

## Evaluation and analysis of personality traits of Latvian and Bulgarian inhabitants

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### ABSTRACT

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The article analyses the aspects of personality traits as well as their role in the choice of one's employment, field of work, and a career. The theoretical framework is based on the theories of different authors who have studied individual's adaptation skills to the surrounding world and the work environment, and the decision-making aspects in the process of choosing a career depending on human nature, character, temperament, and other personality traits. The topicality of the study is based on the idea that attitudes, views, values, and lifestyles differ for various social and ethnic groups as well as for different nations and religions. Therefore, the personality characteristics of the inhabitants of Latvia and Bulgaria in different regions aged 19 to 64 were studied and compared during the survey. The study was organized with the aim to assess the personal characteristics of respondents in two countries and their impact on their career choices.

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**Keywords:** Personality traits, Occupation, Profession, Culture

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### 1. Introduction

The personality characteristics can be associated with all forms of expression in a multicultural context. It can also be argued that the content of the social component in the given study comprises: (1) self-actualization of the population in the environment; (2) people's sense of self-confidence, responsibility and positive emotional attitude towards their career choices; (3) personal understanding of the importance of social status. Therefore, the following research questions were raised: (1) What characteristics of female and male gender in Latvia and Bulgaria are common and which are different? (2) Are there any statistically significant differences for the influence of personality characteristics on the career choices of the Latvian and Bulgarian population?

### 2. Social aspects of the topicality of the research

The social sphere of the research includes questions related to the level of expressiveness of the personality characteristics of the Latvian and Bulgarian people in relation to the type of occupation, education, and social status at the present moment. In this context, emphasis should be placed on the content of the cultural segment in the research based on the cultural environment that influences people's behavior in different situations. The meaning of the term culture has been defined by many authors. In various fields of science, the term containing

the word culture was used in the following context: technical, forest, educational, agricultural and others. In everyday consciousness, culture is understood as a set of standards of human behavior, human education, also as etiquette and a sign of the presence of holiness. The definition of a cultural group is often determined by the different identity markers within these groups – ethnicity, social class, religion, etc. [1] [2].

Thus, the degree of inclusion of Bulgarian and Latvian residents and their socialization in a particular cultural group is important for understanding and explaining the impact of personality characteristics on career choices and occupation. Several researchers [3][2] view the social environment as a decisive educational factor in human personality development. They explore human potential in the social environment, relating it to the family and work environment (for school learners it is primary school), nation, culture, and history. Thus, one can assume that human personality is not influenced by the environment, but by the means of culture, history, education, and socialization in certain environment in order to foster one's self-actualization.

The personality development process, which is focused on the development of behavior and perception, is related to the traditional behaviors typical of men and women. Human behavior to a large extent is formed by positive and negative reinforcements coming from the external environment. In this regard, the present study is focused on personality traits of women and men. According to the theory of new gender psychology [4] [5] biological sex (chromosomal and hormonal) can only help to determine person's potential behavior. In this context, it is accepted that human biology clearly defines social roles, psychological characteristics, spheres of activity, etc. of men and women [6] [7].

Many contemporary scientists in their research on gender proceed not only with the analysis of differences in statuses, roles and other aspects of lives of men and women, but also focus on the analysis of power and domination in the society practiced through gender roles and relationships [8] [9].

Gender does not involve only social but also a culturally symbolic interpretation. In every society, people perceive some positions, behavior patterns, and clothing items to be feminine and others – masculine. However, different social definitions have been adopted in different parts of the world [10]. In this context, it is also necessary to recognize the motivational aspects [11] that contribute to people's behavior, attitudes, etc., which underpin future actions and growth. It can be admitted that motivation is formed by various factors: attitudes of the surrounding community, upbringing, teaching, and work. Cognitive learning is always developing alongside motivation. Hence, this aspect is also addressed in this study, as personality characteristics can sometimes contribute to person's needs becoming a trigger to a direct action.

The type of study is non-experimental and takes place in real-world environments. In the course of the research, a questionnaire survey of respondents was conducted. A random sampling was used to select respondents for the survey, which made it possible to generalize the results for the whole population. The study used a written population survey to obtain data from a large number of respondents. In the design structure of the empirical research, the authors used the tool that was developed for the study of personality traits of Latvian women and men: a standardized Bulgarian language survey that was adapted based on the survey developed by T. Leary, G. Leforge, R. Sazek [11] on domination and obedience, which play an important role in decision-making based on one's own opinion or on the views of others. The same questionnaire was used in the previous study in 2018-2019 that was carried out in Latvia [12]. The data obtained in this study were quantitative (textual data). The structure of the questionnaire included socio-demographic information (age, gender, country, region) and socio-economic status (occupation, type of employment, employment in the labor market). The methodology included instructions, a response form, and recommendations for processing and interpreting the results. The survey includes 128 statements.

Based on personality traits and their degree of expression, personality types such as authoritarian type, egotistical type, aggressive type, suspicious type, submissive type, dependent type, friendly type, altruistic type were also identified. However, in the context of this study, more attention has been paid to the ability of respondents to choose their careers according to individual personality characteristics and gender.

