

MULTICULTURALISM AND PERSONAL SAFETY IN THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE ACCORDING TO THE INHABITANTS OF LĘBORK DISTRICT, POLAND

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses the issues related to the multicultural society and its impact on personal safety. The aim of the study is to present the concept of personal security, multiculturalism and related issues. At the same time, this work is an attempt to answer the question whether life in a multicultural society evokes negative reactions and whether it affects the broadly understood personal safety. In his own research, the author attempted to prove that changes in the environment do not violate personal security, and on the contrary, existence in a multicultural society can positively shape human behaviour and influence their personal development.

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INTRODUCTION¹

Nowadays, the level of security threat is increasing and it would seem that it is escalated by disasters, and weather as well as economic anomalies. However, if one looks at it more closely, the other person becomes the greatest danger for a human being. It is probably influenced by the migration of the population, fear of losing a job, but also ignorance and stereotypes with which people have been fed for centuries. Hostility to other people becomes such a common phenomenon that it leads not only to the violation of personal inviolability but also to the threat of health and life of people. People are so afraid of otherness that they forget about the greatest values and humanity. It seems to people that someone other than them may disturb their order and affect their security. One does not even try to understand the other person; one does not want to know the reason why someone from another country, with a different culture, took up residence close to one. One treats him as someone who threatens one's existence. The above process is related to two concepts: discrimination and racism. Discrimination is the unjustified unequal treatment of people in the same or comparable situation. In turn, racism is a set of views and prejudices characterized by the belief that people who belong to a different ethnic group and have a different skin colour are of inferior nature. These beliefs have no scientific confirmation and are deeply harmful.² Does such behaviour not harm the good name of every human being, does it not make us monsters? Or is creating a shell of inaccessibility the only way to ensure a safe and comfortable life? Article 1 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states that all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Every person is entitled to all rights and freedoms without distinction whatsoever, especially race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social

¹ The paper has been submitted to the conference LIV CICA – XV Security Forum Krakow 2020, that took place on 7–8 October 2020 at University of Public and Individual Security “Apeiron” in Krakow.

² *Międzynarodowy Dzień Walki z Dyskryminacją Rasową*, “Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich”, 21 March 2020, <https://www.rpo.gov.pl/pl/content/miedzynarodowy-dzien-walki-z-dyskryminacja-rasowa-2020> (accessed: 5.05.2020).

origin, property, birth or any other situation. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and personal security.³ Similar provisions can also be found in the constitutions of many countries. The *Constitution of the Republic of Poland* in Art. 32 states that no one may be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason (Paragraph 2).⁴ Whereas, the *Act of 3 December 2010 on the implementation of certain provisions of the European Union in the field of equal treatment* defines the areas and methods of counteracting violations of the principle of equal treatment on grounds of sex, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, denomination, worldview, disability, age or sexual orientation.⁵

By referring to the world of values such as: freedom, love, truth, justice, solidarity, peace and security; and by teaching people to be responsible for their actions, philosophy is helpful in shaping personal security, i.e. the security of people in their real civilization and cultural conditions.⁶

CONTEMPORARY DETERMINANTS OF PERSONAL SECURITY

Security problems have been an inseparable part of human life, because they are closely linked with the very human existence and the human's ability to function in a specific world. Regardless of whether security problems have been perceived and defined or not, they have been determining the level of civilization development.⁷ Striving to satisfy the need for security at the highest possible level is an essential element of the existence of human, regardless of whether he or she is treated as an individual or as a social being.⁸ Since the dawn of time, this element accompanied human in his or her struggle for survival and then in the development of civilization. Currently, when referring to security, one focuses on the entire society, which consists of individuals and smaller groups that have specific connections (family ties,

³ *Powszechna Deklaracja Praw Człowieka*, Paryż 10 XII 1948, <http://libr.sejm.gov.pl/tek01/txt/onz/1948.html> (accessed: 5.05.2020).

⁴ *Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997*, Journal of Laws 1997 no. 78 item 483, art. 32: *The principle of equality of a citizen before the law*.

⁵ *Act of 3 December 2010 on the implementation of some regulations of European Union regarding equal treatment*, Journal of Laws 2010 no. 254 item 1700.

⁶ W. Pokruszyński, *Filozoficzne aspekty bezpieczeństwa*, Józefów 2011, p. 55.

⁷ A. Czupryński, *Bezpieczeństwo w ujęciu teoretycznym*, [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo. Teoria – Badania – Praktyka*, A. Czupryński, B. Wiśniewski, J. Zboina (eds), Józefów 2015, p. 5.

⁸ W. Fehler, *Bezpieczeństwo przestrzeni publicznej*, [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo publiczne w przestrzeni miejskiej*, W. Fehler (ed.), Warszawa 2010, p. 16.

place of residence, religion, culture, work, etc.). And these individuals are people, with all their vices, individual mental structures and ways of coping with the problems of everyday life.

Moving on to the consideration of personal security, the first thing is the definition of security. Practical and theoretical experiences show the great complexity and diversity of the concept of security in relation to its content, explanatory concepts, and subject. In the rich literature, attention is drawn to the embarrassing generality and ambiguity, as well as the multifaceted nature of the concept of security.⁹ The reason for this may be precisely the diversity of personalities in each human society. Security can therefore mean not only certainty and peace, or a sense of freedom from threats, but also a process that changes according to shifts in the environment of the security subject. When perceiving security as a process, one should be aware that each time the variables in this process create a different level of security.¹⁰ Following on the words of the Greek philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus, who stated in 500 BC that everything flows and nothing stands still, these changes in the perception of security and the threats that affect it seem to be obvious and natural. Security, as one of the social rights, is an inalienable human right. Social rights are a product of moral and political agreements that people make among themselves, they are an expression of a compromise that reflects the essence of human civilization development.¹¹ This compromise takes into account the participation of every member of society not only in the enforcement of this law, but also in its creation.

In practice, there are two ways of understanding security. There is the negative approach, in which security is treated as the absence of threats, and therefore the main role is assigned to activities related to protection against these threats. The other approach perceives security from the perspective of the active shaping of the certainty of survival as well as the certainty of retaining the fundamental values and development freedoms of a given entity.¹² As the history of humankind shows, the lack of security threats is

⁹ J. Gierszewski, *Postrzeżenie bezpieczeństwa na podstawie przeglądu definicji*, [in:] *Metodologia badań bezpieczeństwa narodowego: Bezpieczeństwo 2010*, vol. 1, P. Sienkiewicz, M. Marszałek, H. Świeboda (eds), Warszawa 2010, pp. 88–98.

¹⁰ A. Czupryński, *Bezpieczeństwo w ujęciu teoretycznym*, op. cit., p. 16.

