



The Impact of Chayka.lv on the Russian-Speaking Community of Daugavpils, Latvia

Prepared by: The Market Research Center



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X25

The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of overlapping circular and brushstroke-like shapes in shades of blue, purple, and magenta. The colors are layered, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall aesthetic is modern and artistic.

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25x25 Series

Internews is an international non-profit that supports independent media in 100 countries – from radio stations in refugee camps, to hyper-local news outlets, to filmmakers and technologists. We train journalists and digital rights activists, tackle disinformation, and offer business expertise to help media outlets thrive financially. For nearly 40 years, we have helped partners reach millions of people with trustworthy information that saves lives, improves livelihoods, and holds institutions accountable.

We commissioned this research as part of the 25 x 25 initiative, our strategic commitment to increase robust evaluation of our work by delivering 25 research studies by 2025. We have made this commitment because we want to know which of our approaches are most effective in order to bring them to scale, to strengthen our understanding of the impact for communities when their information environments improve over time, to make our contribution to the global evidence base, and to hold ourselves accountable to the people we serve.

We will do this work alongside external research partners who share our vision to realize the potential of a digitally connected world: a world in which evidence-based information advances human progress, enables broad opportunity and accountability, and fuels vibrant civic debate. We know we will only achieve this through a deep understanding of the contexts we work in, and a constant drive to learn and improve.

July 2023

Acknowledgements

The authors express their deep thanks to current and former Chayka.lv staff members who participated in this research, as well as the Internews team for their coordination efforts.

Preface/Foreword

The research that underpins this report, and the main drafting of this report, took place before Russia invaded Ukraine. This created new challenges for media in the wider region, including how to cover the conflict and reflect different perspectives within local communities in Latvia. Chayka.lv took a bolder stance than most, publishing an open letter which condemned the invasion. They lost as many subscribers as they gained for doing so.



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Abbreviations & Acronyms

IDIs	In-depth interviews
FGDs	Focus group discussions
NEPLP	National Electronic Mass Media Council of Latvia (NEPLP)
SIMBA	Supporting Independent Media in the Baltics Action

Executive Summary

This document summarizes an evaluation of Chayka.lv, commissioned by Internews. The Internews team leading this project hope that other efforts to support independent media can draw useful lessons from this report.

[Chayka.lv](#) is an independent media outlet that provides free, high-quality, politically neutral information to the Russian-speaking community of the Latvian city of Daugavpils, including news, entertainment, human-interest and other factual content. It started as pages on the [Facebook](#) and OK.ru social media platforms, then an online news portal, before expanding to other platforms including Instagram, VK, Telegram, and YouTube. In the second half of 2021, Chayka.lv had over 15,000 subscribers to its Facebook page and enjoyed a consistent monthly audience reach of at least 150,000 users on its website. At the time of writing, its Facebook channel and website remain the two main channels of content distribution for Chayka.lv. Its income comes from third-party grants and advertising sales.

The idea to launch Chayka.lv emerged in 2018 through a program to support leadership in journalism run by Internews' partner the Baltic Centre for Media Excellence. The outlet was established in 2019 with support from Internews' project Supporting Independent Media in the Baltics Action (SIMBA), which was funded by the US Department of Human Rights and Labor between 2019 and 2022. Since then, Chayka.lv has benefited from several forms of support through the SIMBA project to develop its journalistic capacity, expand its audience and progress toward financial sustainability, notably:

- An experienced Latvian editor spending 12 months in Chayka.lv's editorial team to increase its capacity
- Five months of support from a sales professional to develop a community-building and management strategy, and creative campaigns to increase advertising sales
- A grant to develop news content in information-poor areas
- A grant to produce high-quality, objective content related to the COVID-19 pandemic

In August 2021, Internews commissioned the Market Research Center to conduct a detailed research study into Chayka.lv's impact on the media landscape of Daugavpils. This study comprised desktop research, in-depth interviews (IDIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and a quantitative survey among the residents of Daugavpils. Its goals were to evaluate:

- The success of Chayka.lv in filling the gap for quality Russian-language based information in Daugavpils
- The impact of Chayka.lv on the Russian-speaking community of Daugavpils

- Whether Chayka.lv is viewed as a trusted quality journalism outlet in the Daugavpils community

Methodology

This study used a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data gathering (see [Table 1](#)). It was conducted by two experienced media researchers in late 2021/early 2022, in Russian.

An initial desktop review of research publications and online media sources provided insights into the media landscape of Daugavpils, to steer the qualitative research approach (see [Appendix 1](#) for a full list of sources). Other desk research Google Analytics and Facebook Insights to assess the audience reach and engagement of the Chayka.lv website and Facebook page, its two most prominent platforms.

To explore issues arising from the desktop research, the research team conducted in-depth interviews (IDIs) with 11 professionals currently or formerly associated with Chayka.lv and the SIMBA project. They then held two Zoom focus group discussions (FGDs) with a total of 15 Chayka.lv consumers aged 18–61 (9 female and 6 male to reflect the outlet’s overall gender balance) to investigate previous findings.

Finally, the team conducted an online quantitative survey of 292 Russian-speaking Daugavpils online news consumers, including those who were not aware of Chayka.lv to triangulate data from the first three research phases (see [Table 1](#) for details of each research phase and [Appendix 2](#) for the IDI and FGD guides, and the survey questions).

Key Findings

This study found that Chayka.lv achieved some impressive impact in just over three years.

“Facts and opinions in a non-intrusive way.”

— FGD participant describing Chayka.lv

Chayka.lv is an Important Source of News in Daugavpils

Survey data shows that Chayka.lv is ranked third in popularity among the city’s Russian-language media outlets after the city’s two leading news outlets ([Gorod.lv](#) and [Grani.lv](#)). But it is a distant third choice (cited by 12 percent of survey respondents, versus 32 and 27 percent for [Gorod.lv](#) and [Grani.lv](#), respectively). The survey also showed that the city’s residents

perceived Chayka.lv to be the only politically neutral source of information in Daugavpils. However, some respondents wanted Chayka.lv to expand its range of news coverage and provide a deeper analysis of political topics.

Chayka.lv is a Trusted Information Source

73 per cent of survey respondents were either aware or regular consumers of Chayka.lv. 83 per cent of this group perceived Chayka.lv to be a reliable source of information, and the FGDs back up this perception. FGDs revealed that Chayka.lv provides more thorough and insightful content on some of the most important topics to the people of Daugavpils than other local online information sources.

Chayka.lv Enjoys High Levels of Awareness but Could Achieve More

Chayka.lv enjoys high brand recognition in Daugavpils: 73 percent of survey respondents who consume news content online said they have heard of it. Over two-thirds of those who had not heard of Chayka.lv suggested it could build more visibility on social media.

Chayka.lv has a Positive Impact on the city's Media Landscape

Almost two-thirds of the survey respondents (63 percent) reported that Chayka.lv has had an impact on their access to more diverse information about Daugavpils. Focus group participants said that Chayka.lv has provided information in more diverse ways than other media outlets, and some research participants believed Chayka.lv's output has constructively influenced the content of competing news outlets by prompting them to produce more long reads and analytical reports.

Chayka.lv is Most Prominent on Facebook

The most popular content distribution platform for Chayka.lv is its [Facebook channel](#). Among the survey respondents who consumed Chayka.lv, 49 percent accessed its Facebook page compared with 45 percent for its website. Its Facebook page had over 15,000 subscribers in December 2021, according to Facebook Insights. In addition, of the 32 percent of respondents who stated that they consume Chayka.lv, nearly half (43 percent) reported reading the outlet's content offerings several times a day, 4 percent reported doing so once a day, and 53 percent reported reading Chayka.lv two or three times a week.

Chayka.lv is Engaging Audiences

Chayka.lv is most popular among women, who comprised 64–68 percent of its audience in 2020–2021. The audience focus groups and survey indicate that members of the Daugavpils community like how Chayka.lv presents information and generally find its coverage comprehensive, although the survey found that 14 percent of male readers did not feel it

provided sufficient information. Its coverage focuses on solutions rather than problems, and audiences like this.

Chayka.lv enjoys an average engagement figure of 1,220 per post (social media likes, comments, shares, and other reactions), the second-highest engagement level among media outlets covering Daugavpils.

Internews Support has been Instrumental in Chayka.lv's Success

According to IDIs with the outlet's current and former staff members, the funds and mentorship provided to Chayka.lv by Internews enabled it to produce relevant and unique content of interest to audiences. All of these participants agreed that Chayka.lv could not have achieved its recognition in Daugavpils's Russian-language media landscape without Internews support.

Key Recommendations

Based on its findings, the evaluation of Chayka.lv made several practical recommendations to improve the impact of the outlet or other similar projects.

1. Increase Chayka.lv's brand awareness
2. Define Chayka.lv's long-term editorial strategy
3. Define Chayka.lv's target audience, and seek to understand and meet its needs
4. Increase political coverage
5. Develop a sustainable business model

Introduction

Chayka.lv and the Research Context

Chayka.lv is an independent media outlet that exists to serve the Russian-speaking community of the southern Latvian city of Daugavpils by providing free, trustworthy, high-quality, and politically neutral information in Russian. Its content includes: local, national and world news; information and advice on health, economic and environmental topics; human-interest stories; and cultural news and reviews.

Chayka.lv started as pages on the Facebook and OK.ru social media platforms, then launched its own website as a content platform. It later distributed content via Instagram, VK, Telegram, and most recently YouTube. At the time of this research it was exploring the potential of using TikTok. In the second half of 2021, Chayka.lv had over 15,000 subscribers to its Facebook page and enjoyed a consistent monthly audience reach of at least 150,000 users on its website. At the time of writing, its Facebook channel and website remain the two main channels of content distribution for Chayka.lv. Its financial model relies on third-party grants and advertising sales.

The founder decided to create Chayka.lv in 2018, and its emergence was supported by Internews' project Supporting Independent Media in the Baltics Action (SIMBA), funded by the US Department of Human Rights and Labor and delivered between July 2019 and November 2022.

Since its launch, Chayka.lv has enjoyed a range of support through the SIMBA project to develop its journalistic capacity, expand its audience and progress toward financial sustainability. The most significant support was:

- **Twelve months of embedded editor support:** SIMBA hired an experienced Latvian editor to work in Chayka.lv's editorial team to increase its overall capacity and expand its popularity.
- **Five months of support from a sales professional:** To develop a community-building and management strategy for Chayka.lv, and increase advertising sales via creative advertising campaigns.
- **A grant to develop news content in information-poor areas:** SIMBA provided financial assistance to Chayka.lv to pilot new multimedia formats, produce unbiased content that meets journalistic principles, and increase audience size and sales revenues. This included Chayka.lv establishing a creative studio to develop multimedia content for its editorial and sales departments.

- **A Good Story Fund grant to produce high-quality, objective content related to the COVID-19 pandemic:** Outputs included analytical materials, expert opinions, and verified information, helping to strengthen Chayka.lv's position in the Daugavpils media landscape.

In August 2021 Internews commissioned research to gain a more detailed understanding of the impact Chayka.lv has had on the Daugavpils community, and the impact and replicability of Internews' long-term tailored support. An independent evaluation team from the Daugavpils-based Market Research Center used a range of methods to conduct the research.