The respondents from different regions of Bulgaria participated in the survey. The distance between the researchers from both countries was covered in a face-to-face format due to a successful collaboration with the

partner university – St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Turnovo. Data processing was performed by the use of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) version 20.0 of data processing software.

The methods of the statistical analysis used for this study were: Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for testing the reliability and coherence of all indicators. The distribution of quantifiable features is determined by the criteria used to compare the level of these features in independent samples (study groups). The distribution of the personality trait does not differ significantly from the normal, therefore the parametric criterion of Student's distribution values (t-test) was used for the purpose of this study. Univariate analysis of variance ANOVA, descriptive statistics, was used to compare the mean of the measurable trait in more than two independent samples. The next section presents the results of the study. The next section discusses the choice of methodology in the context of the research topic.

### 3. Results and discussion

The survey comprises 266 people from different regions / professions (N = 266) in Bulgaria: 136 women (n = 136) and 130 men (n = 130). Age range is from 19 to 64 years (Table 1).

Table 1. Occupation: Gender crosstabulation

Occupation	Female (n)	Male (n)	Total (n)
Group 1	33	29	62
Group 2	47	32	79
Group 3	18	11	29
Group 4	23	47	70
Group 5	15	11	26
Total (n)	136	130	266

Similarly, to residents of Latvia, respondents were differentiated into groups according to their type of occupation:

Group 1 (N = 62; 33 women and 29 men): teachers, IT specialists, civil servants in the state sector, coaches, sportsmen (football players), sailors, piano turners, nurses, bookkeepers;

Group 2 (N = 79; 47 women and 32 men): school learners, students;

Group 3 (N = 29; 18 females and 11 males): soldiers, unemployed, housewives, retired people;

Group 4 (N = 70; 23 females and 47 males): janitors, builders, cooks, kitchen workers, confectioners, sellers, builders, bartenders, welders, nannies, car mechanics, carpenters, technicians;

Group 5 (N = 26; 15 women and 11 men): heads of institution, managers, administrative managers, general managers, private companies, educational specialists, bank managers, project coordinators, entrepreneurs.

According to ANOVA, Occupation has a statistically significant effect on Domination, both in Latvia and Bulgaria. The smallest average Domination is in group 3, however, according to the Student's criterion, there are no statistically significant differences between the average values of Domination among the respondents from different countries in this group. In group 1 and group 5 the average Domination is higher among the respondents from Bulgaria, and these differences are statistically significant. In group 2 the average Domination value is higher among the respondents from Latvia and these differences are also statistically significant (Table 2, Table 3, Fig. 1).

Table 2. The results of one-way analysis of variance when comparing the average values of Domination, Submission, and Altruism in the groups formed depending on the field of work of respondents in Latvia and Bulgaria

Country	Personality traits	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Latvia	Domination	89.144	4	22.286	5.441	.000
	Submission	7.251	4	1.813	.398	.810

	Altruism	83.379	4	20.845	1.716	.147
Bulgaria	Domination	249.086	4	62.271	17.984	.000
	Submission	35.838	4	8.959	2.484	.044
	Altruism	35.494	4	8.874	.814	.517

Table 3. Results of the Independent Sample Test when comparing the average values of Domination, Submission, Altruism among the respondents from Latvia and Bulgaria in groups formed according to their field of work

Occupation	Personality traits	Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Group 1	Domination	.004	.949	-4.545	123	.000
	Submission	1.376	.243	-1.354	123	.178
	Altruism	.007	.935	-.321	123	.749
Group 2	Domination	4.217	.042	2.104	141	.037
	Submission	.105	.747	-1.933	141	.050
	Altruism	.221	.639	-1.551	141	.123
Group 3	Domination	.482	.490	-.624	68	.535
	Submission	.062	.804	-2.061	68	.043
	Altruism	.232	.631	.026	68	.979
Group 4	Domination	.037	.847	.101	110	.920
	Submission	9.794	.002	-1.121	110	.265
	Altruism	.421	.518	-1.860	110	.066
Group 5	Domination	.007	.933	-2.083	52	.042
	Submission	5.864	.019	.802	52	.426
	Altruism	.757	.388	-.165	52	.869