¹¹ A. Czupryński, *Bezpieczeństwo w ujęciu aksjologicznym*, [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo na lądzie, morzu i w powietrzu w XXI wieku*, J. Zboina (ed.), Józefów 2014, p. 11.

¹² W. Fehler, *Bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne współczesnej Polski. Aspekty teoretyczne i praktyczne*, Warszawa 2012, p. 9.

a utopian situation. Diverse kinds of threats used to exist, do exist and will continue to exist in various more or less drastic forms. Human can only strive to eliminate those on which he or she has influence.

Security can be considered in various aspects, but the most important thing that affects humans is personal security because it has an individual, non-objective character and, above all, depends on the activity of each entity. It results from the elimination of pejorative human experiences that are rooted in anxiety and fear, which are also emotional states that are difficult to avoid.

Drabik defines personal security as the conditions for the continuity of an individual (a specific person), interpreted from an individual's point of view of security conditions which are individual and specific. One can then talk about security through the prism of the holistic, physical, mental, spiritual, or intuitive condition of the subject. This is where the sense of security derives, which is an individual's subjective perception of the configuration of his or her living conditions, recognized by him or her from the perspective of certainty of his or her own continuity (security) or threat.¹³ Therefore, personal security consists in creating multiple conditions of existence for a human, which, if properly used by him or her, will ensure proper personal development.¹⁴ Depending on the character of a person, the sense of personal security is felt differently in each case. For some, it is housing or financial stabilization, and for others, there is no racial, ideological or gender discrimination. The human security approach classifies seven areas of security which are important from the perspective of the human entity, i.e. health, economic, food, physical, environmental, social and political security. Undoubtedly, personal security is a limitation, to the necessary minimum, of pejorative and traumatic experiences of an individual, resulting from participation and existence in social life, which are manifested by anxiety or fear. These are the everyday emotional states of people that cannot always be dealt with and which can get worse overnight. Fear refers to the social risks associated with hazardous situations caused by, for example, loss of job or property, loss of social position, racial

¹³ K. Drabik, *Bezpieczeństwo personalne i strukturalne w perspektywie filozoficznej*, [in:] *Natura bezpieczeństwa w perspektywie personalnej i strukturalnej*, K. Drabik (ed.), Warszawa 2013, pp. 38–39.

¹⁴ K. Kołodziejczyk, *Bezpieczeństwo. Kontekst personalno-aksjologiczny*, "Zeszyty Naukowe WSOWL", 2009, no 1, p. 140.

discrimination or other symptoms of pathology. Referring to anxiety, it can be assumed that it is characteristic of situations of damage to health as a result of an attack or accident, or other event causing the limitation or loss of physical abilities.¹⁵

MULTICULTURALISM AND SOCIAL PERCEPTION OF OTHERNESS

The concept of society is inextricably linked with human, among others because since the beginning of the species, human beings have been forming groups, collectives and, finally, communities. Among the human population, there is a very small percentage of those who, for reasons only known to them, choose to live in isolation and do not feel the need to exist in a larger community. Therefore, they are commonly referred to as people living outside society. However, this is not entirely true, as they constitute a certain group in society, even if they do not identify themselves with this society. And yet over 2,300 years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle claimed that human is a social being, and he or she must live among other people and cooperate with them. But he or she is not born as an individual with fully developed consciousness, knowledge, beliefs, and a defined attitude towards the world. All this does not develop spontaneously and is shaped by contacts and relationships with other people. The closest people, i.e. the family, have the greatest influence on this process. They are the first teachers. They instil in children the sense of what is right and what is wrong, what they should do and what should not be done. Thanks to them, young people get to know the first values and social bonds, starting with the family bonds, and as they develop, also with the bonds with other people with whom they live, learn, work, and share ideas and aspirations. However, a human, as a thinking being, at some point reaches the point when, having already sufficient knowledge, can determine on his or her own the scale of values and get awareness of the society in which he or she functions. Depending on whether he or she feels like a member of this society with a sufficient sense of security, or whether he or she finds it lacking or there are too many threats, he or she has to make decisions about his or her future life. All the more that a society is a large number of people living in a specific geographically

¹⁵ J. Gierszewski, *Bezpieczeństwo społeczne w koncepcji human security* [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo państwa we współczesnej Europie Zagrożenia i przeciwdziałanie*, M. Chrabkowski, C. Tatarczuk, J. Tomaszewski, W. Wosek (eds), Gdynia 2017, pp. 248–249.

or administratively separated area where security is to be provided to all its members and not only to individuals. Nowadays, social sciences lack a uniform definition of society. A feature of each society is a certain degree of permanent distinctiveness from other entities of this type and the relative intensity of mutual interactions between its members, connected by common territory, institutions, established ways of communicating, similar living conditions and patterns of behaviour.¹⁶ Each society has a certain culture, which, as it turns out, can become a conflict factor in the event of cultural amalgamation.

Multiculturalism is the conscious coexistence in the same space of two or more social groups with different cultural features, such as external appearance, language, religious belief, system of values, etc. It contributes to the mutual perception of differences with different consequences, from antagonism and conflict to full acceptance and cooperation.¹⁷ On the other hand, the very concept of multiculturalism is used to describe the actual manifestations of the coexistence of various groups and their cultures¹⁸ Human has long desired, to a greater or lesser extent, to learn about the world and the surrounding phenomena. Knowledge of the cultures, religions or customs of other nations and states may turn out to be a milestone in ceasing the tendency to stereotypical thinking that everything that is different poses a threat. Moreover, education in this area may turn out to be a great opportunity to gain new experiences and a broader ability to perceive the world. If one considers it from the perspective of civilization development, the use of this opportunity seems to be a priority in further peaceful and safe development. When one looks at distant tribal communities that form smaller or larger local social groups, and which still function in many countries of the world, one can notice that their security has been defined by both social and cultural isolation. Outsiders were at best unwelcome, and in most cases considered hostile and eliminated. As the members of a given tribe developed, a belief in superiority over others was born, as well as an unsupported belief in their uniqueness, which was naturally followed by the need to dominate others. Every great kingdom, power, or empire had its roots in tribal communities.

¹⁶ *Spółeczeństwo*, "Encyklopedia PWN", <https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/spoleczenstwo;3978364.html> (accessed: 5.05.2020).

¹⁷ M. Golka, *Imiona wielokulturowości*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 7–8.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 9.

The differences were marked only in the later stages of their development, and it was then that the concept of social security would cease to exist. Dominant and ruling groups that took advantage of all rights were formed, as well as groups of subjects, conquered and dependent people for whom social and personal security was an unattainable good. It must be admitted that these situations were caused by the multiculturalism of such communities. Fortunately, however, the days of striving for physical control over as many areas of the world as possible are over. Even if in some countries or nations there is a desire to dominate, it has a different character: it is rather about economic or political domination. However, at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, there were cases of unparalleled barbarism resulting from cultural and religious differences. Suffice it to mention the still smouldering conflict between the Tutsi and Hutu tribes in Rwanda, the Balkan conflict after the collapse of Yugoslavia, or the attempt to unite Muslim countries as a global caliphate by the self-proclaimed so-called Islamic State.