As background to the study, the research team highlighted several insights about Daugavpils:

- **Russian is the language of choice for most media consumers in the city:** 20.7 percent of Daugavpils residents are Latvian. Ethnic Russians are the largest minority group, comprising around a quarter of the population.¹
- **Public trust in Daugavpils media is low:** The Russian-language media landscape in the city is politically influenced, with leading online media outlets dependent on local municipal support that often lacks transparency.²
- **Chayka.lv's competitors are politically influenced:** Before Chayka.lv emerged, the Daugavpils Russian-language media landscape was dominated by three politically influenced media outlets: Gorod.lv, Grani.lv, and Nasha.lv.³

Research Objectives

The evaluation aimed to assess the impact that Chayka.lv has had on the Russian-speaking community and Russian-language information ecosystem in Daugavpils, by determining:

- The success of Chayka.lv in overcoming the lack of quality Russian-language information
- The impact of Chayka.lv on the Russian-speaking community
- Whether Chayka.lv is viewed as a trusted quality journalism outlet

Methodology

Research Questions

This study aimed to answer eight research questions:

1. What is the role of Chayka.lv in the Daugavpils community and the city's Russian-language information ecosystem? How has this changed or evolved since the outlet's inception in 2018?
2. Did Chayka.lv alter the media consumption habits of members of the Daugavpils Russian-speaking community?
3. Has consuming the content produced and published by Chayka.lv changed how members of the Daugavpils Russian-speaking community think about their daily life?
4. How do audiences perceive Chayka.lv? Is it viewed as an influential news source in Daugavpils?
5. Who makes up Chayka.lv's audience?
6. How has the Chayka.lv audience changed over time?
7. What has been the impact of donor support on the development and success of Chayka.lv?
8. How far did Internews' activities to support Chayka.lv derive from the unique needs of Chayka.lv and the Daugavpils community?

Supplementary inquiries under each research question helped to guide and expand the research process.

Research Design and Sequence

An initial desktop review provided insights into the media landscape of Daugavpils. The research team began by assessing the national, regional and local information ecosystems, and the Russian-speaking community of Daugavpils. This involved reviewing available publications, and local online media sources (see [Table 1](#) for an overview, and [Appendix 1](#) for

a full list of sources). Alongside this, the research team used Google Analytics and Facebook Insights to determine the audience size of the Chayka.lv website and Facebook page, respectively, and their levels of audience loyalty/engagement. The team focused on the Facebook page and website as they were the original platforms where Chayka.lv published and at the writing of the report were considered by the editorial team of Chayka.lv as its two main content dissemination channels.

Insights from this exercise informed qualitative and quantitative research that involved hundreds of Daugavpils residents, media experts, and Chayka.lv staff. After holding in-depth interviews (IDIs) with professionals associated with Chayka.lv and the SIMBA project to discuss issues arising from the desktop research, the evaluation team held focus group discussions (FGDs) with Chayka.lv consumers based on findings from the desktop research and IDIs.

Finally, the evaluation team conducted an online quantitative survey of 292 Russian-speaking Daugavpils residents. The team used survey findings to triangulate data from the first three research phases (see [Table 1](#) for full details of each research phase).

Table 1. Research methods and sampling

Method	Sample and sampling strategy	Scope
1. Desktop review of the Russian-language media landscape, as well as Internews support, activities, and approach	<p>The desktop research comprised four elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A content overview of the top three information sources in the Daugavpils Russian-language media landscape to document topics and engagement levels ■ A literature review to analyze research publications and publicly available studies, including 5 research studies into local media consumption and 6 articles. ■ An overview of the audience reach figures on the main content distribution channels of Chayka.lv, namely its Facebook channel and website. ■ An overview of Internews support for Chayka.lv 	National and regional analysis
2. Interviews with people currently or previously associated with Chayka.lv	<p>IDIs used the purposive sampling method to select 11 interviewees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 current staff members (website administrator, three journalists) 2 former staff members (former website administrator, former journalist) 2 members of the management team (editor-in-chief, advertising manager) 1 embedded editor provided by the SIMBA project 1 sales professional provided by the SIMBA project 1 former SIMBA project director 	Current, former staff of Chayka.lv, and the embedded editor and sales professional provided as part of SIMBA support

<p>3. Two focus groups with Chayka.lv consumers</p>	<p>Screening ensured that participants were consumers of Russian-language online media content and familiar with Chayka.lv, and to represent socio-economic diversity.</p> <p>Two cohorts of participants were recruited based on their age, gender, and occupation:</p> <p>1 group of individuals aged 18–34 (4 female, 3 male)</p> <p>1 group of individuals aged 35–60 (5 female, 3 male)</p> <p>In both groups, one third of participants were male and two-thirds were female to reflect the gender balance of Chayka.lv’s audience.</p> <p>Participants of both groups had diverse occupations, including: businessperson, driver, teacher, hairdresser, bookkeeper, self-employed disabled person, office worker, librarian and medical worker,</p>	<p>Consumers of local online news that have recently noticed content produced by Chayka.lv</p>
<p>4. Targeted online survey of media consumers in Daugavpils</p>	<p>Respondents were screened to meet the project needs and research objectives.</p> <p>292 Russian-speaking online news consumers residing in Daugavpils were surveyed.</p>	<p>Russian-speaking residents of Daugavpils, who consume online media</p>

Research Tools, Sampling and Data Collection Methods

The evaluation team used the following research tools to collect data:

- **Semi-structured questionnaire for IDIs:** To obtain detailed and unstructured information about project topics
- **Discussion guide for online FGDs:** To better comprehend and test ideas arising from the IDIs
- **Quantitative survey questionnaire:** To test opinions and hypotheses among the wider population and understand community members’ perceptions about Daugavpils’ media ecosystem

These tools are in [Appendix 2](#).

Desktop Research

The desktop research phase of the project was conducted by two researchers experienced in media analysis, who engaged in the following activities:

- Conducting online searches to identify data sources.

- Contacting media agencies, local government institutions, and national government institutions to learn about the ownership and registration of key media outlets in the city's media landscape and the public funding that they receive.
- Conducting an analysis of Chayka.lv's audience engagement by reviewing the outlet's Google Analytics and Facebook Insights.
- Analyzing the Facebook audience engagement of the online competitors of Chayka.lv in Daugavpils, namely Gorod.lv and Grani.lv.
- Reviewing instances of Internews support provided to Chayka.lv.

Data reviewed by the researchers as part of the desktop research phase was published within the preceding four years and included national media consumption surveys.

In-Depth Interviews (IDIs)

A total of 11 interviews were conducted on Oct. 5–29, 2021, with nine current and former Chayka.lv employees, and two mentors provided as part of Internews' support – people with the best knowledge of Chayka.lv at various stages of its evolution. Phone interviews were conducted by a member of the research team who had been involved in the desk research so had a detailed understanding of the context in which Chayka.lv operates.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The research team selected FGD participants to meet the following requirements:

- Regular online consumers of Russian-language news
- Consumers of news about Daugavpils and its surroundings
- Reflect all age ranges from 18–60
- Reflect the gender breakdown of Chayka.lv's audience
- Knowledge about, and have opinions on, Chayka.lv but deliberately included people who were not regular users of the outlet

The opinions and media consumption habits of Daugavpils residents who were not familiar with Chayka.lv were evaluated as part of the online survey.

Focus groups were conducted in Russian via Zoom with an experienced moderator, ensuring that all participants had an opportunity to express their views.

Online Quantitative Survey

The research team selected survey respondents to reflect the following requirements:

- Regular online consumers of Russian-language news
- Consumers of news about Daugavpils and its surroundings

- Aged 18–60
- Gender diverse
- 20 percent of respondents were Chayka.lv consumers

On Nov. 22–26, 2021 the research team employed an existing panel of Latvian respondents provided by the Alchemer platform⁴ to conduct the survey. Some 390 prospective respondents met the survey’s demographic requirements and were asked to respond to multiple screening questions. Some 309 respondents passed these screening questions within the given timeframe and were invited to participate in the survey. After data cleaning, 292 respondents remained – a statistically meaningful sample for evaluating regional media in Latvia which has a statistical error rate of 5.7 percent.

Table 2. Details about the quantitative survey respondents

Disaggregation	Data
AGE	21–61
GENDER	62 percent female, 38 percent male, representative of the online audience of Chayka.lv
NATIONALITY	48 percent Russian, 37 percent Latvian, and 15 percent other
CONSUMERS OF CHAYKA.LV	32 percent

The quantitative survey was conducted via the Alchemer platform, in Russian. After passing the screening process, survey participants received a unique link to the survey. Questions were displayed to respondents one by one. The survey contained two types of questions: questions for all respondents and additional questions for those who had consumed Chayka.lv content.

Data Analysis

FGDs and IDIs were analyzed using a similar method of discourse analysis: recordings were transcribed, and opinions grouped around areas of agreement and disagreement to inform key findings.

Before commencing the survey data analysis, the research team outlined a data analysis roadmap to support cross-tabulation. This enabled the project team to assess the answers to all research questions in accordance with the study’s demographics and subgroups.

When modelling the data, the research team paid particular attention to data quality and

understanding the components of statistical significance when filtering, narrowing, and focusing on any one subgroup.

Research Limitations

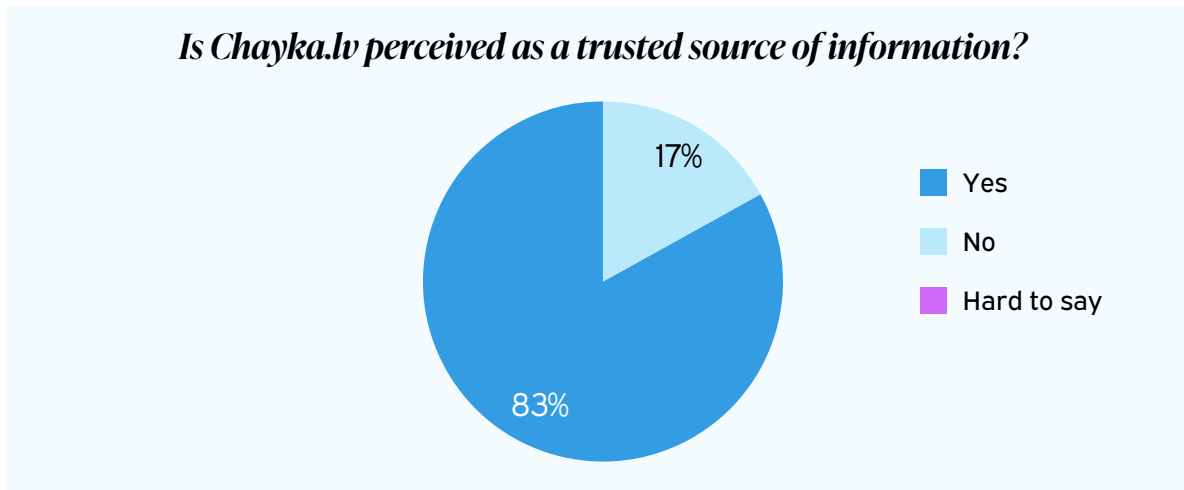
The research team faced limitations with publicly available data that they had intended to incorporate within the analysis. Desktop research revealed that national Latvian media surveys do not disaggregate by region or provide data about the media consumption habits of the Russian-speaking residents of Daugavpils. In addition, objective, non-partisan analysis of the regional media landscape was not available, particularly in relation to political influence.

Results

Research question 1:

What is Chayka.lv's role in Daugavpils and its Russian-language information ecosystem? How has this changed or evolved since the outlet's inception?

Figure 1. Is Chayka.lv perceived as a trusted source of information?



