Globalisation brings similarities into the entire life of society. The response to this process is focusing on the identity problems. The present research aim is to explore attitudes towards these processes. The tasks of the research are: 1) to estimate the similar and distinctive attitudes of awareness regarding cultural heritage in Romania and Latvia; 2) to identify the most important socialization process functions of cultural heritage in both countries. The qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used for various solutions in the process of the research: a survey (Romania – n = 373; Latvia – n = 327), analysis and synthesis; logical and abstract analysis, logical construction; data grouping and comparing. The surveys were carried out in the second half of 2015. The main conclusions of the research are as follows: the understanding of historical and socio-economic value of cultural heritage is an important feature of a society in the modern world regardless of a country’s location or the ethnicity of the society. The survey results revealed at least two explicit differences: in information channels where information on cultural heritage is acquired from and in shopping places for gastronomic cultural heritage products.

Keywords: cultural heritage, identity, information, value variations.

JEL Codes: D24, L10, M13.

1. Introduction

Many research studies indicate that the modern world is characterised by two pronounced trends: the expansion of globalisation in the economy, politics and culture and at the same time the preservation of national identity; the preservation of national cultural heritage and the use of it in real life are emphasised as significant indicators of national and territorial identity (Morley, 2002; Moore, 2007; Pieterse, 2015).

Previous research studies conducted in Latvia focused on the progress of cultural heritage products as value and the introduction of such products by businesses in Latvia’s rural areas (Jeroscenkova, 2013; Kruzmetra, 2013a; 2013b).
During the course of the research, a question arose regarding how people in other countries perceive the trend in globalisation expansion and, at the same time, the trend in maintaining and preserving the national identity, as well as what their assessments of the role and availability of cultural heritage are; a research study on the situations in Romania and Latvia was a response to this question.

Taking into account the abovementioned considerations, the aim of the research is to estimate the influence of nationality and geographic location on attitude to the cultural heritage as well as cultural heritage functionalities under today’s conditions. The tasks of the research are: 1) to estimate the similar and distinctive attitudes of awareness regarding cultural heritage in Romania and Latvia; 2) to identify the most important socialization process functions of cultural heritage in both countries.

The qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used for various solutions in the process of the research: a survey (Romania – n = 373; Latvia – n = 327), analysis and synthesis; logical and abstract analysis, logical construction; data grouping and comparing. The surveys were carried out in the second half of 2015.

Methodology of the research. Theories on globalisation and cultural capital served as the theoretical basis. One of the major changes taking place on the global scale is designated as globalisation. Both economists (Frankel, 2000; Reinert, 2008), sociologists (Gidens, 1990; Castells, 1997; Jameson, 1998; Steger, 2013) and national identity researchers (Popovic, 2016; Tomlinson, 2003) write about globalisation as an important phenomenon. One of the leading researchers of globalisation, Manfred Steger, underlines that the transformation powers of globalisation reach deeply into all dimensions of contemporary social life. For this reason, he writes about the economic dimension, the political dimension, the ecological and also the cultural dimension of globalisation. He also notes that „Globalisation is an uneven process, meaning that people living in various parts of the word are affected very differently by this gigantic transformation of social structures and cultural zones” (Steger, 2013, p. 11). Globalisation is characterised by two trends of change. The first one is the growing flow of goods, services, capital, money and individuals among countries, the trend of equalisation that emerges from the transfer of techniques and technologies from others, which is usually viewed as a positive trend. As John Tomlinson writes, „globalization has been associated with the destruction of cultural identities, victims of the accelerating encroachment of a homogenized, westernized, consumer culture” (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 269). From the viewpoint of Jan Nederveen Pieterse, the media and cultural studies refer to homogenisation; however, according to him, cultural hybridisation is likely taking place (Pieterse, 2015).

The trend of preserving and strengthening the national identity and of appreciating the cultural heritage emerges to ensure their transfer to next generations, stressing the role of cultural heritage in preserving the local identity. The national identity is strongly associated with the national country, a single ethnic community and a single culture, whereas globalisation erases these traditional boundaries, supposing that national identity and cultural uniqueness are possible only in relation to some locality, whereas globalisation as deterritorisation (decreasing the role of territory) melts national uniqueness.
The concept of heritage leads us to a discussion of the continuity between past and present. Heritage provides historical depth and a permanent pattern in a perpetually changing world. Heritage is part of the present, and at the same time holds promises for the future; the problem of the past is a modern one. (Besiere, 1998).

Heritage is an important component of individual and collective identity in both its tangible and intangible forms, according to a survey of cultural heritage conducted by the European Commission (European Commision. Survey and outcomes).