However, despite these cases, the international community adopted the multicultural functioning of its states as normal. It was much faster in countries that had an infamous colonial stage in their past, because in their case the mixing of cultures was a natural process. In other countries, this process is slower but inevitable. The current opportunities of mobility, access to immediate information, and the abolition of borders by some national communities create the “world without borders” and thus the necessity to function in multicultural societies, and the aspects of social security apply to all people, regardless of skin colour, religion or place of origin.

Given that the largest organism is made up of small cells, the growing of awareness in local communities is important because it is their awareness, approach to social problems and attitude that shape the position of a state and a nation.

OWN RESEARCH

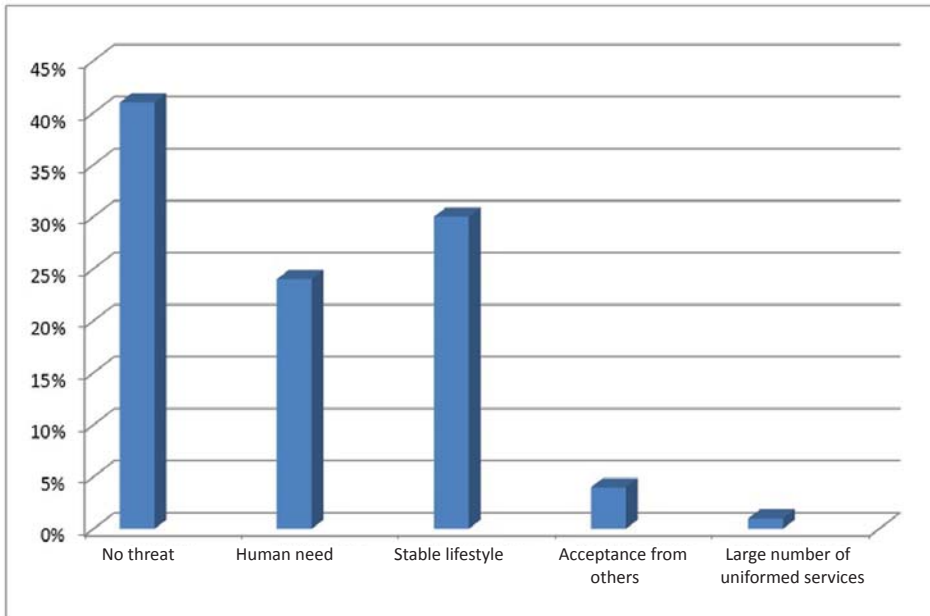
The aim of the study is to investigate the knowledge and attitudes regarding multiculturalism and its impact on the security of the inhabitants of Łębork district, Poland. It is also an attempt to describe safety as a theoretical and practical category. The study was conducted at the turn of April and May 2020 and used three stages of the research procedure, including data reduction, analysis and formulation of conclusions.

The quantitative research was carried out online using an electronic questionnaire. Thanks to the online survey mode, online surveys were conducted on a large group of respondents (275 persons) in a safe manner, while ensuring the anonymity of the respondents. The basic tool in the study was the questionnaire, which consisted of a respondent's particulars section and questions. The respondents' particulars included questions about gender, age, education, place of residence and professional status. Statistics as regards these particulars of the group are presented further in the section "Respondents' particulars".

The basic part of the questionnaire contained 16 closed-ended questions. The questions in the questionnaire were supplemented with a disjunctive cafeteria with one answer to be indicated or a conjunctive cafeteria with more than one answer to be indicated. The questions related to the perception of multiculturalism in terms of personal security, including changes in the actual behaviour of residents. Due to the editorial requirements concerning the volume of the text and the research problem presented in the work, only some of the research results may be presented, which are a summary of the respondents' ratings.

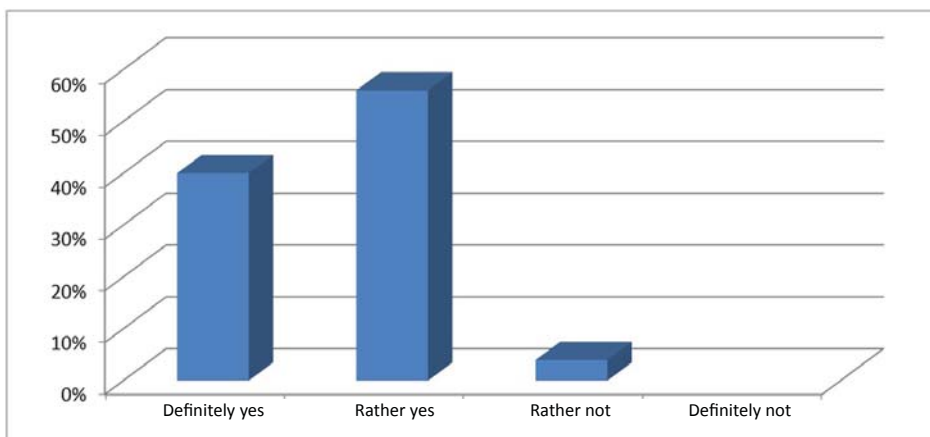
The study began with the interpretation of the concept of security from the respondents' point of view. For the greatest number of respondents, it was no risk (41%), a stable lifestyle (30%), or the fulfilment of their needs (24%). A small group of respondents indicated acceptance from others (4%) and a large number of uniformed services (1%; Chart 1). It follows from the above that most of the respondents equate their safety with functioning in conditions of life stabilization, satisfying their needs and the lack of elements that could threaten their existence in such conditions. Only a small group of people puts acceptance by other members of society above it, seeing in its absence of a real threat to their own or general security. At the same time, among the respondents there was a negligible group for which the determinant of security is the maintenance of a large number of uniformed (security) services. Which in many countries is not considered a sign of democracy, on the contrary, in the public opinion, these countries received the name of police states.

CHART 1. THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT OF SECURITY ACCORDING TO THE RESPONDENTS



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

CHART 2. "DO YOU FEEL SAFE IN YOUR PLACE OF RESIDENCE?"

