

2020

Meat consumption and sustainability

ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR OF LATVIAN GENERATIONS

LASMA SESTULE



AALBORG UNIVERSITY

CULTURE, COMMUNICATION AND GLOBALIZATION

Master Thesis

**Meat consumption and sustainability: attitude and behaviour of
Latvian generations**

**Master's degree in
Culture, Communication and Globalization with specialization in Market Communication
and Consumption**

Author: Lasma Sestule

Student number: 20180710

Assignment: 10th Semester - Master Thesis

Supervisors: Olga Gurova

Characters: 118 116

Submitted: 15.09.2020.

Preface

I want to give a special thanks to all 120 respondents who participated in my research by filling out the survey that I created. Their response was much more active and positive than I anticipated, giving me not only great insight of their buying behaviour, but also positive emotions throughout this process.

Most of all, I wish to express my biggest gratitude to my family who supported me the whole time, giving me the strength to continue when my hands were down. Thank you for believing in me and not letting me stop.

I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisor Olga Gurova. She was there to give me direction and guide through difficulties that I was facing. Her guidance and constructive feedback helped me throughout this thesis project and took me to the finishing line. Thank you!

Denmark, 2020

Lasma Sestule

Abstract

Due to the current discussions of global warming, pollution and overall lack of sustainability within production industries, the topic of meat consumption in Europe and in the world in general is very important. While the number of vegans, vegetarians and flexitarians continues to grow, so does the average number of meat and meat product consumption of the world's population. With this alarmingly increasing number, it is important to look at consumer patterns and their attitude towards meat and sustainability. Knowing how consumers make their decisions, what factors are important to them and what is their general attitude towards the issue, can help politicians, marketing agencies and food production industry to work towards greener future. The purpose of this research is to analyse meat consumer behaviour and importance of sustainability, in order help preventing pollution, meat waste and thus, make greener choices.

This research will be focused on two Latvian generations who have had a completely different background, one being Soviet Union Latvia and the other, independent Latvia. Being raised in a different way, growing up with different ideologies, options and possibilities, have formed the generation consumption patterns. In this research it will be focused on several key indicators that might affect the consumer decision making regarding meat and meat products. The indicators such as age, income, gender and education are evaluated from different consumption perspectives, in order to find the differences both generations present. Moreover, it will be looked at nostalgia as a cultural and historical factor that might influence consumer behaviour and attitude towards sustainability and meat.

To reach the research goal, a quantitative research method was used. The questionnaire was filled out by 120 respondents who were gathered through convenience sampling method. The respondent background varies throughout age, gender, education level, income, location and living situation. The results of the questionnaire showed that all of these key indicators have an effect on consumer attitude towards meat and meat products, however, not all of them influence consumer buying decision. It was found out that it is mostly other factors that shape our choice, for example, whether the product is locally produced, if the animal welfare was important to producers, whether the product is sustainable and what is the price.

Moreover, it showed that consumers would like to consume sustainable meat and meat products if it would be affordable and available in their local stores.

Keywords: sustainability, meat consumption, Latvian meat consumers, generations, nostalgia.

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Problem formulation	8
Literature	8
Sustainability.....	8
Sustainable consumption and labelling.....	9
Perception of Marketing in food sector	10
Sustainable attitude and behaviour	10
Sustainable consumption issues in Europe	11
Meat consumption	12
Quality and consumer choice in the future.....	13
Sensory aspects	13
Latvia	14
Loyalty to food	14
Nostalgia	15
Nostalgia and marketing	16
Soviet nostalgia	17
Soviet ideology today	18
Theory.....	19
Theory of Planned Behaviour and Reasoned Action.....	19
Reflection on theory.....	22
Theory of Generations.....	22
Reflection on theory.....	23
Hypothesis	24
Hypothesis Nr. 1:	24
Hypothesis Nr.2:	24
Hypothesis Nr.3:	24
Research Design and Methodology	24
Ontological and Epistemological Stance.....	24
Research design.....	26
Quantitative Research.....	28
Sampling	29
Analysis.....	31
Validity, Reliability and Limitations	31
Analysis.....	32
Income	34
Income and education.....	34
Income and age	36
Age.....	37
Age and consumption of meat	37
Age and sustainability	38
Age and country of origin.....	39
Age and meat content.....	40
Age and animal welfare.....	41

Age and product labels.....	42
Age and marketing	43
Age and price.....	44
Education	45
Education and consumption of meat	46
Education and sustainability	47
Education and country of origin	48
Education and animal welfare.....	49
Education and product labels.....	50
Education and marketing	51
Education and price.....	52
Gender	53
Gender and consumption of meat	54
Gender and sustainability.....	55
Gender and country of origin	56
Gender and meat content	57
Gender and product labels.....	58
Gender and marketing	58
Gender and animal welfare	59
Gender and price.....	60
Gender and education.....	61
Nostalgia	62
Nostalgia and age	63
Nostalgia and gender	65
Nostalgia and education.....	66
Nostalgia and income.....	67
<i>Discussion</i>	<i>69</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Managerial implications.....</i>	<i>74</i>

Introduction

In today's world where topics such as global warming, health, diets, vegetarianism and veganism are part of everyday discussion, meat and its production have a new meaning attached to it. Meat production is one of the most harmful industries in the world, affecting worlds' eco-system in unimaginable ways (European Environment Agency, 2019). Every day we can hear in the news new discoveries and warnings about global warming and questions that sometimes we are not able to answer. However, one thing is clear- we have to change our ways in order to prevent colossal damages to Earth.

However, even though we all live in the same world and have similar values and expectations, and, in theory, care about the nature and the environment we live in, we do not act the same way. Consumer education is a big factor in overall consumption patterns- the more educated we get, the better and more considered choices we make. However, old habits die hard and it is not easy to change consumer eating and buying habits. As it turns out, an average consumer does not know the impact that food production, packaging and meat consumption alone leaves on the environment (Tobler, Visschers, & Siegrist, 2011). Sustainability has become a concern for people only in the last few decades, making it not only a part of political debate, but also a trendsetter for a modern consumer.

Today it has become a trend, to be healthy, think green, support sustainability and think about one's actions in a long-term. With the new movements and changes in people lifestyle, where gym, recycling, diets, vegetarians, vegans and flexitarians has become a part of a social norm, could seem that the change is here. However, market share of non-sustainable food production companies still remains high, showing that the desired result is still far away (Reisch, Eberle, & Lorek, 2013).

However, the first step towards changes is to educate people of the impact our behaviour has on the nature. Information, knowledge, income and options affect our ability to act on our intentions, shaping our attitude and buying behaviour. If we know the impacts of our actions, and we have the ability to change them, we can start improving our decision making. Moreover, also our personalities, age and the way we are raised, our history and culture, can

affect our decisions, values and priorities. How to change something that is viewed differently by numerous generations? And what are the priorities and decision-making factors for these generations? Moreover, how can it be changed in a country where each generation grew up with completely different social norms, different options and different ideologies?

All of these aspects and questions are what motivates me to do this research. Based on this, the problem formulation for my Master's thesis can be found below.

Problem formulation

“How do different generations of Latvian people choose meat and what social and cultural factors affect their attitude that leads to a buying decision?”

Literature

I started writing this project with a great interest in how different Latvian generations with different life experience make their buying decisions today. What is the motivation and what do they value the most when choosing their meat products (if they choose meat)? Following this interest, I have started looking into different aspects that can influence these decisions. I have chosen topics that, in my opinion, are relevant to this research and can help to establish clear direction of it. The variety of sources is broad as this research involves aspects such as society, meat market and production, history of Latvia, behavioural analysis, trends and values from a sustainable perspective. The insights of this literature review will provide me with knowledge and possibility to establish hypotheses of the research. Furthermore, this will shape this research and questions of the survey.

Sustainability

For this research to have a valid and factual base, it is important to view various aspects of sustainability. This literature section will help me to see what factors should be viewed further and what is already known in the field of sustainability.

Sustainable consumption and labelling

It is a well-known fact that meat producing industry is one of the most environmentally harmful and ecologically burdensome industries in Europe and in the world (European Environment Agency, 2019). That is why today this industry is trying to change and become, if not completely, then somewhat sustainable. But it is not just the industry that is changing, it is also the society. Nowadays it is very popular to be a vegetarian or vegan, but now there is even a new way of meat consumption- meat reducers that are called “flexitarians” (Dagevos & Voordouw, 2013). That means that they eat no meat at least one day per week or even more often than that. This new movement is linked to food consumption patterns that are becoming more common amongst educated people that follows their health and think about sustainability. As meat production affects climate changes, use of water, biodiversity and amounts of oil that is used and polluted, this concern motivates many people to change their eating habits. Moreover, many people not only care about the environment but also about animal welfare. This has led consumers towards purchasing of more ecological and biological products (and production) as that offers meat “that has been treated right” (Dagevos & Voordouw, 2013). However, while the tendency nowadays seems positive, author is very sceptical of whether or not meat reduction is even possible.

In another case, author focuses on eco-labelling of products, as that is what informs us, consumers, of whether or not product is ecological, sustainable and in general friendly to nature and good for our health. Even though there is a good tendency seen in today’s market and consumer behaviour, author in his search points out that there are various factors that prevents consumers to become completely sustainable in their choice of food and products in general (Grunert, 2011). For example, one of the main issues that he noticed is that consumers simply do not notice eco-labels on the products they buy due to their habits and lack of knowledge. Another issue is with the lack of interest, meaning that consumers see the label but do not know what that means and does not try to find out what it stands for. However, even though consumer might not know what it means, it still may affect their choice. Another issue that may lead to not a sustainable choice is price. Eco-labelled products tend to be with a higher price and thus consumer might reject this option. For some consumers, ecological food might also seem to taste weird, look weird or smell weird and

thus the association with ecological food might affect their choice (Grunert, 2011). But, in the end, author points out that in his opinion, the main issue when it comes to sustainable choice is lack of motivation from consumer side.

Perception of Marketing in food sector

However, another research and its authors argue that the new way of marketing and the eco-labelling is a result of the consumer demand. With global warming, health scares, pressure from government to make changes, it is the result why companies start to use *green marketing for green consumers*. Despite of having green marketing and green consumer, the consumer part seems to be unclear for most marketers (McDonald & Oates, 2006). Researchers point out that usually you can define your consumer by such factors as, male/female, educated/not educated, older/younger, but in this case, there is no clear correlation between these aspects and sustainable attitude. This makes me wonder, is this relation, however, affected by country's ideology and upbringing circumstances? Or is there never a relation between who is a sustainable consumer and who is not? However, even though there is no proven connection between attitude and previously mentioned factors, author argues that the choice of sustainable consumption comes from knowledge, and that is not necessarily because of having a degree in chemistry, physics, sales or finances. It is simply because consumer decided that he/she wants to know more about options, impact, results etc. Author also points out that this brings to question where consumer gets knowledge and what is the role of marketing teams, government, media and scientists in this as this shows the importance of knowledge (McDonald & Oates, 2006).

Sustainable attitude and behaviour

In the research article about sustainable consumption and attitude-behaviour gap within consumers and their buying behaviour, authors point out the main problems with it. Authors argue that there is a big gap between the attitude and actual action, when it comes to sustainability. Often, we can hear that consumer intends to purchase sustainable products, and when asked, most will say that they are buying sustainable products. However, when looking at the market share of these goods (sustainable), in most cases their share in the market is even less than 5% (Terlau & Hirsch, 2015). This finding clearly show that it is not

necessarily true what consumer says, as their actions show the true behaviour. However, if their attitude is built towards sustainable consumption, there must be ways of how to lead them to action. Moreover, study shows that this intention towards sustainable consumption is increasingly growing (Terlau & Hirsch, 2015).

W. Terlau and D. Hirsch have identified few of the reasons why consumer attitude is not actually seen in their behaviour. Some of the reasons are short-term motivation, our instincts, consumer illusion of control, optimism, addictions as well as our values from an ethical perspective (Terlau & Hirsch, 2015). What influence these reasons for lack of behaviour towards sustainable purchases are consumer individual determinants that can be witnessed in their socio-economic aspects such as gender, age, income, education. Authors argue that in these factors also can be included such aspects as the needs and wants, motivation, habits, values and consumer ability to control them. Moreover, they state that mass media can also affect consumer attitude and further consumer behaviour towards sustainable consumption (Terlau & Hirsch, 2015).

Furthermore, authors point out that apart from socio-economic and demographic factors, there are other factors that influence their behaviour and these factors are equally important. Health, taste, animal welfare, environmental protection, fair trade affinity is just some of the most common factors that affect consumer attitude towards a product and thus shape their behaviour (Terlau & Hirsch, 2015). Mostly, these factors represent consumer values, however, for each consumer the importance of them might differ and it is not clear how much these factors affect consumer choice when there are alternative choices presented.

Sustainable consumption issues in Europe

Today food consumption is a big issue on the political stage because of the impact it has on the environment, health of people, cohesion of population and, of course, the effect it has on economy. There are several concerns that are in today's agenda that has a strong impact from food consumption, such as, climate change, water pollution, loss of biodiversity, soil degradation, growth of world population, overweight, diseases caused by unhealthy lifestyle that comes directly from food consumption, etc. Just naming these, there can be seen a clear issue of food consumption, however, the motivation for European consumers to buy organic

or sustainable food seems to be the same- the belief that the product is healthier (Reisch et al., 2013). In European Union (EU), the market for organic food in 2010 was 19,6 EUR (billion), where Germany alone had 6 EUR (billion) share from this amount. On the overall food market, this is not a lot. For authors, this statistic shows one clear problem- the issue with organic food and why its market share is so small, is the lack of access, availability and ability to afford it (Reisch et al., 2013).

Moreover, authors point out how important food is in social aspect. Nowadays, organic food is a trend and it shows that consumer belongs to a healthy, wealthy and responsible consumer group. However, while this makes organic food popular, it also makes it more expensive and available only to the previously mentioned group. Yes, there are farmers who grow food for themselves, but that also means that they grow a very limited amount of food, hence, it is not for a wider society. This issue is EU level, as the system supports big farms that can grow big quantities, offering their products for big food companies that in turn produce food for the masses (Reisch et al., 2013).

While authors are being critical on the system that is created for the food production in Europe, they still see a positive tendency in organic food production. However, to change the system and make organic and sustainable food market share bigger, it cannot continue this way and thus it is not a surprise that EU is constantly bringing this question to agenda. After all, it is not just food, but it is our eco-system, health, nature and the world we live in. To do that, not only ways of production has to be changed, but consumers need to be educated and that might be even harder to do than changing the way factories work.

Meat consumption

Further I will look into literature that is available regarding meat consumption and what factors are important when it comes to making a buying decision. This perspective is important in order to establish a knowledge base for further research of this thesis project.

Quality and consumer choice in the future

In the research about meat consumption especially within trends and where meat consumption is heading, author seems very optimistic. The latest trends in meat consumption indicate that such factors as price and income will become less important in decision making. At the same time, quality will become more important to consumers based on the new trends that come from fitness, diets and healthy lifestyle in general. It has become clearer that consumers demand more safe, tasty and enjoyable food of high quality (Henchion, McCarthy, Resconi, & Troy, 2014). However, authors point out that quality for consumers is a very subjective aspect and it depends on various social factors. Moreover, quality judgements can be influenced by past experiences and information provided at the place of purchasing. It is also stated that in Europe, the perception of quality is very localized, hence, consumers believe that locally produced meat has a higher quality than imported meat. However, consumer perception is individual and thus there is no clear measurable of what is quality for a single consumer (Henchion et al., 2014).

Therefore, it can be seen that consumer choice in the future will be based on trends and on their own quality measurements, however, it will mostly be leaning towards local production. Income and price, which are the main factors of decision making today, will become secondary.

Sensory aspects

Whenever it comes to food, sensory aspects such as taste, smell and looks are very important and the same applies to meat and meat products. In this research, the focus was based on beef as it was witnessed that comparing to poultry and pork, specifically beef has been losing its popularity (Resurreccion, 2004). Author argues, that it is due to animal welfare and health aspect acknowledgement. However, beef is still considered as a high quality and expensive product. In a comparative consumer study in Germany, France, Spain and the United Kingdom, the main aspects that consumers cared about the most when it comes to beef is that it is tender, fresh, juicy, healthy and nutritious. Whereas in the United States of America, the main concerns involved calories, cholesterol, price and convenience (Resurreccion, 2004). These facts about choice making indicates that European consumers prefer quality and taste over convenience and price, thus making healthier choices when it comes to meat.

Latvia

For this research it is crucial to build a knowledge base on Latvian consumer, its background and knowledge. This section of literature will provide insights of Latvian consumer and various cultural aspects that are of relevance to this thesis project.

Loyalty to food

Food is something that we all need and consume. It is a specific group of products that we individually choose from given options, evaluating its necessity by various factors. As research shows, the main factor for choice of food product for a regular Latvian consumer is price and it directly depends on individual or household income. However, it is not the only factor that affects our choice, there are many more, such as, quality, taste, origin, packaging, expiration date etc (Upite, Pilvere, Nipers, & Krievina, 2014). Throughout this research it became clear that these various factors are of importance depending on deeper determinants- personal characteristics. Authors argue that experience, psychological and emotional state and the disposable resources a person has, has an impact on consumer behaviour, especially when it comes to price, quality and service. Moreover, they think that it is a conscious behaviour when it comes to food consumption.

However, authors also point out that food group is broad and there are many food product categories, which each have its own characteristics when it comes to the choice and loyalty. The fact is, that nowadays the food industry is facing new challenges every day and mostly when it comes to quality, sustainability, safety and consumers becoming more demanding as an aftermath of new diets, healthy lifestyle and ageing population (which means that new generation is setting a tone of what comes next). Moreover, research shows that consumers are becoming more loyal to private trademarks and small local businesses instead of big factory products (Upite et al., 2014). Arguably, it could be because of the eco-bio-trend which is becoming more popular not only among younger people, but also to older generation, taking a big part of daily shopping habits.

Even though it becomes more tough on bigger companies due to new and high demands on quality, safety and sustainability both by EU and consumers itself, it might actually be a positive change in a local context. This new tendency also supports local food producers, as

consumers tend to prefer local, known and hence trustworthy products (Upite et al., 2014). According to study made by European Commission, the place of origin of food products is important to all European countries. On average, in the EU, 71% of people consider the place of origin of the food important. And, as it turns out, in Latvia this is even more important- 77% would almost always prefer local food products. This finding is very curious and ought to be looked at in this research as well. Research shows that products of local producers are important when purchasing dairy products (67%), while it is just a little less important when it comes to meat products (56%). However, it is not stated if it is fresh meat or meat products that consumers prefer to be local, hence it is difficult to take these numbers as a hard fact as it may differ for each category (TNS Opinion & Social at the request of the European Commission, 2012). Having said that, it still shows a tendency where local meat is appreciated.

Another interesting finding that authors offer is the fact that packaging of products plays the smallest role of consumer behaviour. While it might attract consumers, it is very unlikely that it will shift the consumer to a different producer if it is already loyal to a certain product/producer (Upite et al., 2014).

To conclude, it is clear that the decision of whether or not to buy a certain food product, also meat, there are various factors that may affect the choice consumer makes. Here authors have argued that as consumer becomes more complex and thus have more expectations and higher standards, and as a result, food producers must also evolve and change. However, it is not yet clear how different generations would choose a certain product and that is what I aim to find out.

Nostalgia

Various researches show that nostalgia may be generated from two possible feelings- from a personal experience from the past or from a time in history that we have only heard and read about (Marchegiani & Phau, 2011) However, even though these two are the main nostalgic feeling generators, when it comes to marketing, it is more complex than just these two principles.

Nostalgia has always been a well-known way of how to attract people to something new, be it attending a social event, movie or a new product design. In recent decades, people have been very open to nostalgia being a part of their lives, welcoming olden days into their everyday lives, and marketers have noticed that. It has become common to create new products but in “old style” in various industries, including fashion, electronics and also food and beverage industry. However, it is not at all that simple to use nostalgia in marketing as it requires deep understanding of cultures, history, emotional connection and how it is represented in today’s world and norms.

Nostalgia and marketing

In the research article “Nostalgia Marketing and (re-) enchantment”, B.Hartmann and K. Brunk has addressed the factors that needs to be considered when using nostalgia as one of the selling points of the marketing strategy. The main idea that authors present is that nostalgia is a multi-faceted phenomenon with numerous possibilities for marketing activities. The goal is to create a consumer enchantment through three possible ways: *re-instantiation*, *re-enactment* and *re-appropriation* (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019).

