

Instruction for students

Read the excerpt from an online article and answer the questions below.

Celebrating March 11: unique Lithuanian patriotism by Jurga Tvaskiene

March 12, 2018

The Lithuanian people view themselves as patriots, are particularly proud of their forefathers' land and its rich history, public opinion researchers say. However we have certain unique features which make Lithuanian patriotism unique even compared to neighbouring countries'. [...]

"It is obvious: when asked if they are proud to be Lithuanian, whether they are proud of Lithuania, the absolute majority respond positively. People care about their homeland, the land of their forefathers, its history, its language. But questions about state government and politicians are a wholly other matter. The impression arises that Lithuania is as if some sort of dish, whose content is good, but the government is not appealing. These poles are greatly separated," public opinion and market research company Vilmorus head Vldas Gaidys told Delfi.

According to him, in this respect, the Lithuanian public differs from those of the other Baltics.

"Say in Estonia, the Protestant sphere, the position is held more that if you see evil, you have to report it and fight against it, call on someone, write petitions. If I'm not doing that – why talk about it. There is a greater moment of civic-mindedness, based on active efforts," he said.

Complaining – a sign of good tone

When asked why our neighbours view their own and their country's future more positively than Lithuanians, V. Gaidys mused that this is also due to cultural differences.

"Say in Estonia, lack of self-confidence, negative views of one's own country is hardly possible because it is unfitting to be a loser in the Protestant cultural area. In Catholic Lithuania, complaining is perhaps even a sign of a good tone," the sociologist said. [...]

Speaking of Lithuanian inter-war patriotism, he pointed out dedicated belief in Lithuania, the Homeland, symbolism. The sociologist believes that patriotism was also maintained by external pressures – the conflict with Poland, the slogans of "We won't rest without Vilnius" and other circumstances. Pride in very successful state building of the young country, where the results were evident also contributed to it.

"We can see from various sources that inter-war Lithuanian residents valued the independent state they created, the feeling of pride was also encouraged by what was achieved over just 20 years, performed with the blooming of latent enthusiasm in literature, architecture and industry. It is hard to believe even now that so much was achieved over so little time. After all, from 1918 to 1938 Lithuania changed unrecognisably, became a European state," V. Gaidys spoke.

According to him, if you directly ask contemporary citizens, what can be prided of in Lithuania, they will mention historical facts, sports achievements.

"However from various research I can see that pride is increasing in more global matters, high technologies. It is almost stereotypical to say that Lithuania is a "country of lasers", a perception is arising of Lithuania as a



developer of information technologies, there is talk about the fastest internet and such. In other words, the symbolism of the country for Lithuanians is no longer just zeppelins, with particularly the younger generation finding other metrics important," the sociologist noted. [...]

Source: <https://lithuaniantribune.com/celebrating-march-11-unique-lithuanian-patriotism/>

1. What are the Lithuanians proud of in terms of their country?

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2. What are the unique features of Lithuanian patriotism in comparison to patriotism in neighbouring countries?

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3. What is the source of differences between Lithuanians and Estonians in terms of their attitudes?

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4. What were the key pillars of Lithuanian patriotism in the inter-war times?

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5. How do young Lithuanians perceive their country?

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