The European Expert Network on Culture has prepared a report on publications that focus on analyses of social and economic values of cultural heritage. This document points that many authors distinguish the difference between the intrinsic value of heritage as collective memory of the society and its instrumental value, which is expressed in the social and economic value of cultural heritage (European Expert Network on Culture).

2. Results and discussion

The understanding of intangible and tangible value or, from another perspective, historical and socio-economic value of cultural heritage is an important feature of a society in the modern world regardless of a country’s location or the ethnicity of the society.

2.1. Perception of cultural heritage values in Romania and Latvia

The most recent research studies express an idea that cultural heritage as value has two aspects. On the one hand, cultural heritage is associated with a nation’s efforts to preserve and be aware of its history and to maintain the understanding of belonging to it (landscapes, castles, churches, manor houses, monuments, etc.). On the other hand, in many aspects cultural heritage is important as socio-economic value (traditional foods, crafts, elements in clothing, etc.) (Szmelter, 2013).

All the respondents without exception acknowledged cultural heritage as value. However, the majority of them both in Romania and Latvia perceived it as socio-economic value. In Romania, almost two thirds of all the respondents referred to the socio-economic understanding of it.

Nowadays, information has become one of the most important resources. Our life is unimaginable without it. Information is a model that shows the properties of some real object in a way useful for tackling a practical or theoretical problem. It is characterised by the ability of humans to expand, accumulate and qualify knowledge, as well as to generate information and disseminate it and to create mechanisms that cover all the life aspects of society. The ongoing revolution in the sphere of information makes far-reaching consequences in the social organisation of people (Wilson, 1994; ITS Organization…, 2016).
Individuals’ interest in some thing or phenomenon is closely associated with the availability of information and their degree of awareness of what they are interested in. It was convincingly showed by the survey results. The individuals who referred to cultural heritage as value were more numerous than those who considered themselves informed about this phenomenon; yet, being informed is the first step to knowledge on some thing or phenomenon.

The degree of awareness of members of society about some thing or phenomenon, to a great extent, is determined by the sources the necessary information is acquired from. The survey showed that the range of sources of information on cultural heritage was quite broad and diverse, including both traditional and modern information channels. In this respect, there was no difference between Romania and Latvia. However, the significance of certain information channels was rated quite dif-
ferently. In Romania, only one source explicitly prevailed – Internet portals. In Latvia two sources dominated – first position was taken by TV –, and Internet portals slightly lagged behind. Written information – newspapers and billboards, which in Romania were three times more important than in Latvia –, also serves as an important source of information on cultural heritage in our country. The survey data, unfortunately, do not provide an explanation for such a difference in the importance of information sources. One can only make an assumption that the age composition of respondents and the duration of attention paid to information on cultural heritage were probably different.

![Figure 3. The main sources of information (several answers possible) on cultural heritage by popularity in Romania and Latvia, 2015](image)

In the result, one can say that the individuals who participated in the survey in both Romania and Latvia confirmed to be generally interested in getting information about cultural heritage, as they perceived this phenomenon as an important value in any aspect. However, at the current stage of development, focus is mainly placed on the socio-economic value of cultural heritage, and the data in Figure 1 confirm it.

### 2.2. **Important socialization process functions of cultural heritage in Romania and Latvia**

The socio-economic aspect of cultural values closely relates to the opportunities to acquire such values and, first of all, the gastronomic cultural heritage which the public increasingly focuses on.

Moreover, encouraging local cultural expressions contributes to the growth of culture-related economic activities (Facchinetti, 2014). Although, it is outlined (EC, 2014) that the major problem faced by the heritage sector is the progressive disappearance of traditional skills and crafts, which could be renewed.

Primary agricultural production has a decreasing role in rural economy in terms of population, employment and GDP (Moreddu, 2013). Hence, the diversification of farm activities, multifunctionality and pluriactivity become a more significant solution for farms’ viability (Bergman, 2007; Blad, 2010; Turtoi, 2013), especially for semi-subsistence farms (Davidova, 2013). The socio-economic vitality of rural areas
needs local employment beyond agriculture, such as micro-business, small and medium sized enterprises, and crafts, artisan activities, where cultural and social traditions play a significant role (Dwyer, 2003).

Based on small businesses in rural areas, on the one hand, gastronomic tourism emerges and gastronomic cultural values are consumed on the spot on farms as well as at objects of local rural services (Jeroscenkova, 2013); yet, on the other hand, the mentioned values are offered to urban residents. During the course of the research, the authors sought answers to two specific marketing questions: where are the main shopping places for gastronomic cultural heritage products and what factors most affect the shopping process from the side of consumers.

The survey results showed that gastronomic cultural heritage products were broadly available to urban residents in both countries, beginning with specialty shops through to “green markets” where traditional local products of very high quality were available.