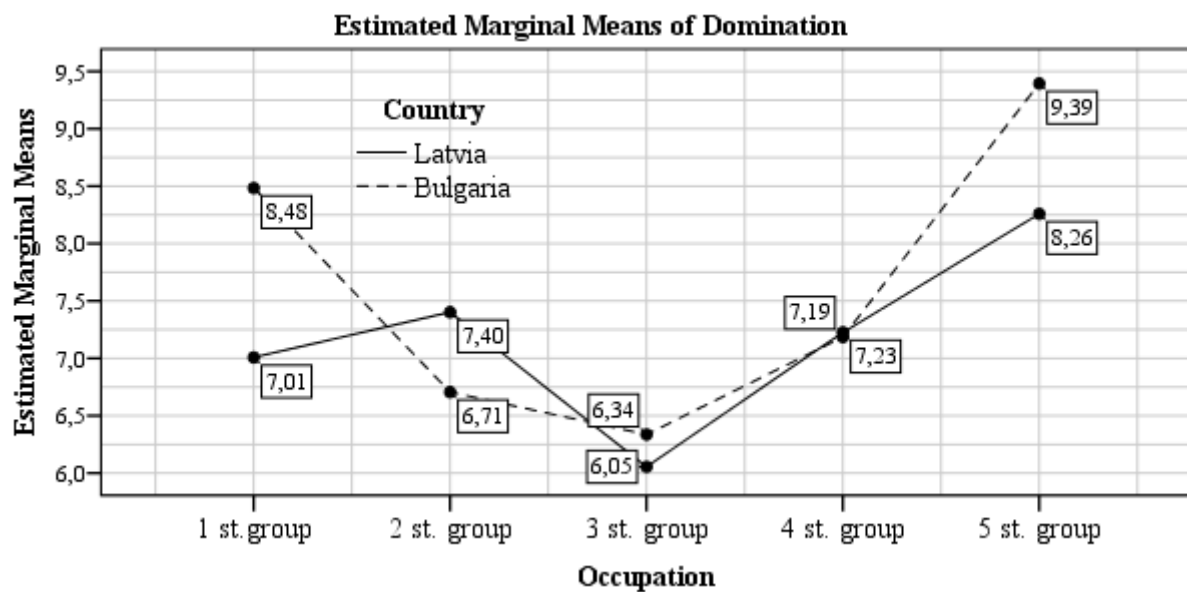


Figure 1. Domination average for respondents from Latvia and Bulgaria, grouped according to their field of work

According to ANOVA, Occupation has a statistically significant effect on Submission only in Bulgaria.

In group 3 the average value of Submission is higher than in other groups in Bulgaria, and, according to the Student criterion, higher than in the corresponding group in Latvia. In groups 1, 2, and 4, the average Submission value is also higher among the respondents from Bulgaria, and in group 5, this indicator is higher among the respondents from Latvia, but these differences are not statistically significant (Table 2, Table 3, Fig. 2).

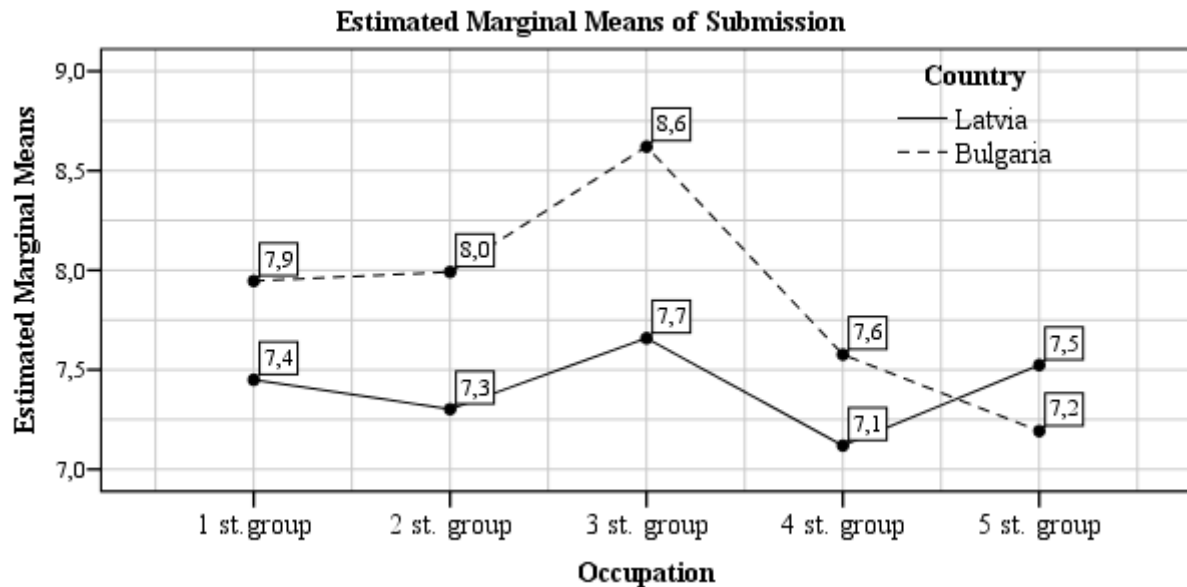


Figure 2. Submission averages for the respondents from Latvia and Bulgaria, grouped according to the field of work

According to ANOVA, Occupation has no statistically significant effect on Altruism in Latvia or Bulgaria. In all groups formed depending on Occupation, the average value of Altruism in Bulgaria is not lower than in Latvia, but according to the Student criterion, these differences are not statistically significant (Table 2, Table 3, Fig. 3).