Re-instantiation is the most problematic way of how to use nostalgia in marketing. This is mostly past-themed brands that follows a collective idea, generalizing history and groups of people and thus creating a reluctant nostalgia among consumers. *Re-enactment* is however with a more positive twist, where past-themed brands use mythology to bring the contradiction of different times- past, future and present. Using this type of marketing mostly creates progressive nostalgia. However, using *re-appropriation*, while it can be the most difficult, can create the most playful nostalgic feeling among consumers. Using this type of marketing strategy requires to make a unique, quirky, fun and retro type of brand, which plays with consumer feelings, making them excited about the product (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019).

As the authors state, it is crucial to establish early on in what way and why it is important to create a “historic brand”- why it brings value and why it should be in today’s market. The most important aspect to be considered is the ability to understand historicized sociocultural landscape against which their brand or product matters to consumers in the present. In today’s globalized world where information flow is faster than ever and people are able to

speak up and express their opinion and feelings more than ever before, these types of brands have to be seriously considered before launching. The history has been complicated and to use *re-enchantment* in marketing is very tricky. The wrong way of using nostalgia can result in *reluctant nostalgia* (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). However, authors admit that, if used wisely and correctly, using nostalgia for marketing can be a very successful strategic step for business creating progressive and playful nostalgia.

Soviet nostalgia

Neringa Klumbyte in her article about Soviet Sausages in independent Lithuania showcases the nostalgic point of view that many consumers in Baltic countries still have. However, nostalgia can play tricks on people's memories. In her article she interviews people where most of them remember "Soviet times" as better times, when everything was better, including quality of food, especially meat or in this case- sausages (Klumbytė, 2010). But when you look at actual historic data and information of the food production in the "Soviet times", it is actually not true. It was very common to save on quality, meaning that the rule was to make more (product) for as little as possible (Krieviņa, 2012, p. 148).

Moreover, the Soviet Sausage was playing on nostalgia with its design and it was working. It could have been used as a "quality label" - the Soviet quality. Whereas, today producers would use different labels to show the product's quality, e.g. bio and eco labels. Of course, it is due to the fact that 20 or even more years ago it was a completely different generation and the same nostalgic feeling would not work today when people are more aware of everything that is going on in the world and has not had the same experience. As stated in the article, this nostalgic feeling was mostly working on people with no or little education as their ability to determine what is real and what is not was limited (Klumbytė, 2010). This argument points towards education as a big determinant for buying behaviour.

However, some articles and interviews point to a different reason why the older generation might still think that products in "Soviet times" were better. In 2015, a Latvian newspaper conducted interviews about the trust towards labels on food products. As it turns out, most people do not trust what is said on the food packaging but do want a local product (Daukste, 2015). Hence, if the label will say it is produced in Latvia, they will much rather buy that

product instead of a cheaper one if the latter is imported. This idea of local products being better is coming from “Soviet times”. However, back then it was because of not being able to get imported food and having collectivism ideology all around the union- local kolkhoz where local people produce local food. And as it was local and produced by them- it must be good. Unfortunately, it was not that simple. The food that local farmers produced was not going directly to markets, but it was going to factories where the meat was processed, making as many products for as cheap as possible (Krieviņa, 2012, p. 148). Some researchers call this *collective memory*, as this nostalgic feeling is constructed by the group, by society and today can be compared to virtual reality (Marchegiani & Phau, 2011). Past studies show that nostalgia has a very strong impact on consumer buying behaviour, attitude and purchase intention. Taking that Soviet Union was a collectivist union, the *collective memory* is very strong.

Therefore, it is clear that nostalgia can play a big role in consumer decision making. In the research about Attitudes and Emotions as Determinants of Nostalgia purchase: An Application of Social Identity Theory, Jeremy J. Sierra and Shaun McQuitty points out the main characteristic of nostalgia:

“Nostalgia is prevalent throughout modern culture; it creates a sense of authenticity, gives legitimacy to our way of life, and influences consumer behaviour.” (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007)

To sum up, it is clear that with this nostalgic feeling soviet generation might have a different sense of authenticity. This, of course, depends on how they remember these times. It could be argued that younger generation does not reflect and have the same feeling (in this case nostalgia) as Soviet generation, but it does not necessarily mean that they do not have the same values when buying meat products.

Soviet ideology today

The annexation of the Republic of Latvia in 1940 initiated rapid political, economic and ideological changes in all social structures (Rubene, Jansone–Ratinika, & Dinka, 2014). It is quite easy to understand that a fifty-year ideology does not simply go away- it leaves a stamp and a footmark not only in the previously mentioned social aspects, but also in the way people

are raised. Parenting is a very important determinant of how young people (and people in general) think. Z. Rubene, N. Jansone-Ratinika and I. Dinka argue that Soviet Ideology is still very much visible even in the family models today, explaining it with a simple fact- we raise younger generation the way we were raised because that is what we know. This means that a lot of basic values are set in our mindset since we were children and it is not easy to shake off. Parenting can form our idea of what is important, what is good and what is bad.

Moreover, P. Eglite argues that Soviet regime has, in a way, deformed the way how Latvian people think because of the constant disinformation which is still visible today. While N. Klumbyte talks about nostalgia, here author talks about lack of knowledge or rather lack of reasoning and fresh view and information (Eglite, 2011). Keeping this in mind, it could be argued that because of the lack of information, Soviet generation might still act without thinking of impact that their actions make. However, while the Soviet generation might have lack of information or live with aged beliefs and not making new researches about industries and their impact, it could be the opposite with younger generation that is raised in independent Latvia where together with democracy, information is freely available and thus there can be more informed decisions. Yet, this is only a speculation and needs to be looked at in this thesis research.

Theory

This section will present the theoretical background that will be used throughout this thesis project.

Theory of Planned Behaviour and Reasoned Action

Based on the literature review made for this project, theory should be based on consumer behaviour and what affects consumer decision making. For that reason, I have chosen to look into "Theory of planned behaviour and reasoned action". This theory will provide two different scenarios of how consumers make their end decision of whether or not to buy a specific product, in this case- meat.

Theory of reasoned action and planned behaviour talks about behavioural intentions being made based on salient information or beliefs that person has, which leads to a specific

behaviour and outcome. It states that knowing or thinking about a specific outcome makes us behave in a certain way- do things with an intention (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992). The authors have created a simple visual to explain theory of reasoned action (A) and theory of planned behaviour (B) as showed below.

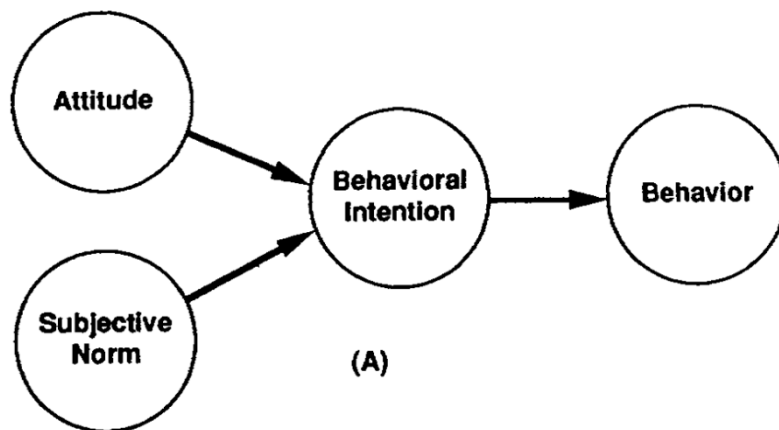


Figure 1: Image borrowed from I. Ajzen, T.J. Madden, P.S. Ellen (1992, p. 4)

As you can see in the picture above, behaviour descends from the intention which however descends from person's attitude towards a certain subjective norm. When person evaluates the norm and builds an attitude towards it, based on the personal experience, feelings and knowledge or, as authors say, based on assumption, person decides on what he/she wants to do about it (intention) and as a result reacts on it. It is the simplest form of our actions.

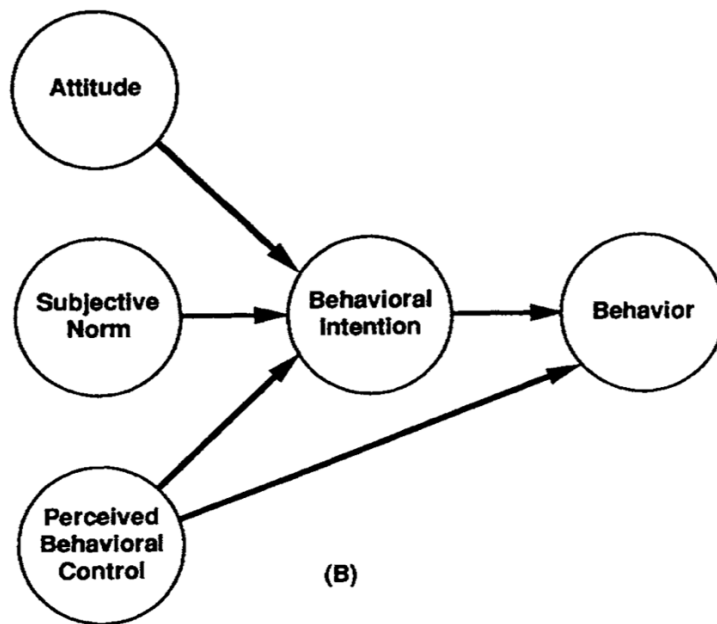


Figure 2: Image borrowed from I. Ajzen, T.J. Madden, P.S. Ellen (1992, p. 4)

But when it comes to theory of planned behaviour, it is a little bit more complicated. As illustration above shows, it is not as straight forward as reasoned action. This theory says that when it comes to planned behaviour (which itself entails that it is something that person has planned ahead), there is some sort of control of the decision made. This means that to come to a decision and certain behaviour, a person has evaluated the possible scenarios, possibly made a research and based its decision on knowledge and information that is available. Based on this, it could be argued that planned behaviour is based on knowledge and thus is more applicable to people with higher education/knowledge.

This leads me to think that every decision we make, we have considered certain outcomes. Hence, it could be argued that when buying meat or its products, if sustainability (or any other valued perspective) is our concern, we consider the outcome and the effect this purchase would make, and then decide which meat to get. If theory of reasoned action is applied, it could imply that this is the way decisions are made by people who are not as educated, knowledgeable and informed about the impact of their actions. Thus, it implies the opposite if theory of planned action is applicable, as this involves decision making based on facts. Therefore, it could be divided in two directions, where one is less informed and the other is

informed. This is strongly linked to the information consumer perceives and values, and thus takes into account when making decision.

Reflection on theory

While this theory is very simple and easy to understand, it is quite narrow. This theory is offering only two, very simple, possible ways of making decision, which in reality seems not plausible. One being purely based on experience and the other based on knowledge, does not seem as the only possible decision-making ways. For example, what happens to impulse purchase? These two theories do not apply to such behaviour and therefore this theory is not applicable for all buying behaviour patterns. Moreover, there are other factors that can affect consumer choice, such as, age, income, gender, upbringing etc. Therefore, it can be said that this theory can test only two out of many possible buying behaviour reasons.

Theory of Generations

Karl Mannheim throughout his research of “The problem of generations”, built a theory that showcased how generations are not only based on the age, but how it is even more complex. While we all start from a neutral zone, from a “clean sleight”, and are the same and with no prior understanding of the world, further our experience in life varies and is completely different from person to person (Mannheim, 1970). For example, the author talks about such generation “types” as *concrete groups*, *class position* and *concrete class*. Neither of these have anything to do with only person’s age but with various social factors that create a feeling of belonging to a specific group that is created based on their experience and beliefs. Such factors can be big and impactful historic events, such as mass deportation, mass protests of a specific political regime, Civil Rights Movement, war, oppression, etc. These are just a few of very impactful events that can shape and categorize young people at that very moment. Further, it was stressed by the author that it has to happen at a young age for it to be impactful enough to shape one’s personality (Mannheim, 1970).

However, this theory also states that it is not just generations shaped by their age or historic events and ongoing. As an example, for *concrete groups*, author states that it can be any group that is formed with a concrete idea behind it – school theatre group, democrat party,

German Youth Movement and etc. These can be groups formed within similar age (if it is German Youth Movement, for example), but mostly they are united because of an idea, a shared belief and feeling, and not necessarily their age. However, for the *class position* the concept is more complex (Mannheim, 1970). In this position, the feeling of belonging is very strong but in this case, to a social group/class which can be based on income, education, lifestyle, but less on the time person has been born in. For example, hypothetically speaking, a person that has been born in the Soviet Union and lived the first ten years in it, would be categorized as someone from “Soviet generation”. However, this hypothetic person moved abroad and further was raised in a different culture and within a certain time this person felt that he/she belonged in the new surroundings and had no more any emotional and social connection to Soviet Union and his/her past. Later this hypothetical person attended a university for a specific course, joined a school music band, graduated, started a career and became financially stable, had a family and still feels no connection or resemblance to Soviet Union and the generation that he/she was born with. Now, is the person still from “Soviet generation” or does this person belong to another generation- a social generation?

This is the question that the author brings up. The core idea behind is that throughout life, people can become different, share different values and experiences, making them no longer relatable to the original idea of generations, the one that they were born in. Social factors throughout our lives affect who we are and thus with whom we share the same values and have the feeling of belonging. Big and impactful events at early stages in our life can affect and shape us, but throughout our lives, there are various other social factors that can shape our personalities (Mannheim, 1970). Based on this, people belong to their own created generations, where they feel the sense of belonging and it does not have to necessarily be because of their age and where they were born. Thus, our personalities are affected and shaped by our experiences.

Reflection on theory

The theory of generations provides a good insight to how the feeling of belonging is created and how certain events at a certain time of our lives shape our personalities and thus, our opinions, values, needs and expectations. It provides a complex view of how age defining generation can be just one part of what creates our personalities. This theory shows that

social and cultural aspects are very important to our personalities and thus our buying decisions. Moreover, this theory shows that the initial assumption that different generations might have different buying behaviour is correct. Furthermore, it confirms the idea that people born in Soviet Union can have different experience and thus have different behaviour.

Hypothesis

Based on the literature review and theory gathered above, the hypothesis of this project are as follows:

Hypothesis Nr. 1:

"Consumer attitude towards meat depends on their social and cultural background."

Hypothesis Nr.2:

"Consumer attitude towards sustainability depends on their social and cultural background."

Hypothesis Nr.3:

"Belonging to a certain generation can affect consumer buying behaviour and attitude towards sustainability and meat."

Research Design and Methodology

The following section aims to showcase overall strategy that is developed in order to answer problem formulation and hypothesis of the thesis. To start, I will be introducing philosophical perspective applied throughout this project that will follow with explanation of methods that I will use, thereafter I will introduce research design and lastly, I will be describing collected empirical evidence. In addition, validity and reliability will be discussed, as well as limitations of this project.

Ontological and Epistemological Stance

To begin with, it is important to distinguish what kind of research method I will use in order to create and explain ontological and epistemological stance of this project. Considering my problem formulation and hypothesis established based on theory and literature, it is clear

that the research method for this thesis project is quantitative. The difference this method brings is that the theory is employed by measurement that can be quantified (data). Moreover, this method will test the hypothesis based on theories considered above with gathered data in order to get objective results of the research.

Keeping that in mind, the most significant perspective of philosophy of science is ontological and epistemological stance of the research. Within this, the first explains how the nature of reality is recognized and the second explains how knowledge is observed and perceived (Bryman, 2016). Person sees the world or social reality as an independent construct of reality, somewhat external and objective or the opposite, the world being constructed by social actors which makes it constructivism (Bryman, 2016, p. 32). In the case of this research, I will approach it with objectivist ontological perspective. The world is constructed outside our social reality and we do not influence it, we do not participate in its creation and therefore, we are objective about what we see and experience. As Bryman says: “*Objectivism* is an ontological position that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors. It implies that social phenomena and the categories that we use in everyday discourse have an existence that is independent or separate from actors (Bryman, 2016, p. 33).” This shows that not always we understand and know what we use in our daily routine, it is independent from us. Some of these actions have grown into us, some we are yet to explore, some just exist, and we do not pay attention to them.

The main task of philosophy of science is to show the view of the world, to show the position of researcher and thereafter- the viewpoint of the research itself. This affects the choice of theory researcher use; methods being used and most of all- analysis of the findings. Moreover, understanding ones view of the world helps to see and understand the specific perspective of the world and thus enables to objectively analyse findings. As for the epistemological standpoint, it is either positivist or interpretivist. The first is where the knowledge is constructed based on data and the other is interpreted knowledge that is based on relations and our own constructions. Having said that, and as I am using quantitative research method for this thesis project, I will use positivist epistemology. “*Positivism* is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural

sciences to the study of social reality and beyond (Bryman, 2016, p. 28).” In this case with positivist approach, I will test the theory and hypothesis of this project and that later on will allow to gather scientific explanations of theory and thus confirm or deny hypothesis.

Research design

Research design will introduce the following strategy, approach of the methods that are applied in order to answer the research question and hypothesis. The following will provide an overview of the main purpose of the study, what methods I used, how I approached the research and what are my sources to get an objective standpoint and result of this thesis.

First, I had to decide what kind of research I would like to conduct- exploratory, explanatory or descriptive. As I have previously expressed, I wish to find out how different generations of Latvian people make their buying decisions regarding meat- what they take into consideration, what they value the most, what affects their choice and etc. This makes it clear that the research I am conducting is explanatory. The aim of this research is to find some explanation to consumer behaviour regarding meat consumption- what are the key determinants that make them make their decisions, does growing up in different systems affect it, does nostalgia play a role or is there other explanation to their buying behaviour? Moreover, this research will show where the trend goes through and what the future of meat consumption might look like. Thereafter, this research can provide a market insight for meat producing companies showing what is it that the future customer will want.

Second, it has to be distinguished what kind of approach for this research I will use- inductive or deductive, or both. Inductive approach implies using secondary or existing data while the second implies using existing theory to analyse and thereafter explain the phenomenon of the world or in this specific case- meat consumption (Bryman, 2016, p. 24). As this research is about to study different behaviours, choices, influences and opinions, using existing theory and confirming or denying it with primary data collected from survey, it is clear that this research is with a deductive approach.

Third, the strategy of the research has to be established in order to see and understand how I will gather and use the empirical evidence to analyse the problem and confirm or deny the hypothesis of this research. There are several strategies that can take place in order to provide empirical evidence, such as, case studies, experiments, surveys, interviews, etc (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). As mentioned before, this is a quantitative research which means that the most obvious and clear way of data collecting is through surveys. This strategy will provide me with most diverse and objective data, which will enable me to quantify my findings and thus give scientific explanations to theories. This also follows within the lines of objectivist ontology and positivist epistemology, taking the researcher away from interpretations.

Last, to analyse the gathered data, I will use various statistical techniques, such as Liker scale, pie chart, graphics etc. This will help me to better represent my findings and it will be used to help and assess the different perspectives of respondents. To help with structuring the analysis, I will use key indicators throughout the research, mainly, throughout the survey. These indicators will help to find common themes within each generation. Key indicators for this research are- age, education, income, gender and nostalgia as another factor that may take a role in decision making. Nostalgia is not a social factor, but it can play a role in our decision making by creating a positive or negative, perhaps, false emotion. I believe that these indicators are different for each generation and thus might have deciding factors on their meat buying behaviour. To better explain my approach, I have created a visualization that you can see below, based on the theory of reasoned action and planned behaviour.

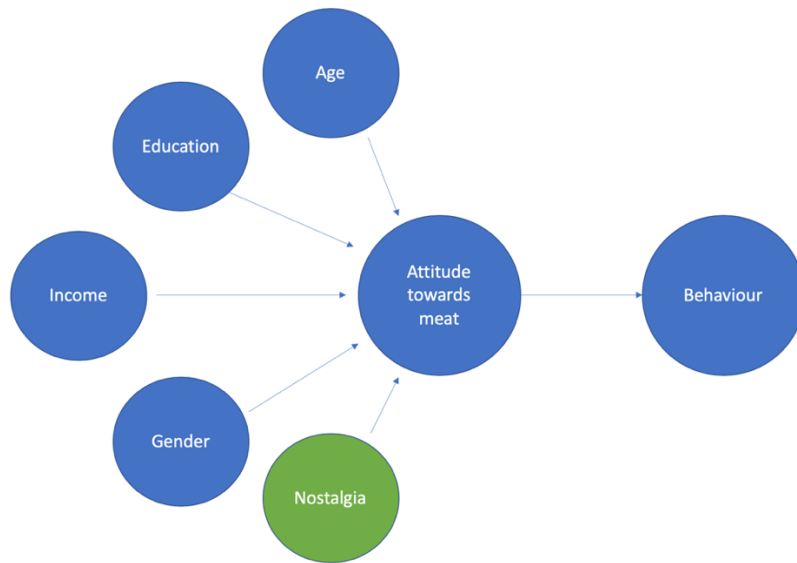


Figure 3: Own creation, based on *Theory of Planned Behaviour and Reasoned Action*

As it is seen by the chosen philosophy and methodology, this thesis project is mainly based on quantitative data gathered from surveys. Quantitative data helps to be objective and see the facts that can be generalized. However, many researchers see this approach lacking measurability and stating that it is providing questionable reality (Saunders et al., 2007). Of course, this research could be conducted through in-depth interviews where respondents could express their viewpoints more clearly, however, that would lead to interpretations and limit the scientific and numeral facts of findings which was not the aim of this research.