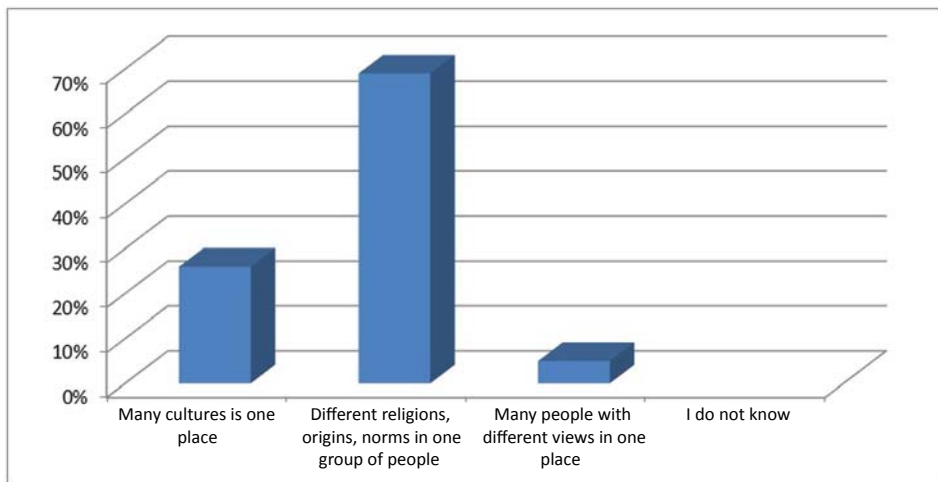


Source: own elaboration based on the research.

When the respondents were to determine how safe their place of residence was, almost all said that they felt definitely safe or rather safe (96% in total) and only 4% of the respondents did not share this opinion (Chart 2). Despite the fact that in every community there are cases of violating the accepted moral standards or the law, almost all respondents concluded that this did not reduce their sense of security in their place of residence. This is probably due to the fact that in cases of violation of legal norms, they do not see a significant threat to their security.

When respondents were asked about the meaning of the concept of multiculturalism, the majority stated that these were different religions, origins, and contradictory norms professed by individuals in one group of people (69%). Many cultures in one place were indicated by 26% of respondents, while for 5% it was a phenomenon when many people with different views gathered in one place (Chart 3). If culture was to be identified only with artistic or architectural activity, multicultural societies would be the cradle of science and new directions in art and architecture. However, due to the fact that each culture is inextricably linked with the religion from which certain norms and customs are derived, and adopted by communities in a given area, significant differences arise in the norms adopted by culturally different communities.

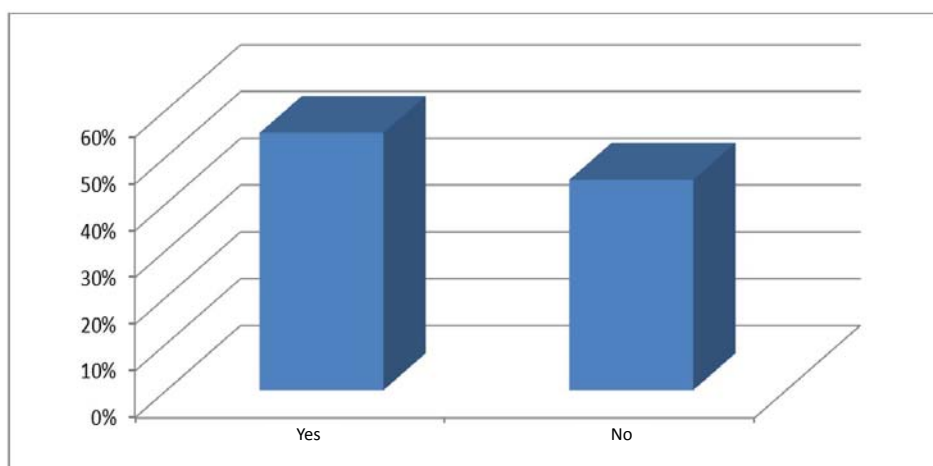
CHART 3. THE MEANING OF MULTICULTURALISM ACCORDING TO THE RESPONDENTS



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

The scale of discriminatory and racist phenomena must be very large as over half of the respondents 55% has witnessed such behaviour (Chart 4). In many cases, such behaviour can be classified as typical hooligan pranks and not racist behaviour resulting from the perpetrators' internal beliefs. According to an analysis by the Ministry of Justice, in the first half of 2018, 890 hate crime cases were recorded in Poland.¹⁹ Over 31% of it were insults to a group or to a person. Slightly less, 30%, was the public promotion of fascism and totalitarianism, over 20% was violence, and 3% was offending religious feelings. Fights and beats were the least. Most crimes were committed with the use of the Internet. Many instances were about threatening a person, or about racist graffiti on walls, buildings and fences. The fewest cases were related to activities such as organized demonstrations, assemblies, rallies, book and press publications, and the behaviour of sportsmen and sports fans.²⁰

CHART 4. "HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED A DISCRIMINATORY OR RACIST PHENOMENON?"



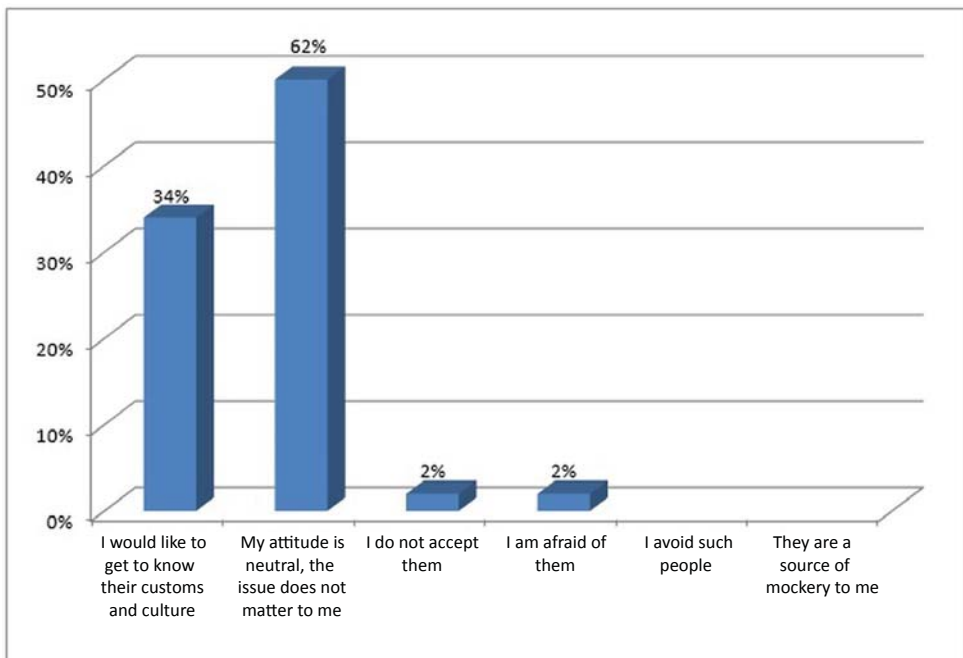
Source: own elaboration based on the research.

