents your hometown or village

- [ ] Up to 1000 inhabitants
- [ ] 1001 – 10 000 inhabitants
- [ ] 10 001 – 100 000 inhabitants
- [ ] 100 001 – 1 000 000 inhabitants
- [ ] More than 1 000 000 inhabitants
21) **What is your language of instruction?**

*Select all options that apply*

- [ ] Estonian, Finnish, Latvian, Swedish
- [ ] Russian, Swedish
- [ ] Other (specify)

22) **How many years have you been teaching history altogether?**

....................................................................................................................................................

23) **Where did you obtain your history teacher qualifications?**

*Please write the name of the university and country*

....................................................................................................................................................

Thank You!

Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us.
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