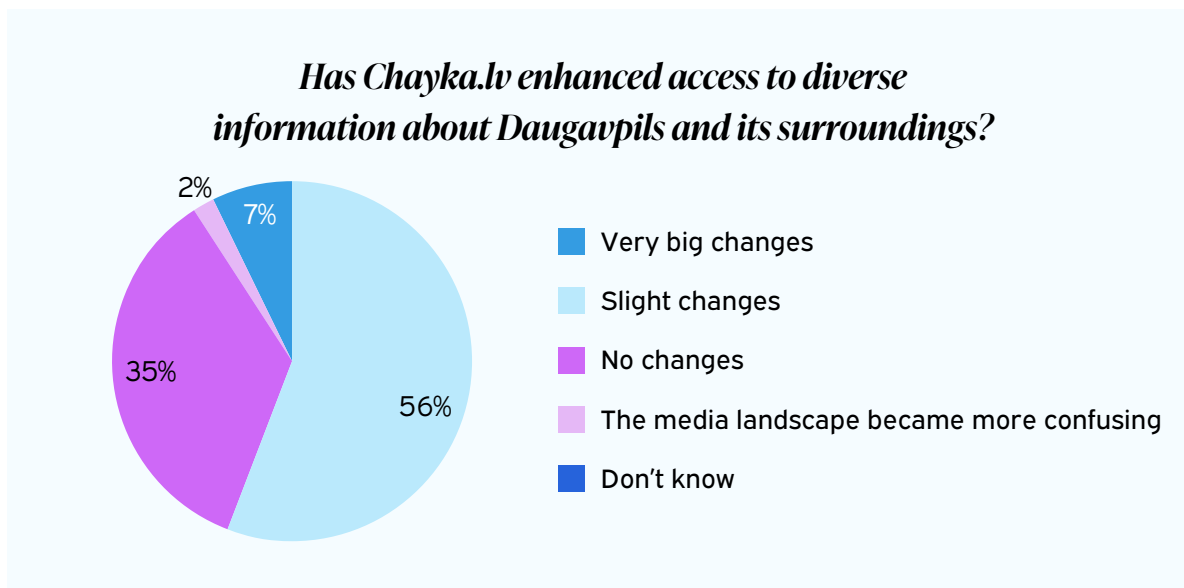
(Source: quantitative survey)

Quantitative survey data suggests that, in just over three years, Chayka.lv has become recognized as a trusted media source by 83 percent of respondents who are aware of or consume Chayka.lv (73 per cent of survey respondents overall). This is significant in an information environment where there is a lack of trust (see [Figure 1](#)). Similarly, one FGD respondent said, “*Chayka.lv is trustworthy, because it does not display a biased approach*” and that no one seems to influence its content. Other FGD respondents pointed to a lack of trust in the independence of the local media ecosystem, with one saying, “One media group works for one leading party, whereas the other media group works for the other political party.”

One factor that may help to build trust in a media outlet is its reliability as an information source. According to data from the qualitative research, Chayka.lv is viewed as reliable in this respect. Focus group participants tended to agree that Chayka.lv is a reliable source of information, although those with less experience of Chayka.lv were more reserved about this. Some FGDs participants noted that Chayka.lv has a “unique approach” and provides kinds of information that are unavailable from other leading media outlets in Daugavpils.

More than half (63 percent) of the survey respondents said that Chayka.lv has enhanced their access to diverse information about the Daugavpils and its surroundings – 56 percent of these respondents said Chayka.lv had led to slight changes in this, and 7 percent of them said it had led to very big changes in this area (see [Figure 2](#)).

Figure 2. Has Chayka.lv enhanced access to diverse information about Daugavpils and its surroundings?



(Source: quantitative survey)

All of the IDI participants were associated in some way with Chayka.lv and all expressed that Chayka.lv is a reliable source of information that provides proven facts and deep insights about Daugavpils. However, they also observed that Chayka.lv lacks some information about the city and its region. This may reflect the limitations of their small team and relative lack of resources compared with the other major outlets.

By weighing the findings of IDIs and FGDs, the research team concluded that people interested in getting the full picture of what is happening in the region should consume content from other media outlets as well as Chayka.lv. Quantitative survey results revealed that this is exactly what Chayka.lv consumers do they regularly read at least one or two other leading local news outlets.

Research question 2:

Did Chayka.lv alter the media consumption habits of the Daugavpils Russian-speaking community?

Daugavpils is diverse in terms of religious affiliation and the cultural traditions of its residents, and has the largest share of different nationalities in Latvia. Half (50 percent) of its residents are Russian, 18 percent are Latvian, 14 percent Polish, 7 percent Belarusian, 2 percent Ukrainian.

According to FGD participants, before Chayka.lv existed they mainly consumed information on the news portals Gorod.lv and Grani.lv. Some also consumed information on Daugavpils LIVE (an entertainment and lifestyle Facebook page) and Nasha.lv (a news portal).

Data collected by the Baltic Center for Investigative Journalism (Re:Baltica) reviewed as part of the desktop research reveals that all of these outlets except Daugavpils LIVE were politically influenced by pro-Russian viewpoints.⁵ In contrast, Chayka.lv’s editorial code of conduct provides guidance on creating independent content and enables it to offer an additional perspective in the Daugavpils media landscape. This was recognized by Chayka.lv audience members who participated in the FGDs.

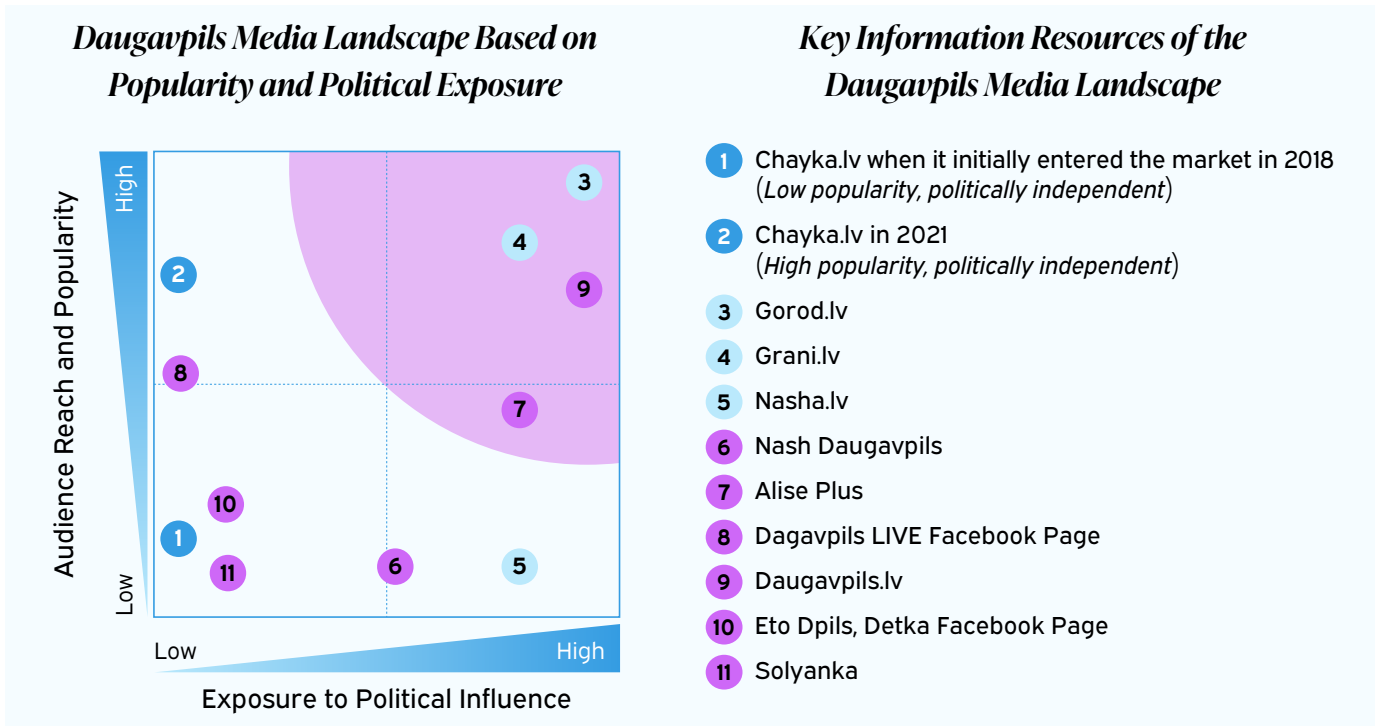
“When I first read Chayka.lv, it immediately seemed to be... a different news genre, it was a breath of fresh air.”

“Nowadays, it is good that it is possible to gain popularity not only by using loud headlines and political dirt, but also by being quiet and peaceful... Chayka.lv is going in its own direction and it is strengthening its position by being kind.”

“It is good that Chayka.lv has entered the market and has shown that it is different [it is also good] that one could talk about good things and in doing so achieve their place in the market.”

— FGD participants

Figure 3. Representation of the Daugavpils media landscape based on expert evaluation through qualitative interviews



Explanatory note: the visualization in [Figure 3](#) reflects the Daugavpils Media Landscape at the time of the expert evaluation that took place in the October-December quarter of 2021. A datapoint for Chayka.lv in 2018 was added for reference to reflect how its position

in the city's media landscape changed in the fourth quarter 2021.

According to desk research, the largest owners of Russian-language media in the Latgale region are based in Daugavpils. Until 2020, the owners of Russian-language media were the Daugavpils Media Group, which published a newspaper and ran a radio station and news portal, and Dautkom Plus, a smaller company that owned a newspaper, a news portal, and a local TV channel.

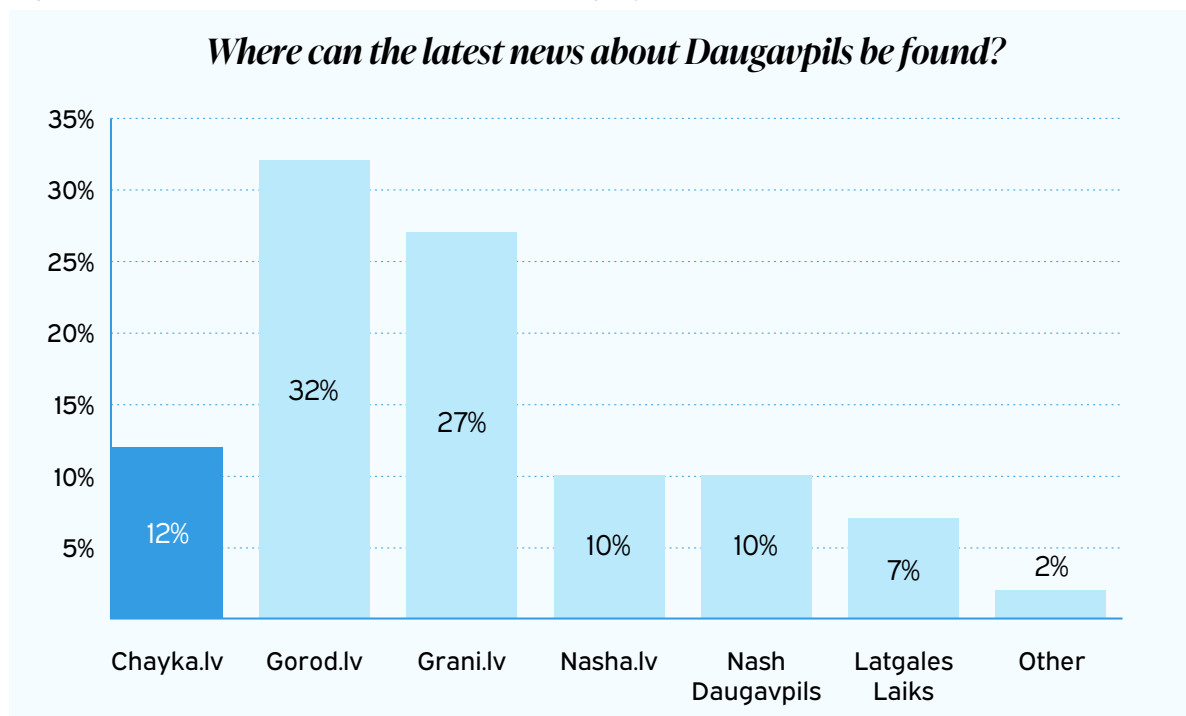
In 2022 the presence of the Dautkom Plus company and Daugavpils Media Group remains apparent within the Daugavpils media landscape because of the following:

Grani.lv has close links with local television channel LRT+. Both media outlets were previously part of Dautkom Plus company.

Nasha.lv is closely linked to the local radio station [Aliseplus.lv](#). Both media outlets were previously part of the Daugavpils Media Group.