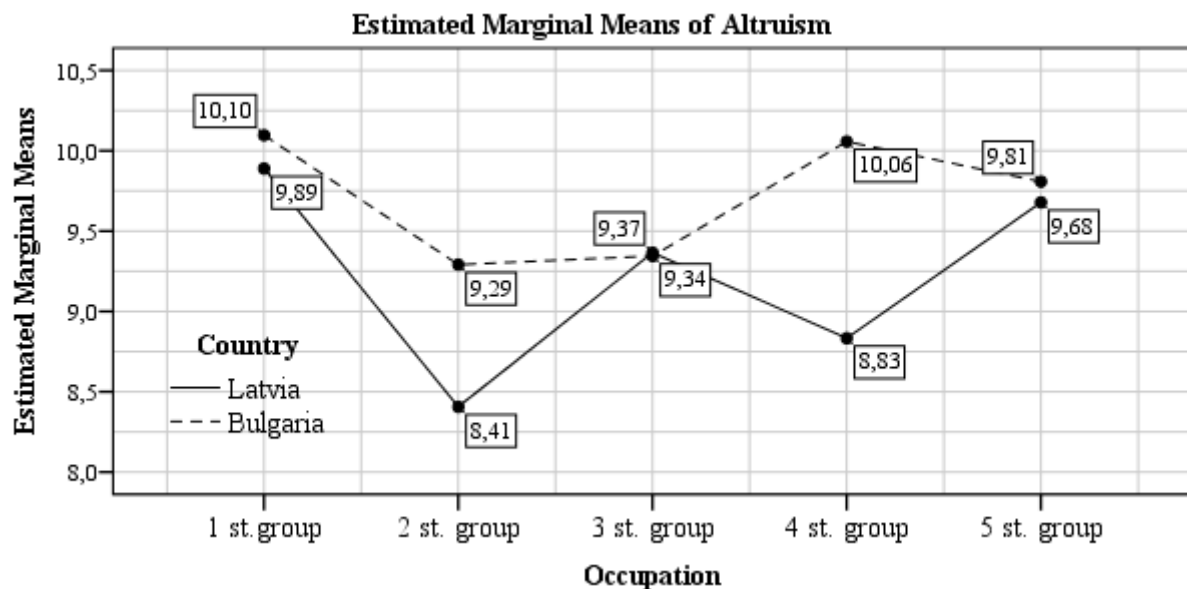


Figure 3. Average measurement of Altruism for the respondents from Latvia and Bulgaria, according their field of work

In group 3 between men and women from Latvia there are no statistically significant differences. In this group, the dominance among women is even higher than among men, although the differences do not reach a statistically significant value.

In Bulgaria, men from this group as well as from others, have a higher level of dominance, they have significantly higher average values as compared with women on such scales as a Tendency towards leadership - dominance - despotism and Confidence about oneself – self -confidence - self - indulgence, and a lower level of submission. The average values on such scales as Leniency - meekness - passive listening and Trustworthiness - obedience - dependency are significantly higher for women (Table 4, Fig. 4).

Table 4. Results of the t-test criterion when comparing average values of scales representing interpersonal relationships among the respondents of different sexes in Latvia and Bulgaria (group 3)

Country	Scale	Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Latvia	Tendency towards leadership - dominance	3.995	.053	1.440	39	.158
	Confidence about oneself - self-confidence - self-indulgence	1.214	.277	-.294	39	.770
	Demanding - disappointment - cruelty	1.749	.194	1.788	39	.082
	Skeptical - tolerance - negativity	1.048	.312	1.728	39	.092
	Leniency - meekness - passive listening	21.100	.000	1.353	39	.184
	Trustworthiness - obedience - dependency	.459	.502	-.215	39	.831
	Goodness -uncertainty - excessive conformism	.169	.683	-.443	39	.660
	Responsiveness - selflessness	.022	.883	.708	39	.483
Bulgaria	Tendency towards leadership - dominance - despotisms	.561	.460	-3.362	27	.002
	Confidence about oneself - self-confidence - self-indulgence	.150	.702	-3.627	27	.001
	Demanding - disappointment - cruelty	.018	.894	-.681	27	.501
	Skeptical - tolerance - negativity	.567	.458	-.436	27	.666
	Leniency - meekness - passive listening	.189	.667	2.388	27	.024
	Trustworthiness - obedience - dependency	9.462	.005	2.516	27	.018
	Goodness -uncertainty - excessive conformism	1.566	.222	-.326	27	.747
	Responsiveness - selflessness	1.418	.244	-.250	27	.804