Quantitative Research

Considering the ontological and epistemological position of this project, I am going to use a quantitative research method. By using this method, I will conduct a survey that will be given to both generations of Latvian people. The survey will be made keeping in focus multiple key indicators that determine a person's social reality and hence affect their buying decisions: age, education, knowledge, income and gender. This will help to measure the concept and findings. I will use one of the non-probability sampling methods, which in this case will be convenience sampling (Bryman, 2016, p. 201). This way of sampling gives a higher response rate which in turn will give more interesting answers to analyse. That means that originally, I will give the survey to a small group of people with a request to share it with their network and thereafter the sample size will grow, as the person will again ask someone else to fill the

survey and so on (Bryman, 2016, p. 201). In this case, I will use my personal account in social network Facebook. To be able to generalize gathered data, I will divide respondents in two groups- Soviet generation and Post-Soviet generation. However, throughout analysis, these two generations will be taken only as a starting point, as a measurement. Another perspective that will be considered, will be social generations- respondents belonging to certain education level, income level and etc. With this I will test my hypothesis.

The survey was conducted in Latvian as it is my mother tongue and so it is to the respondents. This fact enabled me to make the survey authentic and understandable for Latvians. This also gives me the opportunity to understand the specific formulations, ideas and suggestions that are given from the gathered information from desk research and the respondents. The survey was conducted for one week (from 15th of April to 22nd of April), letting it freely flow through social networks. Within this time, it reached 120 respondents, which is more than initially expected. The survey reached people that were born in 1937 to 1999. Survey consists of 18 questions where the last one is open question for respondent thoughts that arose while they filled out the survey. Survey is divided in two parts where the first is to gather information about key indicators and get the understanding of social background regarding generation aspect, and the second is for meat eaters (the first part of survey ends with a question of whether or not respondent consumes meat). Questions are in a growing order that are based on the previous question in order for respondents to see the flow and not get confused. Questions include many topics, such as, frequency of meat consumption, evaluating the quality, knowledge of eco labelling, marketing influence, trust, sustainability etc. Questions are either single choice for those where I want to know one clear answer and Likert scale for those where I want to see priorities and tendencies. To conduct the surveys, I used Google Forms.

Sampling

To distinguish research focus, I have chosen to divide generations in two groups- the ones that were born before 1973 and hence became of age in Soviet Latvia, and the other group is the ones that were born after 1973 and thus became of age in independent Latvia and accordingly had lower influence of Soviet ideology than what has influenced older generation.

To be exact, Latvia declared its independence from Soviet Union in 1990, however, it was internationally accepted only on 23rd of August 1991 (Krieviņa, 2012, p. 181). That means, that people who were born in 1973, at that time, were 18 years old. This sampling is based on the fact that our personalities are shaped in relatively early stage of our life and that later affects the choices we make (Caspi & Roberts, 2001; Mannheim, 1970). In this case, I want to see if the Soviet time has affected how older generation today choose their meat products and what they prioritize when making a decision comparing to younger generation, whose personality is shaped in independent Latvia, where choices and possibilities are available on every corner. Having this in mind, I wanted to have various respondents form different age groups to allow me to see the connection between these two age groups and thus draw conclusions. Moreover, based on the literature, the respondents later on can be divided in social generation groups based on their social background- income, education, living situation and etc, giving insights into consumer profile and what can be done within field of marketing. Here you can see how the sample is divided:

Count of respondents	Meat eaters	Female	Male	Born before 1973	Born after 1973	Have completed higher education (Bachelor and Master's degree)
120	113	83	37	33	87	82

Table 1: Own creation

As it can be seen in the table above, in total there was 120 respondents from which 113 consumes meat, hence, there were seven vegetarians who did not participate in the second part of analysis. Out of 120 respondents, 83 are female and 37 are male. Out of 113 meat consuming respondents, 76 are female and 37 are male. Respondent age range starts from 1937 and ends with 1999, meaning that the oldest respondent currently is 83 years old and the youngest is 21 years old. Out of 120 respondents, there are 33 respondents who were

born before 1973, and 87 respondents who were born after 1973. Out of 120 respondents, 82 have completed higher education either in Bachelor or Master's level.

The income of the respondents (based on the data from Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, 2019) is as follows:

- Minimal salary (430 EUR gross)- 3 respondents;
- Higher than minimal salary, but lower than average salary (less than 1091 EUR gross)- 21 respondent;
- Average salary (1091 EUR gross)- 23 respondents;
- Higher than average salary (more than 1091 EUR gross)- 52 respondents;
- Pension- 14 respondents;
- Scholarship and other social benefits- 7 respondents.

Analysis

To analyse my findings and be objective about the data gathered, I will use statistical tools based on key indicators, such as diagrams, where I can use bar charts, pie charts, Likert scale, etc. To be able to change the key data and see connections between variables, I will use MS Excel and Pivot tables. I have chosen this method as it is relatively easy to interpret and understand, moreover, easy to explain (Bryman, 2016, p. 337). As variables I will use key indicators that were previously mentioned. This will enable me to draw conclusions from results of surveys and give an objective and transparent conclusion of problem formulation and hypotheses, not putting my subjective interpretations and perceptions into use.

For the sake of analysis, I will automatically exclude vegetarians and vegans as they are not able to have a complete insight of meat consumption for questions provided in the survey.

Validity, Reliability and Limitations

To be able to assume that the research will be authentic and that the answers conducted will be close to the truth and reality, the view of validity and reliability needs to be assessed. To evaluate reliability of this research, it is of great importance to assess possible researcher

biases, as it can influence research result and thus mean that in different circumstances and with a different researcher using another method, the results would be different (Saunders et al., 2007).

As this research is of quantitative nature, there is less room for personal biases as the analysis are built upon quantitative data. However, this also means that there is more room for human error as there is no one to help the respondent to understand the question, if it seems unclear. Thus, a questionnaire cannot be too long in order for respondent to not get bored, tired or annoyed, otherwise it can interfere with the completion of questionnaire. Therefore, using this method might also mean incomplete answers and not the whole spectrum of questions that might interest the researcher. Moreover, using closed questions due to quantitative approach, it can limit respondent answers and researchers understanding of the response as there is no room for explanations (Bryman, 2016, p. 250).

Project analysis are limited with what Google Forms and MS Excel allows me to do within their systems. While it will be easy to visualize and understand the graphics of this research, these numbers might not show the whole truth. However, numbers will clearly represent the choice respondent made and thus it will represent consumer behaviour.

Analysis

The section of analysis is with one sole purpose- to analyse gathered data and to make data-based conclusions considering problem statement and hypothesis. In this section I will provide visualised data from surveys that present main findings based on key indicators. The findings will be analysed based on the adapted theory model that was presented in theory section. Each category will be analysed from “attitude towards meat” perspective, which evolves in a specific behaviour. Further, the theory of generations will be kept in mind to answer and showcase the problem formulation and hypothesis.

Before starting the section of analysis, it is important to provide the age distribution of respondents that took part in this research (see Figure 4). As you can see in the graphic below, the majority of respondents are born after 1973 (87 respondents vs 33 respondents).

However, there is a big number of respondents that are somewhere in the middle- who still experienced Soviet regime even though they might not remember it as vividly and do not have such a strong direct impact from it on their lives. Having said that, based on the literature reviewed for this research, this middle group, born from 1973 to 1983 (16 respondents), can feel the aftermath of Soviet regime if the events of the past have been impactful enough to shape their personality. Moreover, it can also depend on their feeling of belonging to other (social) generations that have occurred later in their lives.

Moreover, there is a big peak of respondents from 1994 (23 respondents), which can be explained by the fact that I was born in 1994. When I shared the questionnaire on my Facebook platform, these were people who saw this post the most as they use the platform more than older generation, as well as they might have more time to fill out questionnaires. Even though it is a big proportion of the respondent sample, it is still valid as respondents from 1994 have a different background in education, living situation, income and location, thus it can give a good insight of meat buying behaviour. These 23 respondents are a big part of this research, however, their mentioned background divides them in other social generations and thus, even though they are the same age, their feeling of belonging can be to different social groups. Furthermore, they have been raised differently, by parents whose feeling of belonging and past experience varies and are not all the same, thus some respondents can have a stronger opinion and effect of Soviet Union than others. Therefore, these respondents should not be dismissed because proportionally they are more than others.

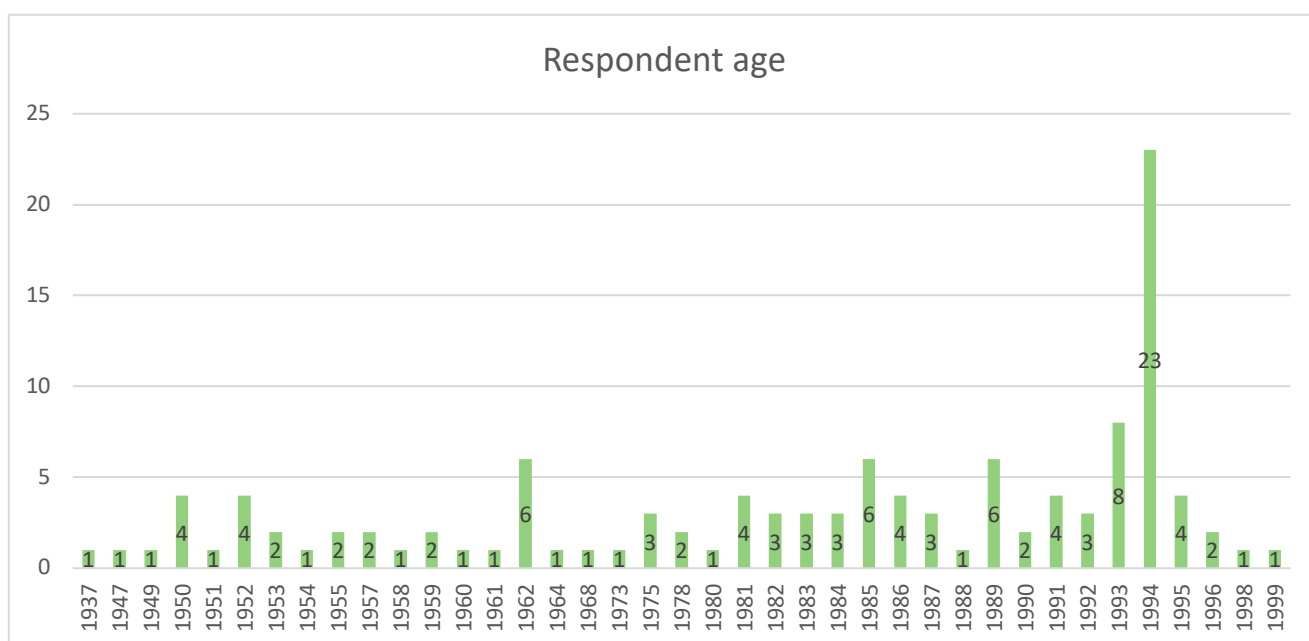


Figure 4: Own creation

As it is seen in the graph above, age range starts from 1937 and ends with 1999, meaning that the oldest participant currently is 83 years old. The youngest participant is 21 years old. This sample demography offers a broad perspective of various opinions from different age groups.

Income

While all key indicators are important, it is crucial to establish the connection between income and education, and, income and age beforehand. This is due to a fact that both of these are important measurements when it comes to other key indicators.

Income and education

As it is showed in the graph below, respondents with Master's degree (45 respondents out of 120) mostly have average or higher than average salary. Exceptions are respondents that are either still studying and thus live on scholarships or other social benefits or are retired and receives pension. As for Bachelor's degree (37 respondents out of 120), respondents with this educational level have a little bit lower salary, while still majority (73 respondents out of 120) receives average or higher than average salary. However, for this education level, the number of lower than average salary is higher than Master's degree holders and, moreover, some still

receives minimal salary. For respondents with first level professional education (16 respondents out of 120) salary is average or higher than average, with some exceptions. Further, respondents with unfinished higher education (12 respondents out of 120) and respondents with secondary school diploma (10 respondents) have lower salary than the previous educational groups. These results confirm that people with higher education have higher salary.

Income and education

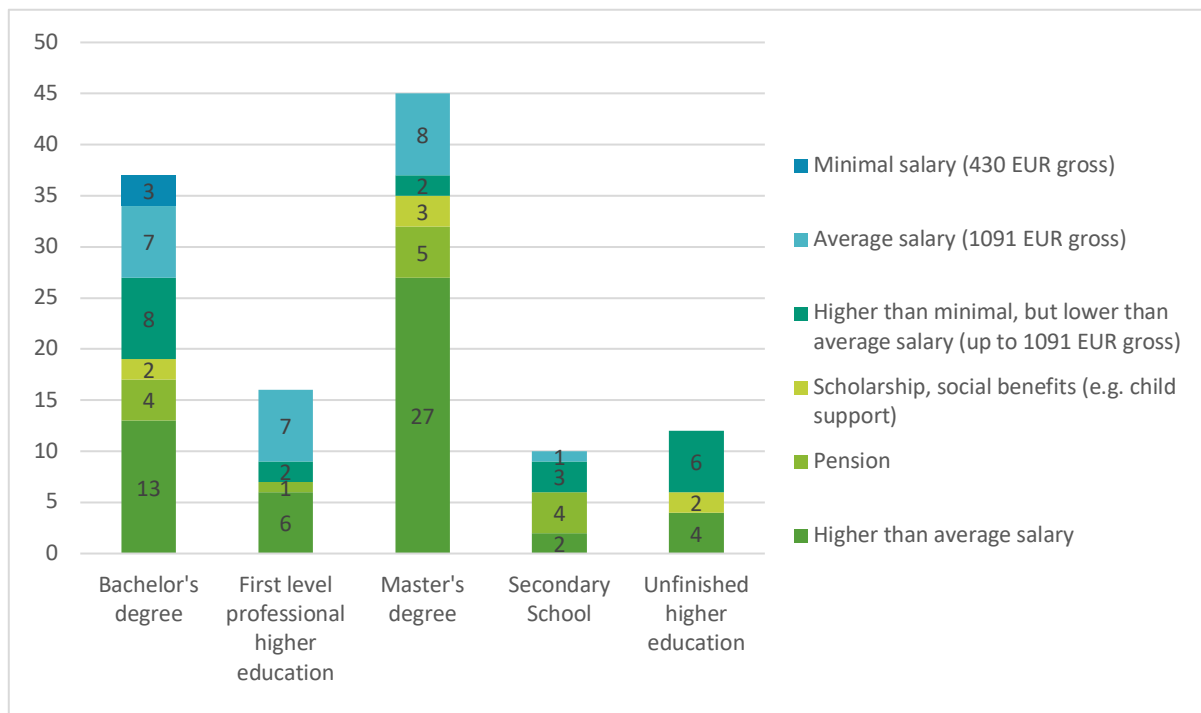


Figure 5: Own creation

Income and age

As we can see in the graph below, higher than average salary is mostly for respondents born after 1973. However, a factor that affects this result is that many respondents from the other generation are already retired and thus have a lower income or lower official income (14 respondents out of 120). Meanwhile, we can see that respondents that are living from scholarships and other social benefits are respondents born after 1973 (7 respondents out of 120), as well as respondents living on pension are those who were born before 1973. These results show that mostly with higher than average and average income are respondents that were born after 1973 (62 respondents out of 120).

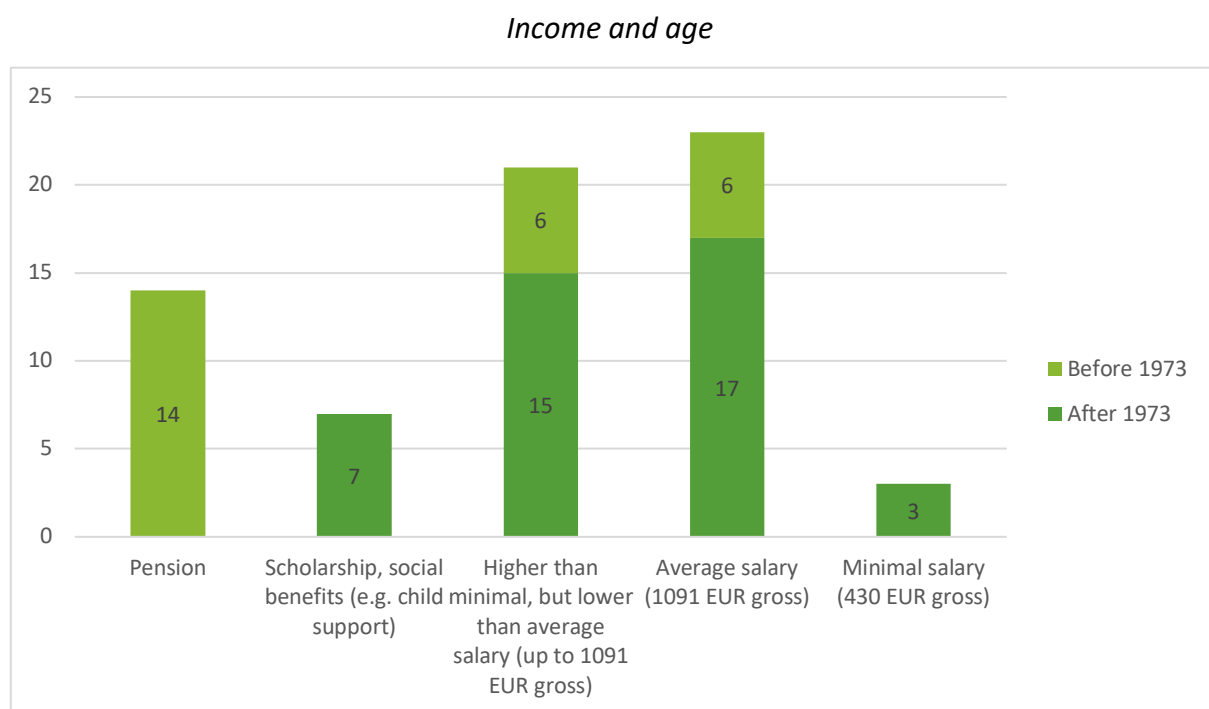


Figure 6: Own creation

Based on both income graphs, it can be concluded that generation that was born before 1973 has a lower income than the generation born after 1973. Furthermore, people with higher education have higher income, which also means that younger generation, on paper, is more educated and with more money to spend.

Age

This section is focused on age as a key indicator, which is the main core of this thesis project. Finding out whether or not there is some major differences or similarities between both age groups can help with following section and in the end- draw conclusions and give answers to problem formulation and hypothesis.

Age and consumption of meat

This question was made to find out how often both generations consume meat. The question was addressed because of assumption that perhaps younger generation, used to different upbringing, bigger variety of food choices, might have different eating habits. Further, my findings are presented in table below and thus it will be explained.

