General AntiLimbo Survey Overview:

Comparative Summary

Countries covered: Latvia, Sweden, Belgium
Target group: Ukrainian youth (refugees/newcomers)
Method: National surveys + youth worker interviews
Main themes: Integration, emotional well-being, education, friendships, interests, gaming habits, cultural identity

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1. Language Use and Communication

- **Latvia:** Most speak Ukrainian or Russian with each other; Russian or English with locals. Many initially resisted learning Latvian due to uncertainty about staying. Older youth now start learning Latvian for university/work needs

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- **Sweden:** Ukrainian is dominant. Swedish is integrated into school life but not yet preferred for social use. English is used more than in other countries

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- **Belgium:** Most speak Ukrainian. Some local integration through school, but Belgian languages (French/Dutch) are challenging. Language is still a barrier to deeper integration

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Common trend: Ukrainian is the dominant language of comfort. Local language is often seen as a **practical necessity**, not an emotional connection.

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2. Integration and Sense of Belonging

- **Latvia:** Youth feel “in-between” – active in local life, but psychologically still rooted in Ukraine. Strong ties to both Ukrainian and local friends

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- **Sweden:** Gradual adaptation. Youth appreciate safety and support systems, feel more ready to make long-term plans

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- **Belgium:** Emotional distance persists. Many teens feel neutral about belonging, though they attend school and participate in activities

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Common trend: Emotional integration lags behind physical presence. Most youth still feel **transitional**, not settled.

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3. Friendships and Social Circles

- **Latvia:** Friendships are mixed – local, Ukrainian, and online. Strong emotional bonds with friends in Ukraine remain

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- **Sweden:** Peer groups often formed within migrant communities. Friendships with Swedes are rare, mostly due to language/cultural gaps

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- **Belgium:** Hybrid friendships – strongest ties remain with Ukrainian friends, followed by online friends. Local friendships form slowly

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Common trend: Teens maintain **blended social circles** with a strong reliance on pre-existing or digital relationships. Local friendships are slowly forming but not dominant.

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4. Interests and Activities

- **Latvia:** Music, travel, sports, and arts top the list. Excursions and physical activities are especially popular

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- **Sweden:** Creativity, digital games, and interactive activities dominate. Respondents value learning and self-expression

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- **Belgium:** Sports, gaming, music, and creative hobbies are common. Nature and arts also mentioned

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Common trend: Youth are drawn to **creative, active, and social formats**. Music, gaming, and sports are universal favorites.

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5. Gaming Habits and Preferences

- **Latvia:** 45% play daily. Preferences include plot-based, simulation, and strategic games. Gaming is emotionally important

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- **Sweden:** Games are a major social tool. Preferred formats are adventure, story-based, and puzzle/logic games

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- **Belgium:** Gaming is daily for many. Social, story-driven, and strategic games are most favored

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Common trend: Gaming is a **coping and connection tool**, especially among under-18s. Youth prefer games with **narrative, emotion, and multiplayer interaction**.

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6. Emotional Well-being and Motivation

- **Latvia:** Motivation comes from family and friends. Some teens struggle emotionally, especially older ones unsure about the future

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- **Sweden:** Teens are resilient but carry emotional weight. Stability, routines, and future opportunities help maintain motivation

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- **Belgium:** Family is the top motivator, followed by friends. Some youth express uncertainty, fatigue, or emotional detachment

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Common trend: Emotional support is driven by **close relationships**. Schools and structured routines also play a key role.

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7. Cultural Identity and Perception

- In all countries, Ukrainian youth express:
  - Pride in their heritage
  - A desire to be seen **as Ukrainians, not Russians**
  - Appreciation for **calmness, safety, and nature** in host countries
  - Frustration with **language barriers and cultural stereotypes**

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8. Future Outlook

- **Latvia & Belgium:** Many youth still dream of returning to Ukraine but feel conflicted. Future is unclear

  MAIN youth survey Latvia summary

  Survey summary Belgium

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- **Sweden:** More teens feel open to staying long-term and building a future

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Common trend: Hope for return coexists with growing acceptance of reality. Sweden shows slightly more forward-looking integration.

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9. Youth Worker Insights (All Countries)

- Youth are **curious, eager, but emotionally complex**
- Integration is best supported through:
  - **Group activities**
  - **Flexible, inclusive formats**
  - **Safe emotional environments**
- Workers emphasize the need for **interactive, non-formal, and culturally sensitive approaches**, especially in digital or playful formats

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Implications for AntiLimbo Game Design

Across all three countries, Ukrainian youth want games that:

- Offer **storytelling, emotional engagement, and freedom of choice**
- Allow **group interaction and cooperation**
- Reflect **real-life dilemmas**, cultural learning, and identity exploration
- Avoid rigid knowledge testing — instead support **creative, emotional, and social engagement**

- *This survey was a part of the AntiLimbo project. The KA2 Small-Scale Partnership project "AntiLimbo" is run by Grem, Latvia in cooperation with MoreMosaic, Sweden and Bessonova Outdoor Immersion School, Belgium within Erasmus+ programme framework. The project aims to enhance the sense of belonging among young Ukrainian refugees in Belgium, Latvia, and Sweden, connecting them to the European Union and its cultural heritage. Through gamification and digital tools, we aim to raise awareness of European cultural history and values, fostering a deeper sense of identity with their new environment and European society. Project reference number 2024-3-LV02-KA210-YOU-000269071. Young people under 18 completed the survey with permission and under the supervision of their teachers or youth workers.
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