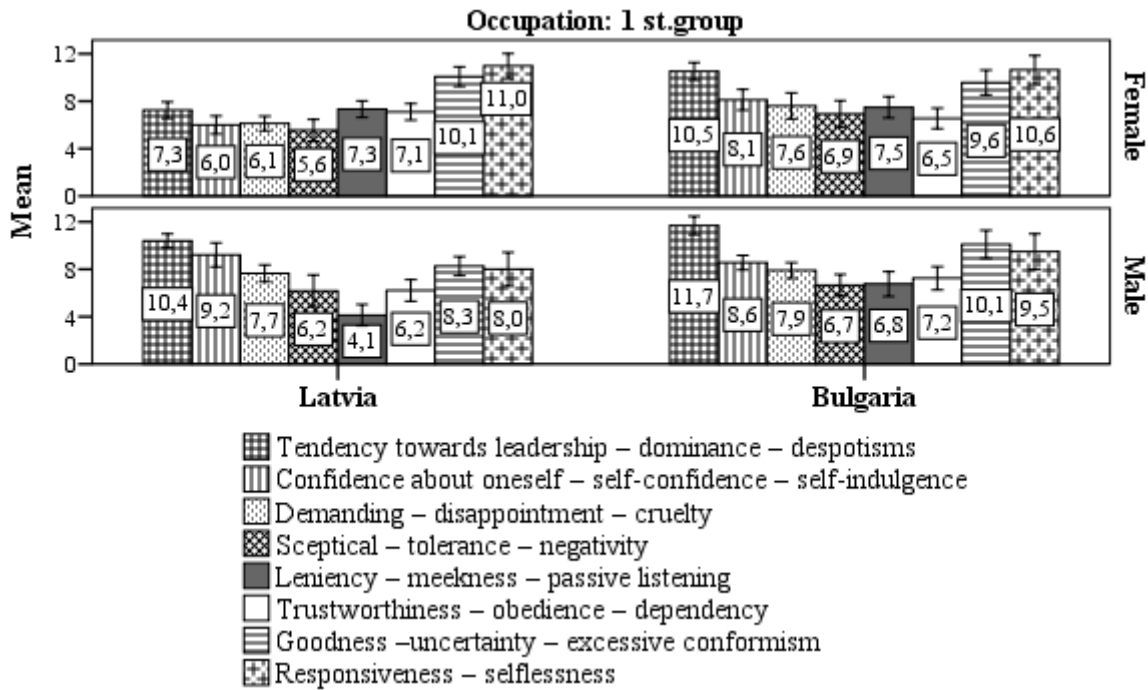


Figure 4. The average values of scales representing interpersonal relationships in group 3, allocated according to their field of work, among the respondents of different genders from Latvia and Bulgaria

Latvian women differ from the Bulgarian women with a higher level of Tendency towards leadership - dominance - despotisms and lower average values on such scales as Leniency - meekness - passive listening, Trustworthiness - obedience - dependency. The indicators for the Latvian men in this group are significantly lower than for the Bulgarian men, the average indicators on such scales as: Confidence about oneself – self-confidence – self-indulgence, Demanding - disappointment - cruelty, Sceptical - tolerance - negativity (Table 5, Figure 4)

Table 5. The results of the t-test criterion when comparing the average values of scales representing interpersonal relationships among the respondents from Latvia and Bulgaria, in groups of respondents of different genders (group 3)

Gender	Scale	Levine’s Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Female	Tendency towards leadership - dominance - despotisms	5.059	.031	2.496	36	.017
	Confidence about oneself - self-confidence - self-indulgence	1.790	.189	1.184	36	.244
	Demanding - disappointment - cruelty	.154	.697	.274	36	.786
	Sceptical - tolerance - negativity	.880	.354	-.499	36	.621
	Leniency - meekness - passive listening	7.488	.010	-2.290	36	.028
	Trustworthiness - obedience - dependency	7.427	.010	-2.620	36	.013
	Goodness -uncertainty - excessive conformism	.354	.556	-.103	36	.919
	Responsiveness - selflessness	.981	.328	.513	36	.611
Male	Tendency towards leadership - dominance - despotisms	.259	.614	-1.806	30	.081

Confidence about oneself - self-confidence - self-indulgence	.326	.572	-1.961	30	.050
Demanding - disappointment - cruelty	2.962	.096	-2.202	30	.035
Skeptical - tolerance - negativity	.717	.404	-2.362	30	.025
Leniency - meekness - passive listening	1.309	.262	-2.244	30	.055
Trustworthiness - obedience - dependency	.750	.393	.238	30	.813
Goodness -uncertainty - excessive conformism	1.291	.265	-.036	30	.972
Responsiveness - selflessness	.133	.718	-.404	30	.689

In Latvia, differences between women and men from group 5 are observed only in the Responsiveness - selflessness scale, while for women this indicator is higher. In Bulgaria, statistically significant differences between representatives of different sexes are not observed in this group (Table 6, Fig. 5).

Table 6. The results of the t-test criterion when comparing the average values of scales representing interpersonal relationships among the respondents of different sexes in Latvia and Bulgaria (group 5)

Country	Scale	Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Latvia	Tendency towards leadership - dominance - despotisms	6.091	.020	.957	26	.347
	Confidence about oneself - self-confidence - self-indulgence	16.065	.000	-.651	26	.520
	Demanding - disappointment - cruelty	1.781	.194	-.651	26	.521
	Skeptical - tolerance - negativity	3.518	.072	.716	26	.480
	Leniency - meekness - passive listening	.004	.952	-.060	26	.952
	Trustworthiness - obedience - dependency	3.164	.087	.683	26	.500
	Goodness -uncertainty - excessive conformism	2.381	.135	1.812	26	.081
	Responsiveness - selflessness	.506	.483	2.355	26	.026
Bulgaria	Tendency towards leadership - dominance - despotisms	4.232	.051	-.320	24	.752
	Confidence about oneself - self-confidence - self-indulgence	.034	.855	-1.110	24	.278
	Demanding - disappointment - cruelty	.512	.481	-1.259	24	.220
	Skeptical - tolerance - negativity	.023	.880	-.462	24	.648
	Leniency - meekness - passive listening	.011	.919	-1.817	24	.082
	Trustworthiness - obedience - dependency	1.558	.224	.543	24	.592
	Goodness -uncertainty - excessive conformism	1.585	.220	1.704	24	.101
	Responsiveness - selflessness	2.053	.165	-1.265	24	.218