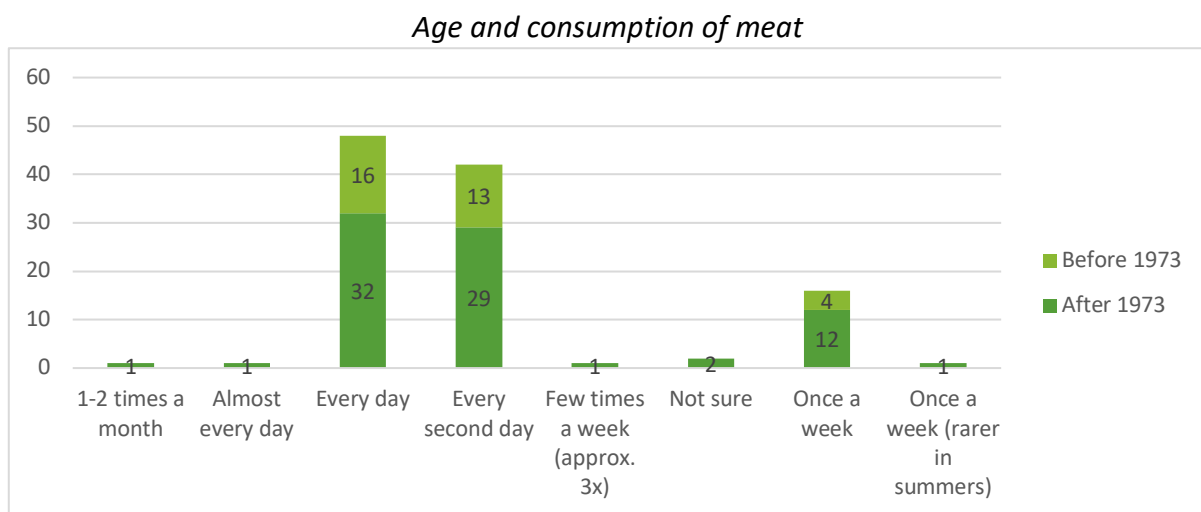


Figure 7: Own creation

As it is seen in the table above, the generation that was born before 1973, consumes meat at least “once a week” (4 respondents out of 33), but mostly “every day” (16 respondents out of 33) or “every second day” (13 respondents out of 33). On the meantime, generation that was born after 1973, vary with their meat consumption frequency. While the majority consumes meat “every day” or “every second day” (61 respondents out of 87), a big part of respondents could be seen as flexitarians where they consume meat only “once a week” (12 respondents out of 87), a “few times a month” (1 respondent) and some are “not sure” (2 respondents), which shows that they do not consume meat that often.

Even though we can see differences in answers of both generations, we can see that the majority of both respondent groups consume meat every day or every second day (90 respondents out of 113).

Age and sustainability

This question was addressed to respondents to find out their perception of sustainability and to see how important it is to each age group. To better evaluate the importance of this question, I used Likert scale where 1 means “not at all important” and 5 is “very important”. As the question of sustainability is a rather new topic and might be more known amongst younger generation, the results shows a rather interesting outcome.

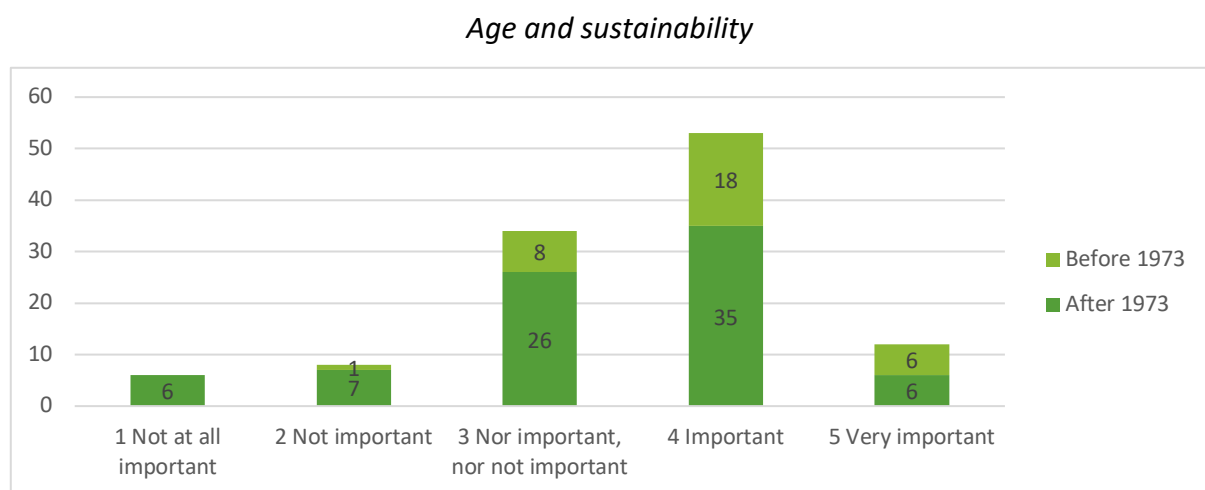


Figure 8: Own creation

As you can see in the graph above, in general, sustainability is important to all generations. However, an interesting outcome is the fact that sustainability is “not at all important” or “not important” to the generation that was born after 1973 (13 respondents out of 87). The same reason could apply to “nor important, nor not important” answer, where younger generation has picked this as their answer (26 respondents out of 87) more than older generation (8 respondents out of 33). However, I would like to point out that this might be in reflection to income and price of meat and meat products. But, at the same time, it is seen that the answer “very important” is equally common for both generations (6 and 6 respondents). Answer

“important” was chosen both from generation born before 1973 (18 respondents out of 33) and born after 1973 (35 respondents out of 87).

While these results show that there is a bigger tendency for younger generation to have less apprehension for sustainability, there is no clear answer why. However, next questions might give better understanding of what the reasons for that are.

Age and country of origin

As sustainability is very often related to the place where meat is produced, how it is transported and how long it is kept in the storage or freezer, country of origin is a very important factor.

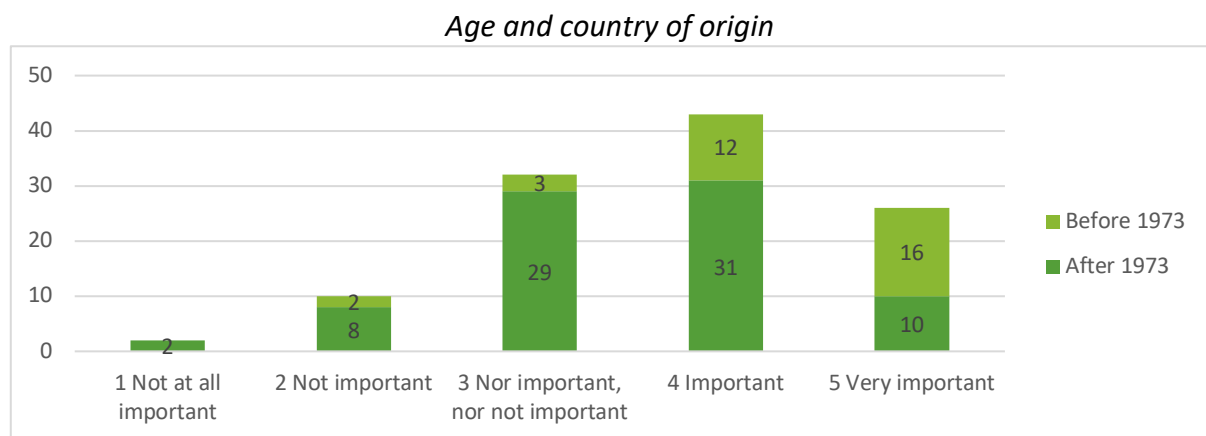


Figure 9: Own creation

As you can see in the graphic above, the question of where the meat is produced is very important to both generations. While the generation born after 1973 has more respondents stating that the fact of origin of meat is “not important” or not relevant (8 respondents out of 33) when it comes to the meat they purchase and consume, there is equally high number of this generation who state that this is “important” (31 respondents out of 87) and “very important” (10 respondents out of 87) to them. Furthermore, based on the results, it is clear that the generation that was born before 1973 takes this question seriously and really do care where their meat comes from and much rather buy locally produced meat. This generation

mostly (28 out of 33) has chosen answers “important” (12 respondents) and “very important” (16 respondents).

Of course, answers to this question are affected by many other factors, for example, price and location. As some respondent commented on the open question at the end of questionnaire, the ones that live in the countryside sometimes have limited choice and thus might not be able to buy local products. It is, however, important to point out that this problem is mostly for very small villages where often it is only “car shop” where they get their groceries. However, a clearer image of the reasons behind will be seen after all of the questions will be analysed.

Age and meat content

The question of meat content is arguably important to everyone as people in general would like to have quality food. However, there is a small difference seen in the answers. As you can see in the graph below, the content of meat is “important” (44 respondents out of 113) and “very important” (58 respondents out of 113) to both generations. Further, number of respondents that do not care about it or do not see it as something important is higher for younger generation (9 respondents out of 87). However, this, again, is due to the income as a factor, as higher quality meat costs noticeably more than meat substitutes or meat that is mixed with more water etc.

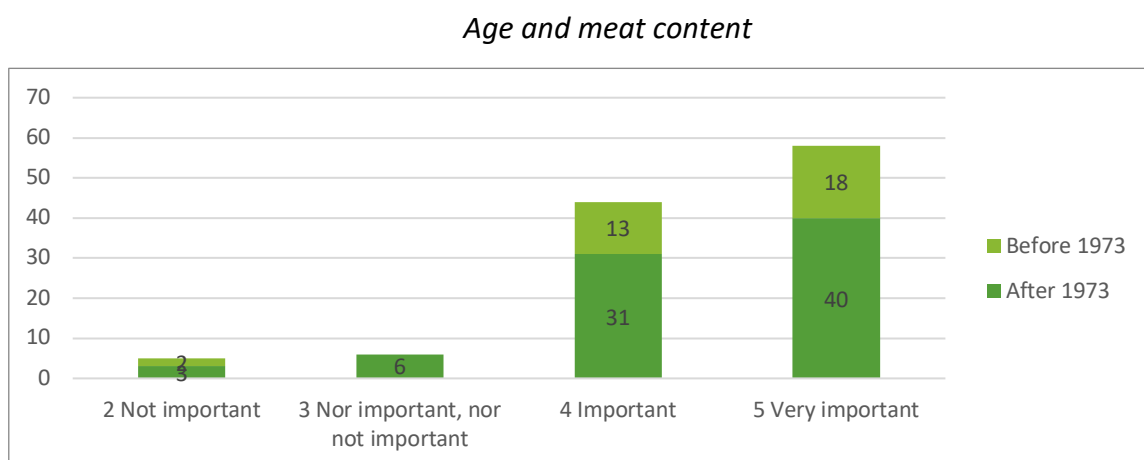


Figure 10: Own creation

Age and animal welfare

Quality of meat often depends on the animal welfare. As we can see in the graph below, animal welfare is important to both generations, as 37 respondents (out of 113) stated that it is “important” and 21 respondents (out of 113) stated that it is “very important”. However, there is an interesting result- older generation seems to look at this matter as a more important factor when choosing their meat, as it is mostly younger generation that state that it is “not important” (8 respondents out of 113) and “not at all important” (7 respondents out of 113). Based on the answers to the open question at the end of the questionnaire, respondents born before 1973 have a big respect and caring attitude towards animals and their products. One of the respondents stated in this open question, that she believes that nowadays people have more time and respect towards their cow or pig than they had in Soviet times. Moreover, she thinks that the food that is given to animals today is better than it used to be. This reminiscing shows that previous experience, good or bad, can influence the opinion and attitude towards meat. However, this opinion should be investigated separately.

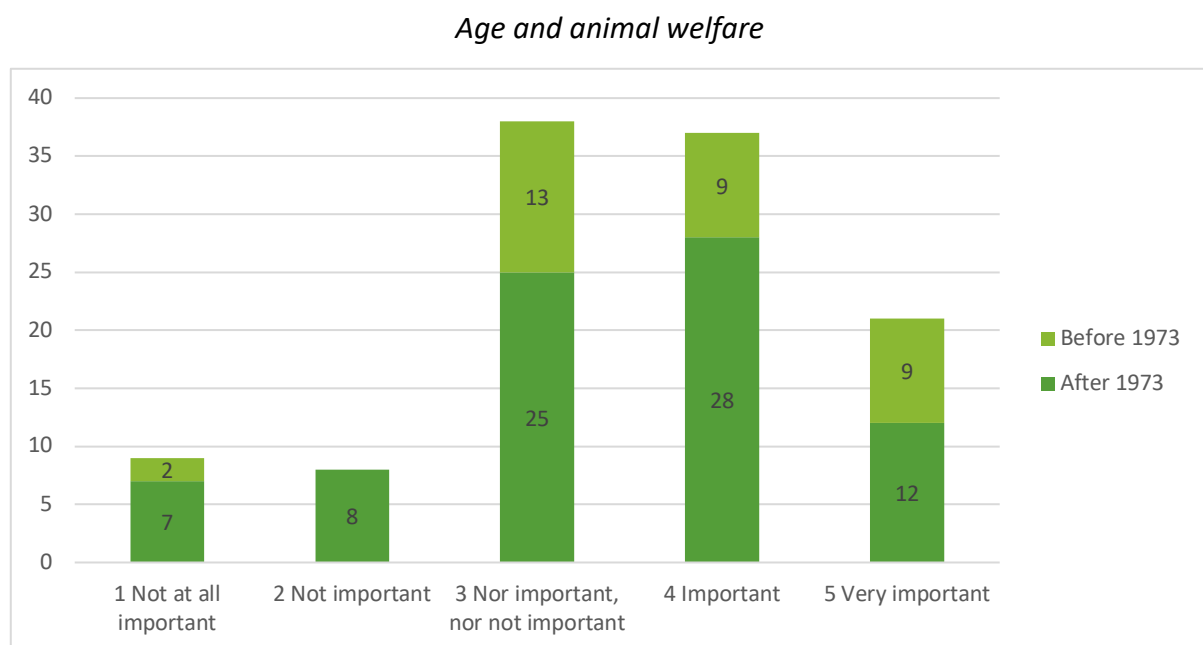


Figure 11: Own creation

As it is showed in the graph above, there is a big proportion of respondents who state that this is neither important nor not important (38 respondents out of 113). However, in general,

the results for this question show that animal welfare is something that both generations consider as a reason to buy or not to buy meat.

Age and product labels

Another important part of this research was to find out how important part in meat consumption plays labels. In this case, my question was addressed toward eco-labels, grown locally labels and meat with no antibiotics. This question was given to see respondent knowledge about labels and what is said on packaging as well as to see if they care about labelling and if respondents even notice it. For this question I offered four different labels that are most commonly put on food products in Latvia (see in Picture 1). Based on that, I asked whether or not these labels influence their choice of meat and meat products (Zemkopības Ministrija, 2020).



Picture 1: Own creation, based on Zemkopības Ministrija data and AS Putnu Fabrika Ķekava (2020)

Age and product labels

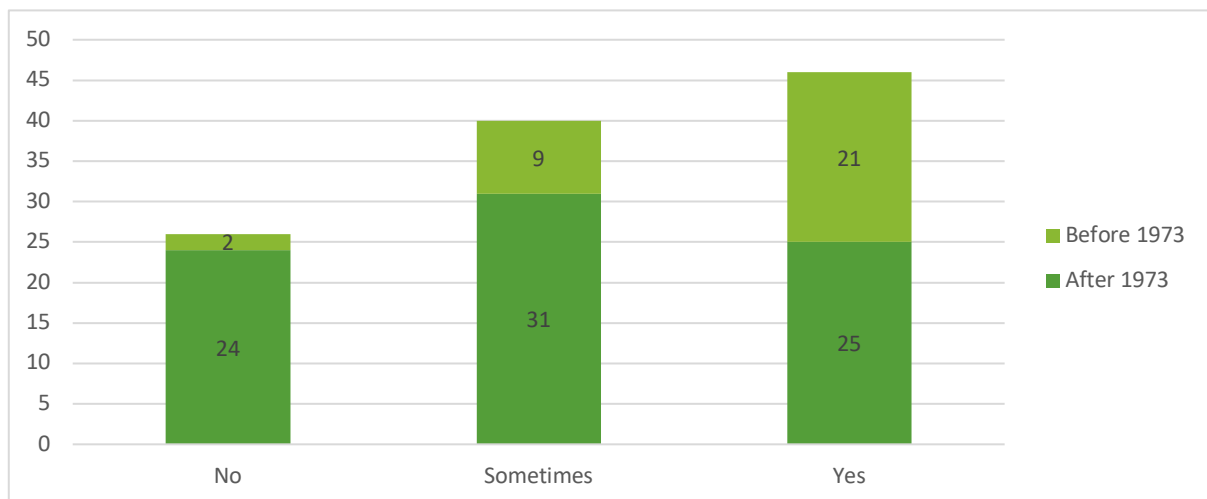


Figure 12: Own creation

As you can see in the graph above, it affects majority of respondents (46 respondents out of 113). While it is very obvious that the generation born after 1973 is affected by it less, stated “no” by 24 respondents (out of 33), the older generation seems to be paying more attention to labels. As the previous question showed, memory is not playing a big role, and that explains results of this question, as the given label examples are only seen in products produced in Latvia and it is a “quality stamp” by which you can recognize products in the store.

However, a big part of respondents has answered with “sometimes” (40 respondents out of 113), which means that it is certain products or brands that they choose based on this. This also means that there is a certain loyalty built for certain brands or the opposite, they might not trust it. Again, products with these labels often cost more than products without it and hence, products with lower quality. This also explains why younger generation might not be directly affected by these labels as the income for some of them, at the moment, might not allow to purchase such products.

Age and marketing

This question was addressed to find out whether or not both of these generations trust what is said in the commercials regarding meat, its content and quality. Answers to this would show

the effect marketing has on consumers and how it works, and thus, if this will work in the future, depending on the younger generation's answers.

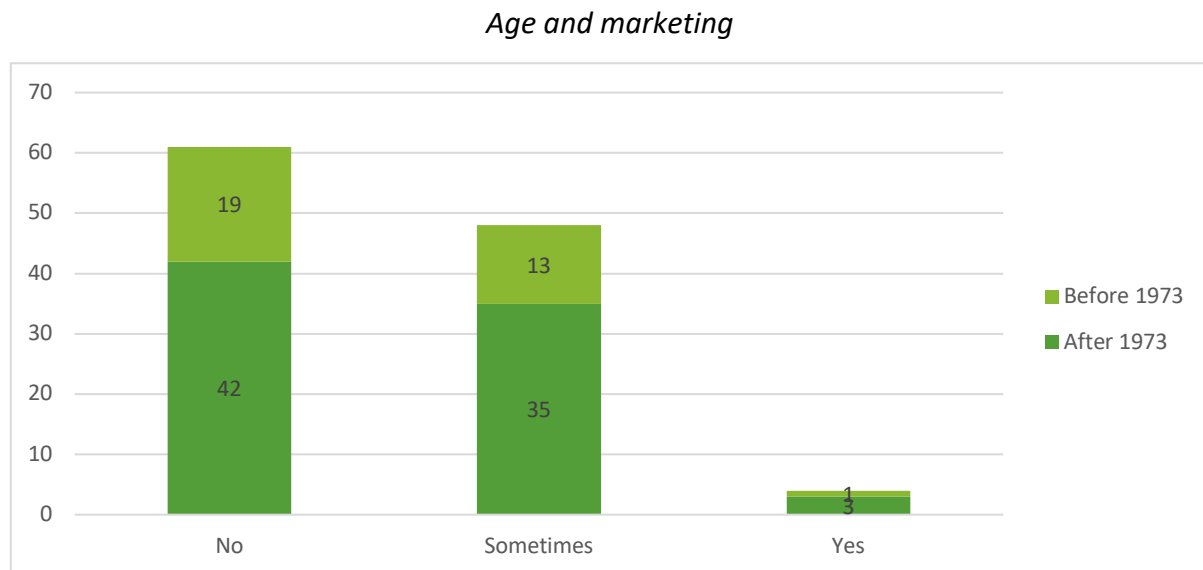


Figure 13: Own creation

As it is seen in the graph above, the results clearly show that marketing campaigns regarding meat products work on respondents only “sometimes” (48 respondents out of 113) or never (61 respondents out of 113). Comparing to the respondent count who stated that they believe them (4 respondents out of 113), there is visible a huge trust issue towards marketing. Moreover, it shows that both generations do not trust what is said in commercials or do trust, but only sometimes. Of course, it could be only regarding meat products, but this fact is alarming for marketing in general.

Age and price

Prior making this questionnaire, it was clear that one of the questions should be about price. To better understand the importance of price when buying and consuming meat products, the question was made in Likert scale.

