Buying into 'green' identity: Representation of sustainable consumption in Latvian lifestyle magazines (2013 – 2018)

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- Green consumption is now perceived as an element of environmental reform in many western societies
- "Sustainable" here refers to a level and pattern of consumption, which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

- A green consumer is someone who is very concerned about the environment and therefore, only purchases products that are environmentally friendly or eco-friendly with little or no packaging, products made from natural ingredients and products that are made without causing pollution or detriment to the environmental quality
- This translates in particular consumer choices, which can be successfully used in marketing and profit creating as well.

research questions

- 1) What is meant by sustainability, green and natural and eco-friendly in publications?
- 2) What reasons if any are provided for positioning consumer goods and lifestyles as eco-friendly, natural and sustainable?
- 3) What is identity of green consumer?

Research results and discussion

- In order to limit the research field, weekly magazine leva has been chosen for analysis
- To cover the entire analysis period, magazine editions for two months from each year were analysed using method of content analysis. In total, 54 copies of magazine were analysed.
- Topic of sustainable or green consumption in magazine *leva* is manifested in several thematic blocks.

Overview of various consumer goods

- leva chooses
- We like it
- leva's wellness
- Style
- Beauty.









- In the analysed materials no special focus is placed on sustainable consumer products.
- Organic, natural or green qualities of the product are not emphasized or explained
- Eco-cosmetic certificate *Ecocert* is mentioned in texts very randomly

Use of term 'natural'

Topic of sustainability

- In analysed material, there were several series of articles which tackles the topic of green lifestyle.
- In 2014, magazine introduced new column: "Discovering Green Lifestyle. Ecological and healthy - to feel, eat and live better".
- In 2016 column "I commit to green" was introduced.

Column "Discovering Green Lifestyle.
 Ecological and healthy - to feel, eat and live

better"









• "I commit to green". With financial support from the Latvian Environmental Protection Fund.





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Motivation for being green

- In magazine publications reasons for buying green consumer products are mostly concern with individualistic motives of wellbeing and living in clean environment
- Concerns about environment are not the prime concern of consumer

Conclusions, proposals, recommendations

 Issues of green consumption are not addressed as integral part of stories

 Consumer is the one to make decision if 'natural' is reason enough to bay any certain

product



- It might be that being green is desirable social identity, but doing green is still behaviour to be learned.
- Buying green also is still practice to be acquired; media can be great tool in helping doing so.

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Thank you!

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