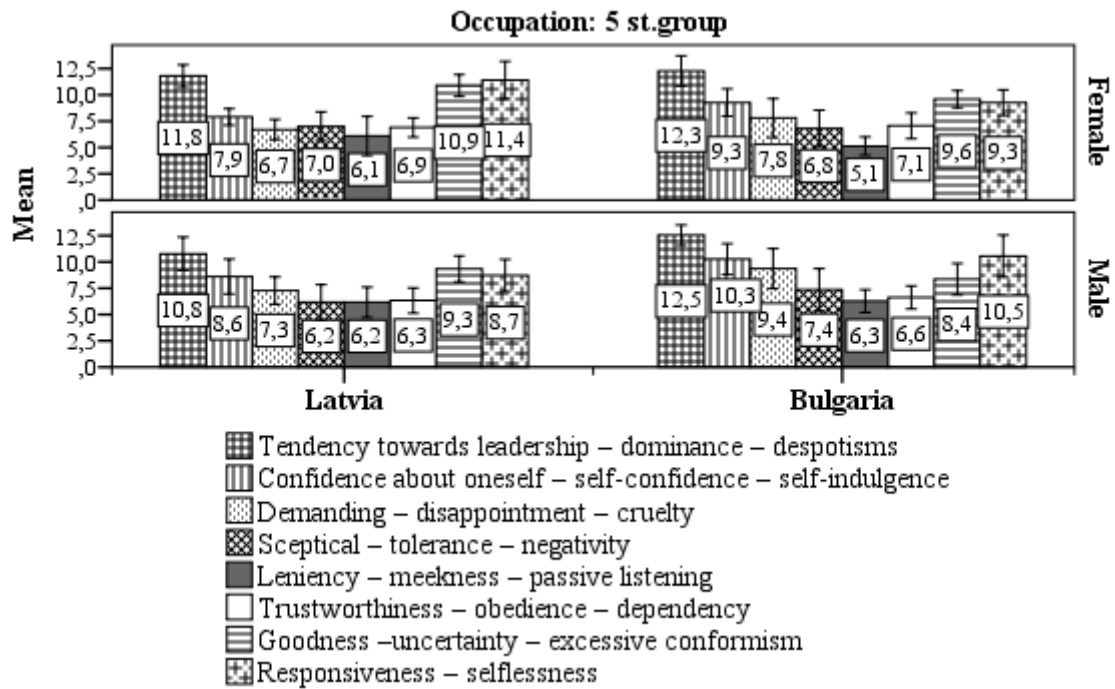


Figure 5. The average values of scales displaying interpersonal relationships in group 5, allocated according to Occupation, among respondents of different sexes from Latvia and Bulgaria

While comparing the average values of scales reflecting interpersonal relationships, the respondents in group 1 are allocated according to their field of work. According to the analysis of the results obtained by the t-test criterion comparing the mean values of scales showing interpersonal relationships among the respondents of different sexes in Latvia and Bulgaria, it was discovered that Bulgarians with higher education show more Domination than Latvians, and vice versa, Submission is more characteristic of the Latvian residents; Altruism is more expressed among the Latvian population, especially among women (Fig. 6).

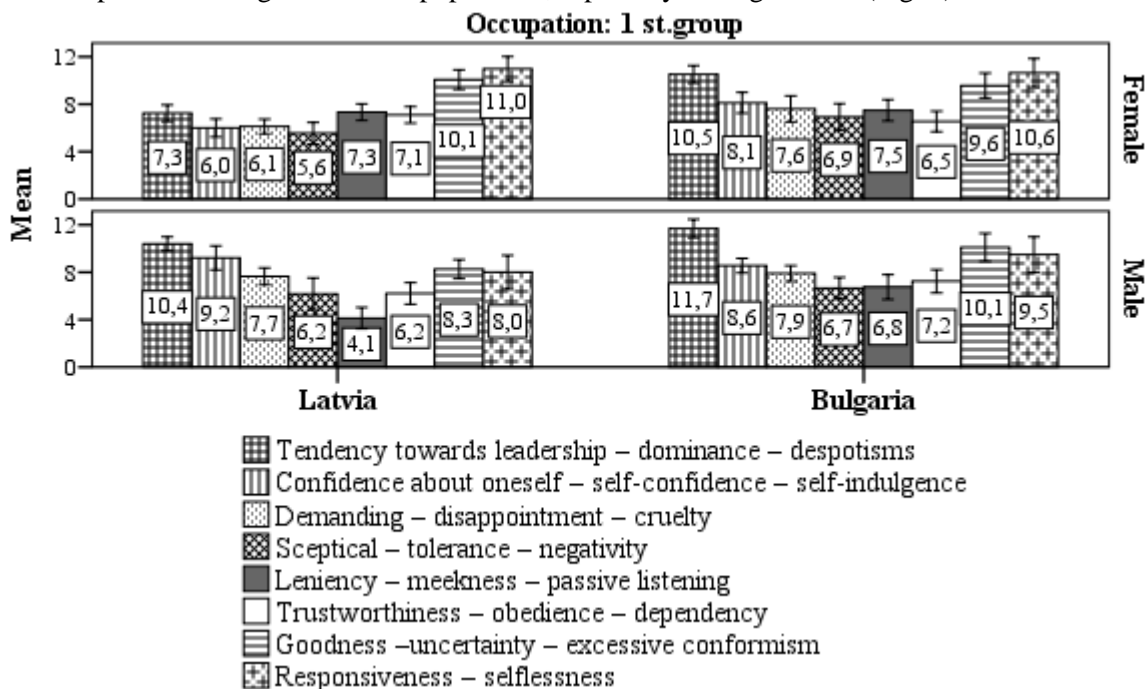


Figure 6. The average values of scales representing interpersonal relationships, in group 1, allocated according to Occupation, among the respondents of different sexes from Latvia and Bulgaria