Chayka.lv is the newest entrant to this media landscape. Survey data from this study shows that it is the third choice information source for Daugavpils residents, after Gorod.lv and Grani.lv (see [Figure 4](#)), and the only politically neutral media source in Daugavpils (see [Figure 3](#)). As such, and as an information source that is perceived as reliable and trustworthy, as discussed above, Chayka.lv plays a valuable role in the city's media ecosystem. However, Chayka.lv finds it challenging to cope with unequal competition – all other local media directly or indirectly receive funds from the Daugavpils Municipality, whereas it does not.⁶

Figure 4. Sources of the Latest news About Daugavpils



(Source: quantitative survey)

While survey respondents ranked Chayka.lv as the third most popular source of the news about Daugavpils, it is a distant third. Far fewer respondents cited Chayka.lv than the most popular information sources (12 percent, versus 32 and 27 percent), and two other information sources were mentioned by 10 percent of respondents (see [Figure 4](#)).

However, Chayka.lv is significant in the Daugavpils media landscape for two other reasons. At the end of 2021, Facebook Insights indicate that Chayka.lv had the third-largest Facebook following among local Russian-language media outlets, not far behind Grani.lv though well behind Gorod.lv (see [Table 3](#)). This is significant because Facebook is the most popular social media platform in Latvia,⁷ and audience data from both Facebook and Google show that Chayka.lv's Facebook audience is consistently increasing.

There may also be some evidence that Chayka.lv is influencing the way other media outlets report. For example, two IDI respondents noted that Grani.lv has begun producing long reads and analytical reports like those published by Chayka.lv. Other interviewees claimed that the city's news sources perceive Chayka.lv as a competitor and have tried to emulate its style of providing more detailed information about concrete events and enhancing their short reports with broader context.

Research question 3:

Has consuming the content produced and published by Chayka.lv changed how members of the Daugavpils Russian-speaking community think about their daily life?

According to focus group participants, Chayka.lv provides alternative viewpoints on city life and a variety of opinions in a neutral way. The key added value cited by these respondents is that Chayka.lv focuses on progress, solutions, and achievements by the city's residents rather than problems.

“Instead of presenting plain reporting on the launch of a new project, [Chayka.lv] went deeper, did interviews and that helped me better understand the matter.”

“I was excited to read about the wise personalities from our city, it was eye-opening and enabled me to view the city with fresh eyes and optimism.”

— FDG participants

Focus group participants noted that Chayka.lv does not participate in political defamation campaigns before elections, and appreciate that this enables audience members to draw their own conclusions. On the other hand, focus group participants sometimes wanted Chayka.lv to have a clearer voice. In addition, survey data suggested that respondents may

be less satisfied with Chayka.lv's political coverage than its other content – respondents rated its political coverage 3.6 out of 5, the lowest of all topics.

When asked for suggestions for Chayka.lv content, FGD participants said they would like wider topic representation and more insight into political issues. The IDIs revealed different views on prioritizing political coverage. Current and former Chayka.lv staff members said political issues were not a priority, while Chayka.lv management representatives emphasized that this will be a focus area in future.

Research question 4:

How do audiences perceive Chayka.lv? Is it viewed as an influential news source in Daugavpils?

Chayka.lv has achieved solid brand recognition in Daugavpils. Survey data shows that only 27 percent of Russian-speaking online news consumers were not aware of it.

Table 3. Daugavpils information sources' prominence on Facebook, 2021

SOURCE	FOLLOWERS	WEEKLY POSTS	WEEKLY ENGAGEMENT	ENGAGEMENT PER POST
Gorod.lv	38.3K	220	125.4K	570
Grani.lv	13.8K	69	195.2k	2,830
Chayka.lv	12.2K	51	62.1K	1,220
Daugavpils City Portal	10.6K	44	9.5K	215
Alise Plus Radio	9.1K	3	297	100
Eto Dpils, Detka	7.7K	10	5.9K	Not assessed
Nash Daugavpils	7.3K	18	3.2K	Not assessed
Solyanka	3.7K	0	8	Not assessed
Nasha.lv	3.6K	56	3.2K	Not assessed

(Source: Facebook Insights, October 2021)

*Note: in the table above, engagement refers to likes and alternative reactions to posts, as well as comments and shares.

While Chayka.lv's content is perceived as trustworthy and reliable (as outlined above), the survey found that 14 percent of male readers and 3 percent of female readers did not feel the information provided by Chayka.lv was sufficient, indicating that the outlet could do more to engage male audiences.

Chayka.lv is achieving impressive audience engagement on Facebook, enjoying a higher level of engagement per post than the city's leading news outlet Gorod.lv, yet some way behind that of Grani.lv (see [Table 3](#)).

The research team asked the 27 percent of survey respondents who were not aware of Chayka.lv a series of follow-up questions and established that 71 percent of them had not noticed Chayka.lv online. This, coupled with the fact that many Chayka.lv users only access its content on social media, suggest that the outlet should pay greater attention to the visibility of its website and a broader online engagement strategy.

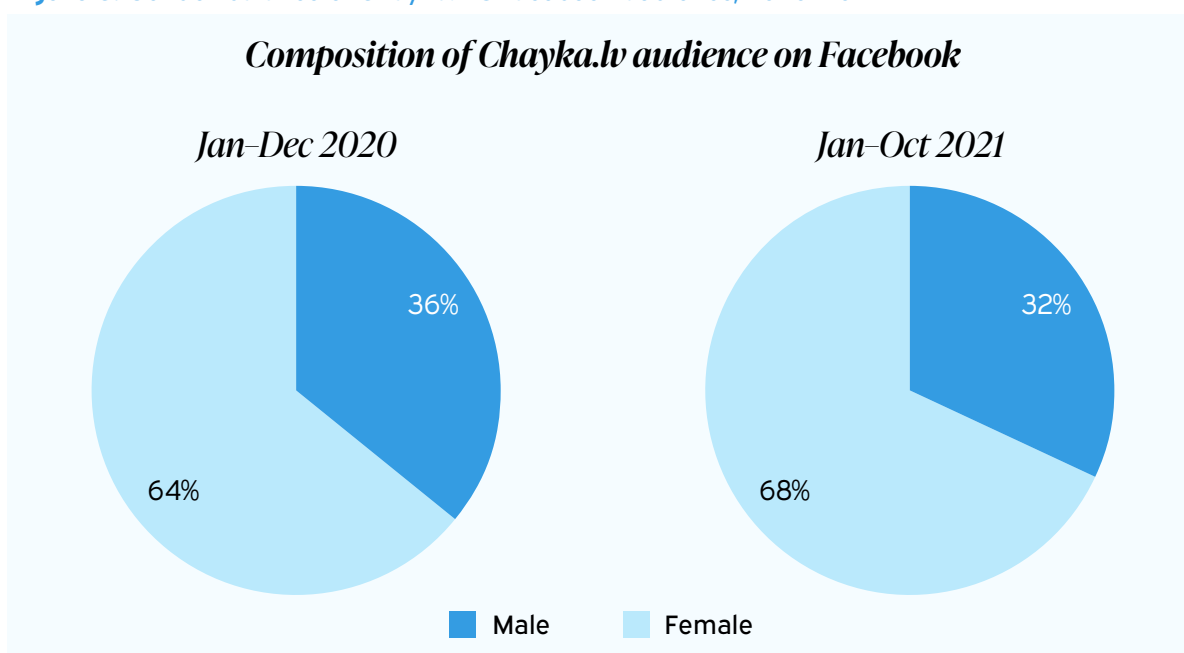
Research question 5: Which groups constitute the Chayka.lv audience?

Facebook is the preferred social media platform for accessing Chayka.lv's content, and women comprised 64 percent of its audience there in 2020 and 68 percent in 2021 (see [Figure 5](#)). According to official statistics, women comprised 55.6 per cent of the Daugavpils population in 2021.⁸

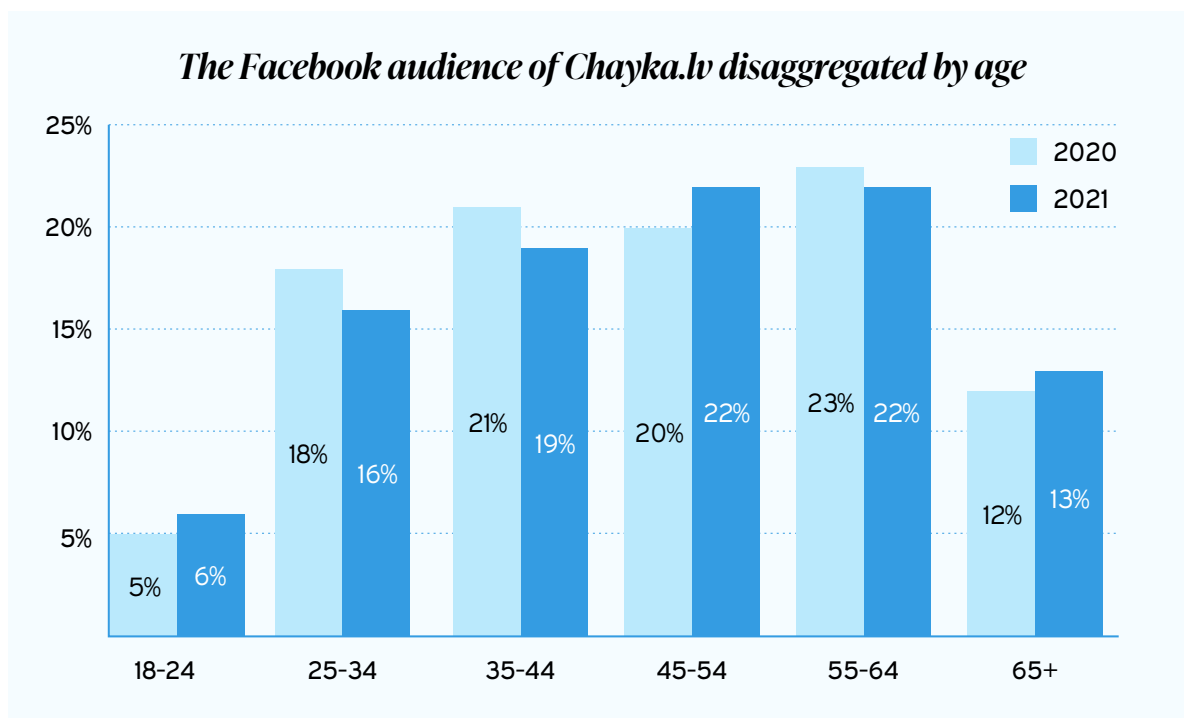
In response to an open question in the quantitative survey, several male respondents attributed their decision not to consume Chayka.lv's to it not covering topics of interest to them, particularly political topics.

The FGD results indicate that young respondents (aged 35 and under) tended to consume entertainment content on Chayka.lv, whereas those aged 35 and older skew toward consuming Chayka.lv's content relating to local and regional news.

