

**Interplay of European, National and Regional Identities:
Nations between States along the New Eastern Borders of the European Union**

Series of project research reports

**Contextual and empirical reports
on ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe**

Belarus
Germany
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Research Report #6

**The Russian Minority
in Latvia**

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About the ENRI-East research project (www.enri-east.net)

The Interplay of European, National and Regional Identities: Nations between states along the new eastern borders of the European Union (ENRI-East)

ENRI-East is a research project implemented in 2008-2011 and primarily funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Program. This international and inter-disciplinary study is aimed at a deeper understanding of the ways in which the modern European identities and regional cultures are formed and inter-communicated in the Eastern part of the European continent.

ENRI-East is a response to the shortcomings of previous research: it is the first large-scale comparative project which uses a sophisticated toolkit of various empirical methods and is based on a process-oriented theoretical approach which places empirical research into a broader historical framework.

The distinct ethno-national diversity in this region, along with the problems resulting from it was generated by dramatic shifts of borders, populations and political affiliation which have continued until today. The prevailing pattern of political geography of this part of Europe was the emergence and the dismemberment of empires, a process which created ethno-national enclaves within the boundaries of new nation states. These minorities were frequently drawn into inter-state conflicts and subjected to repression, ethnic cleansing and expulsion. The subjects of interests were ethnic minorities in the supra-region "Wider Eastern Europe", i.e. the region between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, along the current geo-political "East-West" division line. Estimated 8 to 10 millions of people are affected by "ethnic splits" or minority groups, whose ethnic compatriots would constitute a titular majority in another country, some of them even on each side of this contemporary geopolitical east-west diving border line.

The complex ENRI-East study was designed as a comprehensive set of theoretical, methodological, empirical and comparative work streams exploring the interplay of identities among the twelve ethnic minorities in the supra-region of Central and Easter Europe. These ethnic groups are: Russians in Latvia and Lithuania, Belarusians and Ukrainians in Poland, Slovaks in Hungary, Hungarians in Slovakia and in Ukraine, Poles in Ukraine, in Belarus and in Lithuania, Belarusians in Lithuania as well as Lithuanians in Russia (Kaliningrad oblast). The project includes also a case study of Germany, where our target groups were the ethnic Germans returning to their historical homeland after the centuries of living in other European countries as well as Jewish immigrants (so called "quota refugees" who had moved to the country since 1989).

ENRI-East addresses four general research themes. The first one deals with the interplay of identities and cultures by comparing 'mother nations' and their 'residual groups abroad'. The second theme is a cross-cutting approach which addresses the nations and the states: more exactly, the attitudes and policies of 'mother nations' and 'host nations' toward the 'residual groups' and vice versa. The third research theme comprise the reality of self organization and representation of "residual groups abroad" (ethnic minorities) along the East European borderland. Finally, the last research theme of the project deals with path dependencies, historical memories, present status and expected dynamics of divided nations in Eastern Europe.

The empirical data base for ENRI-East was generated through 5 sub-studies implemented in all or several project countries:

- ENRI-VIS (Values and Identities Survey): face-to-face formalized interviews with members of 12 ethnic minority groups in eight countries, 6,800 respondents;
- ENRI-BIO: qualitative, biographical in-depth interviews with members of 12 ethnic minority groups in eight countries (144 interviews);
- ENRI-EXI: semi-structured expert interviews with governmental and non-governmental representatives of ethnic minority groups in eight countries (48 interviews);
- ENRI-BLOG: online content analysis of weblogs and Internet periodicals run or maintained by ethnic minority group members;
- ENRI-MUSIC: special study on cultural identities and music; an innovative, multi-disciplinary pilot effort in Hungary and Lithuania.

The series of ENRI-East research reports (www.enri-east.net/project-results)

Main outcomes of the ENRI-East research program are summarized in the series of research papers and project reports as outlined below. The whole collection of papers will be publicly available on the project web-site by December 2011, while some papers can be accessed since September 2011.

Individual papers are written by ENRI-East experts from all project teams and the whole series is edited by the Coordinating Team at the CEASS-Center at the Institute for Advanced Studies under the guidance of the Principal Investigator Prof. Hans-Georg Heinrich and Project Coordinator Dr. Alexander Chvorostov.

Summarizing and generalizing reports

1. Theoretical and methodological backgrounds for the studies of European, national and regional identities of ethnic minorities in European borderlands (Edited by Prof. Claire Wallace and Dr. Natalia Patsiurko)
2. Interplay of European, National and Regional Identities among the ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe (main results of ENRI-East empirical program) (Edited by Prof. Hans-Georg Heinrich and Dr. Alexander Chvorostov)
3. ENRI-East Thematic Comparative papers and synopses of authored articles of ENRI-East experts (9 tender papers and further bibliography of project-related publications)

**Contextual and empirical reports on ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe:
(edited by respective team leaders)**

4. The Polish Minority in Belarus
5. The Slovak Minority in Hungary
6. The Russian Minority in Latvia
7. The Belarusian Minority in Lithuania
8. The Polish Minority in Lithuania
9. The Russian Minority in Lithuania
10. The Belarusian Minority in Poland
11. The Ukrainian Minority in Poland
12. The Lithuanian Minority in Russia (Kaliningrad oblast)
13. The Hungarian Minority in Slovakia
14. The Hungarian Minority in Ukraine
15. The Polish Minority in Ukraine
16. Special Case Study Germany

Series of empirical survey reports:

17. ENRI-VIS: Values and Identities Survey
 - Methodology and implementation of ENRI-VIS (Technical report)
 - ENRI-VIS Reference book (major cross-tabulations and coding details)
18. Qualitative sub-studies of ENRI-East project (methodological and technical reports)
 - Methodological report on Biographical Interviews (ENRI-BIO)
 - Methodological report on Expert Interviews and data base description (ENRI-EXI)
 - Methodological report on the pilot study on Musical cultures and identities (ENRI-MUSIC)
 - Methodological report and main findings of the Pilot study of web-spaces (ENRI-BLOG)

Disclaimer:

The treatment of historical, statistical and sociological data and facts, their scientific accuracy and the interpretations as well as the writing style are the sole responsibility of the authors of individual contributions and chapters published in the ENRI Research Papers. The positions and opinions of the project coordinator and of the editors of ENRI-East series of research papers as well as of the ENRI-East consortium as a whole may not necessarily be the same. By no means may the contents of the research papers be considered as the position of the European Commission.

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Abstract

The report is composed of these main parts: executive summary, contextual report, ENRI-VIS Results, ENRI-BIOG Results, ENRI-EXI Results, ENRI-BLOG results, Conclusions. The **contextual report** contains overview and analysis of data gained mainly from the secondary sources (historical, sociological, other kind of research) on the history of Russians in Latvia, demographic overview, Russian self-organisation in Latvia.

Enri-Vis is a quantitative survey which took place in six regions: Riga, Kurzeme, Latgale, Pierga, Vidzeme and Zemgale in 16 November 2009 – 23 December 2009. Survey Sample: 800 Russians living in Latvia. Survey agency: Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia. The report provides with main descriptive outcomes under the following sets of questions: ethnicity and ethnic identity, national identity; family, households and related ethnic aspects; xenophobia, conflicts and discrimination; social and political capital, participation, attitudes toward EU. The importance of independent variables is marked in case of relevant results.

ENRI-BIOG is a qualitative survey. 12 interviews with members of three generations were conducted in Rezekne, Riga, Daugavpils. Survey agency – Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia. The report presents the brief description of the people interviewed and the main facts of their live stories. The report presents quotations and primary analysis of the interviews having in mind the main questions – European identity, national identity (relationship to country of residence and mother country), regional identity, civic participation and ethnic organisation.

ENRI-EXI: Two interviews with representatives of key organizations were conducted in Latvia. The first interview with minority experts in Latvia was conducted with a policy analyst at the national level NGO. The second interview was conducted with the head of the ethnic minority organization in Daugavpils, Latgale. Survey agency – Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia. The report provides overview of experts' considerations on Russian minority situation in Latvia. The analysis is made in accordance to the following questions: main issues associated with that minority in the country of residence, relationship to mother country, relationship to European events and organisations.

Web-analysis (ENRI-BLOG): provides the content analysis of online resources attributable to ethnic minorities, such as periodicals, organisations, blogs, forums, personal websites, and commentaries to articles.

Summary of the study

In the **contextual report** we present an overview of data gained from the secondary sources (historical, sociological, other kind of research) on the history of Russians in Latvia, demographic overview, Russian self-organisation in Latvia.

Enri-Vis: The survey used a questionnaire translated into Russian language. Survey Sample: 800 Russians living in Latvia. For the sampling, two methods were applied: random route sampling classic (718 respondents reached) and random root focused enumeration (82 respondents reached). The survey took place in six regions: Riga, Kurzeme, Latgale, Pierga, Vidzeme and Zemgale. Fieldwork: 16 November 2009 – 23 December 2009.

Survey agency: Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

The report provides with main descriptive outcomes under the following sets of questions: ethnicity and ethnic identity, national identity; family, households and related ethnic aspects; xenophobia, conflicts and discrimination; social and political capital, participation, attitudes toward EU. The importance of independent variables is marked in case of relevant results.

First of all, the ethnic minorities' respondents were asked what language they speak most often at home. The majority of the Latvian Russians (87.4 per cent) speak Russian most often at home. Nearly one tenth of the sample (9.5 per cent) speaks both Russian and Latvian most often, while only 2.8 per cent of the Latvian Russians mainly speak Latvian at home. The respondents were asked about their closeness to different groups and regions, including local and European dimensions. When analysing the statistically significant differences among various socio-demographic groups it was noticed that the elder age survey participants (aged 50 and over) feel closer to the settlement place they live in and Latvia. Oppositely, the youngest, up to 30 years old tend to maintain they feel rather not close or not close at all with the aforementioned categories. The elder less often feel close to such entities as Baltic countries, Eastern Europe and Europe in general.

Trying to identify the components of self-identification, the respondents were asked to define the categories, which are the most important in thinking about him/her selves by defining the three most important categories. While discussing the most important identities, it is obvious that the Latvian Russians firstly define themselves as representatives of their current (or previous) occupation (it is most important for 16.5 per cent of Latvian Russians at the first place), representatives of certain gender group (12.5 per cent mentioned it as the first choice) and the Russians (9.9 per cent mentioned it as the first choice).

The questionnaire included the questions that aim at disclosing the respondents' opinion on what things are important for being truly Russian or truly Latvian. While considering the components that are important for being truly Russian, the great majority of the Latvian Russians maintain that it is very important or rather important (93.4 per cent) to be able to speak Russian. Also, most of the Latvian Russians give priority to the feeling being Russian (91.3 per cent) and to having Russian ancestry (79.7 per cent). For about a half of the Latvian Russians being Russian means to respect Russian political institutions and laws (53.1 per cent) and to be an Orthodox (47.3 per cent).

The respondents were asked to express their opinion on different statements related to the opportunities for their children education, to speak minority language in everyday life, opportunities to read newspapers and magazines in Russian and have the representatives in the parliament. In general, all the opportunities listed in the questionnaire seem to be of a high significance to the Latvian Russians as the majority of respondents qualify them as very important or rather important. The great majority of the Latvian Russians maintains that an opportunity to speak Russian in everyday life (91.7 per cent), an opportunity to read newspapers and magazines in Russian (92.1 per cent), an opportunity for their children to study the ethnic history and culture of Russians (90.8 per cent), and an opportunity to preserve Russian folk customs, traditions, culture (89.3 per cent) are very important or rather important. Also, the majority maintain that an opportunity for their children to get education in Russian and an opportunity to have the Russian representatives in the parliament are of great importance (82 per cent and 77.7 per cent, correspondingly).

The survey data show that the majority of Russians surveyed (62 per cent) defined themselves as Orthodox, 4.5 per cent – as Old believers. 8.9 per cent of the Latvian Russian belongs to the Ro-

man Catholics. Also, nearly one fifth of the Russian sample (19.3 per cent) consider themselves as not belonging to a denomination.

The survey data enable to conclude that the households of the Latvian Russians tend to bear a monoethnic nature as more than three fourth of the respondents' households are comprised of Russians or Latvian Russians.

According to the survey data, more than a half of the Russians surveyed (57.6 per cent) have the Latvian citizenship. One third of respondents (33 per cent) maintain they do not have any citizenship at all, while 8.3 per cent have the citizenship of the Russian Federation.

Respondents were asked about the languages they speak. The great majority of Russians questioned declared their knowledge of Russian (99.3 per cent) and Latvian (72.9 per cent) languages. There are statistically significantly larger shares of people aged 50 or more (70 per cent), widowed (28 per cent), not working (74 per cent) and retired (54 per cent), having Russian (14 per cent) or no citizenship (57 per cent) among the Latvian Russians who state they do not know the Latvian language.

While generalising the data on the respondents' social status, more than half (56.4 per cent) of the Russian sample is inactive regarding the labour market and 42.8 per cent - involved in the labour market. Among the unemployed, the retired/disabled Russians dominate and comprise nearly one third (31 per cent) of the total sample. 5.8 per cent of the sample is comprised of full time students, similar share (3.8 per cent) identified themselves as housewives/keeping house, while 2.8 per cent indicated being on a temporary leave (sick leave, maternity leave).

Unemployed people comprise 13 per cent of the total Russian sample. The data analysis shows that both unemployment and temporary unemployment are statistically significantly more often experienced by males, and middle age respondents (from 30 to 49 years old).

While considering possible tensions between different social groups, Latvian Russians were asked to express their opinion on the level of tension between poor and rich people, between old people and young people, between Latvian Russians and Latvians, between Latvian Poles and Latvians, between different religious groups and between Roma and Latvian society. Most part of Russian respondents (48.9 per cent) tends to identify a lot of tension between poor and rich people first of all, a significant part (37.9 per cent) maintains that there is some tension between poor and rich people. With regard to tensions between old and young people, majority of respondents (53.9 per cent) maintain that there is some tension, while 33.5 per cent – no tension. (See Table 18)

Considering manifestations of ethnic tension, a certain distribution of opinions could be observed. Nearly half of respondents (48.9 per cent) maintain that there is some tension between Russians and Latvians in Latvia, and 15 per cent – there is a lot of tension. Still, 32.3 per cent maintains that there is no tension.

According to the survey data, 22.4 per cent of Russian respondents indicated that in the past 12 months they have personally felt discriminated against or harassed in Latvia on the basis of one or more of the following grounds: ethnic or national origin, gender, age or religion. (In total, 246 cases of experienced discrimination or harassment were reported in the survey data).

Among the grounds listed, ethnic or national origin was most frequently mentioned: 16 per cent of the Russians have felt discriminated against or harassed on the grounds of ethnic origin in the last 12 months. 9.1 per cent of respondents indicate experienced discrimination or harassment on the ground of age, 3.6 per cent – on gender. The discrimination on the basis of ethnic or national

origin was statistically significantly more often experienced by people having no citizenship (these people more often say they also experienced discrimination because of their age), discrimination because of certain gender – by females, having university education.

Among the sectors of society, in which the respondents felt discriminated against or harassed because of their ethnicity in this period, the area of employment was most often mentioned.

While analysing the data on social trust, most Latvian Russians tend to express their higher trust to different social groups than the institutions. The majority of the Russians surveyed trust the Latvian Russians (66.4 per cent, including answers ‘trust them completely’, ‘rather trust them’), Russians (65.5 per cent), people in general (61.5 per cent) and Latvians (59.4 per cent).

While analysing the survey data on respondents’ interest in politics, the Russians surveyed express their relatively high interest in all areas of politics as the majority is interested in politics about the Latvian Russians – 73 per cent (‘very interested’ and ‘rather interested’), politics of Latvia – 71.9 per cent, politics of Russia – 68 per cent of respondents.

While considering the European Union, it must be said that it has pretty negative character among the Latvian Russians as most part of the respondents surveyed (45.5 per cent) has very negative or rather negative image of the EU. One third of the Latvian Russians (33.8 per cent) have neutral and a relatively small share of respondents (16.8 per cent) has a very positive or fairly positive image of European Union. (See Table 25) The youngest respondents (up to 29 years old) statistically significantly have positive image of the EU more often than the seniors (50 years old and elder) who tend to have negative one.

The questionnaire included several question on membership in voluntary organisations. The data analysis shows that one third of the Russian sample (37.0 percent) takes part in one or several voluntary organisations. In terms of activity, most respondents indicate being inactive members, with few expectations.

The most popular voluntary organisations among the Latvian Russians are the church or religious organizations, in which 19.6 per cent of respondents indicate inactive and 6.9 per cent – active membership.

ENRI-BIOG: The interviews were conducted in accordance to the methodological guidelines developed by the ENRI-EAST team and described in the project manual. 12 interviews with members of three generations were conducted. Most interviews were conducted in Russian. The respondents come from Rezekne, Riga, Daugavpils.

Survey agency – Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

The questions of European identity, national identity (relationship to country of residence and relationship to mother country), regional identity, civic participation and ethnic organization, ethnic conflicts and discrimination experiences were analysed in the report. Answering to the questions on European identity, conceptualization of Europe, the respondents used to talk of the Latvia’s accession to the EU. Part of respondents expressed criticism towards EU as a political organization. These respondents were talking of rising emigration, unemployment, less possibilities to travel to Russia and other former republics of the Soviet Union. Other respondents, especially the representatives of youngest generation, named a number of advantages related with Latvia’s accession to the EU: possibilities of travelling and studying, career opportunities.

The major part of respondents described themselves as Latvia’s Russians, i.e. closely connected with Latvia. Some respondents described themselves as connected with both – Latvian and Rus-

sian cultures or as “Baltic Russian”, i.e. neither Russian nor Latvian. The issues related with the status of non-citizens were raised by the respondents in the interviews. The informants were giving examples of ethnic tensions in everyday life, pointed to the issues of Latvian or Russian language use in everyday communication. The issues related with the education reform were also raised during the interviews.

ENRI-EXI: The interviews were conducted in accordance to the methodological guidelines developed by the ENRI-EAST team and described in the project manual. Two interviews with representatives of key organizations were conducted in Latvia. The first interview with minority experts in Latvia was conducted with a policy analyst at the national level NGO. The second interview was conducted with the head of the ethnic minority organization in Daugavpils, Latvia.

Survey agency – Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

Web-analysis (ENRI-BLOG): Internet can be assumed to provide valid sources of information, because it is a modern and flexible means of communication. Analyzing the presence of minorities in the internet, the study can be expected to yield insights into actual concepts of identity. The internet research helps to understand not only special opinions and media activities of minorities, but also how the concept of ethnic identity evolves within new media like internet. Internet provides a forum for the democratic exchange of information, a free and unrestricted domain to escape the limits of political participation in real politics. The World Wide Web can be the communication medium of groups which are politically underrepresented. Among flows of information in the internet, such new patterns of social communication are observable as forums, live journals, or blogs that have an authentic nature and help to restore the public discourse in the most objective way.

The data base of the content analysis consists of online resources attributable to ethnic minorities, such as periodicals, organisations, blogs, forums, personal websites, and commentaries to articles. Collection of empirical resources from the internet has been carried out in two steps: selection of online resources and selection of text fragments within the online resources. Internet resources were identified by employing search engines like www.google.com for different languages and countries using key-words combinations, or checking websites which contain catalogues of resources like <http://kamunikat.org/>. Individual text fragments within a resource were selected for processing according to the criterion of theoretical relevance.

The research discovered a large number of different resources of ethnic minorities. Among the ethnic minorities under study, the highest number of online resources in the content analysis is found with *Russians in Latvia*, all in all 25. Among them are 7 periodicals, 1 news/broadcasting portal, 5 organizations, 7 resources with blogs, 2 forums, 1 personal website, and 2 resources with articles/blogs containing postings. Text fragments were collected from periodicals “Telegraf”, “Novaja Gazeta”, and “Nasha Gazeta” as well as organizations – “Rodina.lv”, “Russians in Latvia”, “Russki Mir”, and Jekabpils Russian Society “Rodnik”. While one forum was identified in “Novaja Gazeta” (<http://novaja.lv/forum/index.html>), the blogs were obtained from the periodical “Novaja Gazeta” and the news portal “NovoNews”. One text fragment was selected from the personal website “Elizaveta Krivzova”.

Russians in Latvia show a high level of *civil activity* (10.6%), although criticism is present regarding the inability of Russian organizations to promote the interests of the Russian community (“*civil activity negative*”, 4.0%). Russian minorities are *critical* of the government of the host country (9.8%) because of neglecting minority rights and tolerance of nationalistic organizations.

Discrimination concerns difficulties to open national schools as well as freedom of the media and association, especially regarding the operation of national channels and the organizing of “Soviet style” (“*discrimination*”, 5.0%).

A high percentage of the Russians do not possess Latvian citizenship and they reject to go through the process of naturalization. Allegedly, the citizenship had been unfairly taken from ethnic Russians at the beginning of the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The dissatisfaction of the Russians exists upon the fact that they have to pass exams to receive the citizenship even though they have been living and working in Latvia their whole life. Nevertheless, the debates about *citizenship* concern only 2.7% of the cases. While the younger generation is influenced by assimilation, the elderly people feel nostalgia towards the communist past.

The Russians in Latvia are involved into *national and ethnic conflicts* with the host country (9.3%) concerning the reception of history and attempts at revising of history by some Latvian politicians. In turn, the Russians demonstrate an inclination towards nationalistic and occasionally chauvinistic rhetoric (“*nationalism*”, 5.0%). The Russian minorities feel discriminated by expressions like “Soviet occupation” which convey the image of enemies in Latvian society. In the nationalistically tuned political debates, the society is split between those who are being called “occupants” and others who are being called “fascist”.

While the Latvian government is concerned about the cultural and political integration of society to normalize the “ethnic-demographic situation” (“*integration*”, 2.9%), the Russian minority is worried to lose its “mentality” and “identity”. The memory of the Second World War among the Russian pupils – for example – would deteriorate if attention were not paid to the teaching of the war history. Russia as mother country supports the participation of the Russian community in cultural and educational programs. It initiates support of minority families who are in a difficult socio-economic situation.

Summary of practical recommendations

The research conducted in Latvia encompasses quantitative and qualitative surveys. The research data is revealing on different aspects of Russian minority situation in Latvia and presents perspectives of different social groups in Latvia. The initial data analysis is presented in the report and raises a number of questions to be further investigated. Some basic practical recommendations can be drawn at this stage.

Civil society organizations in Latvia carry the work of highest importance in fostering and disseminating the cultures of ethnic minorities, in the spheres of minority rights, human rights. It is of highest importance that in their work they seek for interethnic communication, promotion of communication between different ethnic groups, between titular nation and ethnic minorities.

The issues related with the law of citizenship, the status of non-citizens and the law on state language were of key importance for the majority of the respondents of Russian origin in Latvia. This legal basis affects people’s participation in job market and other social spheres. The highest level of sensitivity and sensibility should be demonstrated in developing the laws that affect broad spectrum of population.

2 RUSSIANS IN LATVIA: A BACKGROUND OVERVIEW

Vida Beresnevičiūtė / Tadas Leončikas / Andrius Marcinkevičius / Arvydas Matulionis / Kristina Šliavaite

2.1 Latvian-majority and Russian-minority relations

2.1.1 Historical overview

The history of the Russian population in Latvia dates back to trading ties with Russia as far back as the 12th-13th centuries (Volkovs 1999). Since the second half of the 16th century Russian peasants and later on Old Believers migrated from Russia to the territory of today's Latvia seeking religious tolerance and safety (Volkovs 1999). In the course of the 18th century Latvian territories were annexed to the Russian Empire and in the course of the 18th and 19th centuries the number of Russians in Latvia increased (Volkovs 1999). According to the first All-Russia Census of 1897, there were 171,000 Russians on the territory of Latvia then and the biggest share of Latvia's Russian population resided in Latgale and Vidzeme (Volkovs 1999).

After World War One and the overthrow of czarist rule Latvia declared itself an independent Republic in 1918. During the interwar years, the size of the Russian population further increased, more than doubling from 91,000 in 1920 to 206,400 in 1935 (Volkovs 1999). This increase is explained by the migration of refugees and emigrants from Soviet Russia, a high natural birth rate and some political treaties in which Soviet Russia ceded some Russian populated lands to the Republic of Latvia (Volkovs 1999). According to Vladislavs Volkovs, "all Russians lost the status of their ethnic belonging to the Empire, but in Latvia they were given all the rights normally secured by democratic states" (Volkovs 1999). However, some researchers state that after 1934 "some limits on developing minority languages and cultures" were introduced (Muižnieks 2006:12).

In the 1939-1940 academic year 144 elementary schools and 2 secondary schools provided education in Russian (Muižnieks 2006:12-13). Regarding the important institutions for Russian culture in inter-war Latvia, researchers name the Russian Drama Theatre and the newspaper "Segodnia" (Muižnieks 2006:12-13). According to the researchers, the major part of Russians (80%) were involved in farming during the interwar period (Muižnieks 2006:12-13). The level of education of the Russian population is described as very low – in 1920 the literacy of adults was 42 per cent for Russian men and 28 per cent for women (Volkovs 1999, Muižnieks 2006:12-13). Only 18.9 per cent Russians had Latvian language command in 1930 (Muižnieks 2006:12-13, Volkovs 1999).

In summer 1940 Latvia was occupied by the USSR. In 1941 Nazi Germany invaded the territory of Latvia. After the Second World War Latvia did not regain its independence and remained part of the Soviet Union. During the soviet period the Russian population in Latvia increased due to high immigration rates from Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union. According to statistical data, in 1989 there were 905,500 Russians in Latvia and this made 34.8 per cent of the total population (Volkovs 1999). Researchers have emphasized the fact that historically Latvians were involved in agriculture, while people from other republics of the former Soviet Union (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus) mainly took part in industry sector (Zepa, Šūpule, Klave, Krastina, Krišāne, Tomsons 2005:26). During the Soviet period an intense policy of Russification of the non-Russian population in Latvia was promoted by the authorities and the Russian language ac-

quired a special status (Dimitrov, Raihman 2007:6). Nils Muižnieks has spoken of “asymmetric biligualism” in Latvian society in 1989 (Muižnieks 2006:13). According to Nils Muižnieks, the 1989 Census revealed that 68.7 per cent of Latvians had Russian language command, but only 22.3 per cent of Russians in Latvia had Latvian language command (Muižnieks 2006:13). Researchers note that the majority of Russians in Latvia did not support Latvian independence at the end of the 1980s (Karklins 1994 cited in Tabuns 2006:23).

2.1.2 Political overview

In the second half of the 1980s the general democratic processes of perestroika started in the Soviet Union. In 1991 Latvia's Independence was restored and the Latvian parliament decided that Latvian citizenship should be granted only to those who were citizens of Latvia in 1940 and to their descendants¹. Soviet period immigrants to Latvia were not granted citizenship automatically. Accordingly, Russian non-citizens could receive Latvian citizenship only via naturalisation, a choice that was taken up by only 11,432 people from all national minorities between 1995 and 1998 (Naturalization Board of the Republic of Latvia cited in Zepa, Kucs 2006:305). This low figure is partly explained by people's uncertain future plans in the 1990s (Zepa 2003:87). After the referendum of 1998, when citizenship acquisition procedures were eased, and after the referendum on Latvia's accession to the EU in 2003, interest in acquiring Latvian citizenship increased (Zepa 2003:87, Zepa, Kucs 2006:307). As a result of death and emigration as well as naturalization, the number of non-citizens, the majority of them Russian-speaking, halved from about 700,000 in 1991 to 372,421 in 2008 (16.4 per cent of population)². According to Zepa and Kucs, after Latvia's EU accession new interest in naturalisation procedure could be seen in Latvia (Zepa, Kucs 2006:307). The authors relate this with opening possibilities of employment and education in the EU for the citizens of EU countries (Zepa, Kucs 2006:307). An Amnesty International report of 2009 stated that “the Latvian authorities were criticized by the UN and the Council of Europe about the treatment of non-citizens, including stateless persons, the majority of whom were born in Latvia or had lived there for almost their entire lives” (Amnesty International Report 2009).