The average values of scales reflecting interpersonal relations among the respondents of different sexes from Latvia and Bulgaria, the respondents of group 2 are allocated according to their field of work. According to the analysis of the results of the T-test criterion comparing the mean values of scales showing interpersonal relationships among the respondents of different sexes in Latvia and Bulgaria, it can be stated that Domination un Altruism are similar but Submission is more expressed among men in Latvia (Fig. 7).

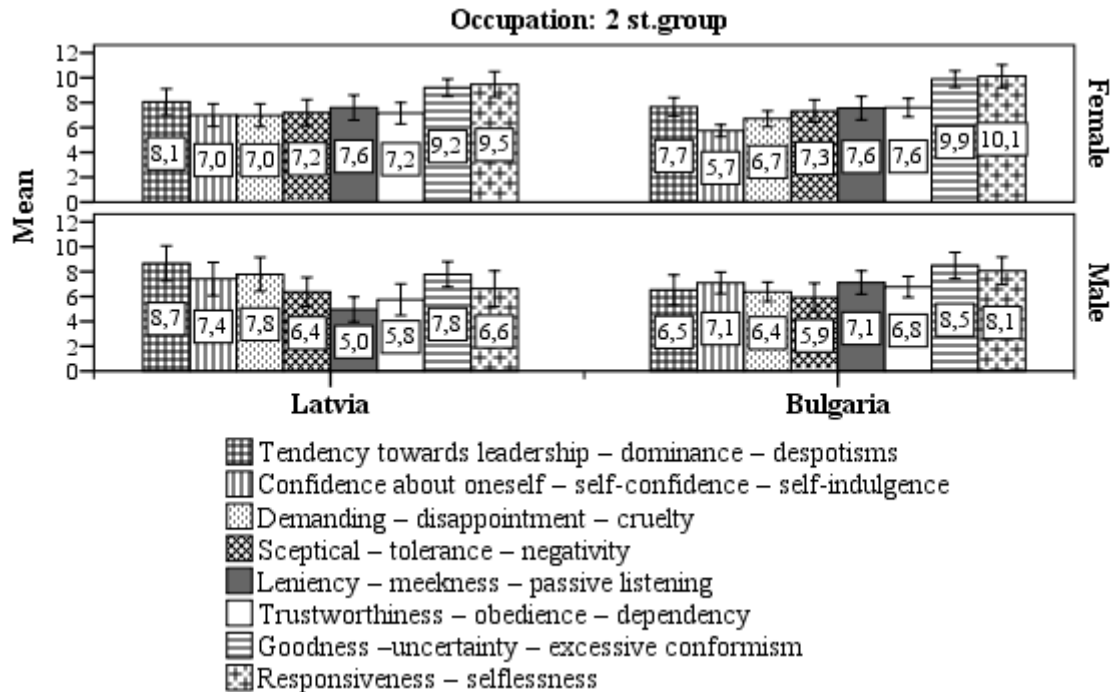


Figure 7. The average values of scales representing interpersonal relationships in group 2, allocated according to a field of work, among the respondents of different genders from Latvia and Bulgaria