Figure 5. Gender balance of Chayka.lv's Facebook audience, 2020–2021



(Source: Facebook Insights)

Figure 6. Age profile of Chayka.lv's Facebook audience, 2020–2021

(Source: Facebook Insights)

Research question 6:

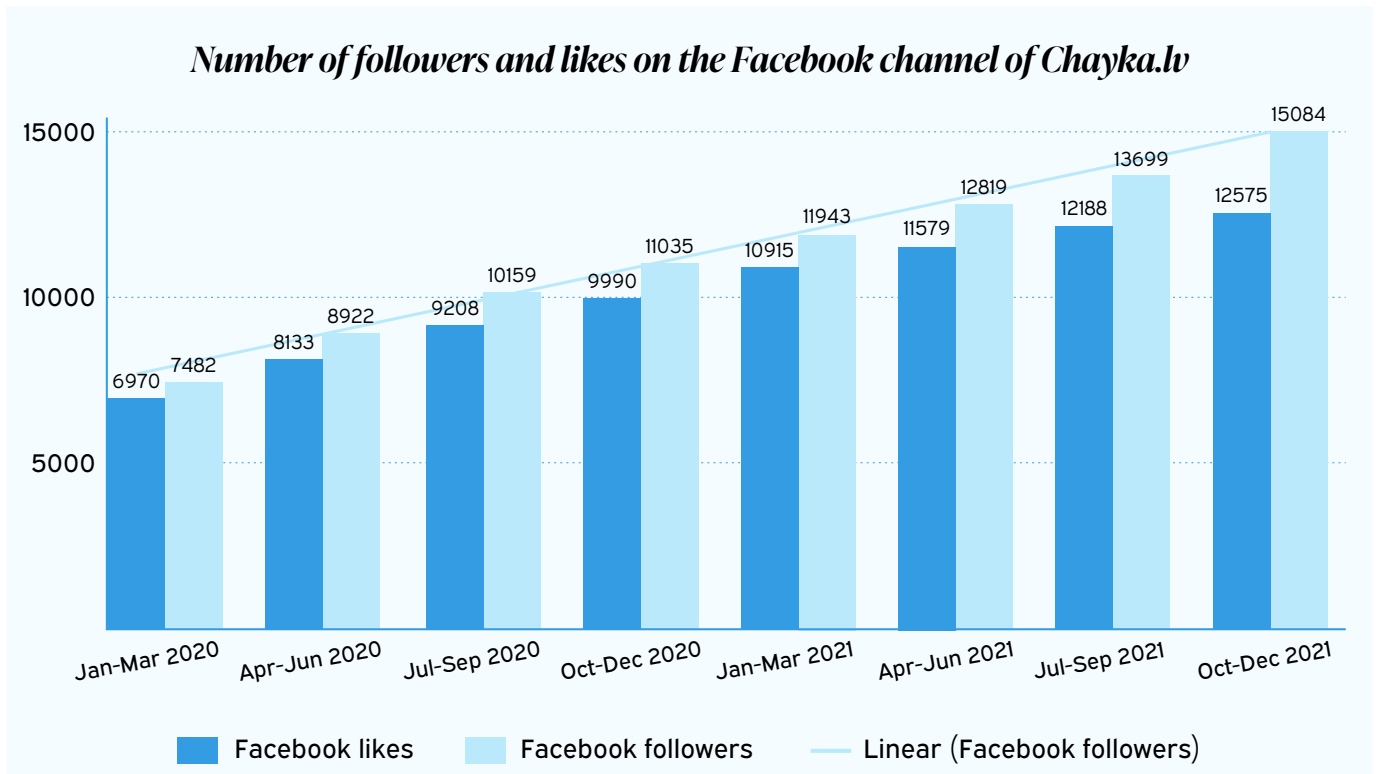
How has Chayka.lv's audience changed over time?

The research team reviewed available audience data from Facebook Insights and Google Analytics relating to Chayka.lv for 2019–2021.

Chayka.lv first launched its operations on Facebook in October 2018. Its Facebook presence has grown steadily since then, enjoying 15,084 followers on Dec. 31, 2021. Facebook likes of Chayka.lv content also steadily increased in 2020–2021 (See [Figure 7](#)).

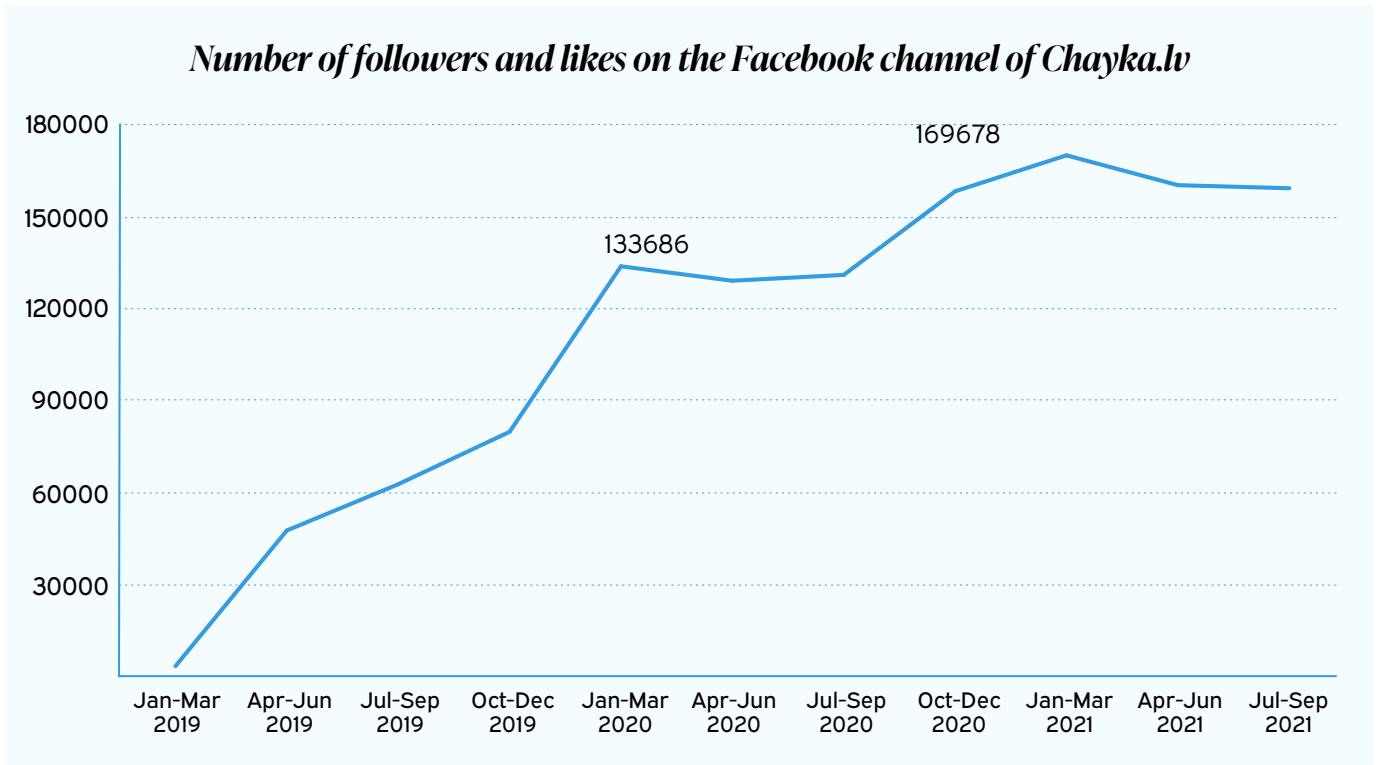
By analyzing Google Analytics data, the research team found that the Chayka.lv website enjoyed rapid audience (user)⁹ growth during its first year, 2019. Its second year was marked by stable growth, which slowed in year three (see [Figure 8](#)). The website's quarterly audience reach peaked at 160,000–170,000 users in early 2021, suggesting that Chayka.lv could now aim to further expand its audience reach.

Figure 7. Chayka.lv’s Facebook followers and likes, 2020–2021



(Source: Facebook Insights)

Figure 8. Number of Chayka.lv website users, 2019–2021



(Source: Google Analytics)

According to Google Analytics data of the Chayka.lv's website, the share of the media outlet's audience in the 18–25 age group has increased slightly over the years, whereas the share of other age groups remained stable. The overall gender balance of its website audience (two-thirds female) has also remained fairly stable. The majority of Chayka.lv website users are residents of Daugavpils. Only a fraction are Russian speakers who live elsewhere – perhaps people who have moved out of the city but continue to read Chayka.lv.

Chayka.lv is available free to consumers and sustains itself through grants and advertising, both of which are more easily secured as audiences – and audience loyalty – grow. According to Google Analytics, on average 17.1 percent of the website's visitors in 2020–2021 directly accessed the website via its URL, without going through a third-party system such as Google. Direct traffic is an indicator of audience loyalty. When conducting IDIs with current and former Chayka.lv staff, the research team found that Chayka.lv does not have a strategy for converting new users into loyal visitors or for increasing the share of direct traffic to its website, indicating the need for such a strategy.

Research question 7:

What has been the impact of donor support on Chayka.lv?

The research findings indicate that Internews support enabled Chayka.lv to develop a diverse range of content. Current and former Chayka.lv staff who participated in IDIs consistently said that the outlet would not have reached its current status without Internews' support.

To assess this, the research team mapped the different stages of Internews support for Chayka.lv (see [Table 4](#)) against the outlet's levels of audience engagement (see [Figure 9](#)).

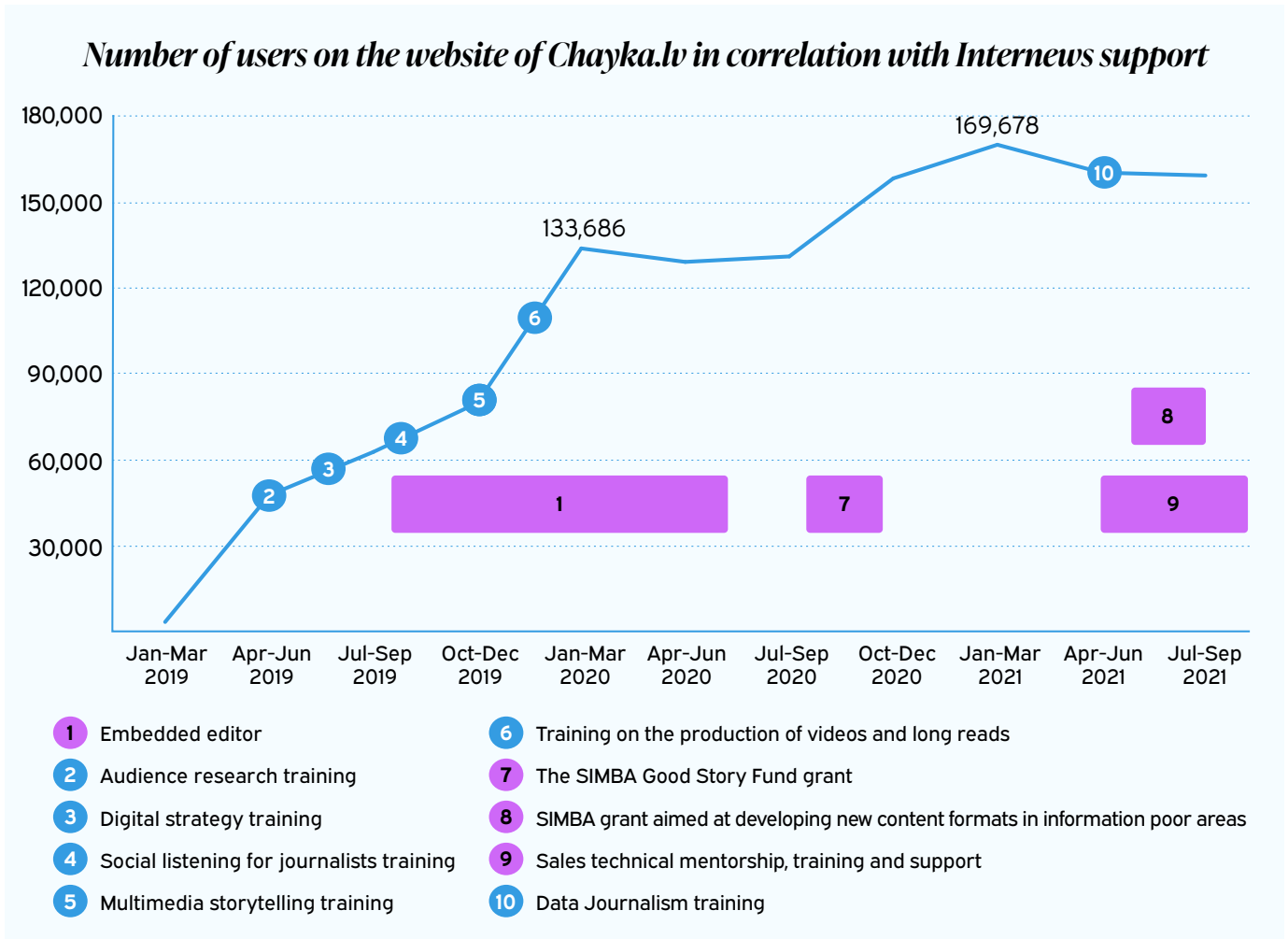
Table 4. Internews support for Chayka.lv, 2019–2021