¹⁹ J. Cuper, *Przestępstwa z nienawiści w Polsce w 2018 – wybrane przypadki*, Warszawa 2019, p. 4.

²⁰ A. Łukaszewicz, *Co Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości robi z mową nienawiści*, "Rzeczpospolita", 16 April 2019, <https://www.rp.pl/Prawo-karne/304169927-Co-Ministerstwo-Sprawiedliwosci-robi-z-mowa-nienawisci.html> (accessed: 5.05.2020).

When the respondents were to present their attitude towards people of a different racial origin, for most of them it did not matter where someone comes from or what his or her skin colour is (62%); many others declared interest in learning about the culture and customs that prevail in a given country (34%). Only 4% of the respondents were afraid of people of a different racial origin, or did not accept them (Chart 5). These results are not surprising because Poland is not a backwater of Europe or the world, and a different skin colour or physical features typical of another race no longer surprise society. A human's natural curiosity and the need for knowledge arouse people's cognitive instinct. Although there will always be a percentage of people who are frightened by such a kind of otherness.

CHART 5. RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS PEOPLE OF A DIFFERENT RACIAL ORIGIN

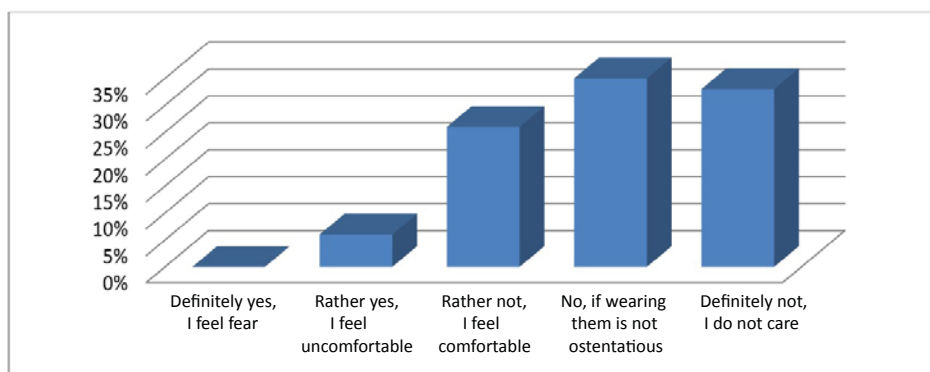


Source: own elaboration based on the research.

The outer garment is a cultural element, important for the identity of a person that wears it. Little knowledge of foreign cultures evokes negative feelings in some people, which is why in the next question the respondents were asked to express their views on people wearing clothes characteristic

for a given region. If wearing an outfit was not aimed at arousing someone's attention, it did not cause negative feelings in the respondents (35%). The influence of other people's regional outfits on their own negative feelings was not confirmed by more than half of the respondents, and only 6% of them felt rather uncomfortable when seeing a person wearing a characteristic outfit (Chart 6). In the modern world, no one is surprised by a specific outfit, regardless of whether it is dictated by customs, religious orders, or new stylizations of fashion dictators. All the more that many elements of regional costumes in other cultures are dictated by living and climatic conditions.

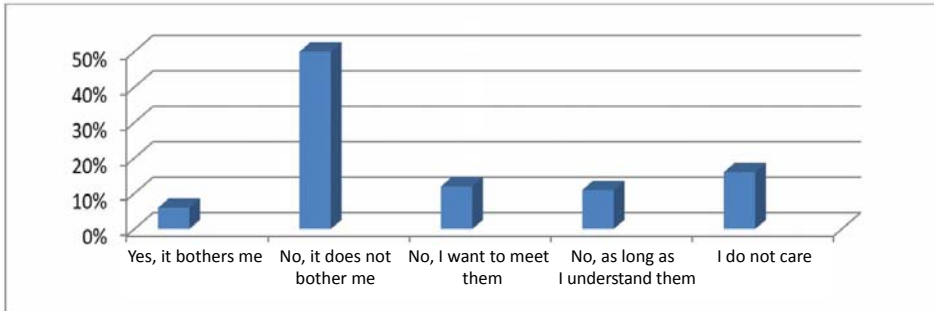
CHART 6. "DO YOU HAVE NEGATIVE FEELINGS TOWARDS PEOPLE WHO WEAR CLOTHES CHARACTERISTIC OF A FOREIGN CULTURE?"



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

The same is true of people who speak a different language. Most of the respondents do not have the slightest problem with it (55%), they want to get to know such a person (12%), or approach such people in a neutral way (16%). As in the previous case, 6% of respondents have a problem with this (Chart 7). In the era of global communication, the ubiquitous Internet and world-wide economic exchange people, even if they do not know a given language, can to a large extent determine at least the cultural circle from which the language they hear comes. Simultaneously, the same determinants cause that in all developed societies there is a trend towards learning new languages, not as a hobby but as a specific tool helpful in work and private life. As usual, there is a certain percentage of people who associate a given language with situations they consider to be a threat to their safety.

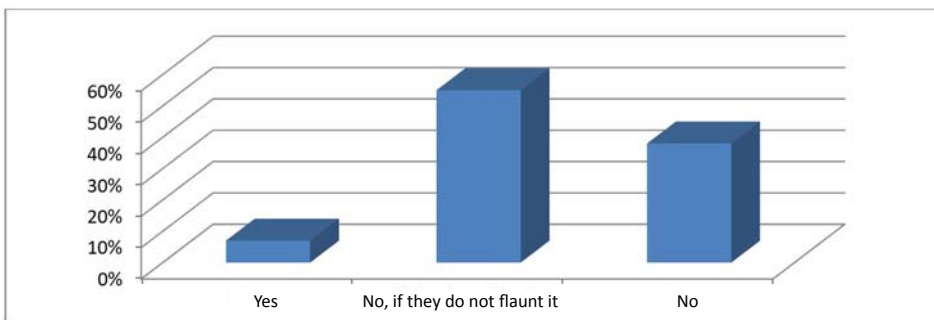
CHART 7. “DOES INTERACTION WITH PEOPLE WHO SPEAK A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE BOTHER YOU?”



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

Religions of foreign countries evoke various emotions in people and if they do not know it, it can have disastrous consequences. Therefore, the respondents were to present their views on people professing a different culture. In this case, one can also note that the respondents are not afraid of such people, as long as they do not flaunt their beliefs (55%). Only 7% of respondents feel fear of such people (Chart 8). This situation is not related to the religion itself, but rather to the behaviour of people from the cultural circle in which a given religion is the leading one. As in any religion, one should not be afraid of its canons, but only of the people who interpret them.