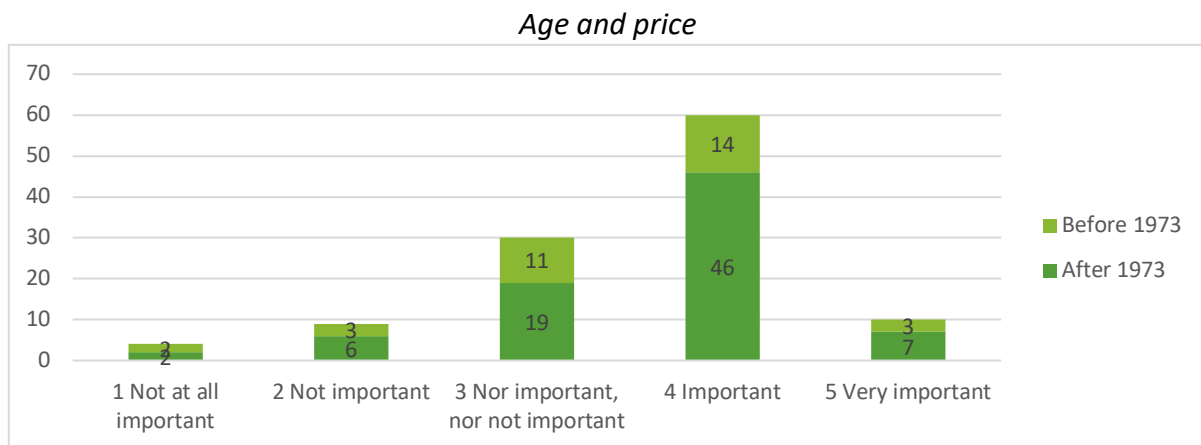


Figure 14: Own creation

As the graph above shows, the price is important for both generations (60 respondents out of 113). However, it is “very important” to a relatively small part of respondents (10 respondents out of 113), which indicates that this is not the main decision-making factor. It can be seen that it is “important” to more than half of younger generation respondents (46 respondents out of 87). Mostly, of course, it is based on the income, however, even respondents with income that is higher than average still care about the price of their meat, as it will be seen in the following sections of this analysis. Nonetheless, a relatively big proportion of respondents do not see price as an important aspect regarding meat- 4 respondents stating, “not at all important”, 9 stating “not important” and 30 stating that it is “nor important, nor not important” (out of 113). This indicates that primarily consumers care about such aspects as taste.

Education

The analysis section of education as a key indicator will be made the same way as section of age but focusing on the main determinants that could be affected by the level of education and thus- knowledge. Prior this section, it is important to point out that most of the respondents have finished higher education either in Bachelor’s or Master’s level.

Education and consumption of meat

The level of education very often is the determinant of how we look at certain things, how we consume things and how often we do that. Moreover, it is very common that people with higher education have a higher income, which means that they are able to buy and consume more products than a student. However, I wanted to find out if knowledge that comes from education in an educational institution makes our habits different than a knowledge we have gained throughout life, reading articles, watching the news or simply using logical thinking and past experience. That is why the following question was given to the respondents- how often do you consume meat?

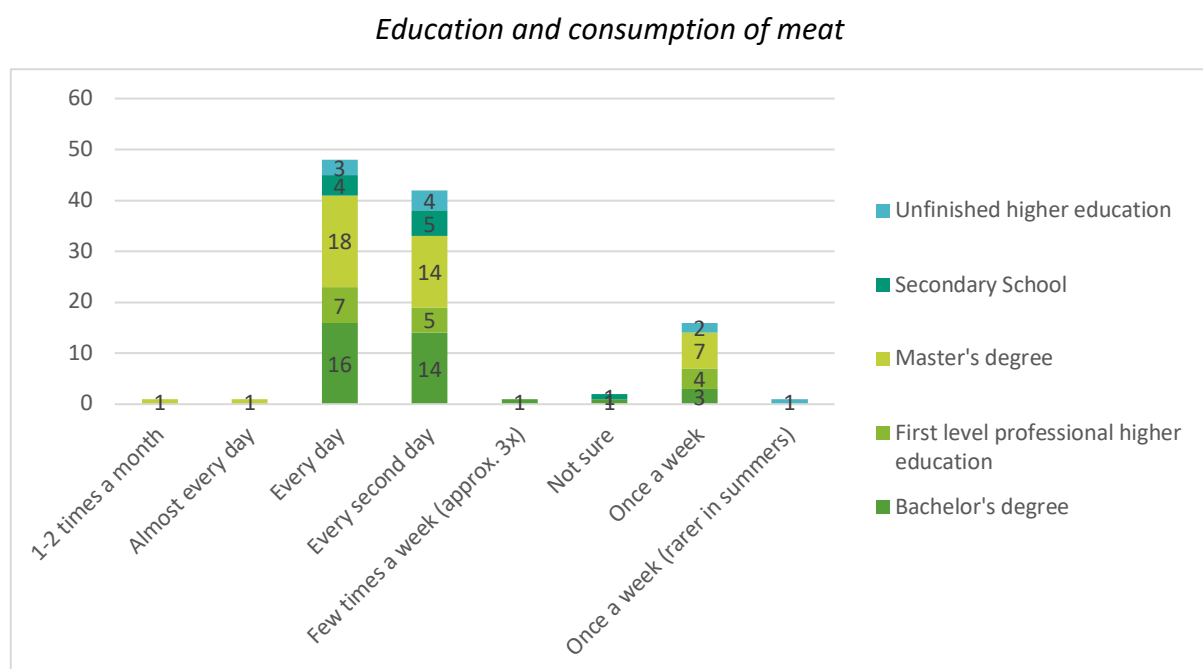


Figure 15: Own creation

As you can see in the graph above, the frequency of meat consumption for answers “every day” (48 respondents out of 113) and “every second day” (42 respondents out of 113) is very even- all education levels have confirmed that they eat meat “almost every day”. However, looking through all of the answers, it is noticeable that respondents with Bachelor and Master’s degree are prone to eat meat even less than the others. But even though there can be seen a tendency, it is not yet clear if education level affects our eating habits.

When comparing these results with same question that was analysed through age perspective, it can be concluded that respondents that mostly answered that they eat meat “every day” (34 out of 48 respondents) or “every second day” (28 out of 42 respondents) are respondents that were born after 1973 and have completed higher education.

Education and sustainability

The same as with consumption, it is easy to assume that the more educated people are, the more aware they are of the footprint meat production leaves on the environment. That is why this question was addressed to respondents- to find out if in fact people in Latvia with higher education care more (or know more) about sustainability than the ones without. To better see the importance and let them evaluate various aspects, this question was given in a Likert scale.

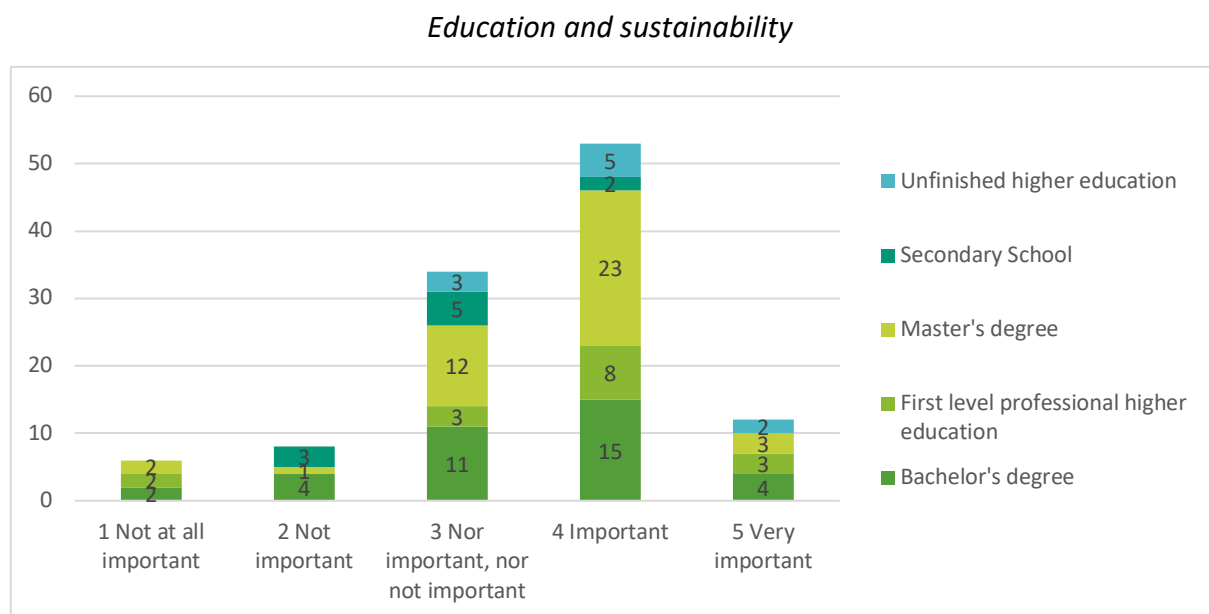


Figure 16: Own creation

As we can see in the graph above, it is “very important” (12 respondents out of 113) to all education levels except secondary school level, where no respondent state that. This could be due to two factors, one that people with higher education have higher income, two, it also can show that the knowledge about sustainability mainly comes after secondary school level education- either higher education or life experience in general. In the meantime, we can see

that it is more likely to not care about sustainability or not pay attention to it for people with lower education level. Only 2 respondents of Bachelor level, 2 of Master's and 2 with first level higher education state "not at all important". Meanwhile, "not important" is stated by 4 Bachelor level respondents, 3 secondary school respondents and 1 Master's level respondent. Further, 34 respondents see it "nor important, nor not important", showing that sustainability is not their priority, but it is good to support it. Furthermore, it is "important" to a big proportion of respondents (53 respondents out of 113). The results in general show that sustainability is an important factor that affects consumer buying behaviour.

Education and country of origin

As it was showed in the previous section where age was analysed, it was clear that older generation saw country of origin as an important factor when buying meat and meat products. Now it is interesting to see if education also has a strong influence on this matter.

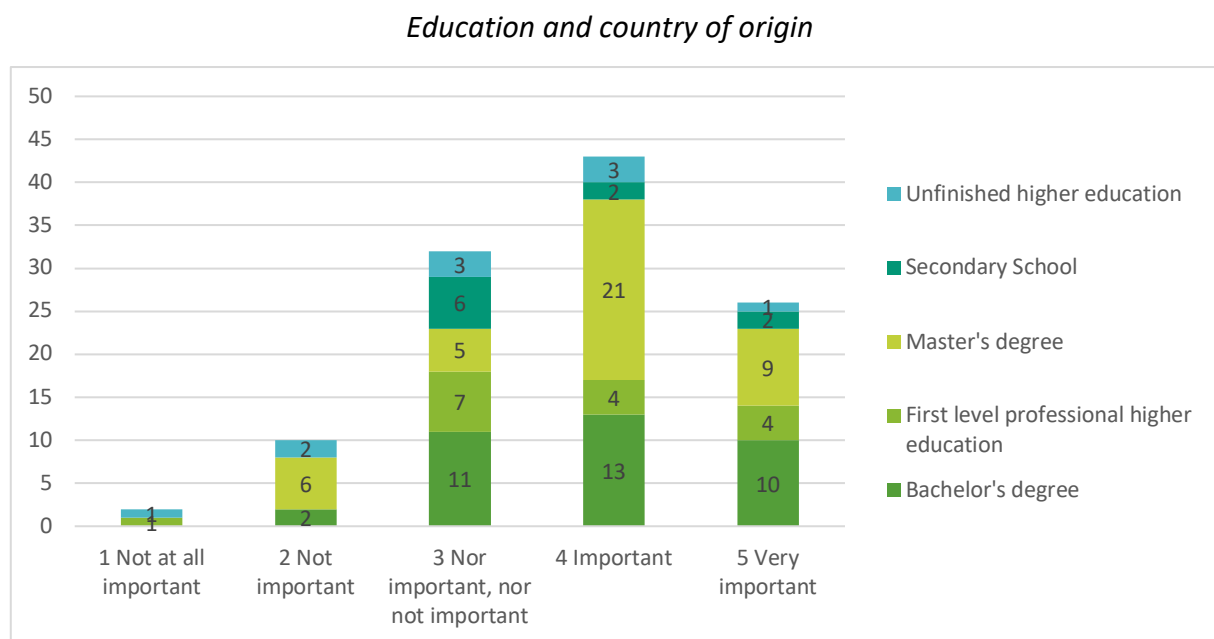


Figure 17: Own creation

As it is shown in the graph above, country of origin is mostly "important" or "very important" to respondents with higher education (23 respondents with Bachelor degree and 30 respondents with Master's degree). However, on the contrary, it is also "not important" to a high number of Master degree holders comparing to other education diploma holders (6

respondents out of 10 who stated “not important”). This is to compare that it is “very important” to people with secondary school education (2 respondents) while none of this level education respondents stated that it is “not important”. This phenomenon is hard to explain, but it could mean that in general, this fact is not a determinant influenced by education level but more likely by different outside factors. As it was mentioned before in the age section, if people live in the countryside, not always they are able to purchase locally produced meat and meat products. This means that for country of origin, the main point that affects the choice for consumers is availability. Furthermore, it means that country of origin can change the attitude towards certain meat products.

Education and animal welfare

The same as sustainability, animal welfare nowadays is a very popular topic. It is not only vegans or vegetarians who care about how animals are treated, but it is also meat eaters. Of course, how animal is treated affects the quality of meat and its products, but it is also a matter of perspective and values. As mostly it is bio and eco producers that advertise and tell people that they treat animals well, it also means that this type of meat costs more. And as it was established earlier, the more educated person is, the more likely he/she will earn more money and be able to afford this type of meat. However, money does not mean that a person cares more about how animal has been treated. This question is about knowledge and priorities and thus it is interesting to see the results of it.

Education and animal welfare

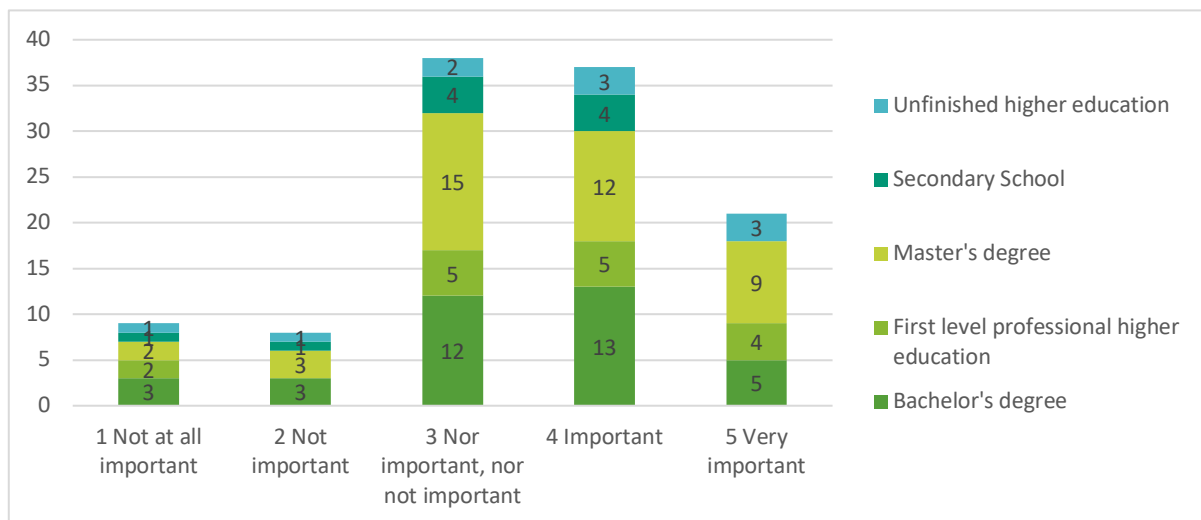


Figure 18: Own creation

Based on the graph above, it can be concluded that the main difference is that people with lower education level care less about animal welfare when it comes to buying meat and meat products. However, there is equally high number of respondents who state it as “important” (37 respondents out of 113) as is the number for those who state it as “nor important nor not important” (38 respondents out of 113). For both of these answers, majority of respondents are with higher education- 27 respondents for “nor important, nor not important” and 25 for “important”. It shows that opinion about this does not depend on level of education but more on priorities. This, again, indicates that there are other factors that might be more important when buying meat. Nonetheless, animal welfare affects consumer attitude towards meat products and consumption of it, but it depends on the alternatives displayed at the moment.

Education and product labels

As it was showed in the age section, younger generation pays less attention to given labels than the generation born before 1973. However, it was not clear why and that is why the perspective of education is particularly interesting.

Education and product labels

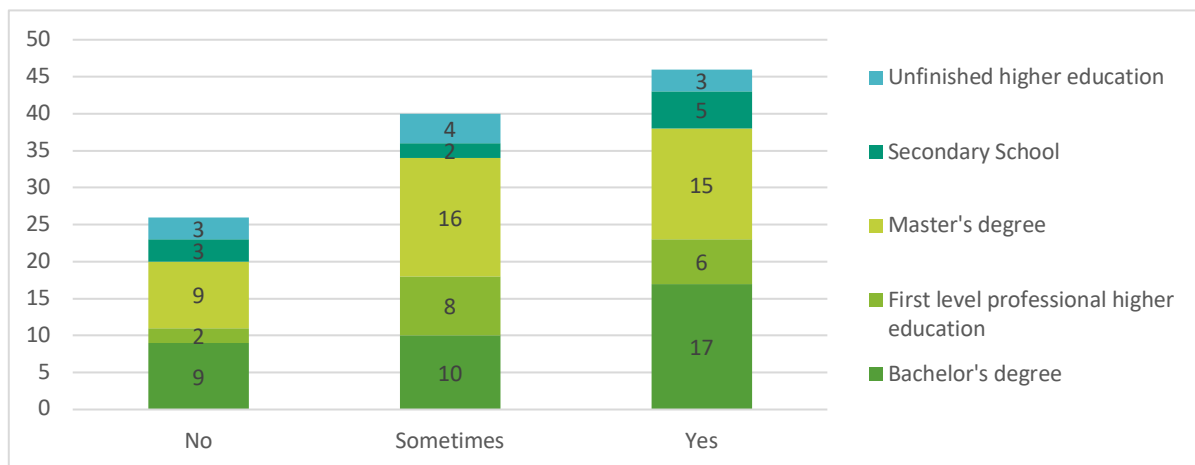


Figure 19: Own creation

As it is shown in the graph above, more educated people tend to pay attention to the labels on meat products (and probably products in general) more than people with lower education level. This could be related to the fact that people might not know what these labels stand for, while people with higher education might show a bigger interest in what it means and why it is there in general. Moreover, these labels make the product stand out and are mostly awarded to ecological and local products, which means that the price is higher. This again has a link to the matter of income, which is higher for people with higher education. However, the tendency of respondents with secondary school education contradicts this, as, comparing to “no” and “sometimes” answer, they have stated “yes” more often (5 respondents out of 10). But, having said that, results show that labels affect the attitude towards products for all education levels and thus influence buying behaviour.

Education and marketing

While product labels mostly seemed to influence respondents towards making a purchase, looking back at the marketing results for age group, the results were completely different. It was clear that marketing, in majority of cases (61 respondents out of 113), did not affect respondent buying behaviour. However, it was not clear why and thus, perhaps the perspective of education will give a clearer look at this matter.

Education and marketing

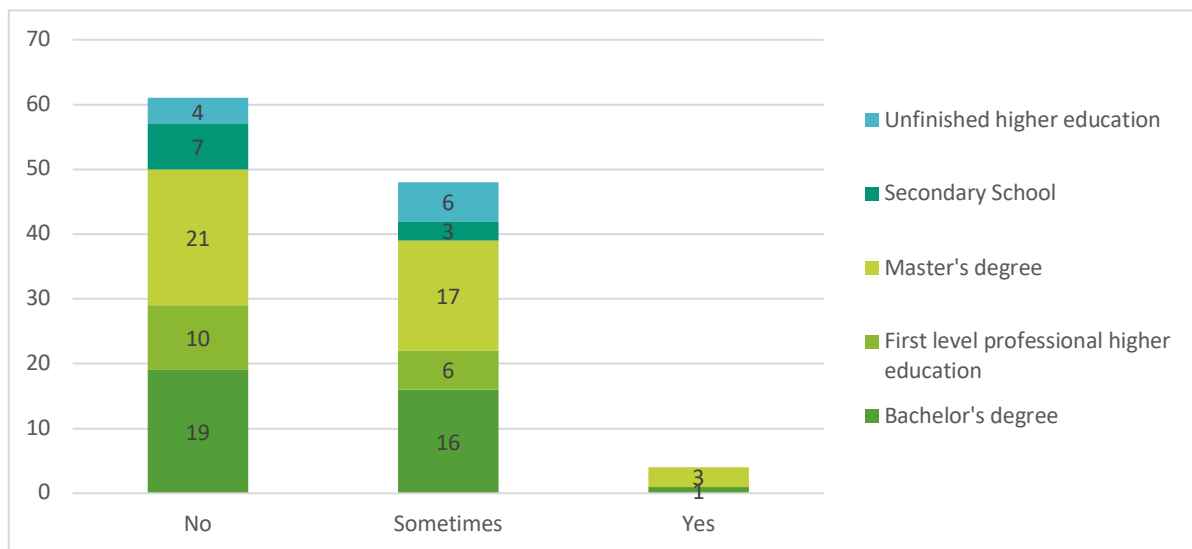


Figure 20: Own creation

As it is shown in the graph above, all education level respondents are very sceptical towards marketing activities and mostly does not believe what is said in the advertisements (51 respondents out of 113). Respondents that admit that they are “sometimes” affected by marketing activities are 48 out of 113. This, again, proves that marketing and advertising has to deal with a huge trust issue when it comes to promoting food products. Moreover, it can be seen that it is neither age nor education level that decides whether or not advertisement should be trusted, hence, it is a big challenge for the industry in the future. Besides, this means that marketing has almost no effect on consumer attitude towards meat and meat products and thus does not change consumer buying behaviour.