In 1991 Latvian became the state language. Fluency in the Latvian language is compulsory for certain job positions (in national government, in education). A new Language Law³ was passed in 1999 in order to protect and develop the Latvian language and national heritage, and ensure the integration of ethnic minorities into Latvian society (Zepa 2003:9). Amnesty International expressed its concern that the State Language law may be discriminatory in regards to linguistic minorities (Amnesty International 2008).

The 1998 education reform, which was implemented with the aim of strengthening the Latvian language in minority schools, was not supported by the Russian minority (Zepa 2004). The researchers argue that as a result “conflict between the minorities and Latvian public institutions has been aggravated; that there are signs of conflict between the Latvian- and Russian-speaking

¹ Non-citizens (Latvia), in Academic dictionaries and encyclopedias, available at: <http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/6235492> (accessed on 2010-01-20)

² Statistics of Latvian Department of Population Register cited in Non-citizens (Latvia), in Academic dictionaries and encyclopedias, available at: <http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/6235492> (accessed on 2010-01-20)

³ See translation of the law at Country Profile Latvia. Last update October 2009. This profile was prepared and updated by Baiba Tjarve. Council of Europe/ERICarts “Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe”, 11th edition, 2010, available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/latvia.php?aid=422> (accessed on 2010-03-03)

communities, and that mutual aggressiveness and intolerance have increased among Latvians and minorities” (Zepa, Kucs 2006:317). Following public demonstrations of the Russian-speaking minority in protest at the law some amendments were made to the Law on Education in 2004 (Zepa, Kucs 2006:316).

The right to vote at the elections, as well as to establish political parties is granted only to the citizens of Latvia (Open Society Institute 2001:295). In 2001 the Open Society Institute reported on the “restricted influence of the Russian-speaking minority over the composition of decision-making bodies“ (Open Society Institute 2001:297).

The Ministry of Justice provides support for ethnic minority NGOs. The Ministry of Culture provides support to a number of cultural institutions/projects (for example, the Riga Russian Theatre, some productions at the Daugavpils City Theatre, etc.), ethnic minority organizations.⁴

Latvia’s and Russia’s state institutions cooperate in a number of questions and have economic relations.⁵

2.2 Demographic overview

2.2.1 The 2000 census

According to Population Census, in 2000 Russian ethnic group made about 30 per cent of the total population and reached up to 700,000 (Results of Population Census 2000). In 2006 the Russian population constituted 28.6 per cent of Latvia’s population and reached up to 652,200 (Latvijas iedzīvotāju sadalījums pēc nacionālā sastāva un valstiskās piederības cited in Волков, Пейпиня 2007:43). In 2009 this ethnic group constituted 27,8 per cent of total population of Latvia⁶.

2.2.2 Language usage

Nils Muižnieks discusses the results of implementation of various administrative, educational and legal premises to strengthen the importance of Latvian language (Muižnieks 2006:20). The researcher states that according to census 1989 data, 22.3 per cent of the non-Latvian population could speak Latvian and in 2000 this number reached 53 per cent (Muižnieks 2006:20). In 2003, 12 per cent (22 per cent in 1996) stated that they do not know Latvian at all (Muižnieks 2006:20). The biggest changes in the knowledge of Latvian language were in the age group 15-34 (Muižnieks 2006:20).

⁴ Country Profile Latvia. Last update October 2009. This profile was prepared and updated by Baiba Tjarve // Latvia/4.2. Recent policy issues and debates. 4.2.1. Cultural minorities, groups and communities // Council of Europe/ERICarts “Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe”, 11th edition, 2010, available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/latvia.php?aid=421> (accessed on 2010-03-03)

⁵ Relations between Latvia and Russia, available at: Embassy of Latvia in Moscow at <http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/moscow/Latvia-Russia/> (accessed on 23.04.2010); for more information on different issues see Nils Muižnieks (ed.) (2006) Latvian-Russian Relations: Domestic and International Dimensions. LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, available at: [http://szf.lu.lv/files/petnieciba/publikacijas/no_vescas_majaslapas/latvian-russian_relations_final\(1\).pdf](http://szf.lu.lv/files/petnieciba/publikacijas/no_vescas_majaslapas/latvian-russian_relations_final(1).pdf) (accessed on 19.04.2010)

⁶ Central Statistical Bureau of the Republic of Latvia, 2009 cited in: Country Profile Latvia. Last update October 2009. This profile was prepared and updated by Baiba Tjarve // Council of Europe/ERICarts “Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe”, 11th edition, 2010, available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/latvia.php?aid=421> (accessed on 2010-03-03)

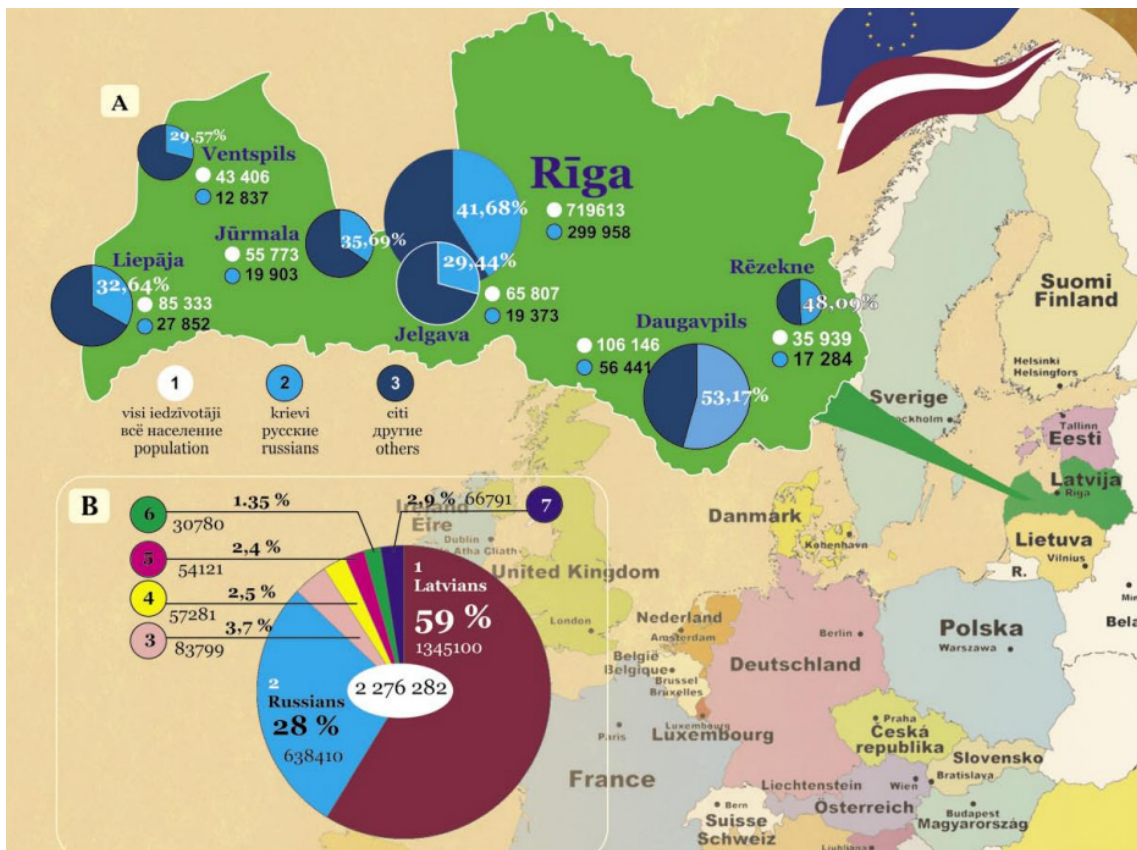
2.2.3 Age structure

The data is not available.

2.2.4 Geographic Distribution

The Russian population resides mainly in the urban centres of Latvia – Riga, Daugavpils, Rēzekne, Jelgava, Jūrmala, Liepāja, and Ventpils (Zepa, Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišān, Tomsone 2005:15). In 2004 Russians constituted 42.9 per cent of Riga’s population, 54.5 per cent of Daugavpils’ population, 30.4 per cent of Jelgava population, 36.4 per cent of Jūrmala population, 33.7 per cent of Liepāja population, 49.4 per cent of Rēzekne population, 30.7 per cent of Ventpils population (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia cited in Zepa, Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišāne, Tomsone 2005:25).

The following map shows the geographical distribution of the Russian minority as of 2008.



Source: Foundation of MEP, Tatjana Ždanoka „For Russian Schools“, „Russian Minority in Latvia. Exhibition Catalog“, Riga-Brussels 2008-2009, available at: <http://www.russkije.lv/files/images/text/rusinlat-buklet-en.pdf>

2.2.5 Religious denomination

In 2002 there were about 1,000 religious congregations registered at the Latvian Justice Ministry, including 114 Orthodox, 67 Old Believer. There were about 500,000 members of the Roman Catholic Church, about 400,000 of the Lutheran Church, about 300,000 of the Orthodox Church,

about 70,000 of the Old Believers⁷. Latvian researchers conducted a survey and founded that despite the persecution of religious believers during the Soviet regime approximately 60 per cent of both Latvians and Russians describe themselves as being religious (Zepa, Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišāne, Tomsone 2005:32). Among Russians, 48 per cent described themselves as Orthodox, 7 per cent as Old Believers and 37 per cent said they are not believers (Zepa, Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišāne, Tomsone 2005:32-33).

2.2.6 Education

According to the recent data of Council of Europe/ERICarts, in the academic year 2008-2009 there were 133 Russian language schools and 97 Latvian/Russian bilingual schools in contrast to 740 Latvian language schools. 97 schools provided bilingual instruction in Latvian and Russian⁸.

Latvian researchers Alexei Dimitrov and Leonid Raihman state that the number of Russian minority schools has decreased disproportionately since the beginning of the 1990s (Dimitrov, Raihman 2007:100). For example, according to the official statistics, in 2006/2007 academic year there were 148 schools teaching in Russian (in 1991/1992 there were 219 such schools) and 92 schools teaching in Latvian and Russian languages (in 1991/1992 there were 178 such schools) (Official statistics of the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia cited in Dimitrov, Raihman 2007:99-100). The researchers argue that the implementation of education reform changed parents' strategies of choosing a school for their children since "parents do not fear anymore that their children will not learn Latvian properly in minority schools, and care more about the quality of training obtained" (Dimitrov, Raihman 2007:101). The researchers conclude that "study results suggest that minorities also tend to be under-represented among the students of state-funded university education establishments" (Pabriks 2002 cited in Dimitrov, Raihman 2007:77).

2.2.7 Employment

In 2002 Artis Pabriks argues that "data on occupational proportionality do not suggest the existence of widespread discrimination on the basis of ethnicity in Latvia [...] However, there is an obvious lack of ethnic parity in certain institutions and sectors" (Pabriks 2002:49). The researcher names a number of reasons for this phenomenon, among them are: lack of interest to gain Latvian citizenship, poor state language command and ethnic-segregation (Pabriks 2002:50).

According to researchers, in 2003 the majority of the working population (62 per cent) were Latvians and they took dominant position in national government (83 per cent), education (73 per cent) and farming (77 per cent) sectors. Such sectors as transport, industry and construction attracted non-Latvians (Labor Force Survey by the Central Statistical Board cited and analysed in Zepa, Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišāne, Tomsone 2005:26). These employment tendencies are explained by the fact that according to Latvian laws a person has to be a citizen of Latvia to be employed at national government and the ability to teach in the Latvian language is necessary to work in the education system (Zepa, Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišāne, Tomsone 2005:26).

⁷ Latvia-Religions. Encyclopedia of the Nations, available at: <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Europe/Latvia-RELIGIONS.html> (accessed on 21.01.2010)

⁸ Country Profile Latvia. Last update October 2009. This profile was prepared and updated by Baiba Tjarve // Latvia/4.2. Recent policy issues and debates. 4.2.1. Cultural minorities, groups and communities // Council of Europe/ERICarts "Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe", 11th edition, 2010, available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/latvia.php?aid=421> (accessed on 03.03.2010) (with reference to the Ministry of Education and Science).

2.3 Russian self-organisation in Latvia

2.3.1 Political Organisation

In 2006, the 9th Saeima of Latvia was elected. 100 members of parliament were elected: 78 Latvians, 15 Russians, 1 Jew, 1 Karelian, 1 German and 4 who did not identify their ethnic origin⁹. Russians mainly support the For Human Rights in a United Latvia alliance (*Par Cilvēka Tiesībām Vienotā Latvijā*) and the People's Harmony Party (*Tautas Saskaņas Partija*) (Zepa, Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišāne, Tomsone 2005:39).

Russian non-citizens in Latvia cannot vote in local elections or be elected to the municipal councils (Muižnieks 2006:16). According to the researchers, in 2005 only 17 (out of 60) members of Riga City Council were non-Latvians (Data of the Riga City Council, cited in Dimitrov, Alexei, Raihman, Leonid 2007:111). However, there is an ethnic Russian MEP, Tatjana Zdanoka, who was not allowed to stand in domestic elections for her links to the old Soviet Communist Party, but did win election to the European Parliament in 2004 and 2009.¹⁰

2.3.2 Civil society organisation

The researchers have observed a low level of participation of Latvians and Russians in Latvia in any civic organizations (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences cited in Ijabs 2006:75). This is explained by the problems related with Russians' adaptation to minority status and lack of Latvian language command (Ijabs 2006:76). Ivars Ijabs names the following key institutions as being important for the Russian community and their activities: the Russian drama theatre, Russian schools, and the Baltic Russian Institute (Ijabs 2006:78). Ivars Ijabs categorises the Russian associations into the following groups: associations that focus primarily on the cultural and educational activities (for example, the "Latvian Society of Russian Culture"), advocacy groups (for example, the Society of Citizens and Non-citizens, the National Committee of Latvia "Western Russians", Civic Initiative XXI, Latvian Human Rights Committee, the Latvian Association for Support of Russian-Language Schools) and overarching organizations (for example, "The United Congress of the Russian Community of Latvia" (OKROL)) (Ijabs 2006:78-82).

2.3.3 Arts and culture

The Russian Drama Theatre in Riga was founded at the end of the 19th century and has been the keystone of the Russian cultural life in Latvia¹¹.

The Baltic International Academy (which was called Baltic Russian Institute until 2006) is an academic establishment which was founded in 1992 and has up to 7.500 students. It carries BA and MA programmes and provides teaching in Russian and in other languages.¹²

Some religious holidays are important both for Latvians and Russians as well as people of other nationalities in Latvia. These include Christmas, New Year, Easter, the Summer Solstice (Zepa,

⁹ The official site of the Parliament of Latvia (Saeima), available at: http://www.saeima.lv/Informacija_eng/likumdeveju_vesture.html (accessed on 16.03.2010)

¹⁰ Tatjana Zdanoka commissioned a team of historians and journalists to prepare an exhibition on the history and current circumstances of the Russian minority in Latvia, which culminated in a brochure "The Russian Minority in Latvia" published in Brussels and Riga in 2009.

¹¹ Riga Russian Theater, available at: <http://www.trd.lv/eng/>(accessed on 27.01.2011)

¹² Baltic International Academy, available at: <http://www.bsa.edu.lv/lang/eng/index.html> (accessed on 27.01.2011)

Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišāne, Tomsone 2005:33). Some holidays, such as international Women's Day (March 8), Labour day (May 1), and Victory Day (May 9) are mainly celebrated by non-Latvians in Latvia (Zepa, Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišāne, Tomsone 2005:33).

2.3.4 Religious observation

Russians who observe Orthodox religious holidays, such as Christmas and Easter, do so in accordance with the Orthodox calendar. Since Latvians are mostly Lutherans and Catholics and Russians are Orthodox and Old Believers, the differences in the calendar of the main religious holidays in these religious communities raise discussions regarding public holidays (Dimitrov, Raihman 2007:42).

2.3.5 Publishing and the press

According to researchers, newspapers are the key source of information about Latvia's news for Russians in Latvia (Skudra 2004 cited in Šulmane 2006:65). There are such national newspapers in Russian issued in Riga as "Biznes I Baltija", "Chas", "Telegraf", "Vesti Segodnia"; Daugavpils newspapers in Russian are "Latgales Laiks", "Million"; Jelgava's newspaper - "Novaya Gazeta"¹³. The researchers argue that the content of the mass media differs in the press oriented to the Russian and Latvian auditorium and therefore conclude that "the closed information models, existing in the press, could be regarded as a prototype of potential future society consisting of two distinct communities" (Zepa 2003:93).

2.3.6 The media

According to Ilze Šulmane, in 2005 78 per cent of non-Latvian TV auditorium watched cable television channels, 62 per cent watched Latvian Independent Television and 58 per cent watched the First Baltic Channel (Šulmane 2006:72). Researchers argue that the Russians in Latvia tend to watch TV and listen to the radio broadcasted from Russia and therefore "the attitudes of many Russian speakers in Latvia are closer to the attitudes that are expressed in the Russian media, as opposed to the official views of the host country" (Zepa, Šūpule, Kļave, Krastiņa, Krišāne, Tomsone 2005:34).

2.4 Overview of existing surveys

It is beyond the limits of this report to make a comprehensive historiography of existing surveys on Russian group in Latvia. The Baltic Institute of Social Sciences (www.bszi.lv) in Riga is a private non-profit research institute, which has published a number of surveys conducted by the researchers on current issues in Latvia. In a leading survey „*Ethnopolitical tension in Latvia: Looking for the conflict solution*“ the researchers Brigita Zepa, Inese Šūpule, Evija Kļave, Līga Krastiņa, Jolanta Krišāne, Inguna Tomsone (2005:12-16) name following main preconditions of ethnic tensions in contemporary society of Latvia: country's ethnic policies (citizenship, state language policy); employment structure; exploitation of ethnic questions by some representatives of political elite; educational reforms. The Latvian researchers analyzed a number of urgent social and political issues related with Russian ethnic group in Latvia: civic participation (Šūpule

¹³ Russian newspapers in Latvia, available at: <http://www.newspapers24.com/languages/russian-newspapers-in-latvia/index.html> (accessed on 27.01.2011)

2005), issues of education and official language (Zepa 2003, Zepa, Žabko, Vaivode 2008), minority identity (Zepa 2005)

The situation of Russian ethnic group in Latvia has been investigated from different angles and it is impossible to make a complete list of surveys and reports. However, we name some of them: the reports/publications analyze minority educational issues (Batelaan, Choumak, Diachov 2002; Catlaks, Dedze et al. 2001, Centre for Public Policy PROVIDIUS 2003, Klave, Supule, Zepa et al. 2004.), questions of human rights (Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Human Studies 2003, 2004), minority civic activity and political participation (Karklins, Zepa 2001), employment structure of Latvian society (Pabriks 2002), minority-majority relations (Muižinieks 2006), implementation of international legislation (Dimitrov, Raihman 2007), etc.

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3 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE ENRI-VIS SURVEY (ENRI-VIS)

Vida Beresnevičiūtė

3.1 Technical parameters of the survey of the Latvia's Russians

- Instrument: The survey used a questionnaire translated into Russian language.
- Survey Sample: 800 Russians living in Latvia.
- Sampling: For the sampling, two methods were applied: random route sampling classic (718 respondents reached) and random root focused enumeration (82 respondents reached).
- Survey geography: The survey took place in six regions: Riga, Kurzeme, Latgale, Pierga, Vidzeme and Zemgale.
- Time: Fieldwork: 16 November 2009 – 23 December 2009.
- Survey agency: Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

		N	%
Gender	Female	479	59.9
	Male	321	40.1
Total		800	100.0
Age groups	Up to 29	163	20.4
	30-49 years old	246	30.8
	50 year old and elder	391	48.9
Total		800	100.0
Education	ISCED 0	2	0.3
	ISCED 1	50	6.3
	ISCED 2	74	9.3
	ISCED 3	185	23.1
	ISCED 4	293	36.6
	ISCED 5	141	17.6
	ISCED 6	50	6.3
	Refusal	5	0.6
Total		800	100.0
Occupation	Working full-time (40 hours a week)	275	34.4
	Working part-time (8-30 hours a week)	41	5.1
	Casual/temporary work	27	3.4
	Housewife/keeping house	30	3.8
	Unemployed	104	13.0
	Retired/disabled	248	31.0
	Full-time student at school/college	46	5.8
	Temporary leave (sick leave, maternity leave)	22	2.8
	Other	3	0.4
	NA	1	0.1
	Refusal	3	0.4

	N	%
Total	800	100.0

Socio-demographic profile of the respondents (continued)

		N	%
Marital Status	Single	153	19.1
	Cohabiting/living with partner	631	7.9
	Married	362	45.3
	Divorced	92	11.5
	Widowed	119	14.9
	NA	6	0.8
	Refusal	5	0.6
Total		800	100.0
Average net monthly income	Up to 150 LVL *	259	32.4
	151-300 LVL	285	35.7
	301 LVL and more	106	13.1
	No income	25	3.1
	DK	34	4.3
	Refusal	91	11.4
Total		800	100.0
Citizenship	Russian	66	8.3
	Latvian	461	57.6
	No any citizenship	264	33.0
	Other	1	0.1
	Refusal	8	1.0
Total		800	100
	Kurzeme	55	6.9
	Latgale	182	22.8
	Pieriga	81	10.1
	Riga	396	49.5
	Vidzeme	24	3.0
	Zemgale	62	7.8
Total		800	100

* 1LVL=1.41997 EUR

The report provides with main descriptive outcomes under the following sets of questions: ethnicity and ethnic identity, national identity; family, households and related ethnic aspects; xenophobia, conflicts and discrimination; social and political capital, participation, attitudes toward EU. The importance of independent variables is marked in case of relevant results.

3.2 Ethnicity and ethnic identity, national identity

This section of the report covers the following issues and related questions to ethnicity and ethnic identity: self-categorisation, ethnic categorisation, closeness to different groups and areas, concept of nation, identity categories, media and identity.

3.2.1 Language usage

First of all, the ethnic minorities' respondents were asked what language they speak most often at home. The majority of the Latvian Russians (87.4 per cent) speak Russian most often at home.

Nearly one tenth of the sample (9.5 per cent) speaks both Russian and Latvian most often, while only 2.8 per cent of the Latvian Russians mainly speak Latvian at home. (See Table 1)

3.2.2 Closeness

The respondents were asked about their closeness to different groups and regions, including local and European dimensions. The majority of the Latvian Russians feel very close or rather close to the local environment as 84 per cent maintain their closeness to the settlement where they live, 81 per cent – to the Latvian Russians and 78 per cent – to the country they live in – Latvia. The other dimensions of closeness received far more deliberate attention of the Latvian Russians as 40.6 per cent feel close to Russia (including the answers very close and rather close), 27.9 per cent maintain their closeness to the Baltic country region, 24.9 per cent – Europe, and 18.8 per cent – to the Eastern Europe. (See Table 2)

When analysing the statistically significant differences among various socio-demographic groups it was noticed that the elder age survey participants (aged 50 and over) feel closer to the settlement place they live in and Latvia. Oppositely, the youngest, up to 30 years old tend to maintain they feel rather not close or not close at all with the aforementioned categories. The elder less often feel close to such entities as Baltic countries, Eastern Europe and Europe in general.

3.2.3 Self-categorisation

Trying to identify the components of self-identification, the respondents were asked to define the categories, which are the most important in thinking about him/her selves by defining the three most important categories. While discussing the most important identities, it is obvious that the Latvian Russians firstly define themselves as representatives of their current (or previous) occupation (it is most important for 16.5 per cent of Latvian Russians at the first place), representatives of certain gender group (12.5 per cent mentioned it as the first choice) and the Russians (9.9 per cent mentioned it as the first choice). While considering the set of the second importance of the categories in self definition, the following categories were mentioned: 12.5 per cent of the Latvian Russians named their age group, 11.9 per cent – their gender and 9.8 per cent the coming from settlement they live in. The set of the third choice follows the aforementioned pattern, as the respondents' age (13.1 per cent), settlement (9.3 per cent) and occupation (9 per cent) are rated first. (See Table 3)

When analysing aggregated choices, it is obvious that ethnic/ civil identity is not as important as demographic – while describing who they are being representative of their occupation is the most important for 35 per cent of the Latvian Russians, being representative of certain age group – for 34 per cent and being representative of certain gender – for 30 per cent of Russians living in Latvia.

When analysing the statistically significant differences among various socio-demographic groups it was noticed that being representative of a certain occupation is more important (at the first place) for the Russian respondents of working age (the middle age group, 30-49 years old), being representative of certain gender – for respondents younger than 30 years old. The ethnic identification is relatively more important for people aged 50 and older.

3.2.4 Concept of nation

The questionnaire included the questions that aim at disclosing the respondents' opinion on what things are important for being truly Russian or truly Latvian. While considering the components that are important for being truly Russian, the great majority of the Latvian Russians maintain

that it is very important or rather important (93.4 per cent) to be able to speak Russian. Also, most of the Latvian Russians give priority to the feeling being Russian (91.3 per cent) and to having Russian ancestry (79.7 per cent). For about a half of the Latvian Russians being Russian means to respect Russian political institutions and laws (53.1 per cent) and to be an Orthodox (47.3 per cent). While a significant share of the Russians surveyed do not consider such factors as being have lived in Russian for most of one's life, being a citizen of Russian Federation, and having been born in Russia as significant factors for being a Russian as majority maintain that these are rather not important or not important at all (69.6 per cent, 65.6 per cent, and 63.2 per cent, correspondingly). (See Table 4).

While considering the components that are important for being truly Latvian, several issues could be considered. Nearly one tenth of the sample could not express their opinion on the issue and the categories provided are assessed with less certainty. Still, the great majority of the Latvian Russians maintain that it is very important or rather important (84.3 per cent) to be able to speak Latvian for being Latvian. Also, majority of the Latvian Russians give priority to the feeling being Russian (72.4 per cent), respect the Latvian political institutions and laws (70.9 per cent) and to have Latvian ancestry (66.5 per cent). More than half of the Latvian Russians (58.9 per cent) tend to ascribe great importance to having citizenship of the Republic of Latvia, being have lived in Latvia for most of one's life (54.6 per cent) and having been born in Latvia (51.6 per cent) for being Latvian. (See Table 5).

When analysing the statistically significant differences among various socio-demographic groups it was noticed that subjective feeling Latvian and having Latvian ancestry are less important for respondents having the Russian citizenship. Respect to the Latvian political institutions and laws is more important for respondents aged 50 and older, and those having children, and the importance of the Latvian citizenship is relatively more often mentioned by the respondents who describe their ethnic status as Latvian with Russian descent.