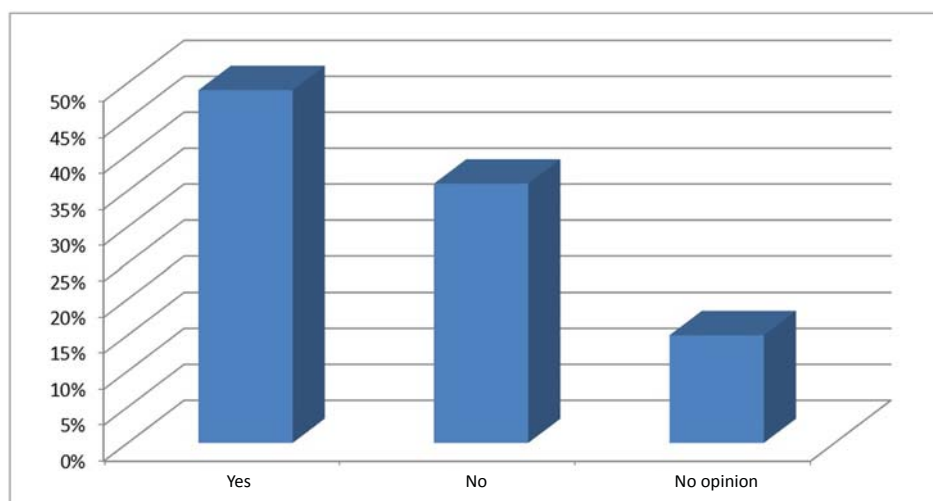
CHART 8. “DO YOU FEAR PEOPLE PROFESSING A DIFFERENT RELIGION?”



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

In every society there is a phenomenon of social inequality. It is one of the social threats of the modern world and it is primarily associated with the differences that occur in each civilization. They are manifested by unequal access of people to cultural and economic goods and services, power, prestige, health care and education. If such a state of affairs occurs in a society with a uniform culture, problems may arise when cultures are then mixed up. When many people from different cultures live in one place, it may turn out that there is an additional source of inequality, which is stated by about half of the respondents (49%). In turn, 15% did not have an opinion on the subject or did not want to comment (Chart 9).

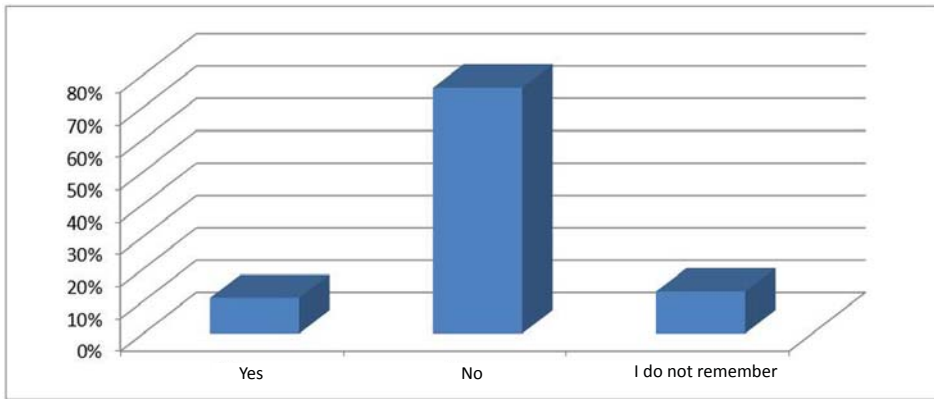
CHART 9. "CAN MULTICULTURALISM BE A SOURCE OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES?"



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

However, when it comes to the threat to the personal safety of respondents due to multiculturalism, one can notice that a very large group of respondents (76%) did not experience such behaviour, and 13% did not remember such a situation or did not want to admit it. It is disturbing that as many as 11% of respondents experienced a personal threat as a result of multiculturalism (Chart 10). The 11% of respondents who felt this threat did not specify the conditions under which such a situation occurred. This threat may be caused by the cultural difference, different customs or differently understood standards adopted in a given community.

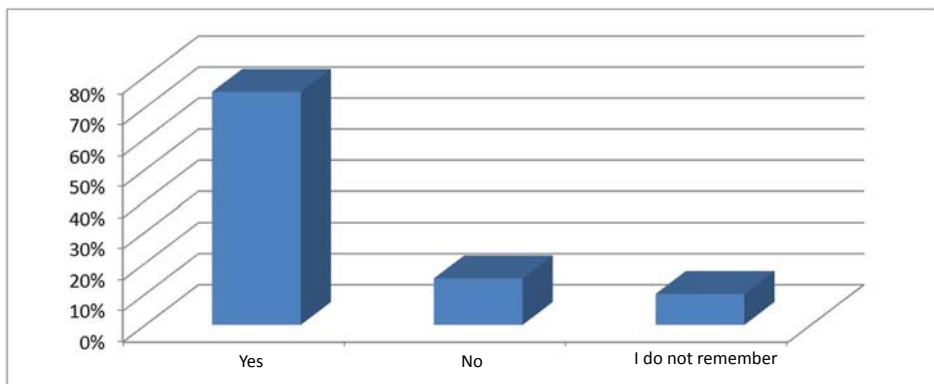
CHART 10. "HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED A THREAT TO YOUR OWN PERSONAL SAFETY DUE TO MULTICULTURALISM?"



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

Regarding the next question, one can see that the majority of respondents (75%) have heard about security threats related to multiculturalism (Chart 11). One can only assume that the respondents get the most information about threats from the media. The media, as the largest carrier of information, reach a wide range of social groups and become the main creator of their views. Much of the information they provide is devoid of deeper cognitive elements that could help to understand the causes and background of the events that have occurred.

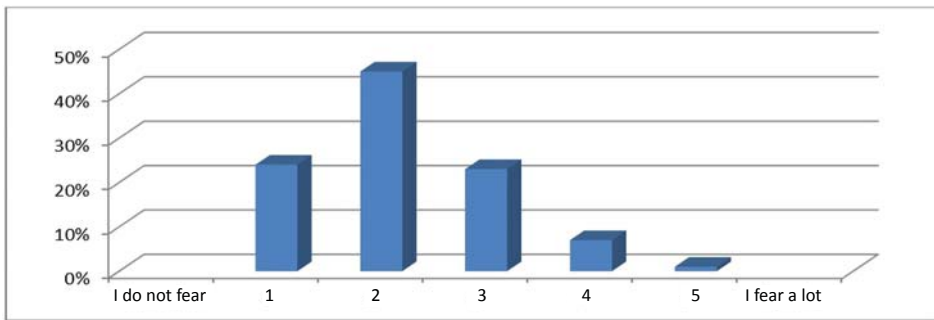
CHART 11. "HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT SECURITY THREATS RELATED TO MULTICULTURALISM?"