Education and price

As it was argued before, education can lead to a higher income. This question is important to look at in order to see if education affects the importance of price and thus changes the attitude towards meat and meat product buying behaviour.

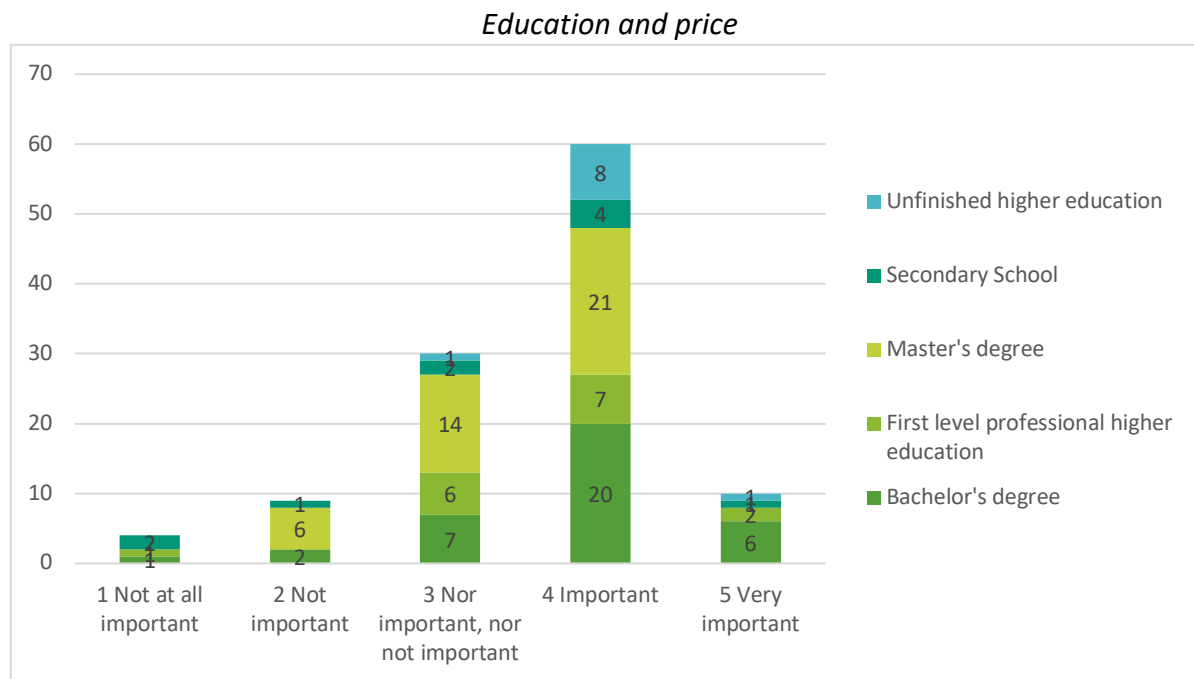


Figure 21: Own creation

As it is shown in the graph above, price is an important factor for all levels of education. There is a tendency for respondents with higher education level to more often state that price is “not important” to them (6 respondents with Master’s level and 2 with Bachelor’s level). However, the majority of respondents states this factor as “important” (60 respondents out of 113). It can be concluded that people with higher education are more prone to see price as not a deciding aspect of product because of receiving higher salary. However, there is still many higher-level education respondents that make their decisions based on price, stating “important” are 20 Bachelor’s degree respondents and 21 Master’s degree respondents. However, there is no Master’s degree respondents who state this factor as “very important”, again indicating that education and income are strongly linked. This means that price is an important determinant for the attitude towards meat, which further affects consumer buying behaviour, no matter how educated person is.

Gender

The question of gender is important in order to see if the meat consumption is the same for both generations disregarding the gender. Moreover, it is interesting to see the priorities of

both genders and how it might affect the overall buying behaviour. In this questionnaire participated 83 women, from whom 76 consumes meat, and 37 men, who all consume meat.

Gender and consumption of meat

Based on data of meat consumption shown in this analysis, most of respondents consume meat either every day or very second day. That is quite often, however, there were respondents that consume meat less and thus can be called “flexitarians”. To see who these flexitarians are, I will look and analyse the data gathered.

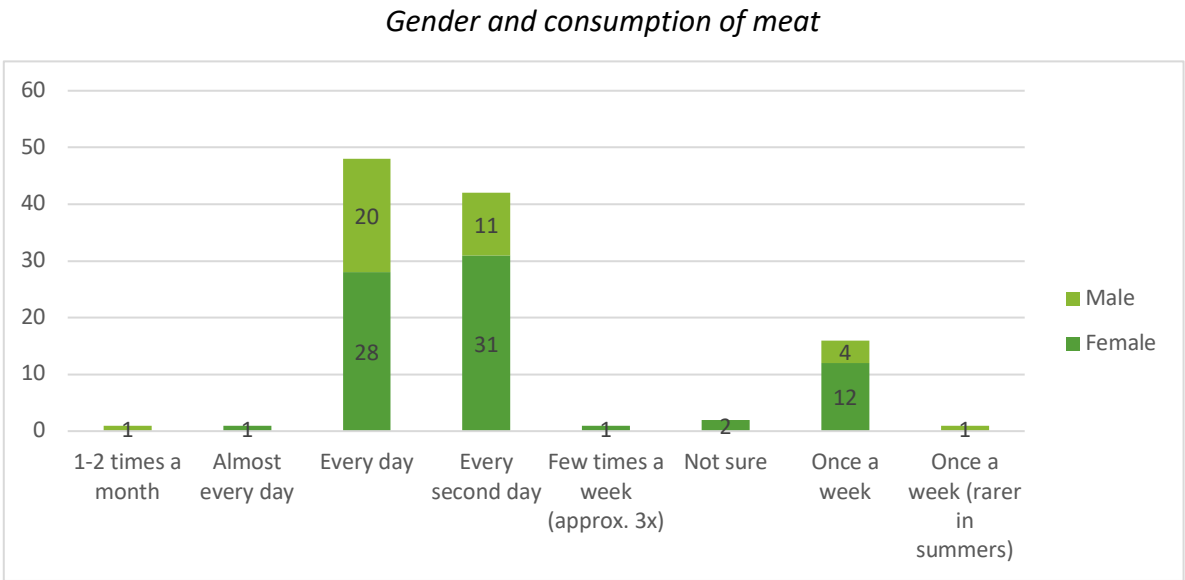


Figure 22: Own creation

As it can be seen in the graph above, flexitarians come from both genders and there is no clear tendency shown. Proportionally, there is more male respondents who eat meat “every day” (20 male respondents out of 37) or “every second day” (11 male respondents out of 37). The number is high for female meat consumers as well, concluding that majority of female respondents eat meat “every day” or “every second day” (59 respondents out of 76 respondents). For the remaining answers, the response rate is very similar, and thus there is no unexpected results. Thus, it can be concluded that gender does not play a role when it comes to meat consumption and its frequency.

Gender and sustainability

While there is no visible difference in gender relation to meat consumption, it does not completely reflect on attitude towards meat more than just consuming it. However, looking at sustainability, it should be possible to see a clearer connection to attitude and thus buying behaviour.

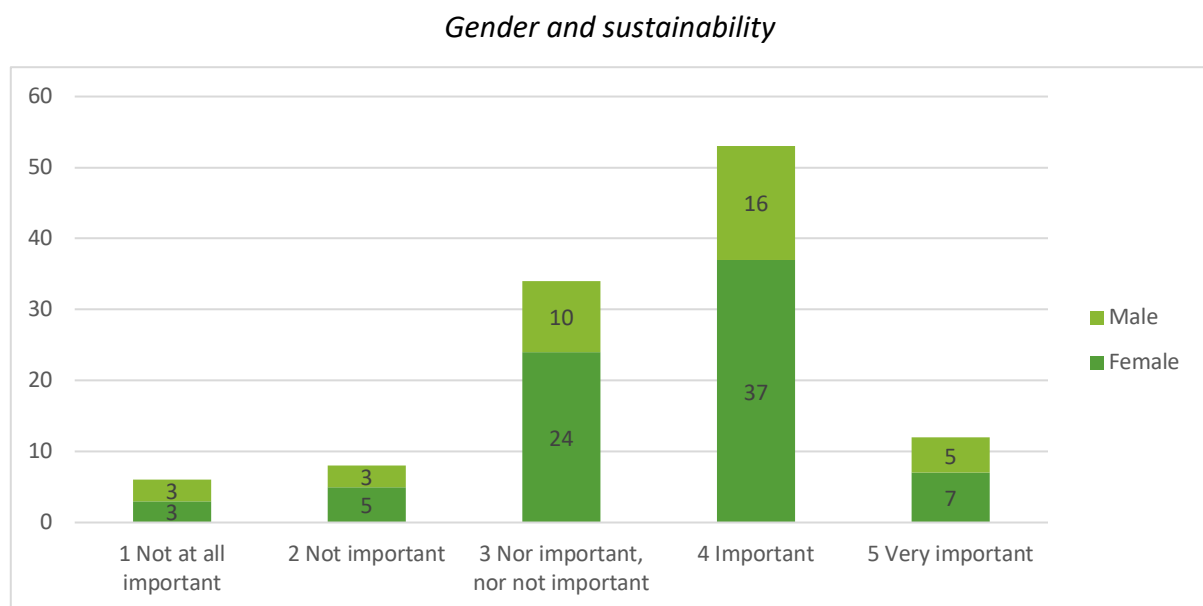


Figure 23: Own creation

As it can be seen in the graph above, both gender attitude toward sustainability is very similar. The numbers show that it is more important than it is not important to respondents- 14 respondents out of 113, state that it is “not at all important” and “not important”, 34 state that it is “nor important, nor not important” and 53 respondents state that it is “important”, and 12 respondents that it is “very important”. However, there is no clear difference between genders, as the numbers equally grow and decrease depending on the statement.

This shows that sustainability is a difficult question no matter what gender consumer is. It means that sustainability is not a deciding factor, however, it can affect the attitude towards certain products. Moreover, sustainability and the importance of it can be influenced by other outside factors that might be of higher importance, e.g., price and country of origin.

Gender and country of origin

As it could be seen in the previous analysis sections, country of origin is an important factor when buying meat products, especially for older generation. However, it is not clear yet if it is just the age or is it also gender that plays a role in decision making when it comes to country of origin.

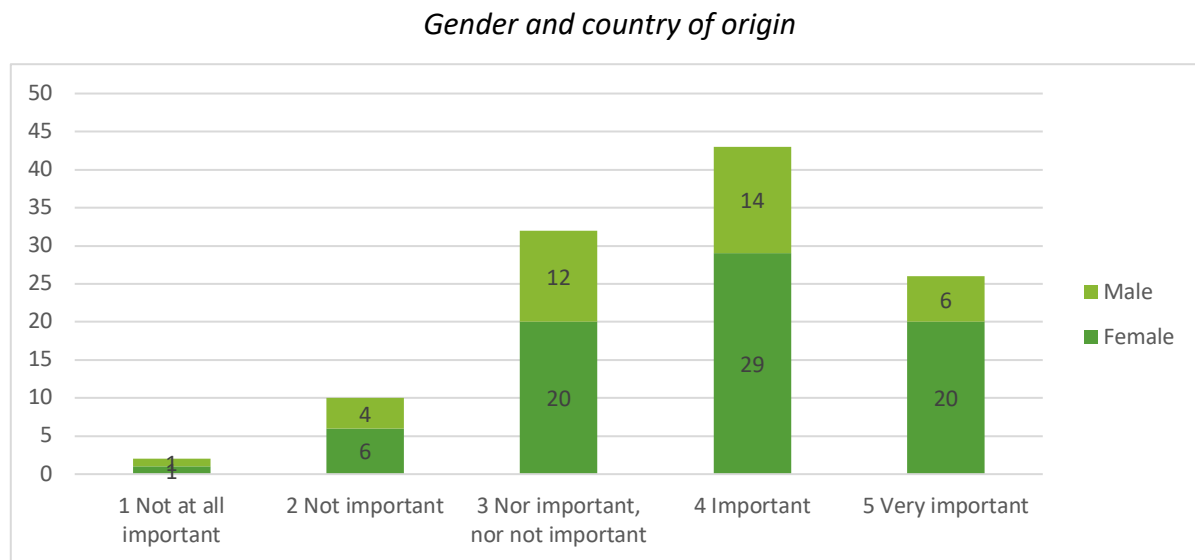


Figure 24: Own creation

As it can be seen in the graph above, country of origin is important to both genders. However, female respondents consider this as a more important factor than male, stating “very important” 20 times out of 76, while male respondents state it only 6 times out of 37. Stating “important” are 29 female and 14 male respondents, however, saying that it is “nor important, nor not important” are 20 female and 12 male respondents. Further, “not important” and “not at all important” are stated by almost equal amount of female and male respondents- 7 and 5 respectively. This indicates that female respondents care more about country of origin, which in some way also indicates that they care more about quality and less about price (based on the previous sections of analysis). Furthermore, this means that gender can change the attitude towards meat products and consumption if it comes to country of origin.

Gender and meat content

Based on the previous finding that female respondents seem to care more about country of origin and thus more about quality of meat, the question about the content of meat is of big importance. By addressing this question with Likert scale, it will be easy to see if, in fact, the previous finding and conclusion is true.

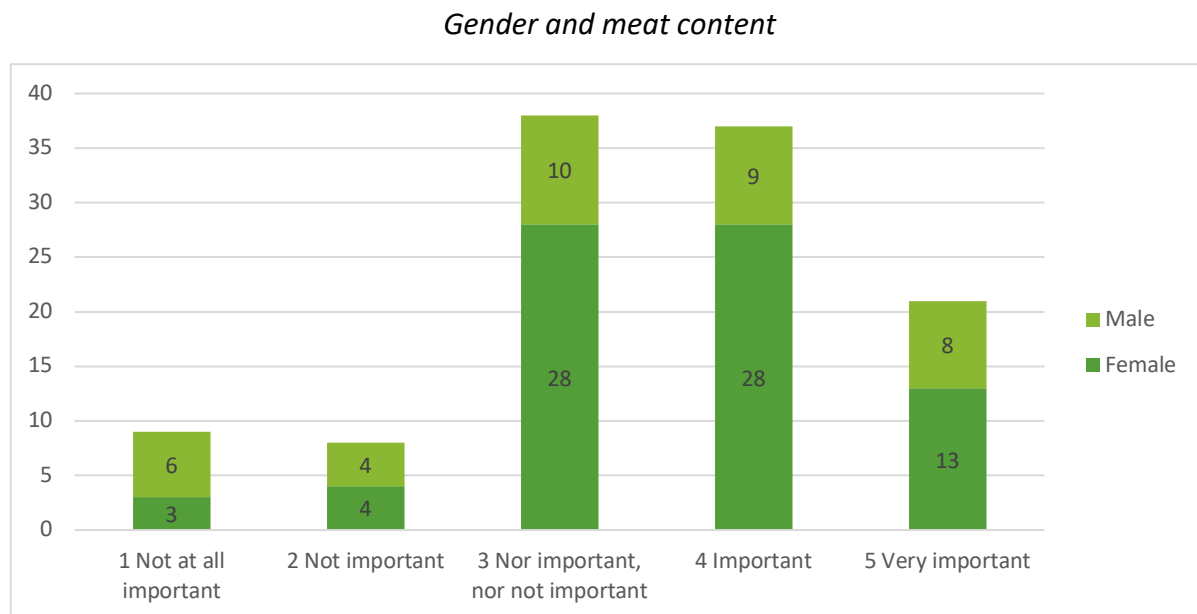


Figure 25: Own creation

As it is seen in the graph above, the quality of meat (its content) is important to both genders. First of all, it is important to point out that none of the genders have stated “not at all important”, which means that this aspect certainly plays an important role when buying meat products. Furthermore, majority of both genders have stated either “important” (31 female respondents out of 76 and 13 male respondents out of 37) or “very important” (38 female respondents and 20 male) to this question. This shows that the need for quality meat is equal for both genders and thus there is no difference. However, this again confirms that quality is an important factor no matter the gender, age or income.

Gender and product labels

As it was shown in the previous analysis sections, labels mostly affect respondents with higher education and thus, higher income. However, it is not clear yet if those are the only determinants that make labels effective to consumers.

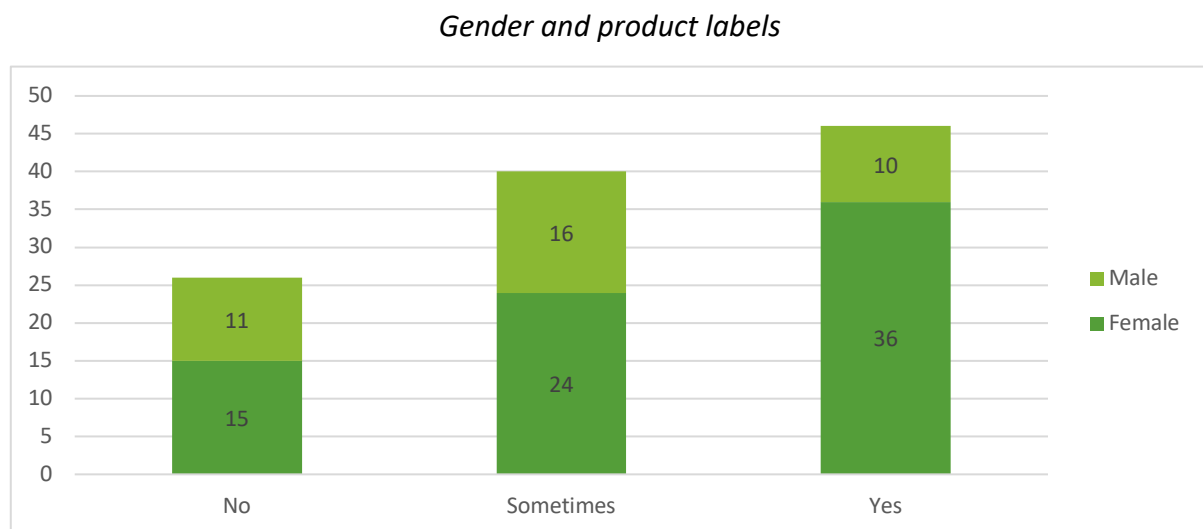


Figure 26: Own creation

As it is shown in the graph above, labels affect both genders either always, sometimes or never. However, there is a tendency that, proportionally, male respondents will most likely not pay attention to them or not be influenced by it (11 respondents out of 37). Meanwhile, only 15 female respondents (out of 76) stated that products having a label on it does not affect them. This clearly shows that female respondents are more likely to look for a label that would provide an immediate verification of quality of the product. Of course, based on the graph above, also male respondents are affected by it, but majority of them (16 respondents out of 37) state that it happens “sometimes”, while 10 say that it affects them always. Meanwhile, 24 female respondents out of 76, state “sometimes” and 36 respondents state “yes”. This shows that gender affects decision making when it comes to product labels.

Gender and marketing

As it was concluded in the previous sections of analysis, marketing has a very hard time affecting consumer choice when it comes to meat and meat products. It was concluded that

younger generation trust marketing campaigns less than older generation, and people with higher education might be affected by marketing “sometimes”, but it is never a decision-making aspect. Now it is interesting to find out if it depends on the gender or it is more affected by education and in general- not trusting marketing and its activities.