Table 1. The various shopping places for cultural heritage products by popularity in Romania and Latvia, 2015 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Specialty shops</th>
<th>Farmers market</th>
<th>Divisions in Supermarkets</th>
<th>Directly from farmers</th>
<th>“Green market”</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference emerges in priorities. In Romania, like in the situation with information sources, one option – shopping in specialty shops – prevailed over the other shopping places; it was mentioned by more than half of the respondents. However, one in five respondents used to shop directly from farmers. In Latvia, two shopping places were almost equally important – green markets and farmers’ markets – while almost a third shopped directly from farmers.

One can conclude for the second time that the purpose of activity, in this case it is interest in shopping, characterises the residents of both countries, while the places where this purpose is implemented differ. The present survey data do not provide an explanation for the difference in shopping places.

Any market management needs information to assess consumer demand and competitors in order to know what kind and quantity of products have to be produced. Information quality depends on accuracy. The closer the information is to reality, the higher its value and usefulness to users (Wilson, 1994; ITS Organization, 2016).

Table 2. Awareness and their percentage distribution* in Romania and Latvia, 2015 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Insufficient information</th>
<th>Ineffective marketing</th>
<th>Too inconspicuous advertising</th>
<th>No interest in additional information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Several answers possible
The respondents expressed their wish to acquire broader information, first of all, about shopping places for goods and services (28.7% in Romania, 26.9% in Latvia), available assortments (10.7% in Romania, 39.4% in Latvia) as well as the specifics of the goods and services that revealed their superiority over the ones consumed currently (55.0% in Romania, 55.0% in Latvia). Gastronomic cultural heritage product buyers were also interested in the process of production of goods or services (20.4% in Romania, 44.0% in Latvia), which provided a better understanding of how organic the products were.

Cultural heritage as socio-economic value, of course, is a good or a service, the successful management of which is determined by the exchange of information on demand and supply. The respondents’ opinions acquired in the present research highlighted the ways of improving the flow of information on cultural heritage.

Figure 4. Scheme for the exchange of marketing information on cultural heritage

Since the majority of the respondents (69.2% in Romania, 59.9% in Latvia) were ready to recommend cultural heritage products to their relatives, friends and other individuals not only for knowledge but also for use, the improvement of information management in terms of both content and form is an essential step towards two objectives: first, contributing to the value of cultural heritage as a phenomenon and, second, promoting the expansion of economic multifunctionality of small agricultural holdings to maintain the viability of rural areas as an important public life arena under the modern circumstances.

3. Conclusions

1. The understanding of cultural heritage in terms of intangible and tangible value or historical and socio-economic value is an important feature of a society in the modern world regardless of a country’s location or the ethnicity of the society. The distance between Romania and Latvia is almost two thousand kilometres and the countries are populated by peoples of different ethnicity, whereas the cultural heritage as an important value is perceived adequately. In both countries, their residents are
characterised by the wish to broaden the scope of knowledge about this value, as under globalisation, on the one hand, culture hybridises, while on the other hand the role of local culture becomes important regardless of whether it takes the form of collective historical memory or practical socio-economic instrument.

2. Both in Romania and in Latvia, under the current circumstances, focus has been put on the socio-economic / instrumental value of cultural heritage and particularly gastronomic cultural heritage. Gastronomic cultural heritage is a part of cultural heritage that can be contacted by any member of society under many and various circumstances, thus showing the understanding of the national value accumulated within many years. Various shopping places are visited for cultural heritage products, beginning with specialty shops through to purchases of “value” directly from the farmer on the farm.

3. Both in Romania and in Latvia, the population wished information of broader scope and higher quality about the gastronomic value of cultural heritage, first of all, in terms of content, so that the information was about the historical origin of a product, how organic the product was, the production process of the product and the place where the product came from. In addition to the improvement of content of information, the respondents wished the visual design of information to be enhanced, which would make people more interested, and the information would be attractive to the reader. Within marketing activities, the enhancement of information flow becomes an important performance improvement task aimed at raising the value of cultural heritage as such and, at the same time, contributing to the entry of cultural heritage into crafts and small business.

4. Although the common basic lines of cultural heritage as value match for both countries, the survey results revealed at least two explicit differences: in information channels where information on cultural heritage is acquired from and in shopping places for gastronomic cultural heritage products. In Romania, in both cases, one element dominates over all the others: information from Internet portals and shopping at specialty shops. Latvia, however, features a diversity of information channels and shopping places. The survey cannot explain such a situation, which indicates the necessity to continue research on cultural heritage as value and its various manifestations as well as the features of its manifestations, identifying both similarities and differences in both the content and the forms of manifestation.

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Santrauka


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