While comparing the attitudes of the Latvian Russians towards the importance of certain things for being Russian or Latvian, knowledge of the corresponding language and subjective feeling of being true representative of one or another ethnicity could be distinguished as common things for the concepts of the nations. However, the Latvian Russians tend to give more importance to the facts of being born, have been lived for most of one's years and having a citizenship of the receiving country for the being a true representative of a dominant ethnicity and far less importance of the aforementioned facts of the sending country for being a representative of an ethnic minority.

3.2.5 Ethnic pride and ethnic status

The answers to the question on the level of proud of being member of certain ethnicity related group, most Latvian Russians are very proud or proud of being Russian (76.2 per cent) and being Latvian Russian (55.9 per cent). While considering their proud of being Latvians, the Russians surveyed have dispersed opinions: the majority of respondents (69.6 per cent) maintain that this question is not applicable to them, 15.4 per cent refused to answer this question or had no answer. Only 6.4 per cent of the Latvians surveyed indicated that they are very proud or rather proud being Latvians, while 8.6 per cent have an opposite negative attitudes. While considering their feelings towards being representatives of the Baltic country region, Eastern Europe or Europe, the respondents tend to have different opinion, however, they are rather not proud of being European (47.7 per cent chose 'rather not proud', 'not proud at all') and Baltic country region

(46.7 per cent, correspondingly) and Eastern European (54.4 per cent ‘not proud at all or rather not proud’). (See Table 6).

The analysis of independent variables shows that males and senior respondents (aged 50 and elder) tend to be more proud of being Russian, and category of Eastern Europeans is more attractive for males, and those who describe their status as Latvians with Russian descent.

In terms of the description of one’s ethnic status, the majority of the respondents maintain that their ethnic status is best described by a formula ‘I’m Russian’ – 67.4 per cent. Nearly every fourth (23.6 per cent) Latvian Russian gives priority to the statement ‘I’m Latvian Russian’. Only about 4 per cent of survey participants state their ethnical status is Latvian with Russian descent. (See Table 7).

3.2.6 General assimilation strategy

The respondents were asked to express their opinion regarding the situation of ethnic minority groups and Russians in particular. The majority of the Latvian Russians agree with a statement that ‘It is better if Russians preserve their own customs and traditions’ – 84 per cent strongly agree or rather agree. Concerning the statement ‘It is better if Russians adapt and blend into the larger society’, the opinions of the Latvian Russians are contradictory: nearly in equal shares the respondents tend to agree (47.2 per cent) and disagree (44.7 per cent) with the statement. No significant correlations could be observed. (See table 10).

3.2.7 Educational and cultural aspects of identity

The respondents were asked to express their opinion on different statements related to the opportunities for their children education, to speak minority language in everyday life, opportunities to read newspapers and magazines in Russian and have the representatives in the parliament. In general, all the opportunities listed in the questionnaire seem to be of a high significance to the Latvian Russians as the majority of respondents qualify them as very important or rather important. The great majority of the Latvian Russians maintains that an opportunity to speak Russian in everyday life (91.7 per cent), an opportunity to read newspapers and magazines in Russian (92.1 per cent), an opportunity for their children to study the ethnic history and culture of Russians (90.8 per cent), and an opportunity to preserve Russian folk customs, traditions, culture (89.3 per cent) are very important or rather important. Also, the majority maintain that an opportunity for their children to get education in Russian and an opportunity to have the Russian representatives in the parliament are of great importance (82 per cent and 77.7 per cent, correspondingly). (See Table 11). The analysis shows that women tend to express their support for the opportunities for the children to study the ethnic history and culture of Russians more often.

The majority of the sample of the Latvian Russians surveyed has obtained primary education (64.6 per cent) and secondary education (86 per cent) in Russian language. 47 per cent of the respondents have obtained higher education or professional training in Russian language, too. Among this group of the sample, the elder respondents dominate. (See Table 12.)

The respondents of the survey have maintained that it is of highly importance for them to use the media in Russian language and to give school education for their children in minority language. According to the survey data, majority of the Latvian Russians can take advantages of reading newspapers and magazines in the Russian language, issued in Latvia (95.5 per cent), watch TV programs of the Latvian TV channels in Russian language (92.9 per cent) and listen to the radio programs of the Latvian radio stations in Russian language (90.1 per cent). Three quarters of the

Russian sample maintain that they have an opportunity to give school education for their children in Russian language (76.4 per cent). (See Table 13)

Worth noticing that the opportunity to give school education for their children in Russian language is more often neglected by Russians having no citizenship, describing themselves as being Russian and having the lowest income level.

3.2.8 Media usage

Several more detailed questions were provided to respondents concerning their usage of printed or electronic newspapers, television, radio and websites. Among the media resources, television is most widely used in terms of different programs. The second most widely used media sources are the listening to the radio and reading the printed newspapers, followed by the browsing the internet sources. The majority of Russian respondents admire the Russia's programs at most as they (81 per cent) watch them regularly / often. Most respondents watch the programs prepared by the Latvian Russians (65.1 per cent), and one third of the sample (32.8 per cent) watch the Latvian programs on regular basis. The same pattern is observed with regard to the websites: 40.3 per cent browse the Russia's websites regularly, then follow the Latvian Russians' sources (36.1 per cent of regular usage) and finally the sources produced by the Latvians (23.8 per cent). With regard to radio, priority is given to the sources produced by the Latvian Russians (52.5 per cent listen to them regularly or often), the Russian radio (42.3 per cent) and at the smallest share – to the Latvian programs (19.9 per cent). The same pattern could be observed in the practices of reading the printed or electronic newspapers, as among the regular /often sources the Latvian Russians' ones dominate (56.5 per cent), followed by the Russian (23.5 per cent) and the Latvian (18.3 per cent) newspapers. (See Table 14, Table 15).

3.2.9 Religious denomination and practice

The survey data show that the majority of Russians surveyed (62 per cent) defined themselves as Orthodox, 4.5 per cent – as Old believers. 8.9 per cent of the Latvian Russian belongs to the Roman Catholics. Also, nearly one fifth of the Russian sample (19.3 per cent) consider themselves as not belonging to a denomination. (See Table 21).

Although the majority of the Latvian Russians could be defined as belonging to a certain religion or religious denomination, most of them are relatively rare practitioners. 23.1 per cent of the respondents never practice religion. Half respondents (50.5 per cent) practice religion several times a year or rarer and one fifth of the respondents (19.3 per cent) practice their religion once a month or more often apart from funerals, christenings and weddings. (See Table 22).

3.3 Family, households, employment and related ethnic aspects

This section of the report provides with an overview of main results of the survey on the household of the respondents, their socio-demographic profile, ethnic descent, marital status, issues related to employment and subjective social status.

3.3.1 Household composition

Most of respondents live in small households, as one fourth of the sample (23 per cent) lives alone, i.e. a respondent is the only member of the household; in this case, the majority (71 per cent) is comprised by senior persons (50 years old and elder). According to the answers of the Latvian Russians, over one third (34.8 per cent) of their households are comprised of two per-

sons. Also these are the households of elder persons: more than a half (58 per cent) of these households are comprised by senior persons (50 years old and elder).

One fourth (23.9 per cent) of the respondents' household consists of three persons. 13.5 per cent of the Russian respondents live in the households that consist of four persons, and 4.5 per cent – five or more persons. (See Table 31)

The structure of the two-person households most often consists of a respondent and her/his spouse (62.5 per cent of all two-person households), a respondent and her/his child (18.8 per cent) or a respondent and her/his parent (14.4 per cent).

While analysing the relationship of respondent's household other members with him/her, most often the oldest household member is respondents' spouse (62.4 per cent), parent (12.7 per cent), or other relative. While defining ethnicity of the household's oldest member, the respondents tend to choose between the Russian (44.6 per cent), the Latvian Russian (27.2 per cent) and the Latvian (18.0 per cent) most often. In most cases, the second (and the third) oldest member of the household is a child (66.6 per cent), who in terms of ethnicity is defined as the Russian (43.8 per cent), the Latvian Russian (32.2 per cent) or the Latvian (18.0 per cent). Among the Russian respondents, the Latvian citizenship dominates, the same corresponds their family members, while in each case over 60 per cent of household members are identified as citizens of the Republic of Latvia. (See Table 32) 13.9 per cent of respondents indicate that children of 7-15 years old live in their households (in most cases – 1 child), there are children under 6 years old in 13.1 per cent of the households.

The survey data enable to conclude that the households of the Latvian Russians tend to bear a monoethnic nature as more than three fourth of the respondents' households are comprised of Russians or Latvian Russians.

By their marital status, 45.3 per cent of the Russian respondents are married, 7.9 per cent live with a partner or cohabitate. A significant share of respondents declares being divorced (11.5 per cent) or widowed (14.9 per cent). 19.1 per cent of the Latvian Russians are single. (See Table 51) While asked about the number of the children, nearly one third of the Russians respondents (33.5 per cent) indicated that they have one child, a little bit less share of the Russians respondents (29.5 per cent) has two children all in all. 4.5 per cent of the Russians surveyed have three children, only 2.5 per cent of the Russians have four or more children. Nearly one fourth of the Russian respondents (22.1 per cent) do not have children. (See Table 39)

Most often Latvian Russians live with their own family – spouse/ partner and their children. 16 per cent of households include respondent's parent (-s). About a half of other household members are younger than 30 years. Most of other household members (70 per cent) have Latvian citizenship. Similarly as their spouses or partners, the majority of Latvian Russians' spouses / partners have achieved ISCED 3–5 education level.

3.3.2 Ethnic descent

According to the survey data, more than a half of the Russians surveyed (57.6 per cent) have the Latvian citizenship. One third of respondents (33 per cent) maintain they do not have any citizenship at all, while 8.3 per cent have the citizenship of the Russian Federation.

While asked about their parents ethnicity, 67.6 per cent of respondents named that their father and 64.3 per cent that their mother were Russians, with a corresponding shares of 14.3 and 16.9 per cent – the Latvian Russians. 5 per cent of respondents fathers and 4.5 per cent of mothers

are/were Latvians. (See Table 41) One tenth of the respondents' parents were of other ethnicity, among which Belarussian, Ukrainian, Polish, Jewish and other are mentioned.

One third of the Russian respondents' parents are/were citizens of Latvia - 33.8 per cent fathers and 30.9 per cent mothers, similar shares were/are Russian citizens (31.8 per cent mother and 30 per cent father), one fourth – other citizenship (25.8 and 24.1 per cent, correspondingly). (See Table 42)

The afore discussed data correspond to the data on the place where a respondent has been born and his/her duration of living in Latvia. The majority of the Russian sample (65 per cent) was born in Latvia, with one fourth (26.5 per cent) born in Russia and 8.5 per cent in other countries. Among those born outside Latvia, the senior respondents (50 years old and elder) comprise the majority. Also, most of the Latvian Russians who were not born in Latvia, live there for 30–49 years, about one fourth of them live in Latvia for less than 30 years and a similar share for 50 years and longer. (See Tables 37, 38)

3.3.3 Languages spoken

Respondents were asked about the languages they speak. The great majority of Russians questioned declared their knowledge of Russian (99.3 per cent) and Latvian (72.9 per cent) languages. There are statistically significantly larger shares of people aged 50 or more (70 per cent), widowed (28 per cent), not working (74 per cent) and retired (54 per cent), having Russian (14 per cent) or no citizenship (57 per cent) among the Latvian Russians who state they do not know the Latvian language.

Among the foreign languages, English was the most often mentioned - 29.4 per cent of the Russian respondents maintain speaking English, 10.1 per cent speak German. Other foreign languages (such as Italian, French, and Spanish) were mentioned just by 2.9 per cent of Russians surveyed. Among the other spoken languages, knowledge of Belarussian, Ukrainian, Polish, Lithuanian and other languages were mentioned. (See Table 44)

3.3.4 Education, occupation and professional activity

By the level of the education achieved, over one third (36.6 per cent) of the Russians have vocational training (including secondary education), one fourth (23.1 per cent) has the secondary education. Also, one fourth of the Russian respondents has reached the level of higher education. 9.3 per cent of the Russian respondents have basic education, 6.6 per cent – primary or no qualification. (See Table 43)

While generalising the data on the respondents' social status, more than half (56.4 per cent) of the Russian sample is inactive regarding the labour market and 42.8 per cent - involved in the labour market. Among the unemployed, the retired/disabled Russians dominate and comprise nearly one third (31 per cent) of the total sample. 5.8 per cent of the sample is comprised of full time students, similar share (3.8 per cent) identified themselves as housewives/keeping house, while 2.8 per cent indicated being on a temporary leave (sick leave, maternity leave). (See Table 45)

Unemployed people comprise 13 per cent of the total Russian sample. The data analysis shows that both unemployment and temporary unemployment are statistically significantly more often experienced by males, and middle age respondents (from 30 to 49 years old).

34.4 per cent of the Russians surveyed were working full-time, 5.1 per cent of the Russians were working part-time, and 3.4 per cent had some casual/temporary work.

The majority of the employed or those who have been employed works in private sector: 47.3 per cent work in profit-making private firms and companies, approximately 5 per cent are distributed among agricultural associations, workers co-operative, joint ventures, private farms, and 2.4 per cent are self employed. More than one third is employed in public sector: 19.4 per cent in central government, local government or other state organisation and 17.4 per cent in the nationalised industries. (See Table 46)

While describing the current or last employment, the answers of the Russian respondents distributed in the following sequence: most of the Latvian Russians work as employees in non-manual (42.6. per cent) and manual (38 per cent) occupations. 3.9 per cent of the Russian surveyed describe its employment as self-employed professional, 2 per cent self-employed in business, trade. (See Table 47)

With regard to occupation, in similar shares, the Latvian Russians can be defined as craft and related trades workers (19.3 per cent) and service and sales workers (17.8 per cent), in lesser similar shares the Russians are distributed in elementary occupations (11 per cent), technicians and associate professionals (10.9 per cent), plant and machine operators, and assemblers (10.4 per cent). (See Table 48).

The respondents were asked whether they have ever been unemployed for a period more than three months. The survey data implicate that every second Russian – 50.5 per cent - has been unemployed for a period more than three months.

The data analysis shows that elder respondents tend having experienced unemployment relatively more often: among those who have ever been unemployed for a period more than three months respondents under 29 years old comprise 24 per cent, the middle aged (30-49 years old) and the seniors (50 years and elder) respondents - 38.per cent, each. Most of these respondents (43 per cent) have higher (non-university) education.

3.3.5 Assessment of the social standing

While subjectively assessing their social standing in the 10 point scale, the Russian respondents tend to place them either to the lower, or middle social standing: 28.9 per cent of respondents identified themselves to the low social standing (while marking one of the first three (from 1 to 3) points of the scale) and the largest share (66.9 per cent) - to the representatives of the middle social standing (while marking the middle points (from 4 to 7) of the scale). Only 2.4 per cent of the Russian respondents identified him/herself with the higher social standing (while marking one of the last three (from 8 to 10) points of the scale). (See Table 50)

3.3.6 Average monthly income and household's articles

While analysing the data on average monthly income of the Russians surveyed, one third of the sample (32.4 per cent) is concentrated among those receiving the lowest income (up to 150 LVL and one third (35.7 per cent) – among those who receive 151-300 LVL per month. (See Table 51)

Along with the question on average net monthly income, the respondents were asked about certain things (property) in their household. The great majority (92.9 per cent) of the households have a coloured television, while one quarter (25.3 per cent) has two coloured televisions or more. Also, the great majority (79.8 per cent) households represented by the Russian respondents have an automatic washing machine. Most of the households are equipped with personal computer or notebook (51.4 per cent), and internet access at home is available at 47.4 per cent of respondents households. One third of the respondents' households (32 per cent) own a car 4 years old or

older. Also, over one e quarter (28.9 per cent) of respondents own a HIFI. The summerhouse or dacha is own by every sixth (15.5 per cent) of the households of the Russian surveyed. Least popular households articles are the dishwashers, which are available in only in 4.6 per cent of respondents' households.

The Latvian ENRI-VIS questionnaire included a question on the ownership of the housing in which a respondent lives. The majority of respondents (65.1 per cent) indicate that they themselves or anybody from their household are owners of the housing they live in. (See Table 52)

3.4 Xenophobia, conflicts, discrimination

3.4.1 Social tension

While considering possible tensions between different social groups, Latvian Russians were asked to express their opinion on the level of tension between poor and rich people, between old people and young people, between Latvian Russians and Latvians, between Latvian Poles and Latvians, between different religious groups and between Roma and Latvian society.

Most part of Russian respondents (48.9 per cent) tends to identify a lot of tension between poor and rich people first of all, a significant part (37.9 per cent) maintains that there is some tension between poor and rich people. With regard to tensions between old and young people, majority of respondents (53.9 per cent) maintain that there is some tension, while 33.5 per cent – no tension. (See Table 18)

Considering manifestations of ethnic tension, a certain distribution of opinions could be observed. Nearly half of respondents (48.9 per cent) maintain that there is some tension between Russians and Latvians in Latvia, and 15 per cent – there is a lot of tension. Still, 32.3 per cent maintains that there is no tension.

The Latvia's questionnaire included questions on tension between Latvians and Poles and Latvians and Roma. These questions were followed by the Lithuanian version of the questionnaire. Therefore the question regarding the relationship between the Poles and Latvians could be treated as not applicable (the survey data shows that 41 per cent of respondents could not express their opinion). Concerning the Roma, the opinions of the Russians surveyed are rather negative: 28 per cent indicate a lot of tension, 37.4 per cent – some tension and only 14.5 per cent maintain that there is no tension between Latvians and Roma in Latvia.

According to the opinion of half of Russian respondents (49.3 per cent), there is no tension between different religious groups in Latvia. Also, one fifth of the respondents (21.5 per cent) do not have opinion concerning religious tensions, while a quarter of Russians (25.1 per cent) maintain that there is some tension between different religious groups.

The results of the analysis of the questions on social distance towards different groups correspond to the afore discussed data. Comparing the data on social closeness or distance towards five ethnic groups, the Latvian Russians tend to be very close to Russians as the great majority (98 per cent) accept all the relationships with Russians. With regard to Latvians and Belarussians, although the general attitude is very positive, the closer relationship such as family membership is accepted with a slight less enthusiasm: approximately 95 per cent of the Latvian Russians accept Latvians, 94 per cent accept Belarussians and as ones living in the same settlement, as working colleagues and as neighbours in their street, while in case of family membership, the level of acceptance reaches 86.5 per cent, and 85.5 per cent, correspondingly. The case of Roma discloses the most differentiated social distance with regard to different social relationships. The attitudes

of the Latvian Russians towards the Roma are multifaceted as most part of the sample tend to accept them as ones living in the same settlement (64 per cent), as their neighbour in the same street (54.9 per cent) or as working colleagues (50.5 per cent). Most of the Latvian Russians surveyed would like to escape the Roma as a friend (53 per cent) or family member (68.1 per cent). (See Table 17)

3.4.2 Friendship and communication

The respondents were asked to identify an approximate number of their friends. Most part of respondents said they had from up to 10 friends: 25.8 per cent have 3-5, 21.6 per cent – 6-10 friends. 1.8 per cent of respondents indicated that they have no friends at all. Most of respondents maintain that most of their friends are the Latvian Russians (41 per cent) or Russians (11.7 per cent), 34 per cent – most of their friends come from various ethnic/nationality groups. Only 6.9 per cent of the Latvian Russians estimate that most of their friends are Latvians. (See Table 59, 60) The data confirm relatively strong bonds within the ethnic group as most of the Russians' friends are of Russian origin.

In the survey questionnaire, the respondents were asked if they have relatives, friends or other acquaintances or business partners living in Russia. Most of respondents (62.3 per cent) maintain that they have relatives, 42.5 per cent – friends and 22.9 per cent – other acquaintances. (See Table 55)

Concerning the ways of communication, in case of relatives, telephone / SMS is the most wide spread mean as half of those having relatives in Russia contact them by phone at least once a month or more frequent (26.5 per cent) or at least one or several times a year (23.5 per cent). Internet based contacts comprise second most frequent contacts as 18.9 per cent use them at least once a month or more frequent and 11.4 per cent at least one or several times a year. Personal meetings with relatives are not often but one third of the respondents (33.9 per cent) make it once in several years and a quarter (25.5 per cent) more often. Mail is least popular mean of communication with relatives in Russia, but still one third (33 per cent) use it. (See Table 56)

In case of friends, telephone / SMS is the most wide spread mean as half of those having friends in Russia contact them by phone at least once a month or more frequent (27.6 per cent) or at least one or several times a year (25.3 per cent). Internet based contacts comprise second most frequent contacts as 29.4 per cent use them at least once a month or more frequent and 9.1 per cent at least one or several times a year. Personal meetings with friends are not often but one third of the respondents (34.1 per cent) make it once in several years and a similar part (30.6 per cent) more often.

In case of other acquaintances or business partners living in Russia, the same pattern of contacts is applied: most respondents use telephone /SMS (41.6 per cent) or internet based contacts (38.3 per cent) most often, however, personal meetings take place at least once a year or more often (33.2 per cent) or once in several years (31.1 per cent).

3.4.3 Experiences of discrimination

According to the survey data, 22.4 per cent of Russian respondents indicated that in the past 12 months they have personally felt discriminated against or harassed in Latvia on the basis of one or more of the following grounds: ethnic or national origin, gender, age or religion. (In total, 246 cases of experienced discrimination or harassment were reported in the survey data). (See Table 19)

Among the grounds listed, ethnic or national origin was most frequently mentioned: 16 per cent of the Russians have felt discriminated against or harassed on the grounds of ethnic origin in the last 12 months. 9.1 per cent of respondents indicate experienced discrimination or harassment on the ground of age, 3.6 per cent – on gender. The discrimination on the basis of ethnic or national origin was statistically significantly more often experienced by people having no citizenship (these people more often say they also experienced discrimination because of their age), discrimination because of certain gender – by females, having university education.

Among the sectors of society, in which the respondents felt discriminated against or harassed because of their ethnicity in this period, the area of employment was most often mentioned. Of the Russians who reported discrimination in the survey (N=109), 42 respondents indicated the case 'at work' and 67 specified 'when looking for a job'. Among the other places, 44 respondents mentioned 'in shops', 'on the street', 'on public transportation' (41 each), 33 – 'in the health care system'. The data prompts that one respondent has indicated experienced discrimination in several areas. (See Table 20) The discrimination when looking for a job was statistically significantly more often experienced by people having no citizenship, and with university education.

3.5 Social and political capital, participation, attitudes towards EU

3.5.1 Social trust

While analysing the data on social trust, most Latvian Russians tend to express their higher trust to different social groups than the institutions. The majority of the Russians surveyed trust the Latvian Russians (66.4 per cent, including answers 'trust them completely', 'rather trust them'), Russians (65.5 per cent), people in general (61.5 per cent) and Latvians (59.4 per cent). (See Table 8)

Regarding the different institutions, most Latvian Russians tend to distrust them; the trust in the listed institutions is low. The Latvian Parliament and the Latvian Government are the most distrusted institutions: correspondingly, 88.7 and 87.9 per cent of respondents indicate that they rather do not trust them or do not trust them at all. Most Russians do not trust Latvian media (62.7 per cent) and the courts in Latvia (58.6 per cent). While the police in Latvia receive the most trust from the Latvian Russians as 37.2 per cent maintain they rather trust this institution, however, half of the Russian sample (53.4 per cent) distrusts it. (See Table 9)

3.5.2 Politics

While analysing the survey data on respondents' interest in politics, the Russians surveyed express their relatively high interest in all areas of politics as the majority is interested in politics about the Latvian Russians – 73 per cent ('very interested' and 'rather interested'), politics of Latvia – 71.9 per cent, politics of Russia – 68 per cent of respondents. (See Table 23)

Despite the expressed interest in politics, the voting in the last elections is much lower. Over one third of the Russian sample took part in the last National parliamentary elections in Latvia (35.3 per cent) and in the European Parliament Elections in Latvia (35 per cent). Most part of the Russian sample (40 per cent) did not vote in both elections due to eligibility. One fifth of the sample (21 per cent) was eligible to vote, but did not vote. (See Table 24)

In both elections, the same political parties were supported by the Latvian Russian voters: most respondents supported 'Accord Center' (45 per cent), another popular political party – 'Associa-

tion for human rights in united Latvia' (9.9 per cent and 15 per cent, accordingly). (See Table 24a, 24b)

3.5.3 Attitudes towards European Union

While considering the European Union, it must be said that it has pretty negative character among the Latvian Russians as most part of the respondents surveyed (45.5 per cent) has very negative or rather negative image of the EU. One third of the Latvian Russians (33.8 per cent) have neutral and a relatively small share of respondents (16.8 per cent) has a very positive or fairly positive image of European Union. (See Table 25) The youngest respondents (up to 29 years old) statistically significantly have positive image of the EU more often than the seniors (50 years old and elder) who tend to have negative one.

Also, more than a half (60.6 per cent) of the Latvian Russians tends to think that Latvia does not benefit from being a member of the European Union. One forth (25 per cent) of the respondents maintains that Latvia benefits a lot or rather benefits from being a member of the EU. (See Table 26) In this case, the younger Russians surveyed (up to 29 years old) are more optimist with regard to the benefits from the membership in the EU.

The respondents were asked to assess their situation after joining the European Union. Most of Russian respondents maintain that both situation for their ethnic groups in making political decisions and recognition of culture of the ethnic group is much the same after the joining the EU – 51.4 and 58 per cent, correspondingly. Although nearly one tenth of the survey respondents could not express their opinion with regard to the aforementioned changes, more respondents think that the situation regarding participation in the political decisions or recognition of culture of their ethnic minority group after joining the EU has worsened (26.6 per cent and 22.1 per cent, correspondingly) than become much better or rather better (11.6 and 9.5 per cent, correspondingly). (See Table 27) While considering opinion differences with regard to the socio-demographic characteristics, the age is the most significant factor as the seniors (50 years old and elder) statistically significantly more often say that situation has become worse in having a say in making political decisions. The younger Russians (up to 29 years old) more often perceive the situation of recognising the culture of ethnic minority group as being improved after joining the European Union.

While analysing the survey data on fears about the future of Europe and the European Union, it is obvious that the Latvian Russians are mostly afraid of an increase in drug trafficking and international organized crime (79.5 per cent) and the loss of social benefits (77.5 per cent). Half of the Russians feel afraid of more difficulties for ethnic and national minorities (50 per cent) and the loss of Russian identity and culture (50.1 per cent); however, significant shares of respondents do not have certain fears (35.4 and 41 per cent, correspondingly). One third of the Russians (31.1 per cent) spell out their fair concerning the loss of the Latvian national identity and culture, while 16 per cent of the sample has no opinion with regard to this issue. (See Table 28) Females and elder representatives of the Russian ethnic group tend to express the fear of the loss of Russians' identity and culture, an increase in drug trafficking and international organized crime, the loss of social benefits and more difficulties for ethnic and national minorities more often.

3.5.4 Migrational attitudes

The data of the minority survey enable to conclude on migrational attitudes of ethnic minorities in Latvia. The respondents were asked whether they would take an opportunity to leave Latvia and move for another country one either alone or with their whole family and a good deal of

monetary and social support. The data results show that strong emigrational attitudes are close to minority groups.

Most of Russians surveyed (40.4 per cent) provided the interviewers with negative answers that they would never leave. Nearly one third of respondents (31.6 per cent) said they would definitely leave, while nearly a quarter (22 per cent) expressed their doubt saying that they perhaps would leave. (See Table 29) The intentions to leave Latvia are much stronger among the younger and middle age respondents (up to 49 years old), those who are citizens of Latvian, and those who have either the lowest or the highest income level.