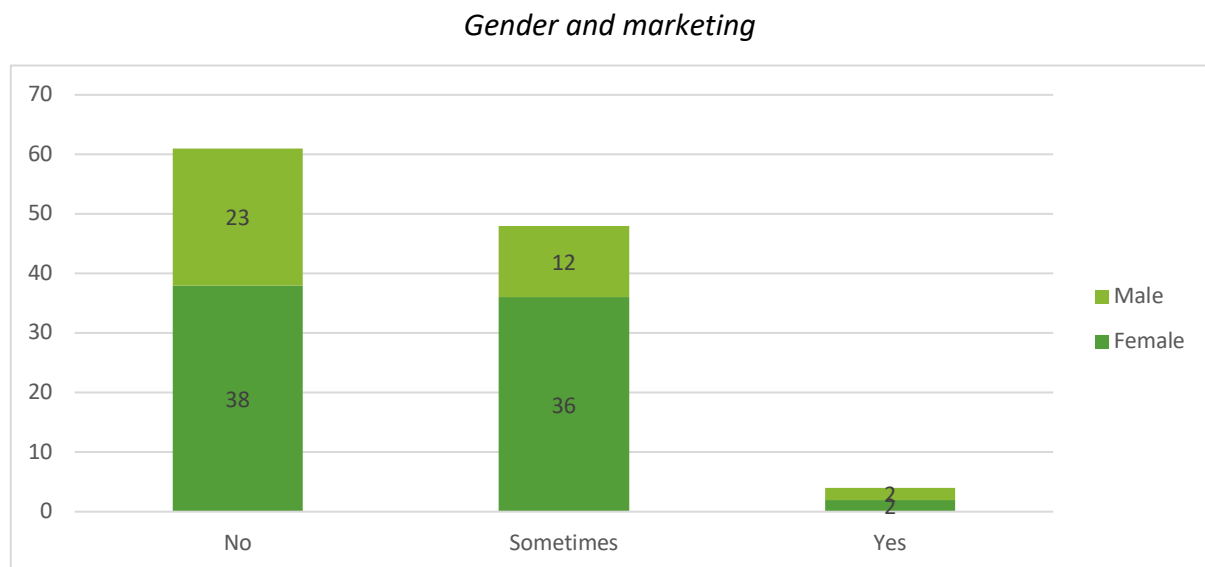


Figure 27: Own creation

As it is shown in the graph above, it can be concluded that gender does not play a role when it comes to marketing. This question proves that marketing is indeed ineffective when it comes to meat products and is facing difficult times. However, it can be seen that male respondents are more likely to not trust marketing and advertising activities rather than sometimes being affected by it- there is a big difference between stating “no” and “sometimes” (23 vs 12 out of 37, respectively). Meanwhile, female attitude is more even (38 and 36 out of 76, respectively) when it comes to “no” and “sometimes”. Therefore, it would make sense to target female audience more than male audience and thus, perhaps, grow trust and in turn, have a bigger influence towards meat attitude and buying behaviour.

Gender and animal welfare

As it was determined in the analysis before, animal welfare is important to everyone and especially to older generation. It was also seen that people with higher education tend to care

about this matter more, however, in general, it seems to be mostly important no matter what educational level consumer has, but more depending on priorities and values.

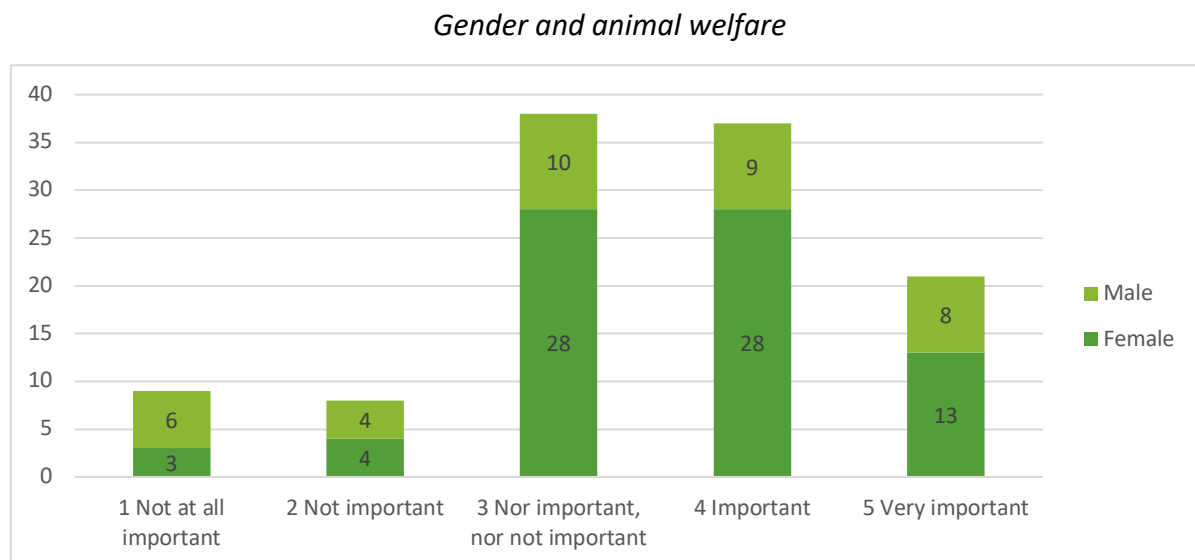


Figure 28: Own creation

As it can be seen in the graph above, this matter seems to be more important to female respondents. While it is “very important” to relatively even number of female and male respondents (13 out of 76 and 8 out of 67, respectively), it is mostly “important” to female respondents (28 respondents out of 76). However, there is a very high number of respondents (38 out of 113) stating “nor important, nor not important”, where majority of them is female respondents (28). This indicates that female respondents are on the edge of this matter. While it can be seen that most of them (41 out of 76 female respondents) care about this matter and are affected by it, 28 of female respondents do not value this factor as the deciding one. However, this factor can affect their choice if the price is reasonable and taste is good and quality is high, meaning, that there are other factors that are more important than animal welfare.

Gender and price

As it was seen throughout analysis, price is one of the main decision-making factors no matter the age, education and income. However, it was noticed that content of meat was more

important to female respondents than male, which indicates that price might be more important to male respondents than female.

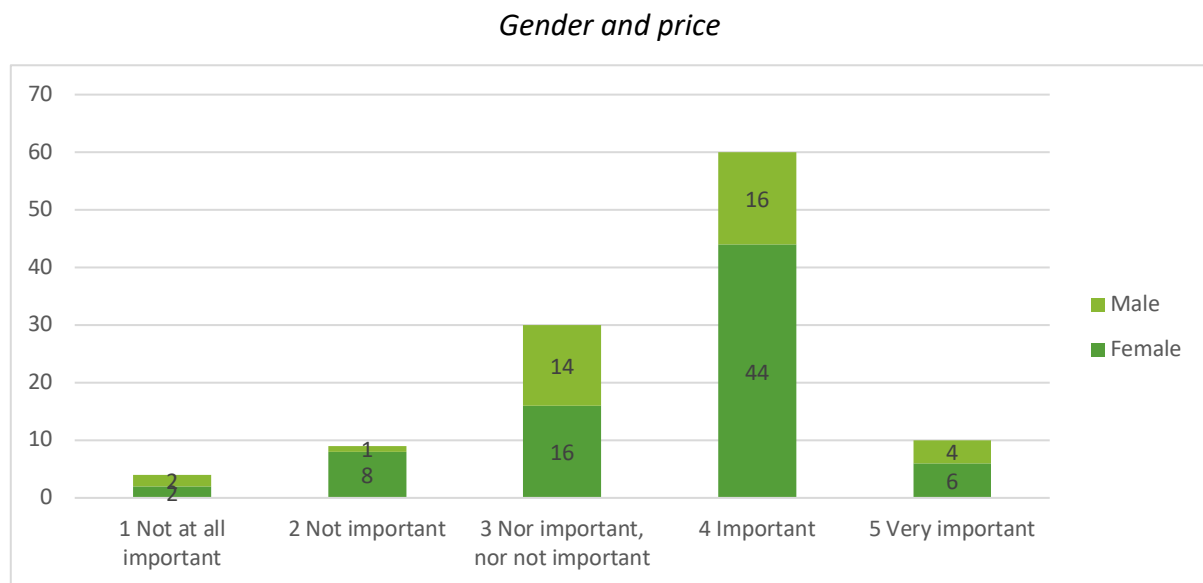


Figure 29: Own creation

As it is shown in the graph above, price is important to both genders. However, it can be seen that it is more important to female respondents as majority of them have stated that price is “important” (44 respondents out of 76). The rest of the answers are distributed quite evenly, with a tendency to state that it is “nor important, nor not important” (16 female respondents out of 76, and 14 male respondents out of 37). This, in the end, indicates that female respondents pay attention to price more than male respondents, however it is not the most important factor to them. Again, it could be concluded that women care more about other factors, such as quality, content and origin. If those requirements are met, then price is important, but not the most important factor when purchasing meat and its products.

Gender and education

As it was implied above, female respondents seem to care more about content of meat, origin, marketing and price. Moreover, those are some of the factors that are affected by education and income level. Therefore, it is important to find out which of the generations have higher education level and thus, higher income, which results in ability to purchase products that cost more.

Gender and education

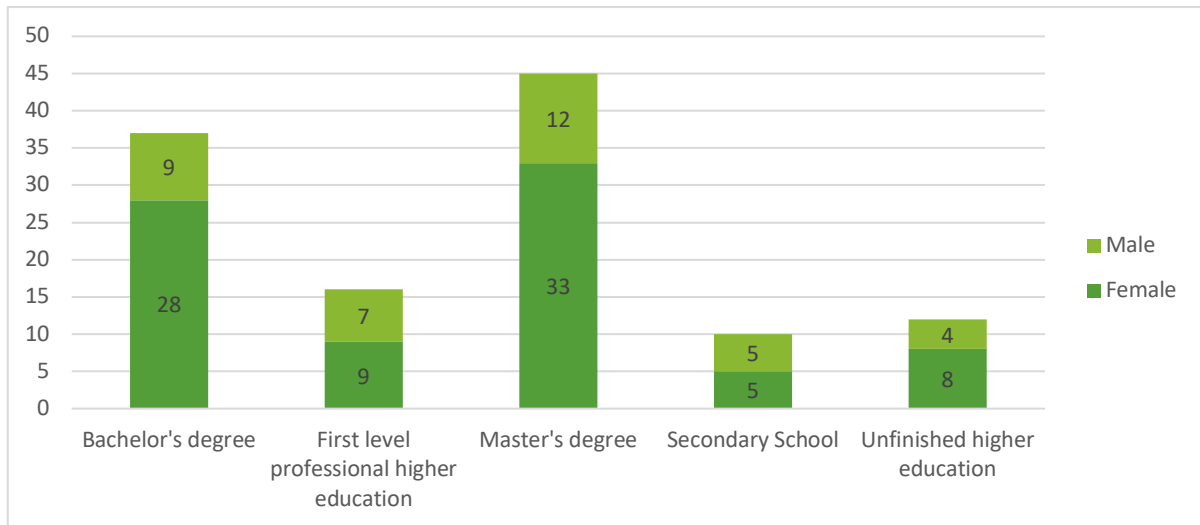


Figure 30: Own creation

As it is shown in the graph above, the distribution of education levels is not even. While majority of respondents holds a higher education diploma either in Bachelor's or Master's degree (82 respondents out of 113), there is no clear sign of one gender being more educated than other. However, these results show that, in general, people are educated and thus their ability to purchase higher quality local products, if not now, then in the future, will increase. This, however, does not show that female respondents care about quality of meat and sustainability more because of their education. Furthermore, the factor of price is not related to the level of education. This tendency indicates towards different attitude in general, as there is no evidence found in these results that female respondents care more about these aspects because of specific social factors. This question would require a different type of research.

Nostalgia

Nostalgia is not an external factor that can be measured as education, income or location can be, however, it is a historical and cultural factor, that can have an influence on our buying behaviour. I have kept this as the last part of the analysis because it is important to understand where respondents come from and what are their thoughts on matters such as

quality of meat, product labels, price etc. Therefore, social factors were investigated before analysing cultural and historical factors.

In order to find out how big of a role nostalgia plays when it comes to two different generations and meat consumption, I asked one specific question: “Do you think that the quality of meat has changed?” This question had an example set that, for instance, quality has changed in the last 5 years- either for good, bad, has not changed or respondent has not noticed any changes in meat quality. This timeframe was given in order to better understand the intention of question but without revealing the specific interest of mine- how nostalgia plays a role in Soviet generation’s buying behaviour. This question, even though it is only one question, implies the emotional aspect which is very important to nostalgia and therefore shows the level of which it affects consumer buying decision when it comes to meat and meat products.

Nostalgia and age

Presumably, nostalgia is something that evolves within age, as people grow older and thus have more memories to linger on. However, younger generation might be affected by their parent and grandparent nostalgic stories. In the case of this research, Soviet upbringing style has stayed in Latvian families for a long time and so did the stories of their experience and memories. Furthermore, as the literature shows, nostalgia is not necessarily positive, it can also be with a negative feeling. With this question it will be seen whether or not nostalgia can only affect older generation, or could it also affect younger generation.

Nostalgia and age

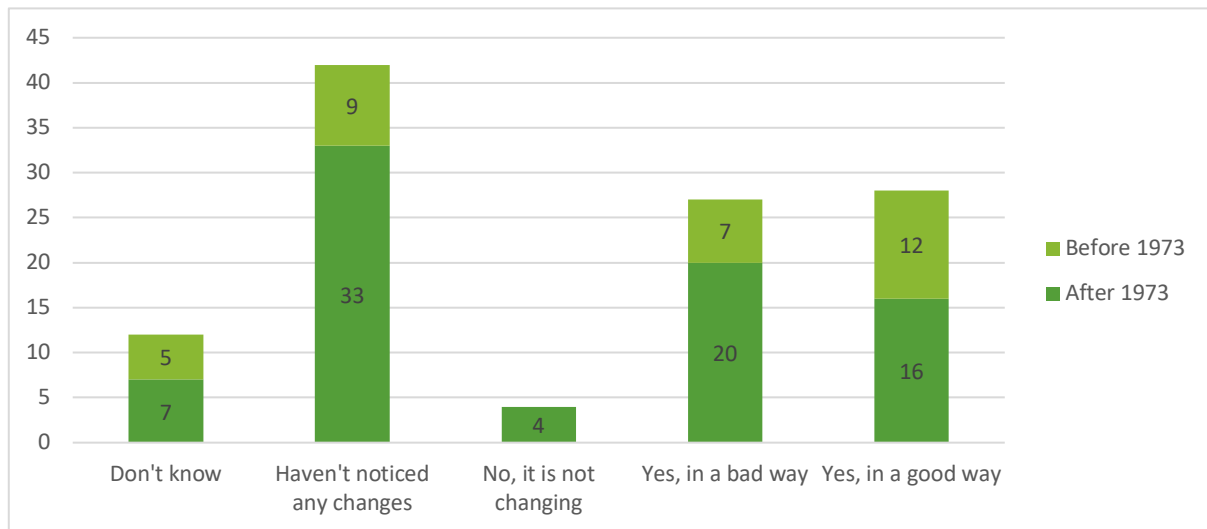


Figure 31: Own creation

As it is seen in the graph above, the majority (42 out of 113) of respondents that consume meat, state that they “have not noticed any changes” in its quality. However, it is also clear that respondents who mostly gave this answer are generation born after 1973 (33 respondents out of 42). Further, only 12 respondents (out of 113) stated that they “do not know” if the quality has changed. From those, 7 were born after 1973 and 5 before 1973. It is obvious that respondents that were born after 1973 stated this because they actually do not know. However, older generation have stated that because of no strong memories and opinions, lack of information and no nostalgic feelings towards meat. Nevertheless, the answers for “yes, in a bad way” and “yes, in a good way” are very curious. Respondents who answered more that meat quality has changed “in a bad way” are from the younger generation- the ones that were born after 1973. From all 27 respondents who gave this answer, only 7 are from the generation that was born before 1973. That means that 20 (out of 27) respondents stating that are from the younger generation. Furthermore, respondents stating that meat quality has changed “in a good way” are still mostly younger generation. However, when looking at proportion of how respondent count has changed, it can be seen that older generation looks more positively at meat quality today, as 12 out of 33 respondents that were born before 1973 think that meat quality has become better than it used to be. On the contrary, only 16 out of 80 younger generation meat consuming respondents state that they think meat quality is getting better.

These results indicate the opposite of what was expected. It seems that the generation born after 1973 are, in a way, more nostalgic than the generation born before 1973. This could be because of the vivid memories of childhood stories or scepticism of today's food product quality. However, it would need a different study (more in depth) about nostalgia to find out why it is this way. Nevertheless, these results show that age actually does not determine nostalgia, but it can be based on completely different reasons.

Nostalgia and gender

As the previous factor shows, age does not affect nostalgia, however, other factors might. Throughout analysis we could see that the gender of respondents affected some of the factors, showing that female respondents are more concerned about animal welfare, meat content and such. Here it will be seen if female respondents are also more prone to have nostalgic feelings towards meat.

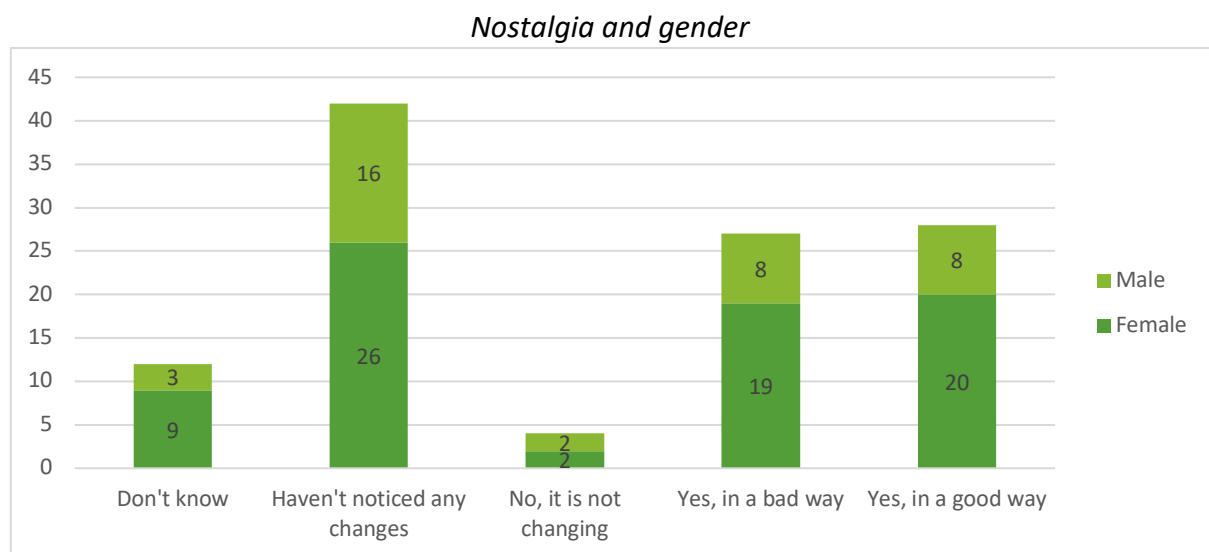


Figure 32: Own creation

As it is seen in the graph above, the answers in general are divided and not consistent. The opinion that quality of meat has changed “in a bad way” is stated by 8 (out of 37) male respondents and 19 (out of 76) female respondents. Meanwhile, the opinion that meat quality has changed “in a good way” is stated also by 8 male (out of 37) respondents and similarly in proportion, 20 female respondents (out of 76). This shows that there is no clear

opinion of whether or not, in respondent opinion, quality has in fact changed. However, out of all respondents who consume meat, 26 female respondents (out of 76) and 16 male consumers (out of 37), totalling in 42 respondents, stated that they “have not noticed any changes”. This shows that neither of genders were affected by nostalgia in such a strong way, to affect their opinion about quality. Total of 4 respondents (2 female and 2 male) stated that they think quality of meat “is not changing”, while 12 respondents (9 female and 3 male) stated that they “do not know”. This also indicates that gender did not play a big role for nostalgia in this question.

Nostalgia and education

In the previous question it could be seen that gender does not affect nostalgic feelings when it comes to the quality of meat. However, another social factor that might affect this historical and cultural factor is education. Further it will be seen if education plays a role when it comes to nostalgia.