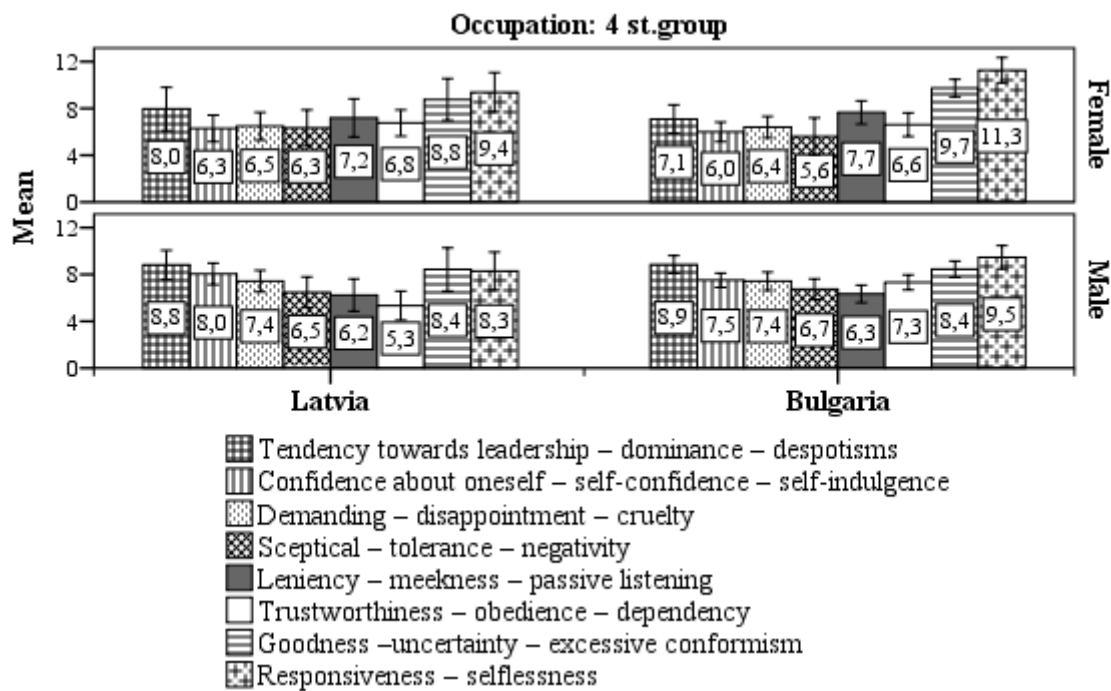


Figure 8. The average values of the scales representing interpersonal relationships in group 4, allocated according to Occupation, among the respondents of different genders from Latvia and Bulgaria.

The average values of scales reflecting interpersonal relations, in group 4 are allocated according to Occupation criteria among the respondents of different sexes from Latvia and Bulgaria. Results of the t-test criterion comparing the mean values of scales showing interpersonal relations among the respondents of different sexes in Latvia and Bulgaria, it was discovered that the Domination un Submission does not differ much, but Altruism is more characteristic of the Bulgarian population.

### **Conclusions**

The first question of the research – what are the personality characteristics (Domination, Submission, Altruism) of women and men in Latvia and Bulgaria. What is common and what differs?

The personality trait Domination for all five groups of respondents is similar: men are more expressive than women. Conversely, Submission is more pronounced for women than for men. This is significantly different from the Latvian population in some groups of respondents when it comes to expressing Domination among the Latvian women as strongly as with men.

The indicators for the third group of respondents (soldiers, unemployed, housewives, retired) are particularly different. The Submission is approximately similar to the female and male respondents in both Latvia and Bulgaria. However, Domination is significantly different for the Latvian and Bulgarian women: for example, unemployed/housewives dominate in Latvia more than unemployed males. But the Bulgarian women are more expressive in Submission as compared with men. It also shows a strong commitment to find a job or to change one's social status, as the specifics of the Bulgarian gender behavior highlight the need for men to develop their careers and to find a job.

Women are more satisfied with housewife's duties. It can be concluded that Latvian men are more exposed to the risk of finding a job as compared with Bulgarian men, because Latvian men are more expressive in Submission. This aspect is a debatable and it depends on the regional economic development and labor market demands. Obviously, cultural and gender specificities differ from country to country, and this is also a prerequisite for a career choice. It is possible to judge the motivation of an individual to choose a career, which can also influence the respondents' response options in the survey. Altruism is more pronounced for Bulgarian women as compared to males, which also differs from the female population of Latvia, whose Domination or Submission is more expressed.

The second research question: Are there any statistically significant differences in the personality characteristics on the career choice of Latvian and Bulgarian people (Occupation: profession, also determined by the respondents' education or other factors)?

In terms of a social status or level of education, it can be concluded that the higher the education or social status (Occupation), the more pronounced Domination is for Bulgarian population. This is more common in groups 1 and 5 represented by such professions as teacher, IT specialist, civil servant in the state sector, coach, athlete (football player), sailor, piano tuner, nurse, bookkeeper, manager, the head of institution, administrative manager, general manager, educational specialist, bank manager, project coordinator, entrepreneur and others. The lower the social status or education, the more distinct Submission is. This is more pronounced in groups 2, 3, 4 comprising school learners, students, soldiers, unemployed, housewives, retired, janitors, builders, cooks, kitchen workers, confectioners, sellers, builders, bartenders, welders, nannies, car mechanics, carpenters, technicians and others.

Controversial differences that were observed among the Latvian residents: sometimes higher education does not affect a person's motivation to change one's social status, to change one's career (group 1 of respondents). However, professions like soldier, unemployed, housewife, retired, janitor, builder, cook, kitchen worker, confectioner, seller, builder, bartender, welder, nanny, car mechanic, carpenter, technician – are related more to people's education and social status, Domination is rather related to Submission (groups 2, 3, 4 of respondents).

Altruism, on the other hand, is more expressed among women in all five groups, both in Latvia and Bulgaria, as compared to men. However, it does not particularly affect one's career choice. Thus, one can recognize that personality traits influence career choices, as each individual can create his or her own internal motivation to

achieve exactly what he or she needs. In turn, external motivation can influence the development of personality characteristics because it is related to the influence of external circumstances for an individual to raise his or her social status, which (external motivation) is more related to rewards, evaluation, and other circumstances. Importantly, life experience, environmental conditions, or education can change the characteristics of a dominant personality. The needs of the individual can change and evolve – the desire to learn and to improve oneself, can motivate people at any age regardless of their gender.

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