Year	Type of Internews support (numbering relates to Figure x)	Support goal
2019/2020	Embedded editor	Increase the overall capacity of Chayka.lv, its brand visibility, and audience reach and engagement
2019	Audience research training	Enhance the capacity of the Chayka.lv editorial team
2019	Digital strategy training	Enhance the capacity of the Chayka.lv editorial team
2019	Social listening for journalists training	Enhance the capacity of the Chayka.lv editorial team

2019	Multimedia storytelling training	Enhance the capacity of the Chayka.lv editorial team
2019	Training on producing videos and long reads	Develop Chayka.lv 's ability to produce more qualitative and engaging content
2020	SIMBA Good Story Fund grant	Provide high-quality content related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and strengthen the outlet's position in the Daugavpils media ecosystem
2021	SIMBA grant to develop new content formats in information-poor areas	Meet modern journalistic requirements, and increase the audience and sales revenues. A creative studio was established to develop multimedia content for the editorial and sales teams
2021	Sales technical mentorship, training and support	Review existing advertising sales, and increase sales through the outlet's website and social media pages
2021	Data journalism training	Enhance Chayka.lv's ability to produce data visualization, digital journalism and cover business topics and data-driven stories, and help develop new communication forms

In 2019, Internews' support to develop Chayka.lv's capacity to produce long reads and video correlated with a rapid expansion in its audience (see [Figure 9](#)). During the embedded editor support, audience reach more than doubled (from 64,565 users in July–Sept 2019 to 133,686 users in Jan–March 2020), and then dipped slightly. The Good Story Fund grant period coincides with a boost in website traffic – Chayka.lv achieved its highest audience numbers (169,678 users) in early 2021. The grant supported high-quality content reporting on COVID-19, which may have helped strengthen its position in the media ecosystem. When Internews provided several forms of support in 2021, Chayka.lv maintained its audience reach on its website and continued to increase its presence on Facebook (see [Table 5](#)).

Figure 9. Chayka.lv website users tracked to support from Internews, 2019–2021



(Sources: SIMBA project and Google Analytics)

Table 5. Increase in users on Chayka.lv’s Facebook channel, 2020–2021

Period	Growth in Facebook user numbers
Apr–Jun 2020	+19%
Jul–Sep 2020	+14%
Oct–Dec 2020	+9%
Jan–Mar 2021	+8%
Apr–Jun 2021	+7%
Jul–Sep 2021	+7%

Research question 8:

How far did Internews' support for Chayka.lv reflect the outlet's and the community's unique needs?

According to IDIs with the outlet's current and former staff members, the funds and mentorship provided to Chayka.lv by Internews enabled it to produce relevant and unique content of interest to audiences.

Chayka.lv leveraged Internews support to develop editorial excellence that brought new forms of content and more diverse opinions to the Daugavpils city media ecosystem. Focus group participants admired both Chayka.lv's writing style and its range of content, including covering the city's social scene in human interest stories. Research data also shows that respondents perceive Chayka.lv as a modern, multifunctional, active and attractive source of information. Some 59 percent of survey respondents noted that Chayka.lv had made positive changes to the Daugavpils city media landscape. The qualitative research suggests that Internews support activities led to Chayka.lv's editorial team focusing on topics of interest to its readers.

“Chayka.lv puts society's interest ahead of its own, and therefore society benefits from Chayka.lv.”

— IDI participant



Discussion

This study has found that, since 2019, Chayka.lv has achieved relatively high brand recognition among its target audience of Russian-speaking Daugavpils residents. It has gained a growing audience, especially among women and has slightly increased its youth audience (aged 18–25). And it has achieved positive levels of audience engagement on its Facebook page, its most commonly accessed platform. Furthermore, some research participants have suggested that Chayka.lv's approach has influenced the content of other media outlets.

However, Chayka.lv has a comparatively small loyal audience – just 17.1 percent of its website traffic in 2020–2021 was direct, and the 53 percent of survey respondents who were aware of Chayka.lv accessed it no more than 2–3 times a week.

The FGDs and desk review suggest that Daugavpils residents do not demonstrate high levels of trust in the media, perhaps because the city's Russian-language media landscape is politically influenced.¹⁰ This presents challenges for Chayka.lv in building trust and loyalty, yet also a significant opportunity to build on its unique offer as an independent media outlet that is perceived as trusted and reliable.

The FGDs and survey conducted for this study indicate that in order to increase its audience size and loyalty, Chayka.lv may need to expand its content to meet the needs of current and potential audiences. For example, increasing its political coverage and analysis may deepen its appeal to men. Chayka.lv's managers have suggested they are planning to do this.

Survey responses among people who were not aware of Chayka.lv, and the fact that Facebook is its most prominent platform, suggest that the outlet should develop a strategy to increase its website visibility and broaden its online audience engagement.

The qualitative research and the desk review indicates that Internews support has played a key role in strengthening Chayka.lv's position in the Daugavpils media landscape in several ways, helping to improve its editorial quality and increase its audience reach. This suggests that future support of this nature may help Chayka.lv to build on its achievements in future.

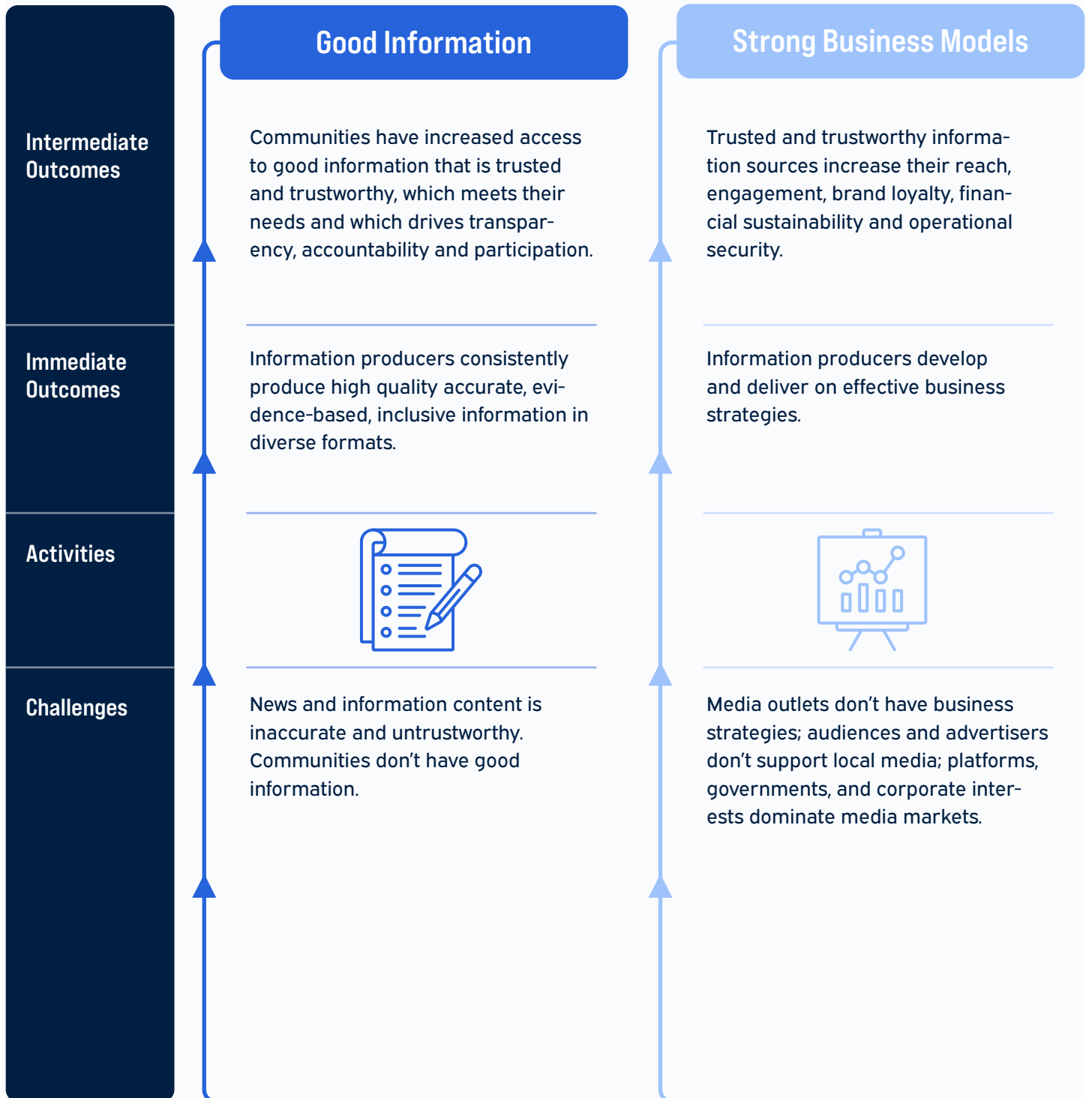
Recommendations

Table 6. Recommendations for Chayka.lv arising from this study

RECOMMENDATION	STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATION
<p>INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF, AND LEVELS OF TRUST IN, CHAYKA.LV</p>	<p>Chayka.lv is still a new entrant to the Daugavpils information ecosystem and must still earn the trust of the Russian-speaking community and engage more effectively with them. FGDs suggest that target audiences would benefit from more insight about the mission, strategy, and team at Chayka.lv.</p> <p>Develop its online marketing to increase brand recognition.</p>
<p>DEFINE CHAYKA.LV'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY</p>	<p>Decide whether Chayka.lv should expand its content by covering more political topics. In any case, the following require additional thought:</p> <p>Specific editorial strands to build audience trust and loyalty</p> <p>The outlet's target audience disaggregated by gender and age, and their information needs and preferences</p> <p>Ensuring that Chayka.lv is not stretched too thin and that enables its editorial team to prioritize topics</p> <p>Defining Chayka.lv's unique offer to the local information ecosystem</p>
<p>DEFINE CHAYKA.LV'S TARGET AUDIENCE AND UNDERSTAND ITS INFORMATION NEEDS AND PREFERENCES</p>	<p>Investigate the following more thoroughly:</p> <p>The decreasing male audience share at a time when the total audience has increased</p> <p>Understanding more about why some men describe Chayka.lv's output as insufficient and how to overcome that</p> <p>How Chayka.lv's different content formats affect audience engagement</p>
<p>INCREASE POLITICAL COVERAGE</p>	<p>Target audience members express a desire for more political coverage. Chayka.lv could apply its high editorial and production standards to this area and better meet audience needs.</p>
<p>DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL</p>	<p>Further develop the Chayka.lv business model by prioritizing this area of work. This might include:</p> <p>Experimenting with audience engagement techniques</p> <p>Better defining the roles of different content distribution sources</p> <p>Increasing fundraising capacity.</p>

Internews Theory of Change

Impact: Healthy information environments enable everyone to make better-informed decisions, bridge divides, participate more fully in their communities, and hold power to account.



Problem Statement: In an unhealthy information environment, people are unable to make informed choices, false and hateful information divides communities, citizen participation in civic life declines and the structures for holding power to account are weakened.

Internews Theory of Change



- Assumptions:**
- Internews has the financial, technical and human resources to achieve significant reach and operate in every setting where this work is needed.
 - Media and information providers share Internews' commitment to high quality, accurate, evidence-based, inclusive information and are open to collaboration.
 - The existence of shared global norms continue to value freedom of expression and independent media.
 - High quality information acts as a driver of positive change.