Those who have expressed their willingness to leave Latvia, were asked which country they would prefer. Most often Russian respondents (N=146) mentioned Russia (30.6 per cent), then United Kingdom (9.6 per cent), Germany (8 per cent) or Ireland (4 per cent). (See Table 30)

3.5.5 Participation in voluntary organisations

The questionnaire included several question on membership in voluntary organisations. The data analysis shows that one third of the Russian sample (37.0 percent) takes part in one or several voluntary organisations. In terms of activity, most respondents indicate being inactive members, with few expectations.

The most popular voluntary organisations among the Latvian Russians are the church or religious organizations, in which 19.6 per cent of respondents indicate inactive and 6.9 per cent – active membership. (See Table 57)

One tenth (10.1 per cent) of the Russian sample declares its membership in sport or recreational organizations, while 4 per cent consider themselves as active members and 6.1 per cent – inactive members. A lesser share of respondents take active (2.4 per cent) and inactive (2 per cent) membership in art, music or educational organizations. 4.5 per cent of the Russian respondents are members of Labour Union and 2.4 – representatives for the Latvian Russians.

While analysing the answers to the question on ethnic composition of the voluntary organisations, according to the members of these organisations, the most mono-ethnic voluntary organisations are those representing the Latvian Russians and the church or religious voluntary organizations: most shares of the members of these organisations estimate that the majority of the members are Russians (correspondingly, 63.2 per cent and 54.5 per cent of the members). With regard to other organisations, the opinions of the respondents are dispersed among all the categories of the answers, most of which indicate either different ethnic composition or refusals to provide the answer. (See Table 58)

3.6 Annex: Tables

Table 1. What language or languages do you speak most often at home?

	N	%
Russian	699	87.4
Russian and Latvian	76	9.5
Latvian	22	2.8
Other languages	1	0.1
NA	2	0.3
Total	800	100

Table 2. How close do you feel to...?

	Very close		Rather close		Rather not close		Not close at all		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Russians living in Latvia	283	35.4	366	45.8	120	15.0	18	2.3	1	0.1	12	1.5	800	100
The settlement	288	36.0	380	47.5	101	12.6	15	1.9	3	0.4	13	1.6	800	100
Latvia	251	31.4	373	46.6	126	15.8	31	3.9	5	0.6	14	1.8	800	100
Russia	93	11.6	232	29.0	323	40.4	119	14.9	18	2.3	15	1.9	800	100
Baltic countries region	28	3.5	195	24.4	320	40.0	213	26.6	26	3.3	18	2.3	800	100
Eastern Europe	16	2.0	134	16.8	304	38.0	288	36.0	35	4.4	23	2.9	800	100
Europe	35	4.4	180	22.5	256	32.0	281	35.1	27	3.4	21	2.6	800	100

Table 3. We think of ourselves in different terms. Some are more important to us than others. Please tell me, generally speaking which is the most important to you in describing who you are? And which is the second and third important?

	The most important		The second important		The third important	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
My current (if inactive - previous) occupation	132	16.5	74	9.3	72	9.0
My age group (that is, young, middle age, old)	70	8.8	100	12.5	105	13.1
My gender (that is, being a man/woman)	100	12.5	95	11.9	48	6.0
Coming from the settlement you live	65	8.1	78	9.8	74	9.3
Being a Russian	79	9.9	69	8.6	61	7.6
My social class (that is upper, middle, lower, working, or similar categories)	51	6.4	67	8.4	53	6.6
To be a citizen of Latvia	40	5.0	27	3.4	30	3.8
My religion (or being agnostic or atheist)	27	3.4	27	3.4	23	2.9
Being European	9	1.1	5	0.6	18	2.3
My preferred political party, group or movement	2	0.3	5	0.6	13	1.6
NA	201	25.1	222	27.8	266	33.3
Refusal	24	3.0	31	3.9	37	4.6

Total	800	100	800	100	800	100
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Table 4. Some people say that the following things are important for being Russian. Others say they are not important. How important do you think each of the following is?

	Very important		Rather important		Rather not important		Not important at all		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
To have been born in Russia	100	12.5	149	18.6	311	38.9	194	24.3	29	3.6	17	2.1	800	100
To have Russian citizenship	92	11.5	140	17.5	301	37.6	224	28.0	27	3.4	16	2.0	800	100
To have lived in Russia for most of one's life	66	8.3	128	16.0	297	37.1	260	32.5	31	3.9	18	2.3	800	100
To be able to speak Russian	619	77.4	128	16.0	23	2.9	12	1.5	5	0.6	13	1.6	800	100
To be an Orthodox	166	20.8	212	26.5	221	27.6	153	19.1	30	3.8	18	2.3	800	100
To respect Russian political institutions and laws	146	18.3	278	34.8	211	26.4	91	11.4	53	6.6	21	2.6	800	100
To feel Russian	552	69.0	178	22.3	39	4.9	15	1.9	3	0.4	13	1.6	800	100
To have Russian ancestry	370	46.3	267	33.4	93	11.6	40	5.0	13	1.6	17	2.1	800	100

Table 5. And how important do you think each of the following things for being truly Latvian?

	Very important		Rather important		Rather not important		Not important at all		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
To have been born in Latvia	198	24.8	214	26.8	208	26.0	115	14.4	39	4.9	26	3.3	800	100
To have Latvian citizenship	252	31.5	219	27.4	175	21.9	86	10.8	44	5.5	24	3.0	800	100
To have lived in Latvia for most of one's life	193	24.1	244	30.5	217	27.1	80	10.0	42	5.3	24	3.0	800	100
To be able to speak Latvian	508	63.5	166	20.8	41	5.1	34	4.3	26	3.3	25	3.1	800	100
To be a Protestant	45	5.6	86	10.8	221	27.6	342	42.8	72	9.0	34	4.3	800	100
To respect Latvian political institutions and laws	276	34.5	291	36.4	115	14.4	43	5.4	47	5.9	28	3.5	800	100
To feel Latvian	439	54.9	140	17.5	81	10.1	85	10.6	28	3.5	27	3.4	800	100
To have Latvian ancestry	325	40.6	207	25.9	102	12.8	103	12.9	33	4.1	30	3.8	800	100

Table 6. How proud are you of being...?

	Very proud		Rather proud		Rather not proud		Not proud at all		Not applicable		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Russian	318	39.8	291	36.4	87	10.9	34	4.3	5	0.6	53	6.6	12	1.5	800	100
Latvian	9	1.1	42	5.3	33	4.1	36	4.5	557	69.6	44	5.5	79	9.9	800	100
Latvian Russian	177	22.1	270	33.8	178	22.3	79	9.9	7	0.9	58	7.3	31	3.9	800	100
Baltic	66	8.3	222	27.8	217	27.1	157	19.6	12	1.5	89	11.1	37	4.6	800	100
Eastern European	33	4.1	122	15.3	230	28.8	205	25.6	62	7.8	108	13.5	40	5.0	800	100
European	59	7.4	203	25.4	181	22.6	201	25.1	19	2.4	100	12.5	37	4.6	800	100

Table 7. Out of the following list, please select the formula that best describes your ethnic status:

	N	%
I'm Russian	539	67,4
I'm Russian living in Latvia	189	23,6
I'm Latvian with Russian descent	28	3,5
I'm Latvian	1	0,1
NA	8	1,0
Refusal	35	4,4
Total	800	100

Table 8. Could you tell me how much do you trust?

	Trust them completely		Rather trust them		Rather do not trust them		Do not trust them at all		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
People in general	73	9,1	419	52,4	230	28,8	56	7,0	18	2,3	4	0,5	800	100
Russians living in Latvia	94	11,8	437	54,6	177	22,1	48	6,0	37	4,6	7	0,9	800	100
Latvians	70	8,8	405	50,6	211	26,4	67	8,4	38	4,8	9	1,1	800	100
Russians	97	12,1	427	53,4	169	21,1	46	5,8	53	6,6	8	1,0	800	100

Table 9. Please tell me how much do you trust each of the following institutions?

	Trust them completely		Rather trust them		Rather do not trust them		Do not trust them at all		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Latvian parliament	4	0,5	51	6,4	179	22,4	530	66,3	27	3,4	9	1,1	800	100
Latvian media	11	1,4	199	24,9	247	30,9	254	31,8	76	9,5	13	1,6	800	100
Police in Latvia	43	5,4	254	31,8	205	25,6	222	27,8	66	8,3	10	1,3	800	100
Latvian government	8	1,0	57	7,1	184	23,0	519	64,9	20	2,5	12	1,5	800	100
The courts in Latvia	19	2,4	185	23,1	208	26,0	261	32,6	116	14,5	11	1,4	800	100

Table 10. There are different opinions about the situation of ethnic minority groups and Russians in particular. I will read out some statements concerning this issue. Could you please tell me, how much do you agree with them?

	Strongly agree		Rather agree		Rather not agree		Do not agree at all		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
It is better if Russians adapt and blend into the larger society	123	15.4	254	31.8	234	29.3	123	15.4	58	7.3	8	1.0	800	100
It is better if Russians preserve their own customs and traditions	304	38.0	368	46.0	54	6.8	17	2.1	48	6.0	9	1.1	800	100

Table 11. To what degree is it important for you?

	Very important		Rather important		Rather not important		Not important at all		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
An opportunity for your children to get education in Russian language	389	48.6	267	33.4	112	14.0	18	2.3	9	1.1	5	0.6	800	100
An opportunity for your children to study the ethnic history and culture of Russians	419	52.4	307	38.4	48	6.0	12	1.5	8	1.0	6	0.8	800	100
An opportunity to read newspapers and magazines in Russian language	506	63.3	230	28.8	44	5.5	13	1.6	4	0.5	3	0.4	800	100
An opportunity to speak Russian in everyday life	533	66.6	201	25.1	55	6.9	4	0.5	3	0.4	4	0.5	800	100
An opportunity to preserve Russian folk customs, traditions, culture	418	52.3	296	37.0	63	7.9	10	1.3	7	0.9	6	0.8	800	100
An opportunity to have the representatives of your nationality in Latvian parliament	345	43.1	277	34.6	104	13.0	39	4.9	30	3.8	5	0.6	800	100

Table 12. Have you obtained education in Russian language?

	Yes		No		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
In primary education	517	64.6	27	3.4	256	32.0	800	100
In secondary education	688	86.0	67	8.4	45	5.6	800	100
In higher education or professional training	376	47.0	214	26.8	210	26.3	800	100

Table 13. Do you have an opportunity...?

	Yes		No		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
To watch TV programs of the Latvian TV channels in Russian language	743	92.9	41	5.1	5	0.6	11	1.4	800	100
To the radio programs of the Latvian radio stations in Russian language	721	90.1	54	6.8	12	1.5	13	1.6	800	100
To read newspapers and magazines in the Russian language, issued in Russia	764	95.5	20	2.5	6	0.8	10	1.3	800	100
To give school education for your children in Russian language	611	76.4	105	13.1	60	7.5	24	3.0	800	100

Table 14. How often do you read printed or electronic NEWSPAPERS?

	Regularly/ Often		Rarely		Never, but I have such an opportunity		Never, but I do not have such an opportunity		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Latvian newspapers	146	18.3	262	32.8	296	37.0	86	10.8	5	0.6	5	0.6	800	100
Russian newspapers	188	23.5	353	44.1	132	16.5	115	14.4	6	0.8	6	0.8	800	100
Russians' living in Latvia newspapers	452	56.5	260	32.5	62	7.8	19	2.4	3	0.4	4	0.5	800	100

Table 15. How often do you watch TELEVISION or listen on the RADIO or on the WEB...?

	Regularly/ Often		Rarely		Never, but I have such an opportunity		Never, but I do not have such an opportunity		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
TV														
Latvian pro-grams	262	32.8	328	41.0	182	22.8	26	3.3			2	0.3	800	100
Russian pro-grams	648	81.0	125	15.6	15	1.9	12	1.5					800	100
Russians' living in Latvia programs	521	65.1	199	24.9	31	3.9	42	5.3	6	0.8	1	0.1	800	100
Radio														
Latvian pro-grams	159	19.9	280	35.0	276	34.5	72	9.0	4	0.5	9	1.1	800	100
Russian pro-grams	338	42.3	258	32.3	123	15.4	70	8.8	5	0.6	6	0.8	800	100
Russians' living in Latvia programs	420	52.5	213	26.6	96	12.0	59	7.4	6	0.8	6	0.8	800	100
Websites														
Latvian	190	23.8	149	18.6	149	18.6	277	34.6	14	1.8	21	2.6	800	100
Russian	322	40.3	102	12.8	77	9.6	268	33.5	12	1.5	19	2.4	800	100
Russians' living in Latvia	289	36.1	118	14.8	84	10.5	275	34.4	15	1.9	19	2.4	800	100

Table 17A. We all have different relationships with one another. Please tell me for each one of the relationships if you would accept the relationships with persons coming from different ethnic groups. So how would you feel about having a member of the following... The answers "YES"

	Latvian		Russian		Polish		Belarussian		Roma	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
As a family member	692	86.5	787	98.4	581	72.6	684	85.5	206	25.8
As a friend	740	92.5	786	98.3	654	81.8	730	91.3	325	40.6
As a neighbour on your street	765	95.6	784	98.0	707	88.4	752	94.0	439	54.9
As a working colleague	755	94.4	786	98.3	697	87.1	747	93.4	404	50.5
As one living in the same settlement	775	96.9	787	98.4	718	89.8	757	94.6	512	64.0

Table 17B. We all have different relationships with one another. Please tell me for each one of the relationships if you would accept the relationships with persons coming from different ethnic groups. So how would you feel about having a member of the following... The answers "NO"

	Latvian		Russian		Polish		Belarussian		Roma	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
As a family member	91	11.4	2	0.3	183	22.9	84	10.5	545	68.1
As a friend	43	5.4	3	0.4	115	14.4	39	4.9	424	53.0
As a neighbour on your street	17	2.1	4	0.5	62	7.8	16	2.0	311	38.9
As a working colleague	27	3.4	2	0.3	73	9.1	21	2.6	345	43.1
As one living in the same settlement	9	1.1	2	0.3	52	6.5	13	1.6	239	29.9

Table 18. In your opinion, how much tension is there between each of the following groups in this country?

	No tension		Some tension		A lot of tension		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Poor and rich people	81	10.1	303	37.9	391	48.9	21	2.6	4	0.5	800	100
Old people and young people	268	33.5	431	53.9	72	9.0	24	3.0	5	0.6	800	100
Russians and Latvians	258	32.3	391	48.9	120	15.0	26	3.3	5	0.6	800	100
Polish and Latvians	317	39.6	126	15.8	12	1.5	327	40.9	18	2.3	800	100
Different religious groups	394	49.3	201	25.1	24	3.0	172	21.5	9	1.1	800	100
Gipsy and Latvians	116	14.5	299	37.4	224	28.0	139	17.4	22	2.8	800	100

Table 19. In the past 12 months have you personally felt discriminated against or harassed in Latvia on the basis of one or more of the following grounds?

	Yes		No		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Ethnic or national origin	128	16.0	648	81.0	19	2.4	5	0.6	800	100
Gender	29	3.6	748	93.5	14	1.8	9	1.1	800	100
Age	73	9.1	709	88.6	12	1.5	6	0.8	800	100
Religion	16	2.0	762	95.3	14	1.8	8	1.0	800	100

Table 20. In which of these environments did you felt discriminated or harassed because of your ethnic origin in the last 12 months? (N=128)

	Yes		No		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
At school/university	12	9.4	74	57.8			42	32.8	128	100
At work	42	32.8	61	47.7	1	0.8	24	18.8	128	100
In the health care system	33	25.8	83	64.8	2	1.6	10	7.8	128	100
By the court	9	7.0	95	74.2	2	1.6	22	17.2	128	100
By the police	17	13.3	88	68.8	3	2.3	20	15.6	128	100
At church	3	2.3	109	85.2	2	1.6	14	10.9	128	100
When looking for a job	67	52.3	40	31.3			21	16.4	128	100
In restaurants, bars, pubs, or discos	16	12.5	87	68.0	3	2.3	22	17.2	128	100
On the street	41	32.0	78	60.9			9	7.0	128	100
By neighbours	16	12.5	101	78.9			11	8.6	128	100
In shops	44	34.4	77	60.2			7	5.5	128	100
On public transportation	41	32.0	77	60.2			10	7.8	128	100

Table 21. Do you belong to a religion or religious denomination? If yes, which one?

	N	%
Orthodox	496	62.0
Catholic	71	8.9
Old Believers	37	4.6
Protestant	12	1.5
Jew	1	0.1
Muslim	1	0.1
Other	8	1.0
Do not belong to a denomination	154	19.3
NA	4	0.5
Refusal	16	2.0
Total	800	100

Table 22. Apart from funerals, christenings and weddings, how often do you practice your religion for example by attending religious gatherings, servings?

	N	%
Several times a week	20	2.5
Once a week	51	6.4
Once a month	83	10.4
Several times a year	261	32.6
Once a year or less often	143	17.9
Never	185	23.1
NA	34	4.3
Refusal	23	2.9
Total	800	100

Table 23. How interested would you say you are in politics?

	Very interested		Rather interested		Rather not interested		Not interested at all		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
In Latvia	203	25.4	372	46.5	157	19.6	60	7.5	4	0.5	4	0.5	800	100
In Russia	187	23.4	357	44.6	179	22.4	66	8.3	5	0.6	6	0.8	800	100
About Russians living in Latvia	217	27.1	367	45.9	151	18.9	47	5.9	7	0.9	11	1.4	800	100

Table 24. Did you vote in the last...?

	Yes		No, but eligible to vote		No, not eligible		Can't remember		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
National parliamentary elections in Latvia	282	35.3	164	20.5	322	40.3	13	1.6	19	282	800	100
European Parliament Elections in Latvia	280	35.0	170	21.3	317	39.6	12	1.5	21	280	800	100

Table 24A. Which party did you vote for in the last National parliamentary elections in Latvia?

	N	%
Accord center	129	45.7
Association for human rights in united Latvia	28	9.9
Association of Latvian first party and Latvia's way	9	3.2
Union of greens and farmers	8	2.8
New era	6	2.1
People's party	4	1.4
Union for fatherland and freedom /lnnk	4	1.4
Latvian social democratic workers party	2	0.7
Politically, the patriotic union rodina	1	0.4
Latgales gaisma	1	0.4
NA	43	15.2
Refusal	47	16.7
Total	282	100

Table 24B. Table Which party did you vote for in the last European Parliament Elections in Latvia?

	N	%
Accord center	124	44.3
Association for human rights in united Latvia	42	15.0
Association of Latvian first party and Latvia's way	9	3.2
New era	8	2.9
Union of greens and farmers	6	2.1
People's party	3	1.1
Latvian social democratic workers party	3	1.1
Union for fatherland and freedom /Innk	1	0.4
Politically, the patriotic union rodina	1	0.4
Civil union	1	0.4
libertas.lv	1	0.4
NA	42	15.0
Refusal	39	13.9
Total	280	100

Table 25. In general, do you have a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image of the European Union?

	N	%
Very positive	18	2.3
Fairly positive	116	14.5
Neutral	270	33.8
Fairly negative	204	25.5
Very negative	120	15.0
NA	53	6.6
Refusal	19	2.4
Total	800	100

Table 26. Generally speaking, would you say that Latvia benefits or does not benefit from being a member of the European Union?

	N	%
Benefits a lot	20	2.5
Rather benefits	180	22.5
Rather does not benefit	284	35.5
Does not benefit at all	201	25.1
NA	91	11.4
Refusal	24	3.0
Total	800	100

Table 27. Compared to our situation after joining the European Union, would you say our current situation is better, much the same, or worse than the old system in terms of whether...?

	Much better		Rather better		Much the same		Rather worse		Much worse		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Your ethnic minority group has a say in making political decisions	8	1.0	85	10.6	411	51.4	142	17.8	70	8.8	72	9.0	12	1.5	800	100
Recognition of culture of your ethnic minority group	9	1.1	67	8.4	464	58.0	132	16.5	45	5.6	74	9.3	9	1.1	800	100

Table 28. Some people may have fears about the future of Europe and the European Union. For each one, please tell me if you - personally - are currently afraid of it, or not?

	Afraid of it		Not afraid of it		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The loss of Russians' identity and culture	401	50.1	328	41.0	65	8.1	6	0.8	800	100
An increase in drug trafficking and international organized crime	636	79.5	95	11.9	63	7.9	6	0.8	800	100
The loss of social benefits	620	77.5	119	14.9	56	7.0	5	0.6	800	100
The loss of Latvian national identity and culture	249	31.1	410	51.3	128	16.0	13	1.6	800	100
More difficulties for ethnic and national minorities	400	50.0	283	35.4	109	13.6	8	1.0	800	100

Table 29. If you had an opportunity to leave your country and move for another one either alone or with your whole family and a good deal of monetary and social support, would you go?

	N	%
Yes, I would definitely leave	253	31.6
Yes, perhaps I would leave	176	22.0
No, I would never leave	323	40.4
NA	43	5.4
Refusal	5	0.6
Total	800	100

Table 30. If you can choose, which country would be your preference?

	N	%
Russia	146	30.6
UK	46	9.6
Germany	38	8.0
Ireland	19	4.0
US	18	3.8
Norway	14	2.9
Australia	13	2.7
Canada	12	2.5
Spain	10	2.1
Belarus	9	1.9
Sweden	9	1.9
Italy	8	1.7
France	5	1.0
Scandinavia	4	0.8
Switzerland	4	0.8
Cyprus	3	0.6
Iceland	3	0.6
Ukraine	3	0.6
Canary	2	0.4
Denmark	2	0.4
Japan	2	0.4
Netherlands	2	0.4
Austria	1	0.2
Bulgaria	1	0.2
Israel	1	0.2
Jamaica	1	0.2
Latvia	1	0.2
Lithuania	1	0.2
Moldavia	1	0.2
New Zealand	1	0.2
Uzbekistan	1	0.2
NA	96	20.1
Total	477	100

Table 31. Including yourself, how many people – including children – live here regularly as members of this household?

	Total		Persons 16 years old and elder		Children of 7-15 years old		Children under 6 years old	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0	-	-	-	-	689	86.1	694	86.8
1	184	23.0	199	24.9	92	11.5	92	11.5
2	278	34.8	381	47.6	19	2.4	13	1.6
3	191	23.9	147	18.4				
4	108	13.5	63	7.9			1	0.1
5	27	3.4	7	0.9				
6	8	1.0	2	0.3				
7	1	0.1	1	0.1				
8	2	0.3						
Refusals	1	0.1						
	800	100	800	100	800	100	800	100

Table 32. Main characteristics of the household members (per cent)

	Senior (N 615)	Second oldest (N 338)	Third oldest (N148)
Male	51.9	43.5	54.7
Female	48.1	56.5	45.3
Up to 29 years old	16.7	64.8	83.8
30-49 years old	36.1	25.1	12.2
50 years old and elder	46.5	9.5	3.4
Spouse	62.4	7.1	7.4
Son, daughter	12.7	66.6	60.1
Father/mother	18.9	16.0	4.7
Other	5.5	10.1	27.0
Latvian Russian	27.2	32.2	29.1
Russian	44.6	43.8	44.6
Latvian	18.0	18.0	23.6
Other	9.8	5.0	2.0
Latvian citizenship	60.2	79.9	83.1
Russian citizenship	6.8	5.0	4.7
No citizenship	31.9	13.9	10.1

Table 36. Respondent's citizenship

	N	%
Russian	66	8.3
Latvian	461	57.6
No any citizenship	264	33.0
Other	1	0.1
Refusal	8	1.0
Total	800	100

Table 37. Where were you born?

	N	%
Latvia	520	65.0
Russia	212	26.5
Belarus	25	3.1
Ukraine	13	1.6
Lithuania	8	1.0
Kazakhstan	7	0.9
Kyrgyzstan	2	0.3
Uzbekistan	2	0.3
Azerbaijan	1	0.1
Estonia	1	0.1
France	1	0.1
Germany	1	0.1
Yakutia	1	0.1
Moldavia	1	0.1
Sweden	1	0.1
Total	800	100

Table 38. How long have you been living in this country?

	N	%
Less than 30 years	70	25.4
30 to 49 years	116	42.0
50 years or more	78	28.3
Refusal	12	4.3
Total	276	100

Table 39. How many children all in all do you have, including the adopted ones?

	N	%
No children	177	22.1
1 child	268	33.5
2 children	236	29.5
3 children	36	4.5
More than 3 children	20	2.5
Refusal	63	7.9
Total	800	100

Table 41. What is your parents' ethnicity/ nationality?

	Your father		Your mother	
	N	%	N	%
Latvian	40	5.0	36	4.5
Russian	541	67.6	514	64.3
Russian living in Latvia	114	14.3	135	16.9
Other	72	9.0	79	9.9
NA	8	1.0	5	0.6
Refusal	25	3.1	31	3.9
Total	800	100	800	100

Table 41A. Other parents' ethnicity/ nationality

	Your father		Your mother	
	N	%	N	%
Belarusian	28	3.5	32	4.0
Ukrainian	17	2.1	18	2.3
Pole	10	1.3	12	1.5
Jewish	5	0.6	1	0.1
Armenian	2	0.3	2	0.3
Estonian	1	0.1	3	0.4
Moldavian	2	0.3	2	0.3
Lithuanian	1	0.1	2	0.3
German			2	0.3
Greek	1	0.1	1	0.1
Latgalls	1	0.1	1	0.1
Azerbaijani	1	0.1		
Kazakh	1	0.1		
Tatar	1	0.1		
Osetin	1	0.1		
NA			2	0.3

Table 42. What is your parents' citizenship?

	Your father		Your mother	
	N	%	N	%
Latvian	240	30.0	254	31.8
Russian	270	33.8	247	30.9
Other	193	24.1	206	25.8
NA	58	7.3	49	6.1
Refusal	39	4.9	44	5.5
Total	800	100	800	100

Table 42A. Other parents' citizenship

	Your father		Your mother	
	N	%	N	%
USSR	97	12.1	94	11.8
Byelorussian	11	1.4	11	1.4
Ukrainian	6	0.8	8	1.0
Lithuanian	4	0.5	6	0.8
Poland	2	0.3	5	0.6
German	2	0.3	1	0.1
Kirghiz	1	0.1	1	0.1
Kazakh	1	0.1		
Non-citizen	67	8.4	78	9.8
NA	2	0.3	2	0.3

Table 43. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

	N	%
ISCED 0	2	0.3
ISCED 1	50	6.3
ISCED 2	74	9.3
ISCED 3	185	23.1
ISCED 4	293	36.6
ISCED 5	141	17.6
ISCED 6	50	6.3
Refusal	5	0.6
Total	800	100

Table 44. What languages do you speak?

	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Russian	794	99.3	6	0.8	800	100
Latvian	583	72.9	217	27.1	800	100
English	235	29.4	565	70.6	800	100
German	81	10.1	719	89.9	800	100
French	15	1.9	785	98.1	800	100
Italian	5	0.6	795	99.4	800	100
Spanish	3	0.4	797	99.6	800	100
Other language	63	7.9	737	92.1	800	100

Table 45. Now we are also interested in the kind of work you are doing (i.e. main job). Which of the statements on this card applies to you at the moment?