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

The respondents were to assess, on a five-point scale, the degree of their fear for prohibited acts which can be perpetrated by representatives of different cultures. Most of them were not afraid of aggression (points 1 and 2 in total – 69%), and only 1% (point 5) were very afraid (Chart 12). Every society, both monocultural and multicultural, is exposed to the occurrence of prohibited acts. The degree of their occurrence depends only on the adherence to the adopted moral and ethical standards and the principles of coexistence.

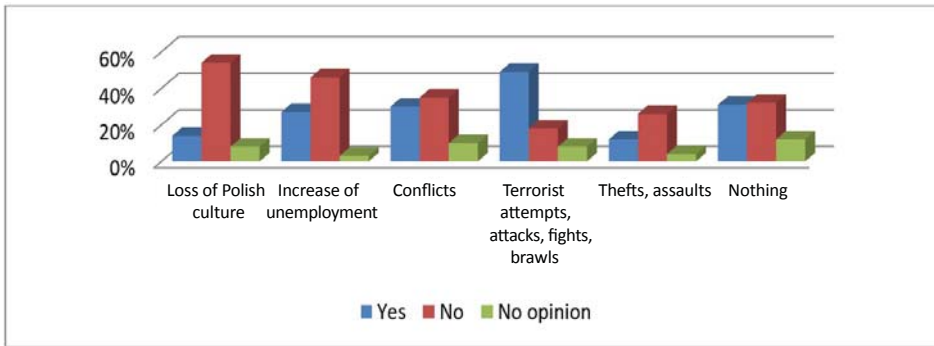
CHART 12. “DO YOU FEAR AGGRESSION FROM SOCIETY MEMBERS BELONGING TO DIFFERENT CULTURES?”



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

In a multiple-choice question, the respondents were to indicate the threats they fear most from societies of different cultures. One can see that the respondents feared terrorist attempts, attacks, fights (49%), conflicts (30%), and unemployment (27%). In turn, 14% of them feared the loss of Polish culture and 12% – theft and assault. A large group of respondents did not indicate any threat (Chart 13). The data show that the respondents are primarily concerned about the risk of physical violence. This is mainly due to the increase in the terrorist threat in the last decade, which has become a global threat. The fact that in Poland no activity of such groups has been recorded is the reason that such a threat is associated with representatives of other cultural circles. However, when exploring the history of Poland, one can learn that such activities did happen. At the same time, the fear of increase in unemployment may result from what respondents know of the situation of Polish economic emigration to Western European countries where Polish workers are perceived by local communities as those who take jobs from indigenous citizens.

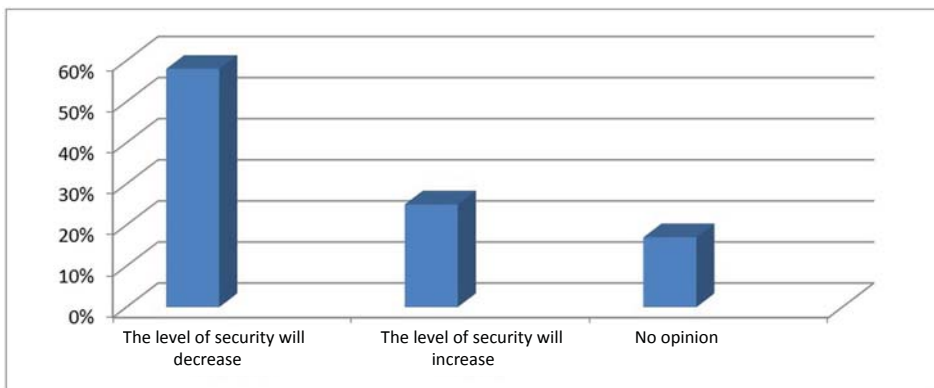
CHART 13. “WHICH THREATS DO YOU FEAR MOST FROM SOCIETIES OF DIFFERENT CULTURES?”



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

Respondents’ fear of living in a multicultural environment is confirmed by their answers to the next question. Namely, 58% of respondents claim that with the development of a multicultural society, the level of security will decrease (Chart 14). This question referred to fears about the everyday coexistence of people of different religions, culture and, consequently, customs, norms, rules of conduct, and, most of all, something new that they have not dealt with so far.

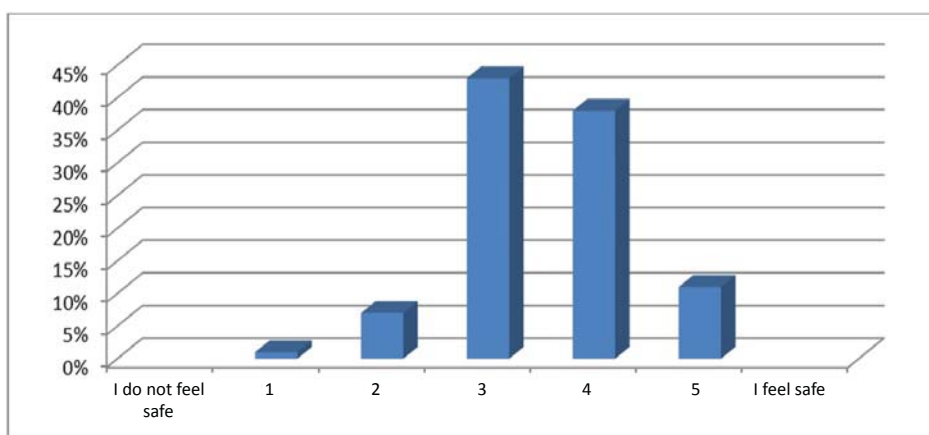
CHART 14. “HOW WILL THE LEVEL OF SECURITY BE AFFECTED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTICULTURAL SECURITY?”



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

The respondents feel neutral about living in a multicultural society. On a scale from one to five, where one meant that the respondent did not feel safe and five – on the contrary, the most respondents indicated grade three (43%) and four (38%). Only 1% did not feel safe (grade 1; Chart 15). This level of the sense of security does not seem to differ from the respective level in any other society where everyone has some concerns and a negligible percentage of people declare a full sense of security.

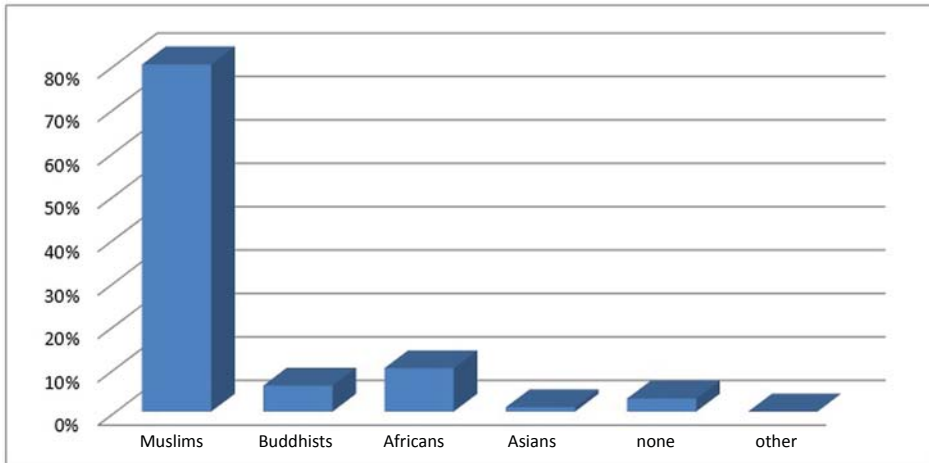
CHART 15. “HOW SAFE DO YOU FEEL LIVING IN A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT?”