Appendix

Appendix 1:

Desk Research Sources

Republic of Latvia Ministry of Culture (2020) Media Policy. Available at: <https://www.km.gov.lv/en/media-policy>

Republic of Latvia Ministry of Culture (2020) Presentations and research. Available at: <https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/prezentacijas-un-petijumi>

Republic of Latvia Ministry of Culture (2020) "Media literacy of the Latvian population." Quantitative study. Available at: <https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/media/11921/download>

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<https://www.rsu.lv/en/anda-rozukalne>

Murinska-Gaile, S (2015) Latgale Region Press in the Cultural Social Space. Department of Communication Studies doctoral thesis, Riga Latvian University. Available at: https://www.szf.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/szf_faili/Petnieciba/promocijas_darbi/Murinska-Gaile_promocijas_darbs.pdf

Daugavpils City Council <https://www.daugavpils.lv/>
<https://www.daugavpils.lv/en/city/daugavpils/media>

The main media platforms in Daugavpils:

Chayka.lv

<https://chayka.lv/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Chayka.lv/>

Gorod.lv

<https://gorod.lv/>

<https://www.facebook.com/gorod.lv/>

Grani.lv

<https://www.grani.lv/>

<https://www.facebook.com/grani.lv/>

Nasha.lv

<https://www.nasha.lv/>

<https://www.facebook.com/www.nasha.lv>

Delfi.lv

<https://www.delfi.lv/>

Latgaleslaiks.lv

<https://latgaleslaiks.lv/>

<https://www.facebook.com/LatgalesLaiks/>

<https://latgaleslaiks.lv/meklet?q=chayka>

Aliseplus.lv

<http://www.aliseplus.lv/>

Appendix 2:

Questions Asked of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Participants

In-depth Interview Guiding Questions

(Interviews were conducted in Russian and the questions below have been translated from Russian.)

1. What information landscape do you represent? Daugavpils, Latgale, Latvia, Russia, Europe, US?
2. In terms of global news coverage, are you more aligned with Latvia, Russia, Europe or the US?
3. Chayka.lv as a media resource: would you consider it good or bad? How long have you been with Chayka.lv?
4. How would you describe Chayka.lv?
5. What could you say about the content of Chayka.lv?
6. What could you say about the design of Chayka.lv?
7. Do you remember Chayka.lv 2–3 years ago?
8. Do you see any changes over the years in Chayka's content, design, communication, or coverage?
9. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the changes?
10. Have these changes happened in the past 18 months? (List what has been done or what has changed in the past 1.5 years).
11. What are the phases or periods of development during the existence of Chayka.lv? How could they be described?
12. Is Chayka.lv a reliable source of information?
13. What news sources (inside and outside Daugavpils) are consumed by residents of the city? Who are the key local opinion leaders?
14. How would you compare Chayka.lv with other sources of information in Daugavpils? How does Chayka.lv differ from: Gorod.lv, Grani.lv, D-fakti.lv?
15. What are the key sources of information for national and foreign news coverage that residents of Daugavpils consume? What did the media landscape of Daugavpils look like (situation, landscape, key players, opinion leaders) before the appearance of Chayka.lv?

16. How has Chayka.lv changed the situation?/ How has the rebranding of Chayka.lv changed the daily life or media consumption habits of its readers?
17. How would you rate/describe the presence of Chayka.lv in the daily life of the Daugavpils community?
18. How do different readers perceive Chayka.lv? How is Chayka.lv perceived in the local community?
19. Can members of the Russian-speaking community of Daugavpils count on Chayka.lv to satisfy their information needs, especially when it comes to content quality?
20. Has Chayka.lv changed local community perceptions on:
 - ▶ Social issues? If yes, how?
 - ▶ Economic issues? If yes, how?
 - ▶ Political issues? If yes, how?
21. Why is Chayka.lv not advertised on the website of the municipality's office and on other information resources of the city/region?
22. What are the obstacles preventing Chayka.lv from becoming an authority/influencing public opinion in Daugavpils?
23. How has the audience of Chayka.lv changed over time?
24. How does the audience size and disaggregation (number, age, gender) characterize the different stages of Chayka's development?
25. Has the profile of a Chayka.lv content consumer changed over time? If so, how?
26. What is the impact that implementor support has had on the development and success of Chayka.lv? What part of that success could be attributed to Internews?
27. To what extent has Internews support for Chayka.lv been based on the unique needs of Chayka.lv and the local community?

ВОПРОСЫ ДЛЯ ПОДРОБНОГО ИНТЕРВЬЮ

1. Кем вы себя ощущаете?_ Принадлежит к Даугавпилс, Латгалия, Латвия?
2. Размышляя о мировой информации, в какую сторону вы смотрите? Россия, Европа, США?
3. Chayka.lv – это хорошо или плохо?
4. Как долго вы работаете в Chayka.lv?..... сколько лет назад? Как долго вы работаете?
5. Как бы вы описали Chayka.lv?
6. Что бы вы сказали о содержании?

7. Что бы вы сказали о дизайне?
8. Помните ли вы Chaika.lv хотя бы 2-3 года назад?
9. Видите ли вы какие-либо изменения за эти годы – в содержании, дизайне или форме общения?
10. Каковы преимущества и недостатки изменений?
11. Скажите, есть ли какие-то фазы или периоды развития в существовании портала? Как бы вы их описали?
12. Является ли Chaika.lv надежным информационным каналом?
13. Какие источники новостей (внутри и за пределами Даугавпилса) потребляют жители города? Кто является ключевыми местными лидерами общественного мнения?
14. Как бы вы сравнили Chaiku с другими источниками информации в Даугавпилсе? Чем chaika.lv отличается от : gorod.lv, grani.lv?
15. Каковы источники информации о национальных и зарубежных новостях среди жителей Даугавпилса? Как выглядел медиа-ландшафт Даугавпилса (ситуация, среда, игроки, лидеры мнений) до появления Chaika.lv?
16. Как Chaika.lv изменила ситуацию? /Как ребрендинг Chaika.lv изменил повседневную жизнь читателей?
17. Как вы оцениваете присутствие chaika.lv в повседневной жизни сообщества?
18. Как воспринимается сайт chaika.lv разными читателями?
19. Может ли русскоязычная община Даугавпилса рассчитывать на то, что Chaika.lv удовлетворит их потребности в качественной информации?
20. Изменил ли Chaika.lv восприятие членов сообщества: По социальным, экономическим и политическим вопросам?
21. Почему сайт Chaika.lv не представлен на сайте муниципалитета и в других средствах массовой информации (СМИ)?
22. Каковы препятствия на пути к тому, чтобы Chaika.lv стал авторитетом/влиять на общественное мнение?
23. Как менялась аудитория Chaika.lv с течением времени?
24. Как размер аудитории (количество, возраст, пол) характеризует различные этапы развития Chaika.lv? Изменился ли со временем профиль потребителей контента Chaika.lv? Если да, то каким образом?
25. Какое влияние оказала донорская/спонсоры поддержка на развитие и успех Chaika.lv?
26. Какое влияние можно отнести, в частности, к “Интерьюс”?
27. В какой степени деятельность “Интерьюс” по поддержке Chaika.lv была основана на уникальных потребностях chaika.lv и сообщества?

FGD Guide

(Discussions were conducted in Russian, and the questions below have been translated from Russian.)

Methodological note: Questions such as 'Why?', 'What else?', 'Do you agree/disagree?', 'Is there anyone who thinks otherwise?', etc. were asked throughout the discussions in addition to the questions listed below.

Target audience: Readers of Chayka.lv, socially active people.

Purpose of the focus groups: to evaluate the activities of Chayka.lv, and compare its strengths and weaknesses with other online news outlets in the Daugavpils media environment.

Introduction:

Respondents were:

- Introduced to the moderator
- Introduced to information about the study by the moderator
- Notified that there is no such thing as right or wrong answers
- Presented with the topic of the study
- Given the chance to introduce themselves, to share their name and age, and to talk about their, profession, family, leisure activities, and hobbies

Part 1: What is the media environment in Daugavpils and what do readers prefer? Which media outlets do you trust and why?

1. How would you describe the media environment in Daugavpils over the past two years?
2. How many news websites do you read on a daily basis?
3. What kind of social networks/websites do you generally use to get up-to-date information?
4. Describe your daily routine of using the Internet. (Each participant was given the opportunity to identify the top three websites that they turn to first.)
5. How do you choose which media to read when it comes to local media such as Grani.lv/ Gorod.lv/Chayka.lv?
6. What topics do you pay most attention to? What are the topics that you are not interested in at all?
7. Has the appearance of Chayka.lv helped you better understand what is happening in the Daugavpils region?
8. Can residents of Daugavpils count on Chayka.lv to meet their needs for quality information?

Part 2: General questions about Chayka.lv

1. Do you read Chayka.lv? How often do you visit the website of Chayka.lv?
2. What do you associate the Chayka.lv website with?
3. How would you rate Chayka.lv?
4. When did start reading Chayka.lv? In 2018, 2019, 2020, or 2021?
5. What are the development stages of Chayka.lv? Do you see any changes in the content, design or communication of Chayka.lv over the years?
6. Is Chayka.lv a reliable source of information?
7. In your view, how does Chayka.lv compare with other sources of information in Daugavpils?
8. How is Chayka.lv different from: Gorod.lv, Grani.lv?

Part 3: Questions about the content, topics, and journalism of Chayka.lv

1. How do you rate the quality of the content of Chayka.lv? How do you rate the quality of its articles and the quality of its journalism?
2. What could you say about the design of Chayka.lv?
3. What are the advantages of Chayka.lv compared to other media?
4. What are the disadvantages of Chayka.lv compared to other media?
5. Is the coverage provided by Chayka.lv strong when it comes to social, political, or economic issues?
6. What topics does the content that you either search for or read on Chayka.lv cover? (Choose from: News of the city and the region, News of Latvia, People stories and interviews, Useful tips, Entertainment, Projects, Instructions on how to act in certain situations.)
7. Is the information provided by Chayka.lv simple to understand and simple to read? (Rate on a scale from 1 to 10.)
8. What is the coverage that Chayka.lv lacks?
9. Do you feel that you could turn to the Chayka.lv team for help in a difficult situation? Do you know how to do that?

Final questions:

1. Take a minute to think about everything that has been said and take turns making recommendations aimed at improving Chayka.lv.
2. In your view, how could Chayka.lv become more useful for its readers? What is the advice that you could give to members of the Chayka.lv team?

FGDs Руководство по обсуждению October 2021

Такие вопросы, как «почему?», «Что еще?», «Вы согласны / не согласны?», «Кто думает иначе?» и т. д. будут задаваться все время во время обсуждения и не отмечены далее в списке вопросов.

Целевая аудитория – читатели “Чайки”, социально-активные люди, 2 группы.

Цель: оценить деятельность Чайка.lv, описать его сильные и слабые стороны по сравнению с другими порталами в Даугавпилсской медиасреде.

Группа но.1	Группа но.2
в возрасте до 34 лет	в возрасте после 35 лет
читатели чайка.lv	читатели чайка.lv
не подписчик – время от времени пользователь чайка.lv	не подписчик – время от времени пользователь чайка.lv
редко заходит на чайка.lv – или знает но не заходит, читает через социальные сети	редко заходит на чайка.lv – или знает но не заходит, читает через социальные сети

ВВЕДЕНИЕ (ПРИБЛ. 5 МИНУТ)

- 1. СТАНДАРТНЫЕ ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬСКОЕ ВВЕДЕНИЕ, ОБЪЯСНЯЮЩИЕ ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬСКИЙ ПРОЦЕСС
- Нет правильных или неправильных ответов
- Имя модератора
- Тема исследования
- Запись

РЕСПОНДЕНТЫ ПРЕДСТАВЛЯЮТ СЕБЯ 10min

имя, возраст, профессия, семья, досуг, хобби

Part 1: Какова медиа-среда в Даугавпилсе и что предпочитают читатели? Каким СМИ вы доверяете и почему?