	N	%
Working full-time	275	34.4
Working part-time	41	5.1
Casual/temporary work	27	3.4
Housewife/keeping house	30	3.8
Unemployed	104	13.0
Retired/disabled	248	31.0
Full-time student at school/college	46	5.8
Temporary leave (sick leave, maternity leave)	22	2.8
Other	3	0.4
NA	1	0.1
Refusal	3	0.4
Total	800	100

Table 46. Which of these types of organizations do/did you work in?

	N	%
Profit-making private firm or company	357	47,3
Nationalized industry	131	17,4
Central government, local government, or other state organization	146	19,4
Self-employed	18	2,4
Non-profit making private organization (charity, pressure group)	18	2,4
Agricultural association/co-operative	17	2,3
Workers co-operative	9	1,2
Never worked (house-wife)	9	1,2
Joint venture	5	0,7
Private farm	3	0,4
NA	3	0,4
Refusal	38	5,0
Total	754	100

Table 47. Which of the descriptions on this card best describes your current/last employment status?

	N	%
Employee in non-manual occupation	341	42.6
Employee in manual occupation	304	38.0
Self-employed professional	31	3.9
Self-employed in business/trade	16	2.0
Helps out, assists in family business	7	0.9
Self-employed farmer	5	0.6
Other	38	4.8
NA	7	0.9
Refusal	51	6.4
Total	800	100

Table 48. Please, tell me with your own words, what is/was your occupation?

	N	%
Managers	16	2.0
Professionals	87	10.9
Technicians and associate professionals	95	11.9
Clerical support workers	36	4.5
Service and sales workers	142	17.8
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	11	1.4
Craft and related trades workers	154	19.3
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	83	10.4
Elementary occupations	97	12.1
Armed forces occupations	1	0.1
Not applicable /Has never worked	44	5.5
DK	33	4.1
Refusal	1	0.1
Total	800	100

Table 49. Have you ever been unemployed for a period more than three months?

	N	%
Yes	404	50.5
No	365	45.6
NA	7	0.9
Refusal	24	3.0
Total	800	100

Table 50. In Latvia today, some people are considered to have a high social standing and some are considered to have a low social standing. Thinking about yourself, where would you place yourself on this scale if the top box indicated high social standing in this country and the bottom box indicated low social standing.

	N	%
1 - low social standing	22	2.8
2	56	7.0
3	153	19.1
4	165	20.6
5	232	29.0
6	88	11.0
7	50	6.3
8	14	1.8
9	1	0.1
10 - high social standing	4	0.5
NA	9	1.1
Refusal	6	0.8
Total	800	100

Table 51. Considering all your sources of income, please tell me, what is your average net monthly income?

	N	%
No income	25	3,1
50 or less	25	3,1
51 to 100	56	7,0
101 to 150	178	22,3
151 to 200	163	20,4
201 to 300	122	15,3
301 to 400	61	7,6
401 to 500	24	3,0
501 to 600	12	1,5
601 or more	9	1,1
DK	34	4,3
Refusal	91	11,4
Total	800	100

Table 52. Does your household have...?

	Yes		No		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Automatic washing machine	638	79.8	129	16.1			33	4,1	800	100
HIFI	231	28.9	507	63.4	13	1.6	49	6,1	800	100
Coloured television	743	92.9	22	2.8	1	0.1	34	4,3	800	100
Any cars 4 years old or older	256	32.0	502	62.8	1	0.1	41	5,1	800	100
Any cars younger than 4 years old	40	5.0	707	88.4	2	0.3	51	6,4	800	100
Personal computer or notebook	411	51.4	350	43.8	3	0.4	36	4,5	800	100
Dish washer	37	4.6	722	90.3	2	0.3	39	4,9	800	100
Dacha. summer house	124	15.5	634	79.3	3	0.4	39	4,9	800	100
Internet-access at home	379	47.4	376	47.0	5	0.6	40	5,0	800	100
Ownership of current living place	521	65.1	220	27.5	4	0.5	55	6,9	800	100

Table 52A. How many coloured television do you have?

	N	%
No television	22	2.8
1 television	541	67.6
2 television	165	20.6
3 television	34	4.3
4 television	3	0.4
NA	1	0.1
Refusal	34	4.3
Total	800	100

Table 52B. How many 4 years old or older cars do you have?

	N	%
No car	502	62.8
1 car	234	29.3
2 cars	19	2.4
3 cars	3	0.4
NA	1	0.1
Refusal	41	5.1
Total	800	100

Table 52C. How many younger than 4 years old cars do you have?

	N	%
No car	707	88.4
1 car	35	4.4
2 cars	5	0.6
NA	2	0.3
Refusal	51	6.4
Total	800	100

Table 52D. How many personal computers or notebooks do you have?

	N	%
No personal computer	350	43.8
1 personal computer	357	44.6
2 personal computers	45	5.6
3 personal computers	8	1.0
4 personal computers	1	0.1
NA	3	0.4
Refusal	36	4.5
Total	800	100

Table 53. What is your marital status?

	N	%
Married	362	45.3
Single	153	19.1
Widowed	119	14.9
Divorced	92	11.5
Cohabiting/living with partner	63	7.9
NA	6	0.8
Refusal	5	0.6
Total	800	100

Table 54. What is the highest level of education your spouse / partner has achieved?

	N	%
ISCED 0	1	0.2
ISCED 1	12	2.8
ISCED 2	22	5.1
ISCED 3	113	26.3
ISCED 4	163	37.9
ISCED 5	83	19.3
ISCED 6	27	6.3
NA	1	0.2
Refusal	8	1.9
Total	430	100

Table 55. Do you have relatives, friends or other acquaintances or business partners living in Russia?

	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Relatives	498	62.3	302	37.8	800	100
Friends	340	42.5	460	57.5	800	100
Other acquaintances or business partners	183	22.9	617	77.1	800	100

Table 56. How frequently do you contact your relatives, friends or other acquaintances or business partners per telephone/SMS, mail, Internet based contacts, personal meetings, face-to-face?

	At least once a month or more frequently		Not every month, but at least one or several times a year		Less frequently (once in several years)		No contacts at all in this way		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Relatives														
Tele-phone/SMS	132	26.5	117	23.5	61	12.2	106	21.3	5	1.0	77	15.5	498	100
Mail	61	12.2	52	10.4	52	10.4	222	44.6	4	0.8	107	21.5	498	100
Internet based contacts	94	18.9	57	11.4	20	4.0	187	37.6	7	1.4	133	26.7	498	100
Personal meetings, face-to-face	52	10.4	75	15.1	169	33.9	94	18.9	2	0.4	106	21.3	498	100
Friends														
Tele-phone/SMS	94	27.6	86	25.3	41	12.1	61	17.9	3	0.9	55	16.2	340	100
Mail	43	12.6	23	6.8	34	10.0	170	50.0	3	0.9	67	19.7	340	100
Internet based contacts	100	29.4	31	9.1	18	5.3	111	32.6	5	1.5	75	22.1	340	100
Personal meetings, face-to-face	47	13.8	57	16.8	116	34.1	52	15.3	1	0.3	67	19.7	340	100
Other acquaintances or business partners														
Tele-phone/SMS	36	19.7	40	21.9	24	13.1	43	23.5	3	1.6	37	20.2	183	100
Mail	25	13.7	11	6.0	19	10.4	90	49.2	4	2.2	34	18.6	183	100
Internet based contacts	47	25.7	23	12.6	10	5.5	57	31.1	4	2.2	42	23.0	183	100
Personal meetings, face-to-face	33	18.0	26	14.2	57	31.1	32	17.5	2	1.1	33	18.0	183	100

Table 57. Now I am going to read off a list of voluntary organizations. For each one, could you tell me whether you are an active member, an inactive member or not a member of that type of organization?

	Active member		Inactive member		Don't belong		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Church or religious organization	55	6.9	157	19.6	587	73.4	1	0.1	800	100
Sport or recreational organization	32	4.0	49	6.1	719	89.9			800	100
Art, music or educational organization	19	2.4	16	2.0	765	95.6			800	100
Labour Union	15	1.9	21	2.6	764	95.5			800	100
Representatives for Russians	8	1.0	11	1.4	781	97.6			800	100
Political party	4	0.5	12	1.5	784	98.0			800	100
Other voluntary organization	3	0.4	3	0.4	794	99.3			800	100

Table 58. Now I would like to ask you about the members of this organization?

	The majority of the members are Russians		There are a few Russian members		NA		Refusal		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Church or religious organization	116	54.5	19	8.9	11	5.2	67	31.5	213	100
Sport or recreational organization	16	19.8	22	27.2	10	12.3	33	40.7	81	100
Art, music or educational organization	10	28.6	12	34.3	1	2.9	12	34.3	35	100
Labour Union	7	19.4	12	33.3	1	2.8	16	44.4	36	100
Representatives for Russians	12	63.2	1	5.3	1	5.3	5	26.3	19	100
Political party	3	18.8	3	18.8			10	62.5	16	100
Other voluntary organization	2	33.3	3	50.0			1	16.7	6	100

Table 59. Approximately how many friends do you have?

	N	%
No friends	14	1.8
1 to 2	94	11.8
3 to 5	206	25.8
6 to 10	173	21.6
More than 10	144	18.0
NA	101	12.6
Refusal	68	8.5
Total	800	100

Table 60. Which statement describes your friends the most?

	N	%
Most of my friends are Russians living in Latvia	322	41.0
My friends come from various ethnic/nationality groups	267	34.0
Most of my friends are Russians	92	11.7
Most of my friends are Latvians	54	6.9
Most of my friends are of other origin/nationality	29	3.7
NA	5	0.6
Refusal	17	2.2
Total	786	100

4 MAIN FINDINGS OF BIOGRAPHICAL INTERVIEWS (ENRI-BIO)

Monika Frējūtė-Rakauskienė / Kristina Šliavaitė

The interviews were conducted in accordance to the methodological guidelines developed by the ENRI-EAST team and described in the project manual¹⁴. Survey agency – Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

4.1 Brief description of the people and their life stories interviewed and from which districts/settlements they came

“Artiom”¹⁵ (interview no.1) was born in country side in Latvia in 1933. Now he is on retirement. He is married, has one son and lives together with his wife in Rezekne city, which is situated in the eastern region of Latvia, next to the border with Russia. He introduces himself as Russian and speaks in Russian language. In 1941 he started attending secondary school. After completion of six classes he started studies at Riga professional vocational training courses for the period 1946-1948. His first job was in a factory in Liepaja. From 1950 till 1954 he was completing military service in Tallinn. After the military service he returned to native place of residence in 1956 and worked in the factories until retirement in 1988.

“Marina” (interview no.2) was born in Riga in 1963. From 1983 till 1989 she studied at Leningrad University. She graduated with master degree. When she returned back to Riga she got married. She has one son. Presently she is divorced and works in Riga. She introduces herself as Russian and she speaks in Russian language. Her father is from Latvia (Latgale) and her mother is from Belarus. Her husband was a Russian from Moscow. In her family they spoke Russian, despite her father sometimes speaks Latvian with her.

“Evgenija” (interview no.3) was born in Russia in 1929. From 1937 till 1941 she attended the primary and later on the elementary school. In 1949 she moved from Russia to Latvia. She got married in Latvia and stayed there. She worked in a primary school as a teacher. In 1964 she moved to Kazakhstan and lived there for thirteen years. In 1977 she returned to Latvia. She introduces herself as Russian (Ortodox) as her family members are Russians from Russia. She speaks only Russian. She is a non-citizen and she does not wishes to pass the process of naturalisation to gain the citizenship since she considers herself too old for additional studies to gain knowledge that is needed to pass some exams of naturalization.

“Tania” (interview no. 4) was born in Rezekne in 1987. In 1995 her parents divorced and her mother with children moved to live in country side. In 2003 she went to Rezekne city and started vocational training. At 2007 she started to work. In 2010 Tania was accepted to the High school. She introduces herself as Russian since her father is a Russian from Latvia and mother is a Russian from Russia (from a place near the border to Latvia). She was baptized in Russia in Ortho-

¹⁴ “Manual for Qualitative Biographical In-Depth Interviews” Manual. Proposed and developed by a task-force: Professor Claire Wallace (head), dr. Lyudmila Nurse, dr. Natalia Waechter, dr. Alexander Chvorostov. July 2010. Survey agency: Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

¹⁵ The names of all respondents are changed.

dox Church. She speaks in Russian in her family, but in Latvian at work place. She has a Latvian citizenship.

“Misha” (interview no.5) was born in 1977. He completed eight classes and after completion of the vocational training he worked as a long distance driver. From 1988 till 1990 he was in a military service. He is married and lives in Rezekne city in Latvia. He introduces himself as Russian, his father and mother are Russians from Latgale. His ancestors were Old Believers from Latvia. He is also Old Believer. At work place and at his family he speaks only Russian language. Their daughter attended kindergarten and secondary school with the Latvian language of instruction.

“Aleksandra” (interview no. 6) was born in Daugavpils in 1969. She completed Riga’s University and works as an engineer. In 1994 she got married and has a son. Presently she lives in Riga with her son. She is divorced. She introduces herself as Russian and speaks Russian. Her parents are Russians from Latvia. She belongs to Orthodox Church.

“Georgii” (interview no. 7) – is a respondent of youngest generation. He was born and lives in Daugavpils. He is 16 years old. Georgii attended Russian kindergarten, later on – Russian school. His parents are Russians, grandparents are also Russians with some German roots. He feels connection with Russians in Russia as well even if he has never been to Russia. His native language is Russian, but he knows Latvian and can communicate in Latvian.

“Fiodor” (interview no.8) is a respondent of middle generation. He was born in 1965 in Riga, completed 10 grades at the secondary Russian school in Vidzeme. Right after the school he got married, was employed at different places. He is a non-citizen. His parents are from Russia. His native language is Russian, but he can speak in Latvian pretty well. He described himself as Orthodox.

“Anton” (interview no. 9) is a respondent of the oldest generation. Born in Russia in 1939 he was 71 years old during the interview. He is a Russian, both his parents were Russians. His family moved to Latvia in 1947 and since then they have been living in Latvia. Anton is a highly educated person. In 2000 he gained the citizenship of Latvia.

“Katia” (interview no.10) is a respondent of the oldest generation. She was born in Novgorod in Russia in 1942. Her grandmother from mother’s side was from Latvia, therefore when she was still a child the family returned to Latvia. After completion of secondary education she studied at medical school and later on worked at the hospital. Currently she is a pensioner. She knows Latvian well, she is a citizen of Latvia since 2000. Her native language is Russian and it is the main language of communication in the family. Russian was the main language of communication at her work place during the Soviet period.

“Varvara” (interview no.11) is a 17 years old school pupil, studying at the last grades at the secondary school in Riga. Her parents are Russians, both were born in Latvia, but father is a non-citizen, mother – a citizen. Varvara is a citizen of Latvia. Her grandparents live in Russia. She considers herself Russian. However, Varvara has never been in Russia. Her main language is Russian, but she knows Latvian as well.

“Viacheslav” (interview no. 12) is a member of youngest generation. During the time of interview he was still studying at the last grade of the secondary school. He lives in Riga and attends school with Russian language of instruction. He knows Russian, Latvian languages. The main language of communication in the family – Russian. He was baptized as a Russian Orthodox.

4.2 European identity

Respondent no.1 does not identify with Europe (does not feel any connection with Europe), and has very critical attitude to the institutions of the EU. The respondent says:

I.: I see. We already talked a little bit about Latvia joining the EU. As far as I understand you have negative attitude towards that? Negative because we joined the EU? What is your opinion?

R.: Well, I think, how to say, we could have lived better being independent. Could have lived better being independent. Because everything is being produced there. Everything is from there, take whatever you want in a store or, how to say, to cut the grass... They could build up a factory here in Rezekne. But everything is from abroad, everything is from abroad. Everything is from abroad, everything is from abroad, everything is from abroad. That's why I...

I.: Besides it are there any other minuses caused by joining the EU? Besides the fact that all products are brought here from there and there are no more factories? Have you noticed any other minuses as well?

R.: I, for example, I believe that, how to say, it would be better if we lived separately.

I.: Are there any pluses from joining the EU?

R.: Oh, there are no pluses, no pluses...

I.: Now we have joined the EU, but do you feel as a European?

R.: No.

I.: Not at all?

R.: No.

I.: Don't you feel any connection?

R.: No, no, no. I am from Latvia. I was born in Latvia, have grown up in Latvia and in Latvia... Never to Europe, never to Europe, no to Europe, I have a son and that's it, how to say, all my relatives live here, some of them have left abroad, to work... Well, many have left. So many have left! People from neighbourhood have left abroad to work. What's the use of it? I can't understand, do you know how they earn money there?

I.: In Europe?

R.: Yes.

I.: How do they earn money?

R.: Yes, how they earn money? It's a big miracle, they are gathering, for example, how to say, berries, and receive how to say... <...>"

Respondent no 2 does not introduce herself as European, but Europe has a meaning to her. She expresses sceptical attitudes regarding the EU. She voted against Latvia's accession to the European Union at the referendum. She considers the EU as exploiting Latvia, and the former Soviet Union as the union which invested in Latvia. Free travelling is seen by her as the only advantage related with the Latvia's accession to the European Union. However, she says that joining the EU has some negative consequences for the Russian community in Latvia since many Russians emigrated. The respondent says:

<...> I.: Now another question – as you mentioned Europe, what does it mean for you, to be a European?

R.: I even don't know. The fact that the borders are open – it is a great advantage. A really great advantage, because in the Soviet times limitation was really serious, and the fact that children have an exit to the West – it is a great advantage. That's true. But altogether with this advantage there are many disadvantages. But I think that as we were not able to go abroad much, Europe and travelling around Europe. For me maybe such a trip and comparing, seeing countries, it is an advantage. This Europe is for me. But what exactly there is in that Europe... maybe education, I don't know. I don't know what European education is like. We know only theoretically, comparing countries, but as I haven't seen it by nature, I don't know, maybe, it is education. But if materially... nothing. I can't say that Europe is for me.

I.: That is, there is a term – Europeans, but don't you feel yourself linked to, for example, Germans as Europeans?

R.: No, no. No link. Also no special link to Russia. I am somewhat local. There is no link, no. And with Europe, you know, when I see those stars of Europe, all those flags, I don't even have such a feeling, interest, I immediately remember what Soviet symbols were there, symbols of the Soviet Union, and we all were proud. No matter how we were living, we all, pride somehow. See, for me, even if I am not really old, but nevertheless pride about Soviet symbols has remained, but I have no interest about those of Europe, I give my word! Even if we go to all those festivals, read all those leaflets, watch, but I personally see in this such a business in Latvia, all this commerce. It seems to me, they are using us but we are letting him do it, use us. That's all. This is my opinion.

I.: Speaking about Latvia, how do you assess the accession of Latvia in the European Union?

R.: Of course, I voted against it.

I.: Against?

R. I voted against. If we are independent, then we need to be independent. Of course, Latvia can never be independent, it is a clear thing. It is a very small country. A grain of sand in the world. But the conditions under which Latvia joined Europe, you can't compare them with the Soviet Union. Ok, there was a consolidation, and here is a consolidation, but you can't compare it with the Soviet Union. Latvia is being used. But in the Soviet times investments were put in Latvia.

(...)

I.: But what do you think, expansion of the European Union, has it specifically affected the Russian community in Latvia?

R.: But can they leave Latvia? Russians, non-citizens, don't you know?

I.: Non-citizens are allowed to go to almost all countries of Europe.

R.: Affected in the way that just as everybody they can leave, yes. And, secondly, I think, very many Russians have left.

I.: And what are the disadvantages of the accession... that they have left?

R.: Yes, everybody left. Yes, Russians left, too. It affected their community that they were given this chance to leave and get education, they are going away from here. Russians are leaving, Latvians are leaving, and soon somebody else will show up here, right, it is 100% that someone will come. A country can't remain empty. <...>"

Evgenija (interview no.3) does not identify with Europe and she has a very critical attitude towards the European Union. She sees more minuses than advantages of joining the EU. As the biggest disadvantages were named unemployment and high rates of emigration. The respondent says:

"<...> I.: Tell me, what does it mean to you that Latvia joined the European Union? Do you consider yourself to be European?"

R.: Certainly not. (laughs) I consider the old way. (laughs) Although it concerns me, because my children live.

I.: Has your life changed after Latvia joined the European Union?

R.: Of course it changed – there's no job.

I.: Changed to worse, yes?

R.: To worse. Son left. Afterwards, the first year was very difficult for him and for us here, without him, was difficult. Guys are still young. It was difficult, nothing else to say. And afterwards he left, you see, left and N left. N and I are left just two of us. They came twice a year. And now, since then, you see, my son was. They work for half a year and take a vacation. Sometimes they take even in excess. But they have such a system: they work for three months and can take one week off. Son works in a factory. He is there almost all the time, in that factory. Now he is doing engineering works.

I.: But what do you think, are there any pros that we joined the European Union? Or, all the same, more cons?

R.: More minuses for me.

I.: You don't feel any pluses?

R.: If it would be the old way, it would be better for me. Better for me. Well, maybe... Anyway, they don't want to come back home.

I.: Children, yes?

R.: Yes. <...>"

Tania (interview no. 4) does not identify with Europe, but she was very proud that Latvia joined the EU. Anyway she is very critical about the European Union as an institution, and she names a number of disadvantages of Latvia's accession to the EU. The biggest disadvantage to her is that she cannot freely go to Russia to visit her close relatives. However, EU gives many prospects of work and career and she prefers any European country to Russia for going to study and work.

„<...>I.: Tell me, now we joined the European Union, do you feel like a European?

R.:(pause) When we joined – yes. I was proud for the country that finally something will change in Europe, but, to be honest, I haven't felt any changes, let's say, for me. Maybe for somebody – yes, but for me – no. Otherwise, in Europe, already pride, I'm happy.

I.: Did you feel any changes after we joined? In the country, in politics, in economy or in relations amongst people? In culture?

R.: To be honest, not really. To the contrary, it seems to me that with years it is becoming worse and worse. Maybe it gave something to somebody, although, how to say, European Union, that's right, helps in many ways. Like my mum with her current husband have an agriculture project and European Union helps them very much with finances and they come and look. They have a big, big project of agriculture and they finance, come, inspect, look, they provide funding for it, from which they can live. That's why mum doesn't even work, it's enough from that.

I.: Seriously?

R.: Yes, they have a big project. In this case – yes, it's a big plus that they don't abandon us.

I.: In what sense are there minuses, that we joined?

R.: Minuses? You can't go to Russia (speaks unclear). Otherwise, actually, by the way, regarding joining the European Union, I think it became easier regarding travelling. It is very easy to travel around Europe, without any problems. Even there is that education. And we can go abroad to

study, to receive knowledge there and afterwards we can go around Europe with our Latvian diploma.

I.: That's a plus for you, yes?

R.: Yes, plus, of course. If I will have some opportunity I will never let it pass, I will go. Maybe not to go to work all life long but its worth to try. <...>"

Misha (interview no.5) does not identify with Europe, he is critical about this political union. However, he is a long distance driver and Latvia's accession to the EU provides some advantages in his everyday work as a driver.

<...>I.: But in general do you see more pros or cons from Latvia joining the European Union?

R.: When simply joined the European Union in contrary there are many cons. Because many companies shut down, the very same kolkhozes, there are many such companies, also in Rezekne many closed down because of the Union. What the Union told to close down, let's say, the same Jelgavas sugar (factory)...Well, many, many...The Dairy enterprise of Rezekne, for what reason...

I.: Also was closed down, yes?

R.: Yes, already long time ago, as we joined the Union it collapsed. Although also with milk from Rezekne...not only with us... everything was provided. In fact for inhabitants there aren't any pros from us joining the Union. Only thing that is good is for work, how we are driving around the Europe, we drove in Europe, which was easier. See now Russians are making Schengen, they enter one country and further they drive freely. Now you don't need anything. So maybe by joining there are pros and its cons.

I.: I understand that in your life it is a plus for work?

R.: For me it is a plus, because it's easier at work. <...>"

Aleksandra (interview no.6) identifies with Europe and considers Russia as part of Europe. She doesn't see any cultural differences between Russia and other European countries. However, she expresses critical remarks regarding the EU. She names some advantages related with Latvia's accession to the EU: possibilities of travelling, security, new life possibilities. She thinks that European Union brings more advantages for Latvians in Latvia, but not for the Russians. According to her, Russians in Latvia who are non-citizens face the same travelling and living problems as people had in the Soviet Union. The respondent says:

<...> I.: Country... well, and last... for you is what? How do you feel – as a citizen of the world, citizen of Europe, citizen of Eurasia?

R.: Well, surely, of Europe. Towards the European side. Here I include both Russia and Europe. Well, both Eastern and Western Europe (laughs).

I.: Meaning, you feel that way, yes?

R.: Yes. Actually I wish we didn't have any borders. So the same easily as we now go to Europe we could go to Russia, to Byelorussia, to Ukraine. So there wouldn't be these visas, so people could easily travel around, communicate, work, study.

I.: Tell me, how do you evaluate the enlargement of the European Union? That is, when Latvia was accepted, that's year 2004.

R.: Well, in general my attitude towards it is positive. I didn't think that it will end up so bad. I somehow thought that the European Union will bring more pros than cons. But again it depended on our leadership. Even those countries that joined the European Union on the same conditions ultimately have achieved much more for their countries, much more, let's say, like...(pause) favora-

ble conditions, they received more bonuses compared to Latvia. Latvia (pause) well somehow maybe those weren't professionals who dealt with the issue.

I.: Did you vote?

R.: Yes, I voted. I was for joining the European Union although I had doubts. But anyhow it was more "yes" for me.

I.: Tell me, but why did you have doubts?

R.: Well, again I had doubts if in Latvia there will be worthy doers who will fight precisely for the interests of the country and not for their personal interests. Well, it is not a secret for anyone that in Latvia belonging to a certain family [семейность], clan is very common, that's why frequently the needed positions are not always taken by worthy people.

I.: That's yes. But in general, did Latvia joining the European Union influence your life? Did it change anything?

R.: Well, in general, no. The only thing that it became easier to cross borders. There is no need for visas, it is possible to go to any European country, of course, it is easier for traveling, for studies. Now I have many acquaintances whose children are finishing school, they are leaving to enter European universities. Because there are more subsidized places than in Latvia and anyway studies are not in the native language, what's the difference in English or in Latvian? (laughs) <...>"

Georgii (interview no.7) is a representative of the youngest generation. For him being European is equated with living in Europe. The fact that Latvia joined the EU is evaluated positively by Georgii (interview no. 7) and this is grounded in such arguments as: Latvia is a small country and therefore it is beneficiary for it to be a part of a bigger political union; the EU enables closer communication between the member countries. The respondent says:

"I: What does it mean to you to be European?

R: Ha, opaa, haha! What does it mean to me to be European...I'm curious, who answered this question before me. Simply to live in Europe. To be part of the European Union. Simply, to live in the country which is part of the European Union. To live on the continent of Europe, that's the same as to feel African and to live in Ethiopia, for example."

Fiodor (interview no.8) says that to be European means for him to live together with many different nations, to be a part of the same union. On the other hand, he perceives Europe as not having direct influence on his everyday life. Fiodor says:

"I.: Talking about Europe, what does being European mean to you?

R.: What does it mean for me to be European... To be European, I think it means to live together with many nations, with, I don't know, together with Poles, Germans, Spaniards. To do one common thing.

I.: Is it important for you to be able to say that you are European or you have never thought about it?