Source: own elaboration based on the research.

In the last question, the respondents were asked to indicate the cultures that inspired the greatest fear in them and as it turns out, these were Muslims (80%), followed by Africans (10%), Buddhists (6%) and Asians (1%). In turn, 3% of respondents were not afraid of any culture. This result, on the one hand, is due to the negligible knowledge of a given culture in all aspects related to it, and on the other hand, to the increased threat of Muslim terrorism and political and social instability in the Arabian Peninsula and Africa.

CHART 16. “WHICH CULTURES INSPIRE THE GREATEST FEAR IN YOU?”



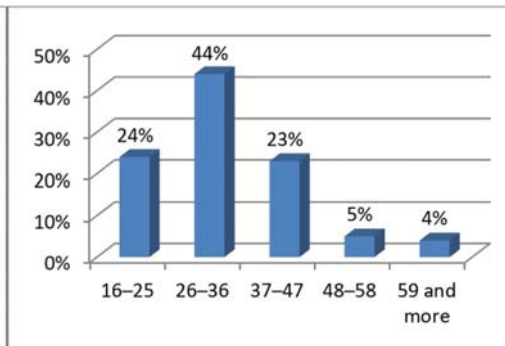
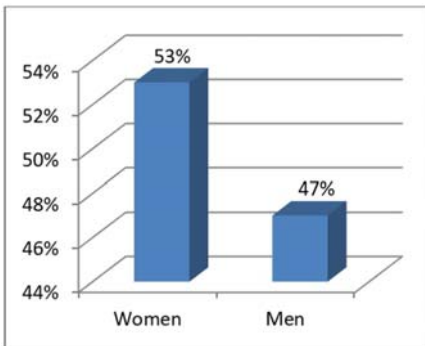
Source: own elaboration based on the research.

RESPONDENTS’ PARTICULARS

The study included 275 people who live in the Lębork district. 53% women and 47% men participated in this project (Chart 17). Most of the respondents were aged between 26 and 36 (44%), then 24% were aged 16–25. People aged 37–47 accounted for 23%, and 5% were people aged 48–58. The smallest group were people aged over 59 (4%) (Chart 18).

CHART 17. RESPONDENTS’ GENDER

CHART 18. RESPONDENTS’ AGE



Source: own elaboration based on the survey.

56% of people at the time of the survey had secondary education, 41% higher education, 3% vocational education. People with primary education did not participate in the study (Chart 19). Most respondents came from the city (65%) (Chart 20).

CHART 19. RESPONDENTS' EDUCATION

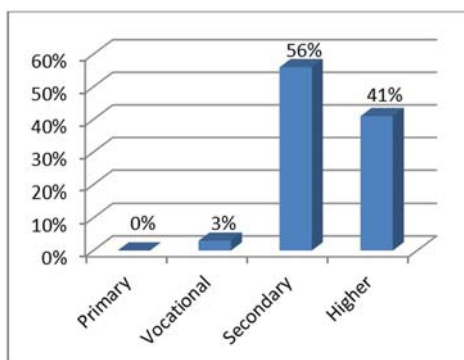
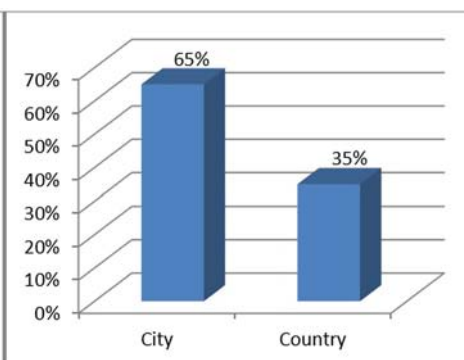


CHART 20. RESPONDENTS' PLACE OF RESIDENCE



Source: own elaboration based on the survey.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RESULTS

Security in the general society-related sense includes securing the needs of existence, survival, stability, identity, independence, and protection of living standard and quality of life.²¹

One of the most common problems one faces today is insecurity. The 21st century brought many threats and dangers, and ensuring a sense of personal security is, after all, an elementary human need, somehow the basis for proper functioning. Abraham Maslow in his hierarchy of needs placed the need for security right behind rudimentary physiological needs, from which it can be concluded that a human being cannot function properly if he or she is not provided with care and support, comfort and peace, and especially freedom from anxiety and fear.²²

Currently, the disturbance of the sense of security is influenced by a number of factors against which people try to protect themselves by creating a wall of inaccessibility. They close themselves to the world, not allowing persons of a different culture to come to them, thinking that they pose a

²¹ A. Rotfeld, *Międzynarodowe czynniki bezpieczeństwa Polski*, Warszawa 1986, pp. 15–16.

²² A. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, New York 1954, pp. 35–47.

threat. Stereotypical thinking about different cultures and customs increases people's fears and anxiety, whereas delving into information on foreign civilizations could bring a lot of good to their lives. Expanding knowledge and understanding what differences are about will result in the fact that persons from different cultures will gain a special meaning in local people's lives so that they could understand that what is different does not have to be dangerous. Multiculturalism does not lead to conflicts, aggression, or aversion; on the contrary, it may turn out to be a key element in building a safe world, provided that one accepts cultural diversity.

The results of the research described above show that the concept of security for the majority of respondents means no threat and their place of residence is largely considered safe. As regards the concept of multiculturalism, they mainly do not have negative feelings, but are rather curious about a foreign culture. They tend to have a neutral approach to everything that is different because most of them have not experienced any forbidden acts perpetrated by people of a different race, colour or religion. Among the features of foreign cultures that do not matter to the majority of respondents there are garments, language and religion; the majority also claim that their personal safety is not threatened. Most of the respondents have witnessed discriminatory and racist behaviours, and the threats related to foreigners that evoke the greatest fear and anxiety in the respondents are terrorist attacks, fights and conflicts. Despite the overall positive attitude to the multicultural society, the majority of study participants think that the security level will decrease as the multicultural society develops. Muslims evoke the greatest fear in the interviewed group. According to all the above, it can be confirmed that any related changes in their environment do not disturb the personal security of the inhabitants of Lębork district, Poland.

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