1. Какова медиа-среда в Даугавпилсе за последние два года, как бы вы ее описали?
2. Сколько сайтов вы читаете ежедневно?

3. Какие социальные сети / сайты в целом используете для получения актуальной информации?
4. Каков ежедневный ритуал пользования интернетом: ТОП 3, что открываете первым, проходит каждый участник.
5. Как вы выбираете, какие СМИ читать – par lokālajiem: grani/ gorod/chaika.lv
6. Каким темам вы уделяете больше внимания? Какие совсем не интересуют?
7. Vai chaika parādīšanās man ir palīdzējusi labāk saprast kas notiek reģionā?
8. Может жители Даугавпилса рассчитывать на Chaika.lv в удовлетворении своих потребностей в качественной информации?

Part 2: А теперь поговорим о Chaika.lv (в целом)

1. Читаете ли вы Chaika.lv? Как часто вы посещаете сайт chaika.lv?
2. С чем у вас ассоциируется сайт Chaika.lv?
3. Как вы оцениваете Chaika.lv?
4. С каких пор вы читаете Chaika.lv? 2018 2019 2020 2021
5. Каковы этапы развития Chaika.lv? Видите ли вы какие-либо изменения в содержании, дизайне или форме общения Chaika.lv за эти годы?
6. Является ли сайт Chaika.lv надежным источником информации?
7. Как бы вы сравнили Chaika с другими источниками информации в Даугавпилсе?
8. Чем Chaika.lv отличается от: gorod.lv, grani.lv?

Part 3: Продолжаем с Chaika.lv – контент, темы, журналистика

1. Как вы оцениваете качество контента? Качество самих статей, соответственно, работу журналистов?
2. Что бы вы сказали о дизайне?
3. Каковы преимущества Chaika.lv по сравнению с другими СМИ?
4. Каковы недостатки Chaika.lv по сравнению с другими СМИ?
5. Сильна ли Chaika.lv в социальных, политических или экономических вопросах?
6. Какие темы вы открывали или искали на сайте chaika.lv? Новости города и края, Новости Латвии, Истории о людях и интервью, Полезные советы, Развлечения, Проекты, Инструкции о том, как действовать в определенных ситуациях
7. Насколько легко понять информацию на Chaika.lv, легко ли она читается? 1-10
8. Какой информации вам не хватает на ОТ chaika.lv?
9. Считаете ли вы, что можете обратиться к команде Chaika.lv за помощью в трудной ситуации и знаете ли, как это сделать?

Final Recommendations/Questions from Client

1. Подумайте минутку обо всем, что было сказано ранее, и по очереди дайте рекомендации CHAYKA.LV
2. Чем, по-вашему, chayka.lv может быть ещё более полезной для своих читателей? Совет, который вы хотели бы дать команде Chayka.lv

Online Survey Questionnaire

(The survey was conducted in Russian, and the questions below have been translated from Russian.)

D1. Gender: _____

D2. Nationality: _____

D3. How old are you?: _____

1. How many websites do you read on a daily basis? 1 2 3 4 5 or more

2. Where can the latest news about Daugavpils and its surroundings be found? Please tick the 3 websites most used for finding such information.

Chaika.lv

Gorod.lv

Grani.lv

Nasha.lv

Nash Daugavpils

Latgaleslaiks.lv

Other:

3. Do you read the news published by Chayka.lv?

Yes

I only read some posts by Chayka.lv on social media

I used to read Chayka.lv, but no longer do so

I have heard of Chayka.lv, but do not read its content

I have not heard of Chayka.lv and do not read its content

4. Why don't you read Chayka.lv?

I am not interested in Chayka.lv

Content offerings are too long

It does not offer enough information for me

It offers an incomprehensible/unpredictable choice of topics

It does not meet my format needs

I do not notice Chayka.lv

Other:

5. Has the Chayka.lv website contributed to enhancing the diversity of information available about Daugavpils and its surrounding areas?

More confusion has been introduced

No changes

Slight changes

Very big changes

I do not know

6. What is your view of Chayka.lv?

I like it

I do not like it

Difficult to say

7. How often do you read Chayka.lv?

Several times a day

Once a day

2-3 times a week

Once a week

Once a month

Several times a year

8. What platform do you use to access Chayka.lv content?

The Chayka.lv website

Facebook

Instagram

Telegram

Vkontakte

YouTube

TikTok

OK.ru

Other:

9. When did you begin consuming Chayka.lv content?

2018 2019 2020 2021

10. Is Chayka.lv a trusted source of information?

- Yes
- No
- Difficult to say

11. What are your perceptions of Chayka.lv?

- Modern
- Useful for me
- Multifunctional
- Politically neutral
- Subjective
- Trendy
- Attractive/active
- Boring/uninteresting
- European
- Pro-Russian
- Regional
- Pro-American
- I do not know

12. What topics are covered by the content that you search for or read on Chayka.lv?

- News of the city and the region
- News of Latvia
- Human-interest stories and interviews
- Helpful tips
- Entertainment projects
- Instructions on how to act in certain situations
- I don't know
- I don't remember

13. Rate your level of satisfaction with Chayka.lv with regard to the following list of topics:

Very low	Low	Neutral	High	Very high	N/a
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- Local news
- News of Latvia
- World news
- Weekly event reviews
- Culture news

Health
Ecological problems
People stories and interviews
Political issues
Economic issues
Valuable advice
Sports news
Recreation and entertainment
Content on the history of the city

14. Is the information provided by Chayka.lv simple to understand and simple to read?

Very hard
Hard
Neither difficult nor easy
Easy
Very easy
N/a

15. What is the coverage that Chayka.lv lacks? (Open question)

16. How do you feel about the fact that Chayka.lv exists on voluntary donations?

Good
Bad
That means it is independent
I do not care
I do not understand it

17. Do you think that you can turn to the Chayka.lv team for help in a difficult situation?

Yes/No/I do not know

18. In your view, how could Chayka.lv become more useful for Daugavpils? Write a piece of advice that you would like to give to the Chayka.lv team. (Open question)

Анкета онлайн-опроса

D1. Пол : _____

D2. Nationality: _____

D3. Сколько вам лет?: _____

1. Сколько сайтов вы читаете ежедневно? 1 2 3 4 5 более

2. Где можно найти последние новости о Даугавпилсе и его окрестностях?

Пожалуйста, отметьте 3 наиболее часто используемых?

chaika.lv

gorod.lv,

grani.lv

nasha.lv

Наш Даугавпилс

latgaleslaiks.lv

другое:.....

3. Читаете ли вы новости от Chaika.lv?

Да

Прочитал только некоторые посты в социальных сетях

Я читал, но больше не читаю

Я слышал о chaika.lv, но не читал.

Я не знаю chaika.lv и не читал

4. Почему вы не читаете chaika.lv

Неинтересно

Информация слишком длинная

Недостаточно информации для меня

Непонятный / непредсказуемый выбор тем

Не мой формат

Я не замечал/а их

Другое:.....

5. Предоставило ли появление сайта chaika.lv разнообразность информации о Даугавпилсе и его окрестностях?

Внесло еще больше путаницы

Без изменений

Небольшие изменения

Очень большие изменения

я не знаю

6. Как вы оцениваете Chaika.lv?

Нравится

не нравится

трудно сказать

7. Как часто вы читаете chaika.lv?

Несколько раз в день

1х в день

2-3х в неделю

1 х в неделю

1х в месяц

Несколько раз в год

8. На каком медиаканале вы читаете chaika.lv

На сайте chaika.lv Facebook Instagram Telegram ВКонтакте Youtube

Tik Tok ОК.ru на другом:...

9. С каких пор вы читаете Chaika.lv?

2018 2019 2020 2021

10. Является ли Chaika.lv надежным источником информации?

Да

Нет

Затрудняюсь ответить

11. Как вы воспринимаете Chaika.lv?

Современная

Полезная для меня

Многофункциональная

Политически нейтральная

Привлекательная/активная

Субъективная

Скучная / неинтересная

Европейская

Тендициозная

Пророссийская

Провинциальная

Проамериканская

я не знаю

12. Какие темы вы от chaika.lv?

Новости города и края,

Новости Латвии,

Истории о людях и интервью,

Полезные советы,

Развлечения,

Проекты,

Не знаю ,

Инструкции о том, как действовать в определённых ситуациях;

Не помню

13. Оцените, насколько вы удовлетворены chaika.lv:

Очень плохо	Плохо	Нейтральна	Хорошо	Очень хорошо	N/a
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Местные новости

Новости Латвии

Мировые новости

Обзоры событий за неделю

Новости культуры

Здоровье

Проблемы экологии

Истории о людях и интервью

Политические вопросы

Экономические вопросы

Ценные советы

Новости спорта

Отдых и развлечения

Материалы об истории города

14. Насколько легко понять информацию Chaika.lv, легко ли она читается?

Очень трудно

Трудно

не трудно / не легко

Легко

Очень легко

N/a

15. Какой информации вам не хватает от chaika.lv?

16. Как вы относитесь к тому, что chaika.lv существует на добровольные пожертвования?

Хорошо

Плохо

Они независимы

Мне все равно

Я не понимаю это

17. Считаете ли вы, что можете обратиться к команде Chaika.lv за помощью в трудной ситуации? Да/Нет/ я не знаю

18. Чем, по-вашему, chaika.lv может быть ещё более полезной для Даугавпилса? Напишите совет, который вы хотели бы дать команде Chaika.lv

Endnotes

- 1 Baltic News Network (2022) Proportion of Latvians in the country up to 62.7% since start of 2022. Available at: <https://bnn-news.com/proportion-of-latvians-in-the-country-up-to-62-7-since-start-of-2022-240425>
- 2 Re:Baltica (2020) In Russian and only for their own people – Figure 9: Chayka.lv website users tracked to support from Internews, 2019–2021 how Daugavpils City Council feeds its friendly media. Available at: <https://rebaltica.lv/2020/01/tikai-krieviski-un-tikai-savejiem-ka-daugavpils-dome-piebaro-sev-draudzigos-medijus/>
- 3 Re:Baltica (2020) In Russian and only for their own people – how Daugavpils City Council feeds its friendly media. Available at: <https://rebaltica.lv/2020/01/tikai-krieviski-un-tikai-savejiem-ka-daugavpils-dome-piebaro-sev-draudzigos-medijus/>
- 4 The Alchemer platform has a large sample of pre-recruited people who respond to online surveys in exchange for points that they can exchange for prizes and other benefits. It has access to over 50 million panel respondents and controls the selected sample automatically to ensure that age, gender, and other demographic quotas are met.
- 5 Re:Baltica (2020) In Russian and only for their own people – how Daugavpils City Council feeds its friendly media. Available at: <https://rebaltica.lv/2020/01/tikai-krieviski-un-tikai-savejiem-ka-daugavpils-dome-piebaro-sev-draudzigos-medijus/>
- 6 Re:Baltica (2020) In Russian and only for their own people – how Daugavpils City Council feeds its friendly media. Available at: <https://rebaltica.lv/2020/01/tikai-krieviski-un-tikai-savejiem-ka-daugavpils-dome-piebaro-sev-draudzigos-medijus/>
- 7 Statista (2021) “Leading social media websites in Latvia in 2021, based on share of visits.” Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1165920/market-share-of-the-most-popular-social-media-websites-in-latvia/>
- 8 https://data.stat.gov.lv/pxweb/en/OSP_PUB/START_POP_IR_IRD/IRD010/table/tableViewLayout/
- 9 Google Analytics refers to ‘users’ as visitors who initiate a session on a website. One individual using multiple devices to access the same website may be identified as multiple users, so the number of users may not accurately reflect the number of unique individuals visiting a website.
- 10 Re:Baltica (2020) In Russian and only for their own people – how Daugavpils City Council feeds its friendly media. Available at: <https://rebaltica.lv/2020/01/tikai-krieviski-un-tikai-savejiem-ka-daugavpils-dome-piebaro-sev-draudzigos-medijus/>

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