R.: You know, I don't have such a feeling that I am European, because we kind of are in Europe, yes, but actually (pause) it doesn't concern me. We are in Europe but Europe passes us by. Personally me it passes by, yes. The only thing that I went, I got, while I was unemployed, I registered for the courses, I went there, asked, they registered me for courses. The European Union kind of paid for those courses. I finished two courses. In all the time that I have been here, in 44 years there are these two moments where I can say that this Europe did something for me. Otherwise, well, there aren't places of work, nothing is opening up. Why, if some big European company comes, I don't know, buys something, why can't it be done so that it's obligated...some bank comes to Latvia, before handing out credits and driving the people into bondage, why doesn't it

build two schools? That you are indeed interested in this country. Europe kind of wants Latvia to integrate in Europe. But why Europe, well, currently, in what context I see it... why, let's say, some kind of European bank came into Latvia but why can't it build a recreation..."

Fiodor (interview no. 8) has a status of non-citizen in Latvia and he expresses his dissatisfaction that he could not vote at the referendum on the Latvia's accession to the EU. Fiodor says:

I.: How do you evaluate expansion of the European Union, that is, Baltic's joining?

R.: How do I evaluate...well, how can I evaluate, kind of (laughs), nobody asked me! I told you that once my vote was needed to vote for separation from Soviet Union but nobody were interested in my vote for joining Europe. Although I have lived here for 44 years. Sort of, nobody asked me – do I want it or no, maybe I wanted! In reality, nobody needs my vote. And what I will say, largely there in Brussels it doesn't matter, yes, what Fiodor with his family feel here, with his son, what he wants, that there was peace, what he wants to create."

Katia (interview no. 10) is a respondent of the oldest generation, she is a pensioner. She relates the EU with broader possibilities of travelling, but says that in her everyday life nothing changed after Latvia joined the EU. Katia says:

I.: Yes. Tell me, do you feel yourself a European?

R.: No, I guess. I think, no.

I.: But what does the extension of Latvia, accession to the European Union, mean to you?

R.: You know what... It is possible to go where you want, to what country you want, no need for visa, it is the only thing. But what else, I even don't know.

I.: But that we acceded to the European Union in 2004, what is your attitude to it?

R.: Positive, of course. It is good. We all will be together. But a European? Well, how... Do you feel yourself a European?

I.: Hard to say, already step by step, I guess, yes. I am studying, I am communicating with student from Europe.

R.: Well, of course. A young person, natural for you, but I actually... What can I? I am a housewife. What kind of European am I?

I.: But didn't your life change in any way after accession to the European Union?

R.: Principally nothing changed for me."

Varvara is a 17 years old school girl. When asked about European identity Varvara's first answer was negative, i.e. she said that she does not feel European, but rather Russian. But just in the same paragraph she corrected herself and said that yes, she feels European because she lives in Europe.

I.: Do you feel yourself a European?

R.: No, a Russian more (laughs). Well, actually, if to think more, then yes. We live in Europe, why not? As if yes, probably yes."

Varvara evaluates positively Latvia's accession to the EU:

I.: Tell me what Europe is for you and how you relate to the European Union.

R.: To that Latvia acceded in the European Union?

I.: Yes...

R.: In principle, I don't see anything bad in it. I think that, well, it is possible that we even gained from it, because Latvia, it itself is small, and here it joined, well, a rather big, I don't know how to call, union or what it is, and it's like this that from there, if something, you can get some assistance, support comes from there. Well, of course, also it wasn't without some losses, namely, that they want to implement euro, I don't agree with it at all. Better if our lat [currency in Latvia] remained, because it will be an extra reorientation to something, I don't like it. And that, for example, they build here "the Castle of Light" [a new multifunctional information centre in Riga - the Latvian National Library Project, still under construction], I am also not really glad, because it is not being built, just money is being spent. Ad so I think that it is because of the European Union that Latvia wanted to be notable, that we have something of this kind. They started to build it, nothing was successful, all in debts, everything stopped, everything finished bad. Well, in principle, I don't see anything bad in it that still some new achievements, technologies, development, in the end. If Latvia hadn't acceded to it, we would have remained standing there, Latvia, not relating to anyone, such a lonely country. But now everybody is together, a union of peoples, I can say."

Viacheslav (interview no. 12) is a member of the youngest generation. He identifies with Europe and feels European first of all because of Latvia's accession to the EU. The EU integration is perceived as a positive decision by him and first of all related with higher possibilities of education, free travelling and country's economic development. Viacheslav says:

I.: But tell me, do you feel yourself a European? Can you say it this way: I am a European?

R.: Yes, yes, I can... Well, although I don't talk like this, but I feel myself this way, because thanks to, but although – yes, I understand it straight, that thanks to the European Union, some changes take place in our city.

I.: For example?

R.: Well, something (laughs), it sounds funny, but it is the new bridge, the underground tunnel was built near "Stockmann" [a supermarket in Riga near Central Railway station], you walk along an underground tunnel, just like in Paris, and because of it you feel yourself exactly as in Europe. There are such... they have improved technologies, there is something more in terms of development of architecture, it has started, building, also maybe in some programs of exchange. And it encourages you... Again, it is a way to Europe, that is, something global, big, and this is what gives you such a right to feel yourself a European. Well, and also, yes, those opportunities to go somewhere, you can call yourself a European, I think. I can say so now."

4.3 National identity – relationship to country of residence

Artiom (interview no. 1) describes himself as a Latvian. Latvia is a native land for him and also for his grand parents.

Evgenija (interview no.3) considers Latvia as her homeland as she has lived here almost all her life. She says she doesn't feel any special sentiments to Russia, but some relatives live in Russia. Evgenija says:

<...> I.: Tell me, as you were born in Russia, what does Russia mean to you? To what country do you belong more: to Russia or to Latvia? Which country do you consider to be your homeland?

R.: Well, more as homeland, certainly, I consider Latvia. Because, I have lived here, I could say, all my life.

(...)

I.: But do you have any connection to Russia now?

R.: Daughter. We often call each other. And my daughter will come in October. <...>"

Misha (interview no.5) identifies more with Latvia than with Russia. He feels Russian in Latvia as he speaks only Russian. His grandparents were Old believers from Latvia, he is also Old believer.

Aleksandra (interview no.6) considers herself Russian as she lives in Daugavpils where Russian population dominates and almost everywhere (except the work place) she speaks in Russian. She thinks that Latvia is her homeland and she doesn't want to move anywhere else. Her parents are ethnic Russians from Latvia.

Georgii (interview no.7) is a respondent of the youngest generation. He was born in Latvia and he has Latvian citizenship. Georgii introduces himself as a Latvian Russian. However, he depicts himself also as having close relation with Russians and Russian culture. Georgii says:

I: Do you consider yourself Russian, rather Latvian or German?

R: I consider myself to be Russian who lives in Latvia.

I: Who lives in Latvia, that is, Latvian Russian?

R: Yes.

I: But do you, for example, feel relation to Russian Russians?

R: I do. I feel to Russian Russians as well as to Latvians. Though I am between such two countries, you can say, nationalities, so to the ones and the others I feel some kind of relation.

I: About the same?

R: Probably to Russians a bit more. Still they surround me from very childhood. And I have more Russian friends, and acquaintances, so more to Russians. "

Later on Georgii describes his feelings about living in Latvia as living in a country where he was born, but not as in his native country: he says he feels as national minority there. Georgii says:

I: Meaning, how? Tell me, what is your life as for Russian in Latvia?

R: (pause) Life is normal. You feel yourself Russian but you feel like you don't live in your native country. Simply in the country, here kind of Latvians dominate and they....but you are simply national minority. Meaning, in fact, your motherland is supposed to be behind the border, but you live in a country where are different laws, different customs.

I: But you yourself, which do you consider as your motherland - Latvia or Russia?

R: Latvia – my home country/birth country but closer to me anyway will be Russia as a Slavic territory."

Georgii can use Russian and Latvian languages. He says that the main language of communication is Russian. Describing his connections with Latvian and Russian cultures Georgii describes himself as connected more closely with Russian culture than Latvian. Georgii (interview no. 7) says:

I: Tell me what does Russian culture of Russia mean to you? Does it mean to you anything, starting with, let's say, language up to kokoshniks (traditional Russian head-dress).

R: (laughs) Does it mean anything? Yes, it does.

I: What does it mean?

R: What does it mean...what, what, what does it mean, what...it is like native culture! Meaning, (pause) as native language, in general, it is, probably, everything.

I: For example, Latvian culture, do you feel any connection to it?

R: (laughs) Well, yes. Since Latvia, after all, is my country, my motherland. Meaning, well, I am connected with Latvian culture. To say that I feel a strong connection to it, that I like it very much, that I am simply, Latvian culture...no.

I: Did your parents somehow influence you that you would adopt Russian culture of Russia or Latvian culture or you perceived it somehow yourself?

R: Somehow it turned out so that they let me make my own choices. And I made the same choice as they. Meaning, I lean more towards Russian.”

Fiodor (interview no.8) is a respondent of the middle generation. He has a status of non-citizen in Latvia. He was born in Latvia and during the interview he expressed dissatisfaction that he does not have a citizenship of Latvia. Fiodor says:

“R.: Further...further it got worse (giggles). Latvia ended up as all the other soviet countries which were in USSR, state started to collapse, the united, I mean USSR. It happened that (pause)... at the moment, today I think that Latvian government has cheated Russian inhabitants in many ways, well Russian speaking - Poles, Jews, Russians, Byelorussians in that way that (pause) ... let's say so, by inviting to vote for separation from Soviet Union, for independent Latvia of course when in Russia was happening God knows what, Latvia was more peaceful country and we have been born here, me and all my friends, acquaintances with whom I keep in contact up to now, kind of communicate. Well, naturally we wanted normal life for our families, for ourselves. That is, we went to elections and voted for separation from Soviet Union. As a result after some time everyone who at that moment was not a citizen of Latvia was pushed away. Naturally our life started to change a lot. It... started to break many (people), somebody started to drink, somebody became a drug-addict, somebody went... and became a racketeer, bandit, because times were like that. Well, in general, government of Latvia in particular at all didn't take care of those people who wanted to live and do live in this country and who have done a lot for this country and consider it to be their homeland. They tried to push away these people. I understand that it is not all of the people who hold power at the moment, its part of the people. But believe me, those are bad people who started to draw society apart into two echelons. Community lived all together. If we look at what was happening, eeeeh, well, not happening but took place in a good sense in Soviet Latvia. Latvians had normal Latvian schools where they studied, where they had normal financing, exactly the same there was even priority to Latvian schools. And there wasn't any discussion about closing them down, there wasn't any discussion that... about any re-evaluation of Latvian people or something else. It was normal, people studied, normally received education but we kind of, my generation at least, I honestly experienced it – we were pushed away. They said, well, we voted, after we were told: “That's it, thank you, we don't need you! That's it, you are like cannon fodder, you have been wrung out. We took what we squeezed out but you yourself get out!” And many were told: “Go away!”

Fiodor describes Latvia as his homeland, as a country where he was born, where his childhood passed:

“I.: I meant... who do you think you are – more Russian, Latvian?

R.: I consider myself to be a Latvian citizen. Because, you know, by the way, my relatives from Russia wrote to me and actually asked me: who do I consider myself to be, yes. And why don't I want to return to Russia, such questions, yes. But how can I return there? I was born here, every little bush, every little mound in my area where I lived, where I grew up when I was little, where all my childhood passed... It passed here, in Latvia! I even, well, I went there, to Russia several times, but I wasn't... I somehow understand that my roots come from there but I have nothing that draws me there. Only someone's stories about something. My life passed here. Here was my son born, he grew up here. I got married here once, second time, I worked here. That is, all my life has passed here and I can't imagine a different country for me. I consider Latvia, Riga to be my homel-

and and not some kind of Russia. I can go and visit it, I will maybe go and see there something, but my homeland is here.

I.: You don't feel as Russia's Russian [россиянином] but as Russian in Latvia?

R.: Well, surely, yes. Yes, as a Russian in Latvia. Moreover as a humiliated Russian in Latvia, who is not given the possibility to vote and so on, and so forth."

Fiodor (interview no. 8) thinks that young non-Latvian people are in worse situation in the sphere of education in comparison with Latvians. He says that it is because they do not know Latvian language as well as Latvians. Fiodor says:

"I.: What do you think, are there any difficulties in accessibility of education for people who are Russians or...

R.: There are also difficulties. You understand, due to that, what happened, part of youth, for example, like me, I am also currently relatively young, I would go to study but education is in Latvian language. It's difficult for me, understand, how can I master physics, chemistry or even biology, I need to speak the language so perfectly. (...)"

Fiodor (interview no.8) also talks of personal experience of discrimination which he first of all relates with the fact that he has no right of voting. Fiodor is a non-citizen in Latvia:

"I.: Tell me; have you personally experienced discrimination or oppression towards you as a Russian?

R.: Well, it exists! Let's say, it is apparent in the fact that I can't go and take part in the elections. In my opinion that is number 1 discrimination!"

Anton (interview no.9) expresses skepticism and critic about current social, economic situation in Latvia. Nevertheless, he says that he feels comfortable in Latvia. Anton got Latvian citizenship in 2000.

Katia (interview no. 10) is a respondent of the oldest generation. She described herself as a native-born resident of Latvia. She loves Riga since it is her native town. Katia got citizenship of Latvia in 2000.

"I.: As far as I understand, you see yourself, too, such a native-born [коренной – old, basic, permanent; used in regard to residents of some certain area] resident of Latvia [латвийка - collective name for the residents of Latvia (here in feminine)]?"

R.: I am a resident of Latvia [латвийка - collective name for the residents of Latvia (here in feminine)], of course, who else am I? Who else am I? I am no Russian, how to say in other words, that I am a resident of Moscow [москвичка – a resident of Moscow (here in feminine)] or someone else? Of course, not.

I.: But your ethnical origin comes from Russia, but Russia, let's say so, it doesn't mean much to you?

R.: Of course, not. But if all the time I am here. I watch those news... All this I ... Sometimes I even watch the program LNT [a TV channel in Latvian], I turn it on."

Varvara (interview no.11) is a respondent of the youngest generation. She was born in Latvia in 1993 and she is a citizen of Latvia. Her parents are Russians. Varvara lives in Riga and during the interview she said a number of times that she loves this town very much. She is Orthodox and therefore she celebrates the Christian festivals in accordance to different calendar than the majority of Latvians. Varvara's native language is Russian, but she knows Latvian as well. Varvara says:

“Of course, it is insulting because we all live in the same country, because if something happens, some war, for example, I am not sure that Russians will fight for Latvians, they will be in favor of Russia, and Latvians will remain alone. And how many are they? They are this many (shows that very few), comparing to other countries. I think, they, just the opposite, should keep up relations with all nations, lure them from other countries, say that it is better here, that everyone is friendly here, that everything is good here! They are not doing this, just the opposite, they somehow spray around this hostility, of course, it is upsetting. But NN [the mayor of Riga], for example, I like him very much, maybe because he is a Russian (laughs)! So, and he, I think, holds the right position, I think, he is exactly busy with this, the unity. That he is not only, well, actually he is directing his attention to the Russian audience, but he is also doing something for Latvians and for everyone. It seems that he should better become the President (laughs)!”

Viacheslav (interview no.12) was born in an ethnically mixed family. The main language of communication in the family is Russian, however, Viacheslav also knows Latvian well and says that he can switch freely between the languages and choose Russian or Latvian language for communication depending on the situation. Viacheslav seems to be relatively well integrated into the Latvian society – for example, he says he participates at the Latvian Song and Dance Festival which is held only in Latvian and is closely related with Latvian culture and traditions. Viacheslav says:

“(…) And also I like in the city that there are many musicians, let’s assume, I also like, as you walk around the city, somebody always plays, either the guitar, or the violins, any kind of instruments. Understand that for tourists it is also, it must be, such an indicator, that here musical... Generally, as they say, Latvians – they are a singing nation. Yes, we are really musical, and especially it is confirmed by “Dziesmu svētki” [in Latvian: “Song Festival” - the Latvian Song and Dance Festival is an important event in Latvian culture and social life. The All-Latvian Song and Dance Festival has been held since 1873, normally every four years], that I love very much, too.”

4.4 National identity - relationship to mother country

Artiom (interview no.1) describes himself as Russian Old Believer. His ancestors, Old Believers, came to Latvia many years ago. He describes himself as Latvian. Latvia is his native land. Artiom says:

I.: I see. Tell me please, what is your nationality – are you a real Russian?

R.: Yes, yes, yes, an old-believer.

I.: The old-believer, yes? But tell me please, were your parents also a real Russians?

R.: Yes.

I.: Their native land is Latvia?

R.: Latvia. Yes, they were born in Latvia.

I.: And your grandmothers, grandfathers were also born in Latvia?

R.: Also Latvians. Russians have been living here for 300 years.

I.: 300 years, yes?

R.: Yes.

I.: And, let’s say, your ancestors also 300 years ago...

R.: (cutting short) Yes, yes, yes.

I.: ...(continuing) moved here to live?

R.: They moved... In Russia they started to catch those, those...(pause)

I.: The Orthodox believers?

R.: The Orthodox believers. They escaped and moved here – the old-believers – and continued to live as the old-believers.”

Marina (interview no.2) feels attached to Riga, she was born here. But she introduces herself as “half Russian, half Latvian”. She considers herself a “Baltic Russian” – neither Russian, nor Latvian, something in between. She says she does not feel “pure” Russian, as she does not like popular Russian culture, but she says that something Russian is in her heart – as Russian language is her native and Russian literature is very close to her.

“<...> I.: And tell me, please, how you are feeling now, which ethnical group do you belong to, after having lived in Leningrad [former name of St. Petersburg] and returned here.

R.: The question is very... it is hard to answer it clearly, because by nature I am, in my soul - an internationalist. This is how my father was bringing me up, he himself being a Latgalian [person who was born in the Eastern part of Latvia] always said: “All people are good, regardless of nationality.” And, frankly speaking, when I was living here in my childhood, before I went to Russia, I was always very proud that I was in Latvia, that I belong to this, how to say, Latvian state. After I returned, I loved Latvia, too! (laughs) So I am saying how it is, I related to it also very patriotically, but I always supposed that all people are equal, you can't distinguish between them. Later at work a colleague explained very precisely who we are, we are a few people of this kind, who speak a few languages fluently, and they are neither Russians nor Latvians. He said: “You understand, Latvians will not accept you, because you are not Latvians, and Russians are not taking you because you are not theirs. You are in between.” But you can say as Zadornov (remark – a Russian humorist) says: “The best Russians are the Baltic Russians.” So apparently a Baltic Russian. (laughs) How to say – a Russian in Latvia. You can say it this way. Namely, I don't feel myself a pure Russian, I don't understand these Russian national songs [Частушка – a short Russian national song, usually with humorous content], these songs, well, I don't feel them close, I didn't grow up in them. That is, to say that it is something purely Russian in my heart – it is not like that, too. I didn't grow up in them. I was growing up – Russian my native language, but I was growing up in this Latvian culture. Yet more, on my father's side I have all my relatives in Latgale [the Eastern part of Latvia]. Their native language is Latvian. Such a mixture! (laughs)<...>”

Respondent No 4 is born and lives in Latvia, but she identifies with Russia, as she has roots in Russia and she feels part of that country. She says that in Russia she feels very comfortably. The respondent says:

“<...>I.: But do you feel like part of Russia?

R.: Yes. After all I have Russian roots. But I live here with great pleasure and to even leave, somehow, I wouldn't want to.

I.: Which country feels more native to you? Latvia or Russia?

R.: Nevertheless, Russia. Although I was born here but 2 years ago I went to Russia and I simply felt good. I have peace of mind but here I'm little bit...well, I feel good but somehow, little bit, not that. But there: actually appeasement of soul.

I.: But what does it depend on? On nature, on people?

R.: On people, largely on people, yes. I was very surprised that when I arrived I was immediately received with smiles, almost with a loaf of bread, as it's done in Russia. Friendship, this love emerges from people. It depends on many things. Here in Latvia you won't manage to speak to anyone like that, if we think about it.

I.: How is it apparent in Latvia?

R.: Cold blooded. Everyone is busy with his own problems, rushing somewhere, trying somehow to make more money. Don't notice each other but in Russia it's not that simple.

I.: How do you think, what does it depend on? The cold bloodedness? On nationality? On weather?

R.: I think, not on weather (smiles), but on the condition of the country. Now there are problems, people don't even want to communicate.

I.: Precisely because there is crisis?

R.: Well, yes. Usually first comes something connected with money, money issues.

I.: But in Russia, in that place, can you feel crisis?

R.: There you can't feel it, there they make a bit of money, in that place where I was, let's say Pskova, but they don't value money above all. Here finances take the upper hand more but there it's simple. There it is much simpler. In communication in general so open people, they accepted me immediately and everyone started to make the acquaintance. Here, as much as I know people, nobody opens up on the first time but there, you come, sit down, tell everything and that's it, we are friends. You see, somehow you can feel that openness.

I.: How often do you go to Russia?

R.: Well, I was 2 years ago, now, I don't know.

I.: But before that, how many times had you gone there? <...>"

Respondent No 5 does not feel any connections with Russia, as he does not have friends and relatives in Russia. The only connection with Russia goes via his work – he is a driver and usually he goes to Kazakhstan through Belarus and Russia.

Respondent No 6 introduces herself as a Russian since she lives in Daugavpils where Russian population predominate (85 per cent) and almost everywhere (except the work place) she speaks in Russian. But she thinks that Latvia is her homeland and she doesn't want to move anywhere else. Her parents are ethnic Russians from Latvia.

Georgii (interview no. 7) has never been to Russia, but he describes himself as more affected to Russian culture and Russian community than Latvian. He wishes to visit Russia sometime just to travel in a country where everything is in Russian. Georgii says:

I.: Have you ever been to Russia?

R: No, I have never been to Russia yet. We were planning to go to Russia this summer but instead we will go to the country of my dreams – Finland. But to Russia, yes, I would like to go with pleasure.

I: What would you like to visit and why?

R: Where...ohohohoh, probably, the first destination would be Moscow, capital of Russia. Second city Saint – Petersburg, they say it is very beautiful city and that's why I would very much like to look at it. It is a real Russian city and that's why I would like to see it.

I: You would like to visit Russia just to see architecture or because you feel some connection?

R: One and the other. I feel connection as well as to see the architecture. Simply to travel around the country where everything is in Russian! Which is crucially different to where we live now. "

Fiodor (interview no. 8) is a respondent of the middle generation and he presents himself as a Russian of Latvia. He was born in Latvia. His parents are Russians. Fiodor is proud of Russian culture, but his social relationships in Russia are very weak. Fiodor says:

"I.: But in principle, what does Russia mean to you?

R.: Russia (pause), well, probably, that it is homeland of my ancestors. I... I watch all Russian news. You know, in many ways in the post-soviet space, that's again my point of view, yes, fashion, even fashion, I will call it that, in general not just fashion of clothes but fashion in many things always comes from there. And even now I know that many, let's say, lecturers who teach in universities, in private schools, anywhere else, they go and improve their skills not somewhere in some countries, they go and improve their skills in Moscow, yes. They go to St. Petersburg to some institutes, upgrade their qualifications and so on and so forth. That is, for Latvia to draw away from Russia like that, as it has drawn away in the past years, that's absolutely silly. Of course to stare into the mouth, what are they eating, to copy one to one, well, that would be silly, one should live one's own life, but you have to live reasonably. You have to understand that it's a big neighbor who has big resources, who has much bigger possibilities than Latvia. Somehow Europe is bigger of a friend, well, I take Europe generally, not to divide into separate countries as some of them bark like jackals or do something else against Russia, well, there is always a need for a silly-billy who will show off, others will behave in a normal way. I believe that we have to live in a friendly way with Russia. And not only because my ancestors are from there but because actually there are many positive things. There is Chekhov, there is Turgenev, there is Pushkin, there is the entire glow that the world knows. There is Dostoyevsky, there is Gogol, they are from there, you understand... and some units that come from here... "

Katia (interview no. 10) is a respondent of oldest generation. She describes Russians in Russia as different from Latvia's Russians. Russians in Latvia were described as influenced by Latvian culture. Katia does not keep close connections with relatives in Russia and does not travel to Russia. Katia says:

"I.: Clear. And tell me, what is your link to Russia now? Do you go there, travel?

R.: You know, no. Links to me... Actually my brother is near Volgograd [a city in Russia], my own, who... he was a military. Well, we never went there. I haven't ever been there. "

Varvara (interview no.11) is a respondent of the youngest generation. She says she has never been to Russia. But she feels part of Russian community especially during such festivals as May 9th, for example. Varvara says:

"I.: Tell me what Russia means to you, and do you feel any link to it as to a country?

R.: Yes, yes, yes, I feel! For me the 9th of May is a high day, very high! On that day I feel my affiliation with Russians, with Russia. On this day I always have high spirits, every year I go to the monument [The Victory Memorial to Soviet Army in Riga], and always from the morning till the evening, till 10 o'clock, till fireworks come up, I am there. I socialize with veterans, who have remained very few, and very soon there will be none of them, and there will be no people to communicate with, to ask how it happened in reality. And it seems it is necessary to absorb from them what they can tell, so that later I could tell my grandchildren, how it all happened in reality. Because history will be altered a thousand and one times, but according to my experience, well, to their experience, their stories, I can tell my children myself, that this all happened in this way and not in another. And I think that it is a great day, and this day is the day when all Russians become united, and I think, well, I don't know why Latvia relates to this day so bad. Well, this year already less, it must be also because of Nil Ushakov [the mayor of Riga]. It must be because of occupation, that they think that they all were occupied, but in general... well, I don't know, how this could be thought up! It didn't happen in reality! Thanks to Russians, thanks to the victory, we live, we have what we have. Both Riga and Latvia, and we all now are alive, thanks to them, and highest appreciation to what they have done. I can't understand how one can to such great people, just spit in their faces and, for example, allow those... processions... well, what was the word..."

Viacheslav (interview no. 12) is a respondent of the youngest generation. He makes sharp difference between Russians in Russia and Russians in Latvia and he does not identify with Russians in Russia. Viacheslav says:

“R.: Yes. It is very dirty there [in Moscow], they have lots of their own businesses [варка – brew; here figuratively: a business], I will always be an outsider and... well, like I was there. It... of course, I love when everything is moving, it is constant moving there, well, Moscow, it is like an everlasting moving, there are many people, many cars, and it is easy to be lonely in that city, as they say right. Even in a huge city one can be lonely. I am afraid of it, maybe, also afraid of it, but it is not what I am afraid of first of all. I am afraid of everything what is new, naturally, a change, maybe it is for good, but it can be stressful a little, well, I am just afraid... I don't know the contingent, that of Russia. Well, they are such specific people, I have a cousin in Moscow, I have...”

4.5 Regional identity

Respondent No 1 identifies with Latvia and Rezekne, the place where he lives.

“<...> R.: I, how to say, think I'm a Latvian.

I.: First of all, yes? So, I draw a cycle around Latvia, right?

R.: Yes, I'm a Latvian.

I.: Secondly, who do you think you are after being a Latvian. How would you say – a European or an inhabitant of Rezekne...

R.: Oh, no, no, no. I don't want to Europe.

I.: What is the second place?

R.: Rezekne.

I.: Rezekne – the second one...

R.: Yes. (pause)

I.: And thirdly? Maybe some other country? Maybe Russia? Do you feel any belonging to Russia?