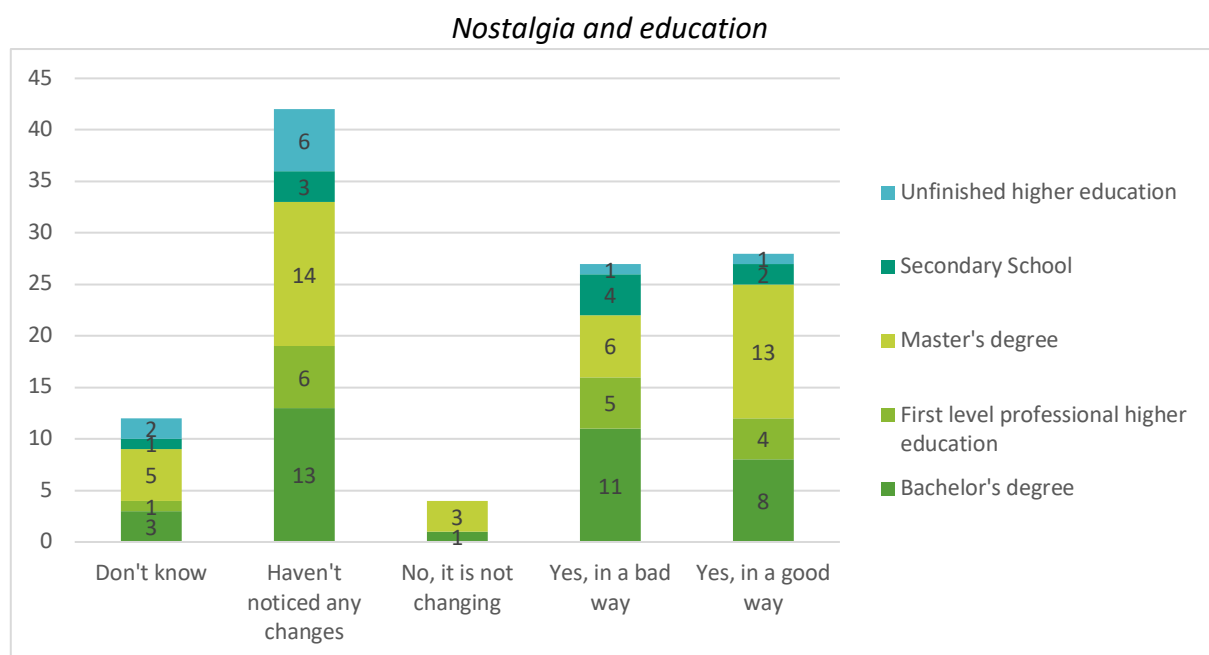


Figure 33: Own creation

As it can be seen in the graph above, the distribution of education levels and nostalgia indicating answers is intriguing. The same as in previous sections of nostalgia, most respondents from all groups state that they “have not noticed any changes”. Proportionally,

all groups lean towards this answer- 13 respondent with Bachelor's degree, 14 respondents with Master's degree, 6 respondents with first level professional higher education degree and unfinished higher education, 3 respondents with secondary school education level. However, it becomes interesting when it comes to respondents who stated that meat quality changes "in a bad way" and "in a good way". The biggest difference can be seen between Bachelor's and Master's degree respondents. It can be seen that proportionally Master's degree holder tend to think more that meat quality has changed in a good way (13 out of 45 Master's degree respondents) while Bachelor's degree holders tend to lean more towards the idea that the quality of meat is changing in a bad way (11 out of 37 Bachelor degree respondents). Meanwhile, there is only 6 Master's degree respondents who think that the quality of meat has changed in a bad way and only 8 Bachelor's degree respondents who think that the quality of meat has changed in a good way.

These results show that no matter the education level, majority of respondents' (44 out of 113) state that they have not noticed any changes in the quality of meat and thus have no nostalgic feelings towards it. However, it can be seen that the more educated person is, the more it leans towards opinion that the quality of meat is getting better, hence, the more educated person is, the less nostalgic feelings plays a role when it comes to attitude towards meat and its consumption.

Nostalgia and income

Until now it can be seen that education is what clearly affects nostalgic feelings when it comes to the quality of meat and its consumption. As it is known from previous sections, the more educated person is, the higher income it has. Now it will be seen if income plays a role in nostalgia, as based on the previous findings, it could be expected.

Nostalgia and income

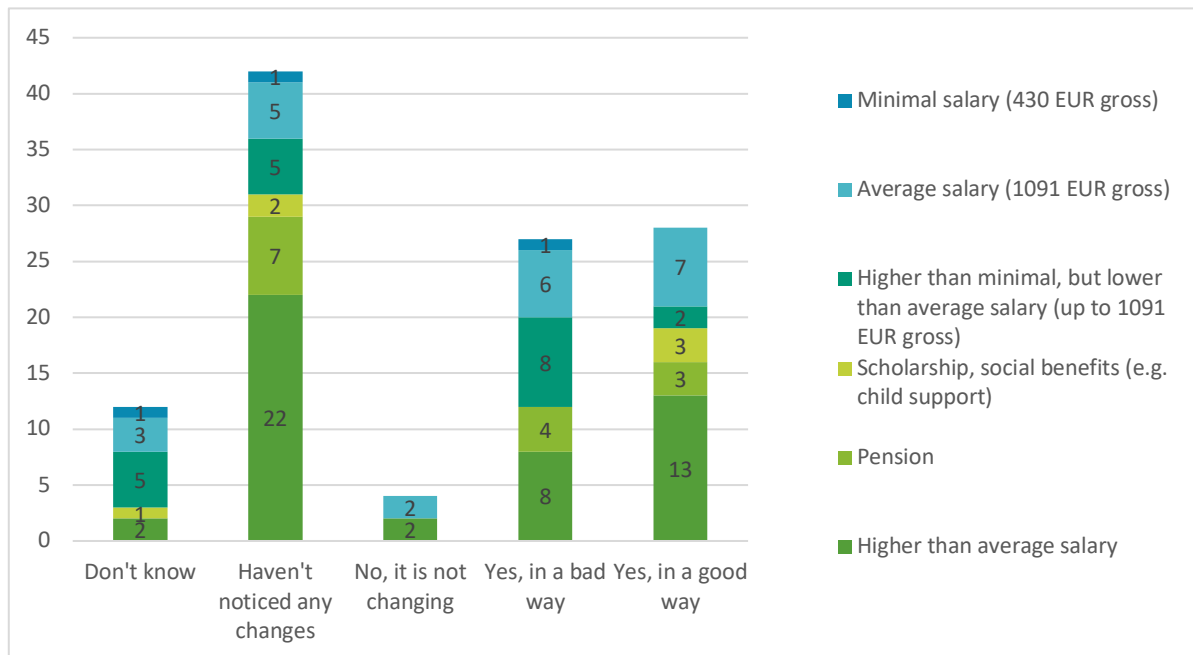


Figure 34: Own creation

As it can be seen in the graph above, the biggest difference is showed in the “higher than average salary” group. The majority of respondents from this group (22 out of 52), tends to state that they “have not noticed any changes”. However, there is a high number of this group’s respondents who think that the quality of meat has changed “in a good way”, where 13 out of 52 respondents think that way. But there are only 8 respondents from this group who think that the quality of meat has changed “in a bad way”. Another noticeable difference in change of proportion for answers is for the “higher than minimal, but lower than average salary” group. It can be seen that, while in general their opinion is quite divided towards all of the possible answers, only 2 out of 20 respondents think that the quality of meat has changed “in a good way”. At the same time, there are 8 respondents from this category who think that quality of meat has changed “in a bad way”. The rest of the income groups have a relatively similar count of respondents for each possible answer, except for “no, it is not changing”, where only 2 respondents with average salary and 2 respondents with higher than average salary has this opinion. However, there is a tendency for respondents with higher salary to think that the quality of meat is changing in a good way.

Findings in relation to income and nostalgia indicates that respondents with higher income are more likely to be less affected by nostalgia, hence it rarely might affect the attitude towards meat and its consumption.

Discussion

Based on the literature review and analysis conducted above, further I would like to discuss some findings that I find extremely interesting.

First of all, it is clear that the theory provided by I. Ajzen, T.J. Madden and P.S. Ellen is too simplified to analyse and put a frame on a consumer behaviour as a whole, when it comes to buying meat products. It can be seen that the way consumers choose their meat is much more complex than just the two ways offered by the authors. It is clear, based on analysis, that factors such as price and income affect consumer choice even if their attitude towards sustainability is positive. Moreover, choice is affected by products and alternatives available. Therefore, there are many independent but important factors that may form consumer behaviour, and this theory does not talk about that.

Second, it could be seen, based on data gathered in analysis, that there is a big proportion of flexitarians also within Latvian meat consumers. However, this trend is still making its way into Latvian consumer meat consumption behaviour as it is still visible that the regular consumer still consumes meat either every day or every second day.

Thirdly, one of the biggest issues that can be witnessed in the analysis is the fact that Latvian consumers do not trust marketing campaigns when it comes to food and meat products. Even though the situation with quality labels is not as bad and can still sway consumer towards a choice that would benefit to sustainable or local product, the situation is completely different for marketing as such. The lack of trust means that most of the food producers might actually be wasting their money on campaigns. Of course, brand awareness is a good thing, but what does it give to a company if consumers do not buy their products? Therefore, it can be concluded that marketing strategy either should be changed or taken off from traditional

ways. Thus, results show that marketing campaigns for meat and its products should be focused on female audience and sustainability and ecological quality of meat.

Further, based on the results of the analysis, it could be seen that it is extremely important for Latvian consumers, no matter which generation, that their meat is locally produced. Based on the literature, overall, Latvian people prefer local products, but it was stated in the literature, that only 56% want their meat to be local. This thesis research show that the actual number might be higher. However, it could be that this aspect is more important when it comes to fresh meat and not meat products that are mostly imported, let's say, prosciutto, serrano ham and other specific meat products that are traditional to other cultures.

Another interesting finding is the fact that accessibility plays a big role in consumer buying behaviour. Of course, choice of meat depends on what is offered in consumer selected shop, but the finding that was most interesting was about countryside. It could be expected that in the countryside it should be easier to get fresh and local meat, however, based on the results of the open question at the end of the survey, it is not. Respondents stated that a bio or eco-shop might be too far for them to be able to purchase a biological meat. Moreover, some of the respondents depend on the store that drives to their house- then they have to buy what they have and are offering that specific week. As respondents state, very often they are simply not able to buy a high-quality meat because it is just not there. The same goes for local meat products.

Further, when looking in direction of Europe, Latvian consumers are following the trends that are discussed in various sources. In the literature it could be seen that today's trends show that consumer main values in meat and food sector will change. Right now (or in the past) it was mostly price and income that determined consumer choice of product. However, now and in the future, it is expected to change towards quality being the most important factor. As the analysis show, already now this tendency can be seen among Latvian consumers. Both generations, especially women, seem to care more about the quality of the meat rather than price. However, price is still a big factor, but it becomes less important for consumers with higher education level and thus, higher income. The tendency, however, shows that the average income is growing in Latvia, which means that this aspect might change in the future.

Furthermore, not only quality has become an important factor, but also sustainability, animal welfare and taste. Latvian consumers are changing together with European consumers, acknowledging that there are more important factors than just price.

Last but not least, findings of nostalgia brought an interesting perspective. The results of analysis show that older generation tend to think more that quality today is better than it used to be. When looking back at literature and what Klumbyte said, it was expected that older generation might have nostalgic feelings towards meat quality. However, findings show the opposite and actually confirms that nostalgia is not always with a positive tone and most of all, is an emotional factor that does not play a deciding role to buying behaviour. Turns out that younger generation more often think that quality of meat used to be better before. This is extremely interesting as, even though they are comparing it to five years ago, the difference of that time and now is not that visible. Moreover, this finding leads to think that younger generation might be influenced by the nostalgic stories that have been told by older generation- parents, grandparents and maybe even grand-grandparents. This indicates that these stories are very vividly built in younger generation memory and thus form their opinion and attitude towards meat, which confirms the theory of generations. Moreover, this generation actually has no evidence of the quality of meat from "Soviet times" therefore their perspective of this question is not factual but rather based on emotional factors.

Conclusion

Based on the research conducted and analysis made, it is clear that there are various social and cultural factors that affect both generation attitude towards meat and thus their buying decision. However, it is not easy to distinguish which factors directly affects consumer buying decision as there are various scenarios for each of them.

When looking at age as a social factor, it is clear that there are some effects it has on consumer buying decisions. The results show that it does not matter what age the consumer is, Latvians will most likely consume meat either every day or every second day, unless they are vegans or vegetarians. Moreover, this fact does not change, no matter what social factor is looked at- consumers in Latvia simply like to consume meat. However, it is important to point out that flexitarian movement is becoming more popular also in Latvia. Furthermore, another finding is that, when it comes to Latvian generations, older generation tends to think more about sustainability when purchasing their meat and meat products. However, this fact might be because of the respondent sample being relatively young and thus, it might change over time. Another important finding is that older generation is more likely to choose local meat products than younger generation. Further, both generations find animal welfare as an important factor when buying their meat and meat products. Meanwhile, for both generations, the question of quality depends on the consumers' income and education level, as they both are intertwined. Last, but not least, neither of the generations show trust towards marketing campaigns regarding meat and meat products, which means, that such factors do not influence their buying decision.

When looking separately at generations not just based on age as a factor, but on social factors, the results of the survey show that age in this case does not define generations. The results show that income and education is the biggest social generation factors that determine the feeling of belonging to a certain group and thus affect consumer buying behaviour. From this it can be structured further into consumer common belief/ideology groups, e.g., environmentalists, green consumers, premium food consumers, flexitarians, etc. Either way, the belonging to these generations are not based on the age but on other social factors that have influenced consumer personality and thus behaviour. This confirms the hypothesis that

belonging to a certain generation, in this case- social, can affect consumer buying behaviour and attitude towards sustainability and meat.

Income is a very important social factor when it comes to attitude towards meat and consumer buying decision. Logically, the higher the income is, the more and higher quality products consumer is able to afford. However, findings show that income also affects the attitude towards sustainability, as the higher income consumer has, the buying decision is more sustainable. Still, this is due to the fact that sustainable and ecological meat is more expensive, hence, these consumers are able to afford them more than the ones with lower income. Moreover, income is linked to education level, thus showing that more educated people earn more money and thereafter can make more sustainable choices.

Education is another very important social factor that affects consumer attitude towards meat and thus their buying decision. As stated above, education is linked with income and, therefore, with the ability to afford sustainable and ecological meat. However, education in general plays an important role, showing that people with higher education level are more likely thinking about sustainability and quality. Moreover, the more educated consumer is, the less it trusts marketing campaigns. However, it is the opposite when it comes to labels and quality they represent, meaning that more educated people pay more attention to quality signs attached to meat packaging.

When looking at gender as a social factor, it can be seen that this is the least important factor in regards of forming attitude towards meat and making a buying decision. It can be concluded that gender does not affect meat consumption frequency. Also, sustainability is perceived similarly by both genders. Moreover, the content of meat is equally important to both genders. However, the difference could be seen in the concern about country of origin, where female respondents tend to care more about this aspect. Furthermore, quality labels seem to be more important to female respondents than to male respondents.

Apart from social factors, it could be seen that price is a very important factor. However, the importance of it depends on various aspects mentioned before. Based on the findings, price is less important when it comes to local products. Moreover, it is affected by the income level,

however, even consumer with high income will take price into consideration when buying meat and its products. This means, that Latvian consumers want local, well treated and organic meat of high quality and for a reasonable price.

As a part of this thesis research, nostalgia was another factor that was looked at. However, this was not a social factor but cultural and historical factor. Based on the findings, it can be seen that nostalgia plays a role in consumer attitude towards meat. However, nostalgia does not affect consumer buying decision.

Based on the findings of this thesis research, all three hypotheses have been proven right. Indeed, consumer attitude towards meat depends on their social and cultural background, meaning that their upbringing and social status have a strong impact on their attitude towards meat. Further, it has been proven that consumer attitude towards sustainability depends on consumer social and cultural background. The more educated the consumer is, the more sustainable choices consumer can make as it has a strong link to consumer's income. And, as mentioned above, hypothesis that belonging to a certain generation can affect consumer buying behaviour and attitude towards sustainability and meat has been proven.

Managerial implications

Based on the thesis project analysis, there are a few findings that should be taken into consideration by marketing teams. First of all, this research shows that there is a serious issue with trust when it comes to marketing and that has to be changed. While the survey shows that for most respondents' advertisements of meat does not have any effect on their choice, there is still consumers who might get convinced and swayed towards another product. Survey shows that the one consumer segment that can be affected more by advertisement is female consumers. However, it must be stated that the advertisement should be focused on sustainability, meat quality and how ecological the meat is in order to convince them. This indicates that the average consumer is becoming more educated and will not blindly trust pretty pictures and nice slogans- marketing has to bring value and educate consumers about their products.

Moreover, the question of social responsibility should be brought up. Sustainability is a rather hot and new topic; however, it can be seen that in general there is a lack of information provided to consumers from companies. This is another aspect that marketers should use for their advantage and build new and trustful relationships with their consumers by educating and motivating them to become more sustainable. This has also been stated by researchers, asking about the responsibility from companies and their marketing teams.

References

- AS Putnu fabrika Ķekava. (2020). Welfare. Retrieved from <https://www.vistas.lv/welfare/>
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods* (5th ed.). United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Caspi, A., & Roberts, B. W. (2001). Personality development across the life course: The argument for change and continuity. *Psychological Inquiry*, 12(2), 49-66.
- Dagevos, H., & Voordouw, J. (2013). Sustainability and meat consumption: Is reduction realistic? *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, 9(2), 60-69.
- Daukste, V. (2015). Vai uzticaties pārtikas produktu marķējumam un kvalitātes zīmēm? Retrieved from <https://www.la.lv/patiesi-uzticos-tikai-pasa-audzetam>
- Eglīte, P. (2011). Padomju okupācijas demogrāfiskās, sociālās un morālās sekas latvijā. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, 65
- European Environment Agency. (2019). Industrial pollution in europe. Retrieved from <https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/industrial-pollution-in-europe-3/assessment>
- Grunert, K. G. (2011). Sustainability in the food sector: A consumer behaviour perspective. *International Journal on Food System Dynamics*, 2(3), 207-218.
- Hartmann, B. J., & Brunk, K. H. (2019). Nostalgia marketing and (re-) enchantment. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 36(4), 669-686.

- Henchion, M., McCarthy, M., Resconi, V. C., & Troy, D. (2014). Meat consumption: Trends and quality matters. *Meat Science*, 98(3), 561-568.
- Klumbytē, N. (2010). The soviet sausage renaissance. *American Anthropologist*, 112(1), 22-37.
- Krieiviņa, V. (2012). *Latvijas vēsture* (2nd ed.) Zvaigzne ABC.
- Madden, T. J., Ellen, P. S., & Ajzen, I. (1992). A comparison of the theory of planned behavior and the theory of reasoned action. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 18(1), 3-9.
- Mannheim, K. (1970). The problem of generations. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 57(3), 378-404.
- Marchegiani, C., & Phau, I. (2011). The value of historical nostalgia for marketing management. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*,
- McDonald, S., & Oates, C. J. (2006). Sustainability: Consumer perceptions and marketing strategies. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 15(3), 157-170.
- Reisch, L., Eberle, U., & Lorek, S. (2013). Sustainable food consumption: An overview of contemporary issues and policies. *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, 9(2), 7-25.
- Resurreccion, A. (2004). Sensory aspects of consumer choices for meat and meat products. *Meat Science*, 66(1), 11-20.
- Rubene, Z., Jansone-Ratinika, N., & Dinka, I. (2014). PADOMJU IDEOLOĢIJAS MANTOJUMS MŪSDIENU AUDZINĀŠANĀ ĢIMENĒ LATVIJĀ heritage of the soviet ideology in parenting nowadays: The case of latvia. Paper presented at the *Proceeding of the International Scientifical Conference may 23th–24th*, , 3

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2007). Research methods. *Business Students 4th Edition Pearson Education Limited, England,*

Sierra, J. J., & McQuitty, S. (2007). Attitudes and emotions as determinants of nostalgia purchases: An application of social identity theory. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 15*(2), 99-112.

Terlau, W., & Hirsch, D. (2015). Sustainable consumption and the attitude-behaviour-gap phenomenon-causes and measurements towards a sustainable development. *International Journal on Food System Dynamics, 6*(3), 159-174.

TNS Opinion & Social at the request of the European Commission. (2012). *Europeans' attitudes towards food security, food quality and the countryside.* ().

Upite, I., Pilvere, I., Nipers, A., & Krievina, A. (2014). Loyalty of consumers to food in latvia. *Economic Science for Rural Development, (35), 62.*

Zemkopības Ministrija. (2020). Nacionālā pārtikas kvalitātes shēma. Retrieved from <https://www.zm.gov.lv/partika/statiskas-lapas/kvalitates-politika-/naciolana-partikas-kvalitates-shema?nid=1012#jump>