R.: No, no, no. No other place. Only with Latvia.

I.: Latvia and Rezekne, right?

R.: Yes, and Rezekne.

I.: Maybe there is some third place.

R.: (pause) I haven't been no where, to third place.

I.: It shouldn't be obligatory a city or country, maybe it's some region. For example, the Eastern side of Latvia or...

R.: (cutting short) I just don't know, I just don't know the name. I did the military service...

I.: Then we have only those two cycles?

R.: Yes. <...>”

Respondent No 2 identifies with the place she was born (Riga) firstly. Her second choice regarding the place she feels attached is the Eastern part of Latvia – Latgale as her father came from that region. And in the third place she names Europe and France as the country she dreams to visit.

I.: Tell me, now I have this question, I will show you a map, and which place attracts you most of all? It can be absolutely at all scales – a house, a street, some district, what is the first one.

R.: It is Riga. This city. This is a city of the full scale.

I.: But if you were said - what is the next place, to which you feel ... a place, a district, maybe after Riga?

R.: I even don't know, I have never even thought about it, because Riga for me – it is everything. Maybe... no, not Daugavpils [a city in the Eastern part of Latvia], maybe Krāslava [a city in the Eastern part of Latvia].

I.: It can be not only a city, it can be whole Latgale [the Eastern part of Latvia]....

R.: Ok, let's take whole Latgale [the Eastern part of Latvia]! Whole Latgale! Not whole Latvia, whole Latgale!

I.: Do you feel attracted because relatives, father there...

R.: Yes, yes.

I.: And the third place?

R.: Europe.

I.: Europe?

R.: Yes, France (laughs). France! No, not attracted, but a desire, a dream, this is how it is called.<...>

Respondent No 4 first of all identifies with Rezekne (the place she lives now) and Pskov (the city from where is her mother). In the second place she identifies with the region she lives – Latgale. In the third place she identifies with the farm where she moved to live with her mother and brother after their parents had divorced.

For Misha (interview no.5) two countries – Latvia and Russia – are the most important. But in the first places he identifies with Latgale (region in Latvia). In the second place with Russia (the part of Russia that is connected to Europe).

Respondent No 6 identifies with Latvia (mainly with the city where she lives – Daugavpils) and Europe (she sees Russia as part of Europe).

Georgii (interview no.7) marks Daugavpils – a town where he lives as the first place he identifies with. Scandinavian countries were marked as the second place/region the most important for the respondent. The respondent says that he likes the culture of Scandinavian countries and depicted Finland as the „country of his dreams“. The third circle included whole Russia and this was connected with respondent's ethnic background.

Fiodor (interview no. 8) marks Riga as the first place that is important for his personal identity. Europe was marked on the map as the second place that is important for him.

Anton (interview no. 9), a respondent of the oldest generation, defines Riga and Tver as two the most important places he identifies with and both places were said to be equally important for him. Anton says:

I.: Tell me, please, now such a question – which place do you feel yourself mostly linked to? It can be a city, a country, a region...

R.: Well, in the world there are 2 places I am most linked to, I feel it myself. It is Tver [a city in Russia] and Riga. Tver – where I was born, and Riga – where I have lived the main part of my life.

I.: But if you, let's say, were asked – which of the two is closer for you, Tver [a city in Russia] or Riga?

R.: You understand it is about as to say – who is closer to you, father or mother.”

Katia (interview no. 10) is a respondent of the oldest generation. During the interview she talks about Riga as about nice city where she has lived all her life and which she loves very much. When asked to mark the place or region she identifies with, Katia first of all marks Riga as the place the most important for her identity. The second circle she made included whole Latvia and the third circle – whole Europe. However, she emphasizes that her identity with Europe is only partial.

Varvara is a respondent of youngest generation. When asked about regional identity Varvara mainly talks of Riga as of a place of key importance for her in Latvia. Varvara says:

“R.: Well, of course, if I go to some other country, I will never forget Riga. I will miss it, I will always return to it, and I will cry, when I am leaving. When I come back, I will cry again, because it is my native city, I lived all my childhood here, I think, it was successful, but I didn't become an adult too early. I still consider myself a child. And it is my motherland, I can say, and I don't care how I am treated here, the main thing is, that I love this place and I treasure it with all my heart, and how to say, if the life forces, of course, I will go somewhere, but if there is such a chance to stay here, then I will dig my claws in it and stay here. Because sooner or later the situation will change, it will become better here. I am trying to think positively (laughs), because anyway there is too much negative in our lives, at least thoughts must remain positive.”

Viacheslav (interview no.12) first of all identifies with Riga – a place in Latvia where he lives. Riga is compared with Moscow and depicted very positively by him. As the second place he circles Paris – he has been there, he likes French literature, culture. And the third circle – Europe. Viacheslav says:

“R.: It must be, well, because a city, first of all, a city has a meaning, because ... I think we have a beautiful city, insanely beautiful city Riga is, in contradistinction to Moscow. Well, there are some places in Moscow, but it is so grey, well, at night it can be beautiful, lights are on, but usually it is insanely grey, big and empty, or what. Although no, ok, I am joking, it is not empty, but impossibly big. And there is a difference, because... well, even not in interests, it can sound strange, but it really seems to me... because the city, that that they have Russians, only Russians, maybe it helps us that we have this dilution: we have Latvians and Russians, I don't know, honestly. But I can feel that communication can be even less interesting, because they even have some humor of a kind... well, for us it seems a little silly, not funny. And so, unfortunately, with them it is like... it is possible to communicate, but to make it close, to go deep inside, deep and everlasting relationship, I can't tell yet. Again it can be that as I am young, I have been there just a few times. But I am still afraid of it and I know according to my experience, as many people tell who go there. How much they don't want to stay there, because both the contingent, and attitudes towards them, and many of these nuances...”

4.6 Civic participation and ethnic organisation

Respondent No 1 is not a member of any organization, he is not active politically. The respondent says:

“<...> I.: All right, thank you. Now I want to ask you one question. Tell me please, are you a member of some organization or society?

R.: No. No. <...>

I.: And tell me please, do you go to elections when we elect the Saeima?

R.: To elections, how to say...

I.: When we have to elect parties, the new government in the Saeima?

R.: How to say, how to tell you, sometimes I go, sometimes – don't.

I.: Why do you sometimes go but sometimes don't. What does it depend from?

R.: Sometimes, how to say, I feel sick and...

I.: But would you gladly like to go?

R.: No!

I.: No, why?

R.: I would gladly those deputies, how to say... Why do we need them? Why do we need them? Why deputies are needed in Latvia? Why they are needed? <...>

Respondent No 2 is very active politically, she is a member of political party and she is actively involved in the activities of the party. Before she joined the party she was very active leader at a trade union. She participated in some protest actions organized of trade union and the party.

<...> I.: And tell me, please, have you ever taken part in any campaigns of protest, rallies?

R.: Yes, yes.

I.: Tell me!

R.: First of all, I was really actively, why 2 years ago when I joined, I was a very active leader of a trade union. And when, honestly speaking, I understood in the educational system, that our trade union is not moving in the right direction, I switched over to a political party. I took part in all trade union strikes of teachers, a well-known strike 10 years ago. In all rallies, and, of course, I participated in the 13th of January, the rally in the Dome Square [interviewer's remark - a campaign of protest against the political activities of the state, mostly about economic matters; it was organized on January 13th, 2009, by the political party "The Society for other Politics"; it is estimated that more than 10 000 people participated], but there I was taking part as a member of the party, as a support. What other meetings... well, in all of the trade union, but in political... also there were some signatures regarding pensions. Well, in such ones I take part, too. But the last one was on the January 13th, such a loud, noisy strike, rally, which concluded in... and there were victims there, and all. I was there, too.

I.: But what do you think, how important it is to participate in political activities to defend your opinion, your interests? Is it important? Is it working in Latvia at all?

R.: Oh, hard to say. Everything depends on the person. Because defending one's opinion, it is necessary to take into account the opinion of the other person. Because even in the political life people defend their opinions and they think that their opinion is the only one that is right. But if this group, let's say, a party or some association, you can do it among yourselves, but in public you need to show it undivided, an undivided opinion. Unfortunately, not always people understand it. Of course, someone comes, someone leaves, but to work in a team – it is the foundation. Your own opinion, taking into account the opinion of the person next to you and then create a common ground. It is so in any organization, but even more in a party, in a political one.

I.: But in that political, you, because you are there, do you feel yourself a local Russian more? That is, being in a party, do you feel it more that ethnically you are a Russian or...

R.: I feel myself an inhabitant of the city of Riga, an inhabitant of Latvia. Somehow I myself that I am a Russian I don't feel it. I haven't thought about it. I really liked that in this political association people communicate in their native languages and understand each other. What we want, actually, in the society. <...>

Responded No 4 does not participate in the activities of any organization, but she is active politically (votes in elections, she is interested in political campaign of the parties, follows the news in newspapers and TV, etc.).

"<...> I.: Do you usually vote for on party? Or do you look at their slogans?

R.: Yes, I look. I don't really believe when prior to elections they say all that. I try in length of time, on news, in different sources, newspapers, what are their activities. How do they present themselves? Not before elections but in a long run. And then already the image takes shape and you already understand is it worth or not worth.

I.: Do you constantly read, watch some news and follow it all? Or is it that before the elections you specially look for the information and look who did what?

R.: I constantly follow. I watch LNT (TV channel in Latvia) all the time. I read a lot. I read that all.

I.: You keep track of it?

R.: Yes, I try, I try. Of course, not always I manage but you have to have a perception of what is happening in the country and who rules over us. I try.

I.: What precise interests, actions of a party can concern you?

R.: For me, honestly, it is important that children are not hurt. Children and pensioners. Because I think it is very cruel what they are doing now. These pension cuts when a person has worked all life long. Or when a child is born – he needs so much. Well don't place restrictions, give to those children and pensioners. Yes, we are working, we still have strength but when children are discriminated and even more pensioners who have worked all their lives, that's for me...<...>"

Respondent No 5 does not participate in any activities of civic organization. He votes at elections.

"<...> I.: Tell me, do you attend voting, elections? Do you vote?

R.: When I have the possibility then yes, always.

I.: You attend because that's how it should be, it's a custom [так принято] or by your own will?

R.: No, by my own will. What, it's a custom, there isn't such a thing, because you are not forced. Simply by my own will, I want to, to live easier, so it's better. Regarding elections, yes, we attend.

I.: Do you have any precise interests, any precise parties which you support, their goals and motivation?

R.: No. Simply somewhere something is heard, somewhere we ourselves hear what there is...what the parties can do, what are they planning to do, what they can't...Only somehow what they plan doesn't work out.

I.: To what plans or interests or what they say, let's say, do you pay attention, what exactly attracts you in these parties, which slogans?

R.: So that it is easier for working people, but regarding this, more the very same....

I.: And it doesn't matter if, let's say, the party is more inclined towards Latvians or Russians?

R.: Doesn't matter. There isn't such a thing that nationality is some kind of... They should simply stand up for the rights of the working people, that's it.

I.: All people regardless of nationality?

R.: Yes, not only their own. Now it comes to... (pause)<...>"

Respondent No 6 does not participate in the activities of any organizations but she is active politically. For one year she was a member of political party but later on she suspended her membership. She always votes at elections, reads the political programs of the parties, she is interested in the political news. In 2003 she participated at the protest actions against the new Education Law in Latvia:

I.: For example, if we take not only parties but some other associations, unions, something like that...

R.: No, I'm nowhere. Although I consider myself as socially active person.

I.: Why? You haven't had a wish to, for example, join a political party or...

R.: Well, for a year I was in a political party, I had some kind of belief that it's new, but I took a look and saw that there is nothing new.

I.: Were you disappointed?

R.: Yes.

I.: In what? Why? What disappointed you?

R.: Well, I don't know. There simply was a hope that in Latvia such political force can emerge which unites people regardless of passport, regardless of nationality. There was a belief that such a force will appear. But after communicating with these people for a year and seeing it from inside I understood that there won't be anything new.

I.: Tell me, did you vote in the last parliament elections?

R.: Yes, I voted.

I.: Are you going to vote in the upcoming elections?

R.: Yes, I participate in all the elections. I haven't missed any; I'm an active person (laughs).

I.: Do you think it is important to vote?

R.: In my opinion it is important. It is a possibility for any person to express one's opinion about what is happening in the country.

I.: How do you choose the party or the candidate to vote for? What do you prefer?

R.: Well, they should be close to me in their beliefs and they shouldn't contradict my opinions in economic sphere, in education sphere, in national sphere. These three spheres, I assume, are the most important for me.

I.: But tell me, is your choice influenced rather by programs or particular names?

R.: Program and particular names. How members of the party, let's say, have proven themselves. Well, I constantly keep up to date. I keep abreast of the news sites. I follow the news of Latvia, of politics, of what is happening. I find it interesting.

I.: Do you read the programs?

R.: Yes, I read the programs. <...>

Georgii (interview no.7) says that he is not a member of any organization or political unit. He describes himself as not interested in politics. Georgii emphasizes the importance of communication between Russians and Latvians and criticizes the ideas of establishing organizations on ethnic basis. Georgii says:

"I: Well, but let's say not politics but simply Russian national association...

R: If such associations - somewhere Russian, somewhere Latvian will really be created it will also be like segregation/separation. I understand, creating some associations where Russians as well as Latvians can be. To practice mutual understanding, mutual friendship rather than to put on the same show again only in rather subtle form as ordinary communities: somewhere are Russians, somewhere are Latvians. Better to get everybody together and really create common community rather than to try to create community for Russians and for Latvians."

Georgii is still too young and cannot vote, but he says that if he had to vote, he would choose a candidate who would work for equal rights of Russians and Latvians in Latvia. Georgii says:

I: According to what principles will you chose your candidate?

R: One, who will try to build equal rights between the two nationalities and will pay attention to children as well as students and pensioners also. But mainly, that for him the equal rights amongst the nationalities is important.

I: Do you see anyone like that now?

R: No. I say at once, no. Well, maybe that we have a Russian mayor in Riga, actually, that is already a big step. That is even a big plus. Before that...well, in general, that's why I would vote. By what criteria."

Fiodor (interview no.8) – says that recently he joined some political organization, but he did not wish to develop more on this theme. In his opinion civic participation is important for Latvian population:

I.: In general do you think it is important to get involved in a political or some kind of social activity to defend your interests or that's pointless?

R.: Well, in general I think that certainly it's needed, yes. I think to a certain moment it is pointless, but, certainly it's needed. If we won't do it then nobody will do it. There are very many people who simply sit and say: "Yes, we won't change anything!" Well, how we won't change anything? Well, of course we won't change anything if we think that way, then we won't change anything. We know those are the pessimists, who say: "Well, why drink water if after five minutes anyway I will want to drink, I won't drink it at all", well you can reason that way. But you can reason also like this that I drunk the water and 5-10 minutes I will not want to drink, I will feel already better."

Katia (interview no. 10) is a respondent of the oldest generation. She says she has never been a member of any political party or ethnic association. Katia says that she always goes to the elections. Katia is a citizen of Latvia.

Varvara is a respondent of the youngest generation (interview no.11). She is an active person, participates at a number of clubs related with her hobbies (singing, dancing, etc.). She is not a member of any ethnic associations. She comes to the celebration of the May 9th in Riga every year and in this way she feels affected with Russians and Russian community in Latvia. She participated at some public protests in Latvia against bilingual education in Latvia.

Viacheslav (interview no. 12) is a respondent of the youngest generation. He is a member of political alliance "Harmony Center" and he says that this alliance gave him many personal opportunities. He says he is not conflicting person and therefore has never participated at any rallies, protests.

4.7 Ethnic conflicts and discrimination experiences

Respondent No 1 says that he has never faced any discrimination on ethnic basis in Latvia, at least from the side of Latvians.

"<...> I.: How do you think, how do Latvians treat Russians in Latvia?

R.: (long pause)

I.: Have you noticed any conflicts between Russians and Latvians?

R.: No, no, I haven't noticed.

I.: No conflicts in your experience?

R.: No.

I.: But maybe some of your relatives or friends have told you or you have seen reporting on TV about some situations, incidents?

R.: I, how to say, didn't go anywhere and don't go, and I didn't go anywhere, I don't know, I haven't seen, haven't seen and I won't lie. I won't lie, I haven't seen, haven't seen.

I.: How do you think, in general is there discrimination in our country from the Latvians' side against Russians? Is there any discrimination, repression? Do Latvians repress Russians?

R.: (pause)

I.: How do you think, are there anything like that?

R.: I haven't faced anything like that. I don't know.

I.: You haven't faced such things?

R.: I haven't noticed. I didn't go and don't go anywhere. I am a blind man, where I can go?"

Respondent No 2 feels that there is (was) ethnic hatred between the Russians and Latvians. She thinks that currently it is less expressed and less felt than in 1991 when Latvia declared the Independence. She remembers past years in following way:

"<...> R.: Well, first of all, I returned from Leningrad [former name of St. Petersburg], how to say, under war conditions. I couldn't return to Latvia by any means. But I returned thanks to the Ministry of Education, it helped. And then there were people, giving a hand. I came back and right away I felt this hatred between the ethnoses. It didn't exist when I left. Maybe it was at its infancy then, but as I was young, I didn't feel. But after I had lived 5 years, I got more mature. I felt it. And here at home we had very ugly cases, interethnic. In the courtyard here we had very unpleasant ones – old women were shouting at each other, in transport, I will tell you honestly, there were years as 1991, 1992, 1993, when Russian people were keeping their mouths shut in transport, they didn't speak Russian, they didn't understand Latvian, but they didn't speak Russian, because if you start to speak Russian, right away you hear: "Get your suitcase and go to Russia!" It happened. It was terrible. Now it is much less, now it is really much less. But then there were awful, first of all, it was the time... 1991, a revolution took place then, so to say, a mini-revolution, and also the state power changed, and also these really-really-really strong.. and understand, another thing – I understand and I know what people say in Latvian, but those Russian people who didn't understand it, this is why they were silent, they could neither answer nor to defend themselves, nothing. And it always hurt me, it always... I felt it right away. And also such a hostile, in organizations, in institutions, where you go to get your papers drawn up, to clerks, let's say, to these officials. It is always felt that you speak with an accent or what, there was a biased attitude. It was hard, it was very hard. And that is why I am saying, especially elderly people, I felt it right away, and therefore I decided for myself... then I was on maternity leave, I... according to those times, very many years were given, we were sitting for 3 years, the state paid to us, yes, and during these 3 years I caught it up, and the language, what I had forgotten, and my son, of course, it was like this. I felt it right away. The changes, they were simply in the air, these interethnic ones, just as if a match lit, immediately arguments in transport, in shops, it all happened like this. Now there are separate

cases, somewhere someone cries out something, but shut your mouth and all, but then it was very painful. Very. <...>”

Respondent No 4 thinks that the Russians in Latvia do not feel comfortable and feels that there are tensions based on ethnicity between Latvians and Russians in Latvia. She also acknowledges that there were situations when she was treated differently due to her ethnicity.

I.: Have you felt anywhere else any harassment from Latvians?

R.: No. Also there when I was submitting the documents, immediately, when I was filling in the inquiry form, I had to show “tautība”, what is my nationality and language. I wrote – Russian and that my language is Russian - I want to study in Russian. They looked at me so. I reply: “Well, I speak Latvian!” (laughs). Simply the look was so judging. It was asked, I answered. There was a boy next to me also applying, we got acquainted, also Russian, he had come from Riga to apply. I entered and started talking in Latvian, but he entered and started talking in Russian. I don't think that any harassment will start. It will be hard, they say that in this school there are such deans who can't stand Russians at all and I think in that sense there will be difficulties. Girls who I know told me that if they feel that you are Russian and in addition don't understand something, that's it that is total disaster. But I don't think that everything is that bad. I will try. <...>”

Respondent No 5 says that there are no ethnic conflicts or any ethnic tensions in Latvia. He doesn't speak Latvian, but he does not have any problems at his work: the owner of the firm where he works is a Russian himself.

<...> I.: Have you ever seen any ethnic conflicts? When Russians and Latvians have a conflict between themselves? Or have seen on television or eye witnessed?

R.: No, it hasn't been that there is a conflict, maybe only amongst some neighbors who haven't divided something among themselves. Otherwise...

I.: Not based on their nationality?

R.: No, no, no. When I was working in a company in Rezekne, half were Latvians working there and anyway everything in Russian. Now in our company there are Latvians workings and anyway we speak in Russian. There isn't that ... (pause)

I.: Who is the employer: Latvian or Russian?

R.: Russian. <...>”

Aleksandra (interview no. 6) feels tensions between Latvians and Russians in Latvia. She is very disappointed about the political situation in Latvia when people are divided into citizens and non-citizens. For example in her own family, her father does not have a citizenship of Latvia even if he lives in Daugavpils since his early childhood. She participated in the protest actions against the Educational law. She thinks that such laws as the law on State language are discriminative towards Russians living in Latvia.

I.: Tell me, have your life been somehow affected by historical, political events of Latvia?

R.: Of course.

I.: Tell me, please!

R.: Well, the first encounter with the new order, how to say, there was a feeling of fierce injustice, when passports were changed for the first time. When all people were divided into citizens and non-citizens. I have a friend, she is still my best friend, so it happened that now she lives in Russia, became citizen of Russia, well, partly due to how she was treated in Latvia. We both were born in the same maternity hospital, we had 13 days difference only, we grew up in the same house, in the same yard, studied in the same school, that is, we are absolutely the same. I am citizen but she is

non-citizen. Afterwards when she got married to a cadet, there was a military academy in Daugavpils, the stamp in her non-citizen passport was crossed out and at once a round stamp was stamped - she was made totally foreigner, although the person was born here. Then that was, let's say, the first disappointment in the new politics. Somehow there was always a dream, well, I was for the independence, of course, of our country, for separating it from the big union. I believed that you can make a perfect order in a small country, because there are not many of us! But what came out of it...well, people were divided, people were made inferior, well, that's wrong, that's my opinion.

I.: But how else affected?

R.: Well, even also in my family, inside, my mum is a citizen, I'm a citizen, my brother is a citizen but my dad is a non-citizen. He was born in the territory of Abrene in year 44, he lives in Daugavpils since he was two years old. He is a non-citizen. <...>

<...> I.: Tell me, in your opinion, from your experience, how does the society of Latvia perceive Russians?

R.: Well, I don't know. I think it also depends on a person, on the environment where he lives, on upbringing. Of course if he lives in the environment where it's constantly inclined that Russians are bad, then...(pause). With Latvians with whom I communicate, it doesn't exist. Maybe in Daugavpils it's less common. I think it depends on the family. Or also (depends) on what kind of sources of information person uses, because many people, if every day on TV they are told that Russians are bad then they will believe it (laughs)."

Georgii (interview no.7) argues that he personally has never experienced discrimination on ethnic basis but says there are tensions between Latvians and Russians in the society. A number of times Georgii referred to the issues of Latvian language use. The Russian was said has to be the second official language of the country due to numerous Russian population there. Georgii expresses his opinion in such words:

"I: What do you think, should Russian be established as second official language?

R: Yes. It should be very much.

I: Why?

R: (pause, doesn't answer)

I: What would it change?

R: There are many Russians. It would be understandable why somewhere there are signboards in Russian, somewhere very many people speak Russian. Here very many people speak Russian. It would be understandable, otherwise you come to the country – Latvia, where, in fact, everyone should speak Latvian and you meet very many Russians. It's like in some festival where people come together from different countries, where one can meet...for example, you go to Germany to a festival and you think that you will meet there many Germans but, in contrary, you meet many other people. Meaning, that I would definitely want Russian to be the second official language. It would change, actually, a lot."

On the other hand, the introduction of bilingual education system was not evaluated very critically by the respondent. Georgii says that he was strained because of these plans, but at the end everything turned out not so complicated.

"I: When you started school was there already this bilingual system?

R: No. They started; I can tell you straight a way, around 6th grade.

I: What were your feelings when you found out that you must transfer? How was it for you, tell me?

R: It was rather difficult. Well, yes, to transfer it was difficult. I simply, for myself personally, could not imagine how it is going to happen, but when we transferred it all turned out to be rather simpler. Well, sometimes it indeed becomes tiresome, this bilingual teaching. Sometimes I just want in native language.”

The availability of education was seen by Georgii as not determined by ethnic criteria, i.e. that secondary education is accessible for everyone and acquiring or not high education depends just on personal interest not on ethnic background.

Fiodor (interview no. 8) talks extensively on the discrimination of Russian population in Latvia. In his opinion, Russian population was discriminated during the property privatization process in independent Latvia. Fiodor says:

“R.: I left trading because everything started to close down, started...started this, when separation of the state happened, what did the ones at power start to do? They simply started to destroy the country, to divide it into pieces, to seize into their hands. When country... look, if you look at it, let's take a look [окунуться] at politics just a little. At that moment when the country separated, first three-four years, how many privatized buildings were there in Latvia, in Riga? Few! Afterwards they took the power in their hands and illegally, I am of the opinion that illegally, that is my personal point of view, illegally privatized whole Riga. Some kind of documents turned up that this belongs to Janis, this to Peteris, this to Ilze, that to someone else and so on. Only not to Aleksei and Nikolai and whoever (laughs). Meaning, trampled everything, ruined all manufacturing.”

Anton (interview no.9) is a highly educated person, a respondent of the oldest generation. He does not talk openly on the issues of discrimination, gives many examples from the history, makes parallels, uses metaphors. Anton (interview no.9) says that the fact that he could not get citizenship until 2000 should be interpreted as discrimination. However, from his point of view, Latvian and Russian population are not conflicting in general, that there are only some groups of people who are rising some conflicts.

Katia (interview no. 10) is a respondent of the oldest generation and she depicts her relations with Latvians positively – she has Latvian friends, she says she feels comfortable living in Latvia. Katia refers to the years of 1990s when there were some cases when she felt insulted because she is a Russian, however currently she says she does not experience discrimination on ethnic basis. Katia says:

I.: Do you feel comfortable in Riga?

R.: I feel good. Look, I am saying, in the beginning when this all started, this perestroika [a political movement within the Communist Party of Soviet Union referring to the restructuring of the Soviet political and economic system], right? There were cases when, I remember, we were getting off a train, started to talk about something in Russian, and some guys were passing by and they said: “Get off, Russian pigs!” By the way, they said it in Russian. Yes, this happened.

I.: It was in 90ies?

R.: Well, when all this started. This happened. Of course, we were getting off, we were at the train station, got off a train... I pretended that I didn't hear and that is all. “And it is time for you to go home from here.” There was such a period of time, when they were saying this openly, and they were saying this on TV, and all of this happened. Later this all...

I.: But, let's say, you in your life, have you felt it often besides this case?

R.: Besides this case I haven't. At work we never had. We worked in the previous place, then we moved to the new one, and I recruited very many Latvians. Very many, because Russians from Riga wouldn't go. They were coming to us from Jelgava [a city in Latvia], to work in the hospital.

And there were only Latvians, I recruited only Latvians actually: both nurses, and doctors, and hospital attendants, I recruited everyone. There were no Russians.

I.: Let's say, wasn't there some suppression or discrimination?

R.: Absolutely nothing."

However later in the interview Katia (interview no. 10) compares her situation with situation of other Russian employees at the hospital. Katia says that she knows some Latvian language and she is in the pension already, but her colleagues who are in their 50-ies and who do not know Latvian language, they are in difficult situation. Katia says:

I.: But what do you think, other Russians, do they feel the same comfortable in Latvia as you do, or there are different cases?

R.: Well, you know, I don't know, for example, in regard to those inspections, when they started to test us, Russian girls, yes? Of course, I am sorry because they will lose their job at the age of 50, and it is not clear where to go, understand, because in another hospital they don't need you, too. But for studying, look, she lost her job, she has no money. For studying a course, there you need money, too. Do you understand? And of course, I am just sorry for these people. Honestly, because I left, I have pension. But they don't have, they have 2 children, and she, how to say, that is all. Such a situation."

Varvara (interview no.11) is a respondent of the youngest generation. She talks quite pessimistic of the inter-ethnic relations in Latvia. One of the issues she raises during the interview is the issue of language. One of the aspect – interethnic everyday tensions related with the language of communication. Varvara says:

I.: Speaking about languages, in principle, in what language do you communicate most of all in everyday life?

R.: (...) In shops actually, too, when I come, I speak the language which is convenient for me, that is, Russian. If I need to ask something, how to say, I ask in Russian, I am answered in Latvian, again I talk in Russian. If some person, I see that he doesn't like that I speak Russian or he puts an accent that "I want you to talk in Latvian", please, it is not hard for me, I have no problem, I can ask the same in Latvian. There are such people, well, I have got it just disgusting, how many times I came across this... you come up to a person, well, you don't know what you will have – a Russian, a Latvian, I am asking in the language that is convenient for me. I come up, ask: "Would you tell me where that street is?" "Es neko nesaprotu, lūdzu, pa latviski!" (speaks Latvian: I don't understand anything, please, in Latvian). Then, well, such an anger!"

Varvara (interview no.11) also talks of the issues of state language in Latvia. In her opinion, the Russian language can be the second official language in Latvia. Varvara (interview no. 11) says that she personally has never experienced discrimination because she is a Russian. On the other hand she thinks that if there are two people seeking for a job with identical qualifications and one of them is Latvian, another Russian, then the Latvian would be recruited. Varvara says:

I.: But tell me, have you ever experienced discrimination towards yourself because you are a Russian?

R.: I personally haven't. Now I will think about my acquaintances... I don't know, in this field I have no problems. That is, I already told you that I can find common language with any person, if he tries to upset me, insult me all the time, I can always turn it into a joke: "What is it with you? I didn't do anything bad to you!" But no matter how much one tries to humiliate me, I don't want to be in a situation of conflict, because I, if there starts some conflict, of course, we will have argument with him, fight (*laughs*), but I think everything can be turned into a joke and I have never had a case when somebody tried to insult me with some, that you are a Russian, I am a Latvian, don't be my

friend! There are no such stories. Although maybe, it came into my mind, of course, now they basically recruit Latvians. But if you are a good Russian, a good, qualified worker, and you have some experience, knowledge, then actually also Russians get recruited normally. Everybody says, I am a Russian, it is hard for me to find a job! But first you get educated! Get a good education, qualification, go and work, please! You shouldn't find excuses that I am a Russian, they don't recruit me, you must achieve everything yourself, it doesn't matter who you are, a Tatar, a Mongol, a Russian! If you want something, you need to achieve it. Well, actually if to compare, for example, people with absolutely identical qualifications, that is, they came to work and absolutely everything in them is the same, that is, they both know both Russian, and Latvian, and English and they have worked everywhere the same, but one of them is a Russian, the other one a Latvian. I am sure, the Latvian will be recruited. Well, because it is Latvia, well, it can be no other way! And in other countries it is the same."

Viacheslav (interview no.12) is a respondent of the youngest generation. He expressed some dissatisfaction because they have to learn some subjects at secondary school in Latvian and not in Russian. Viacheslav says:

"R.: Yes, at school. Yes, there are those subjects, well, mathematics, well, mathematics, well, Latvian is not so important there, but the most difficult subject for us, it is, let's assume, let's take history. Let's assume, we study history, it is hard for us, let's assume, to get prepared for it, because of it ... because of it bad grades are received more, because of laziness. Because, let's assume, one has to read a chapter, a long chapter, there is such a big book there, to read the whole chapter, and it happens, when you read a material in Russian, up to the 7th form we in Russian, up to the 6th form we were studying history in Russian, and when you read in Russian, you still need to think. It is your native language, but you read, and you re-read several sentences a few times, to understand, to grasp it, to remember something somehow. And even reading in Russian, it took enough time to get through it, understand this all, realize, read again a few times to learn. But no, there are such people, who read for the first time and understand right away. But I need to read three times, let's assume, if a big material, and it will be normal for me. But when it is in Latvian! It makes us all so exhausted, because we even begged, that maybe the teacher would give us the summary, dictate in Russian, but, naturally, she: "Not allowed!" She says: "Study according to the text books, and don't be lazy, it is your problem." Well, yes, no matter how good many of us know Latvian, we know Latvian good, even on my part, well, I am the only one of this kind in my form, that it is hard to read in Latvian, you know, understand Latvian, understand what they write there, but some words, maybe you don't understand them – you translate, but it is still hard to perceive in Latvian, because your native language – Russian is still in your head, and therefore we have the same teacher in Latvian and in politics. (...) There is the Latvian language, Latvian literature, I think, it is enough. Anyway we live in Latvia, encounter with it a lot, shops, communication everywhere, also television, who wants, he will watch TV in Latvian, he will read magazines, newspapers, books. But also to force to study in Latvian, I think, it is too much... it is wrong. Maybe for many Latvians it is easier, because it is their native language, they study, they don't have unnecessary information in their heads, but for us, it is mentally, somehow we have to do a hard brainwork all the time, to understand that we, because we are used to Russian, need to overcome this barrier, Russian barrier, we can say. But nothing to do, we were born like this in families, and in such families, and so I think Russians must be given education in Russian, it will help them finish that school better, get accustomed better and to think better in the field of activities that they need. But if you poke it everywhere, as that history, then it is a pity, as because of it someone becomes lazy, says, enough, I can't do it anymore, I have no strength, let's assume, to sit and translate, because of it grades become bad. (...)"

Viacheslav (interview no.12) mentions some inter-ethnic tensions, basically related with the use of Latvian or Russian in public. But he himself does not take anyone's side and tries to analyse the situation objectively:

“But so... nobody towards me, I haven't felt, that someone was oppressing me, that you are a Russian... no, there are just those, again those Latvians, oh, those Russians... By the way, I agree with it that those Russians who cry without a reason that I hate Latvia, I hate Latvians, I hate the Latvian language. This is right what they tell them: so go to Russia, go, where you feel more comfortable. But they don't go, for some reason, they don't go. If they can't go, they shouldn't whine, they should be glad that they can at least somehow settle in here. But those who cry without a reason, these people madden me. Of course, if you have a reasonable argument, if you were offended in your life because of it, something didn't go well in your life, then yes, maybe, you don't like because of it... But when people just like that... someone said that I hate the Latvian language, another says, too: I hate Latvian, too, the third one on a damaged phone understood that those Latvian are fools, and so this is how these stupid rumours are spread, and everybody starts to speak about it, it is nonsense. I don't like this absurdity, groundlessness and futility. I think this is wrong. They... many of them respect us, as we respect, too. I haven't met such people, who don't respect the Russian contingent, frankly speaking, I haven't met such Latvians, who don't respect us.”

4.8 Summarizing Matrix

Table presenting individual respondents in rows and a description of key variables in separate columns.

Respondent	Sex	Place of residence	Age	Occupation	Educational level	European identity	Languages	National identity (residence)	National identity (mother country)	Regional identity	Relationship to organisation of minority group
"Artiom"	M	Rezekne city	Older (born in 1933)	Pensioner	L (completed 6 classes)	Does not identify with Europe, has a critical attitude towards EU	Russian (only), does not speak Latvian, understands Latvian (no everything). His son lives in Riga and speaks Russian, but understands Latvian. His granddaughter speaks Latvian.	Rezekne city	Latvia (they are old believers, have lived in Latvia for 300 years)	Only Latvia and Rezekne city	No relation. He is an old believer but does not go to church.
"Marina"	F	Riga	47 (born in 1963)	Specialist of defecology	Higher (master degree at University)	She identifies with Europe, despite she does not feel any connection to Europe. But she is very critical towards European Union (she thinks Latvia has to be independent country) and compares EU with Soviet Union.	Russian in her parents' and her family. She speaks also Latvian, mainly at work place.	Riga	Mother country (Latvia)	Riga, Latgale (her father is from that region) and Europe	No relation, but she participates in the activities of trade unions (she is a pedagogue and she is very active politically).
"Evgenija"	F	Rezekne, Latvia	81 (was born in 1929)	Pensioner	M (pedagogical vocational training)	Does not identify with Europe, has a very critical attitude towards EU (emigration, joblessness).	She is Russian, speaks only Russian. Studied German in school.	Rezekne city	Mother country (Latvia)	Only Rezekene and Bryansk (Russia).	Participates in the activities of the center for pensioners.
"Tania"	F	Rezekne, Latvia	22 (born in 1987)	Bookkeeper	M (vocational training)	Does not identify with Europe, has a critical attitude towards the EU (according to her, situation became worse, she can't go to Russia), but is pleased that can go freely to Europe for studies and for carrier.	She speaks Russian in her family as her mother Russian from Russia and father Russian from Latvia. At work she speaks Latvian.	Rezekne city	She feels more Russian than Latvian, but does not want go to live in Russia.	Rezekene, Pskov (as her mother is from there), Latgale, Golyshevo.	Does not participate in the activities of any organization.
"Misha"	M	Rezekene, Latvia	40 (Was born in 1970)	Long distance driver	M (vocational training)	Does not identify with Europe, has a critical attitude towards the EU	He speaks only Russian in his family as his parents are Russians from Latvia.	Rezekne city	Mother country (Latgale)	Latgale and Russia (European part of Russia)	Does not participate in the activity of any organization.

Respondent	Sex	Place of residence	Age	Occupation	Educational level	European identity	Languages	National identity (residence)	National identity (mother country)	Regional identity	Relationship to organisation of minority group
"Aleksandra"	F	Daugavpils	Was born in 1969	Engineer	Higher	Identifies with Europe	She speaks Russian in her family and with her parents, she also speaks Latvian at work.	Daugavpils	Mother country is Latvia	Daugavpils, Latvia and Europe (but she includes also Russian in Europe)	Does not participate in activities of any organization at the moment, but earlier she was a member of a political party for a year
"Georgii"	M	Daugavpils	16	School student	Studies at the 9 th grade of the secondary school	Yes	Russian – native language, Latvian	Feels the Russian of Latvia, has Latvian citizenship	Has never been in Russia, but identifies with Russian culture	First place marked in the map – Daugavpils, second – Scandinavia, third - Russia	Does not participate
"Fiodor"	M	Riga	44	Currently unemployed	L (secondary)	Hard to say, dubious. In the interview states that Europe passes somehow by him, but on the map marks Europe as the second region he identifies with.	Russian – native language, can speak Latvian	Considers himself Latvian Russian. Was born in Latvia.	Does not have close relations with Russia	As the first place marks Riga	Is a member of some organization but did not want to develop more on this theme
"Anton"	M	Riga	71	Professor	H		Russian – native language, mainly used in family, communication with friends. Knows also Latvian and English, can teach in these languages.	A citizen of Latvia.		Names two places – Riga and Tver (in Russia) that are most important for him.	Active in civic life
"Katia"	F	Riga	68	Pensioner	M	On the one hand she says that she does not identify with Europe, on the other – marks Europe as the third circle that is important for her identity. Evaluates Latvia's accession to the EU positively	Russian – native language, used in the family and at work place during the Soviet period. In the Independent Latvia got the third (highest) level of the Latvian knowledge.	Described herself as native born citizen of Latvia. She is a citizen of Latvia since 2000, got the third category of Latvian language command, she does not plan to leave Latvia.	The Latvian Russians and the Russians from Russia were perceived as two different categories. The Latvian Russians were described as influenced by Latvian culture and more polite, less tempered, etc. She does not travel to Russia.	The first place marked was Riga, the second circle included all Latvia and the third – Europe.	Never was a member of any ethnic minority association or organisation.
"Varvara"	F	Riga	17	Last grades of the secondary school	L (still studies at the secondary school)	Yes. First answer was 'no', that she feels Russian more, however later she said 'yes' because she lives in Europe.	Russian, Latvian, English	She describes herself as Russian, she is a citizen of Latvia	Feels part of the Russian community in Latvia and Russians in general. Has never been to Russia.	Marks Riga as the main place she identifies with.	Does not belong to any ethnic organization.

Respondent	Sex	Place of residence	Age	Occupation	Educational level	European identity	Languages	National identity (residence)	National identity (mother country)	Regional identity	Relationship to organisation of minority group
"Viacheslav"	F	Riga	17	Last grades of the secondary school	Not completed secondary education	Yes	Russian, Latvian	He is a Russian, but knows Latvian language well.	Does not associate with Russia and Russian people	First of all marks Riga, then Paris and the last circle is Europe	Active in civic and political life

5 MAIN FINDINGS OF EXPERT INTERVIEWS (ENRI-EXI)

Kristina Šliavaite

The interviews were conducted in accordance to the methodological guidelines developed by the ENRI-EAST team and described in the project manual¹⁶. Survey agency – Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

The first interview with minority experts in Latvia was conducted with a policy analyst at the national level NGO and the expert demonstrated deep knowledge in various issues related with the human rights, minority rights in Latvia. The respondent has been working with national and ethnic issues for 11 years. The organization was established in 1993. The expert names these priorities of the organization – “human rights issues that embraced, for example, monitoring in detention facilities that are prisons, psycho-neurological hospitals; and this ethnic issue that, of course, is closely related to the integration of society, and ethnic issues mostly embraced matters of citizenship, education and language.” The expert names such trends of work of the organization as preparation of reports on human rights and ethnic rights in Latvia, teaching, organization of seminars and conferences, courses, work with asylum seekers, elaboration of programmes related to national minorities, immigrants, etc. The organization has close collaboration with foreign organizations.

The second interview was conducted with the head of the ethnic minority organization in Daugavpils, Latgale. The main goal of the organization is named by the expert as “maintenance and dissemination of the Russian language and culture in the place where we live”. The biggest attention is paid to the cultural projects. There are about 25 people that are actively involved into the different activities of the organization, the majority of them are Russians. The organization is part of the Russian Society of Latvia.

5.1 Main issues associated with Russian minority in the country of residence

5.1.1 The interview no.1

The expert (interview no.1) lists a number of laws and documents that have influence on the situation of ethnic minorities in Latvia – the Constitution, the Law of 1991 on Unrestricted Development and Right to Cultural Autonomy of Latvia's Nationalities and Ethnic Groups, Official Language Law, Education Law, Citizenship Law, Law on Religious Organizations, laws on prohibition of discrimination, the Education Law and related regulations, Mass Media Law. The programme of integration was also mentioned as important document.

The Law on Citizenship in the case of new-born children was described by the expert as following:

¹⁶ See „Enri-Exi: Expert Interviews Manual, 2010”, designed by Claire Wallace, Natalka Patsiurko, Barbara Dietz, Natalia Waechter, Alexander Chvorostov, Lyudmila Nurse, available at: <http://www.enri-east.net/work-packages/wp5/en/>. Survey Agency – Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

“What regards children we cannot say that children gain citizenship automatically. For a child to gain citizenship automatically, the system must be that a child who is born, he/she automatically is registered as a citizen of Latvia and later the parents can refuse. The system for a child who is born after 1991 to gain citizenship is that the parents go to the registry office to receive birth certificate and there is it written that the parents are non-citizens, stateless persons. It means that initially the child is recognized as a non-citizen if it does not appear in his/her birth certificate, but that his/her parents are non-citizens, it automatically ... Later the parents must go to the corresponding department of the Office of Citizenship and Migration, the parents fill in application form where they ask to recognize their child a citizen of Latvia. The Office of Citizenship and Migration reviews the application and later makes a decision either to recognize or not to recognize the child. What is being planned and what, of course, would be logical what means that this system, we can say that the child has a right to gain citizenship but his/her parents have to take pains to go or they have to be aware, they have to know that they are allowed to do it; there are parents who do not know that they have this opportunity, there are parents who think they do not need to go to get this citizenship.”

The expert (interview no.1) says that this situation should be changed:

“What we have often mentioned in our reports and participating in workshops of state institutions is that this process must be facilitated. It is not normal that in the country after the period of 20 years still children of non-citizens are born. Therefore what is planned that it will be like this – parents will go to the registry office and there the official will offer them to fill in such an application right away, it means, the parents will still need to write an application but they will not need to go to another institution for doing to. I hope that the regulations of the Cabinet will be issued and the problem will be solved.(...)”

The expert points that after Latvia’s accession to the EU the number of applicants who wished to gain citizenship through naturalization increased, but now the number decreased. The expert (interview no. 1) gives the following explanations:

“There can be various reasons why it is so. One thing is that those who wanted the citizenship or who needed it for rational reasons, have already gained it. Those who have remained non-citizens, a part of them feel resentment against the state and they think they do not have to pass such naturalization exams, that they have the right to the citizenship automatically. For a part it is a question of knowing the state language; the latter statistics about those who do not pass state language exam at the first attempt show a quite large number, it is more than 50%, it means that those people go to gain citizenship who have problems with the language and recently the number of those people has grown who also cannot pass the test on history and the Constitution; previously it was not so.”

The expert (interview no.1) names two laws – the State Language Law and Law on Citizenship as very sensitive Laws that rise great discussions and tensions in the society. Talking about the Law on Education the expert says that:

“Talking about Education law, right for children to gain education bilingually is guaranteed and all norms that concern education, language proportion at high schools, I think that all fervent discussions and protests have calmed down and the society has accepted that the law is the way it is, the law functions, therefore new discussions will start when Fatherland and Freedom/All for Latvia [Tēvzemei un Brīvībai/Visu Latvijai – national co-alliance of two national conservative parties in Latvia- interviewer’s remark] will collect enough signatures [for referendum] or gain sufficient support in Saeima [the Parliament of Latvia], to amend Education law again that elementary education must be only in the Latvian language. (...)”

The expert points to the fact that the Russians in Latvia are not homogeneous community, but diverse group. Part of Russians have been living in Latvia for centuries, part came during the

Soviet times. The expert also points to the fact that the Russian organizations in Latvia work in very diverse directions. The expert says:

“If we specifically speak about Russians, there are two significant things. One of them is that we must see that it is not a homogenous group, because there are Russians who have been living in Latvia for centuries, and of course, there is the group of Russians who arrived in Latvia in the times of the Soviet Union, and these are two absolutely different groups with absolutely different identities and different points of view on what this country must be like and if they are endangered, restricted here. Another thing that forms specifically this identity is that the community is very dispersed, there are very many organizations, ones that work on culture and others that work much on politics and constantly try to maintain the image of an oppressed ethnic group, and separate political forces participate in the play, and therefore it creates, I think, this group has not understood itself what is that Russian identity, and we know that many Russians say that when I go to Russia, I don't feel like I belong there because my language is different, my point of view on many things is different, but in Latvia I don't really feel like one of them, because here there is the constant fear of Latvians for themselves and their identity, and of course everything that is related to participation matters, therefore there is this inner division. (...)”

The expert (interview no 1) says that there is a lack of research and statistics on the situation of ethnic minorities in the spheres of housing, labour, etc. The expert admits that at some spheres there are more Latvians employed and this is related by her to the issues of state language skills and citizenship:

“Yes, also there is this where... of course, what those factors are that influence something in labor market, it is skills of the Latvian language. There are professions where a certain level of the Latvian language is determined what must be known, and there are professions where this requirement is citizenship, for example, it is civil service, you cannot work there if you do not have the citizenship of this country. To a certain extent this practice has become a custom that if we take a look at the ethnic composition of the staff that works for the public sector, to a great extent it is really Latvian, for example, ministries.(...)”

The expert concludes that:

“(...) this continuous regulation in normative acts that concern the state language, applying these requirements of the Latvian language to an increasing category of employees also in the private sphere, to a certain extent they can limit opportunities for ethnic minorities in labour market. I think it was proven well that during the crisis there was a trend observed that people with low skill of the Latvian language finally could become part of labour market; not in the crisis, but when there was the prosperity, before the crisis; then during the crisis, of course, it is observed that these people are first ones who will be fired. If we speak either of housing or health, it is very hard to speak about it because no data are available. We have managed to get information from several municipalities that Roma people have problems with renting or obtaining a dwelling, but in relation to the Russian or other minorities it is lesser, we do not know of cases that something like this is going to happen. In health, there is the same question of language.”

Regarding the possibility of non-citizens to participate at the elections, to vote, the expert claims that non-citizens should be granted the possibility to vote at the municipal elections:

“My personal opinion as well as the opinion of the centre is that discussions should be initiated and opportunities should be evaluated to grant non-citizens the right to participate in election of municipalities, and not because Europe or various European institutions or commissars require it but because it would be a normal practice to promote participation of these people on the level of municipalities. It is not about election of Saeima [the Parliament of Latvia] because in all countries this is an advantage for citizens, and even referenda, but on the level of municipalities, these people

live here, work here and pay taxes and they should be entitled to decide matters of their municipality.”

Regarding the composition of the Parliament of Latvia, the expert (interview no.1) says that:

“also, if we speak about political representation in Saeima [the Parliament of Latvia] it is not proportional to the composition of the residents but still it exists.”

The expert notes (interview no.1) that mass media in Latvia is divided according to language into the Russian and Latvian mass media oriented to the Russian and Latvian population. The expert (interview no.1) points to the importance of mass media in mobilizing population to some activities.

5.1.2 The interview No.2

The second expert interviewed (interview no 2) mentions the law on the state language as affecting the employment situation of national minorities in Latvia. The expert also says that even if elementary education in native language is guaranteed, however, nobody trains the teachers that are necessary to guarantee this education The expert says:

“And generally we are worried that officially the state declares that.. at least not depending on what opinions there exist, the state politics is that secondary education... I mean, a person can gain elementary education in his language. But teachers for teaching children in their language, they do not graduate, they are not trained. Only teachers in state language are trained. That is, a person comes to school, he simply does not know the terminology and so on, and so on, if... for teaching children in their language, at least in elementary school. So there are these problems.”

Talking of the integration of Russians into the society of Latvia the expert (interview no.2) points to the problem of non-citizens. In his opinion, the existence of non-citizens is an absurd and this does not help the society to become one integrated unit. The expert says:

“(...) You see... I mentioned such general, big processes, but if we descend to the level of family, then... first of all, non-citizens still continue to be born here. This is a savagery! Ok... good... There are people who lived, who belonged to the Soviet Union, who even fought against independence of Latvia, yes? Well, if you have such a desire – let them remain non-citizens – well, in the end, they have right to become naturalized, someone chooses for himself/herself. By the way, we always in our organization, if to take our opinion, I always say that people should go and become naturalized, they should leave their resentment and so on, and so on.(...)”

The expert (interview no.2) says that non-citizens are mainly Russians and they cannot be employed at some positions at state institutions and this is interpreted as discrimination by him. The expert says:

“I already touched this subject a little... Presumably, this thing – there is a restriction of rights of non-citizens to have a job. It could seem – it is only political restriction. But the thing is that non-citizens – they are mostly Russians, well, maybe a few Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Poles and so on... But almost all – Russians. And it turns out that restriction of rights to occupy some positions affect specifically this group. That is, as a result of them being non-citizens. Such a projection. Did I explain understandably?”

The expert (interview no.2) argues that there are a few options to solve the question of non-citizens and these are:

“Well, zero option of citizenship – it is one of the options. Another option – automatically allocate it to children who are born. It is another... well, at least... here, see, already 20 years have passed, and non-citizen would have been born over these 20 years. Someone of those would have left,

someone would have died. And none would have remained. But we produce and produce. This is, how to say, the basic thing. (...)"

5.2 Relationship to mother country

5.2.1 Interview no.1

Describing the Russian population relationship to Russia the expert (interview no.1) mentions the fact that lately substantial number of non-citizens did not proceed via the process of naturalization, but accepted the citizenship of Russia:

„Yes, of course, but we still have that comparatively large number of non-citizens and there was that disturbing trend in the previous year when a large part of non-citizens simply accepted citizenship of Russia, I think it is not flattering for any country if the number of citizens of another country grows rapidly inside your country, and that number who accepted citizenship of Russia was larger than the number of those who went to become naturalized. I think it is a dangerous signal for the country, we will see how it will be, how it will develop further, but Citizenship Law, it functions, the process continues, people are given chance to obtain this citizenship.”

The expert (interview no.1) mentions that Poland and Lithuania provide support for their minorities. The expert says that there are many speculations on Russia's support for Russian population or Russian speaking population in Latvia, but there is lack of official data on these issues. The expert says:

“if we speak about Russia, here is this controversial question what is being supported and how it is being supported because very often we know nothing about such official support but we have speculations and assumptions that the government of Russia and various foundations of Russia support these more radical organizations, support these political forces but we don't know through what, through what financial flows. We have assumptions, we don't have proofs. There are these various programs of support to compatriots where we have to understand what is being financed through them but it is quite hard to obtain this information through embassies or other institutions, something shows up in mass media, but there is no direct confirmation.”

“I think here we must speak about lobby of Russia and that this problem of non-citizens should be solved, about aim-centred activities that appear even on the international ring, repeatedly reminding that Latvia discriminates or oppresses Russian speaking people. Here they speak not only about Russians as an ethnic group, but they operate with the concept “Russian speaking” embracing other groups, too. Yes, I think that it is exactly the way it is, solving all these sensitive matters, we hear the voice or influence of Russia, and we have and we will have to take it into consideration that there will be this condemning or fighting position.”

5.2.2 Interview no.2

The expert from Daugavpils (interview no.2) would like the support from Russia to Russian population in Latvia were more substantial. The expert suggests that the way Poland supports its diaspora in Latvia is an example Russia should follow up. The expert says:

“How to say, Russia does not fulfil the hopes of those Russian speaking people who live here, of Russians. There are lots of examples regarding work with compatriots, well, let us say, Poles. We have a Polish school here. I think, partly it is financed by Poland... Very much... And there is so called “Card of the Pole”, by use of which he can go to Poland and receive education, medical aid, employment under the same conditions as a resident of Poland. That is, he is a Pole – and all is said by that. And where he lives – it does not matter. If he has proven, that this person even living abroad has maintained his Polish identity, that he links himself to Poland and so on, so he gets this “Card of the Pole” and he can absolutely freely... “

The expert (interview no.2) depicts the help from Russia to Latvian Russians in a following way:

“First of all – it is a help for carrying out some humanitarian projects. Primarily in the field of culture. In the field of youth exchange, in the sense that visiting each other. In supporting projects in the field of history, let us say, education. Work with veterans, with elderly people – also they invite them to come for relax, for treatments. These are basic fields. Yes, really, there is such support. And generally. If to speak about numbers in relation to the whole world, it must be really much. Well, it can be also sensed in Latvia, because yes, we have been carrying out our project already for many years, and without help of the Russian consulate most likely...Well, at least in the present scope, most likely it would not be existing. Therefore some help really exists there.”

5.3 Relationship (if any) to European events and organisations

The expert (interview no.1) estimates the influence of Latvia’s accession to the EU on minority situation in a reserved manner. The expert says:

“(…) Has anything changed since the country acceded to the European Union, I think no, actually we must thank the European Union and institutions of the European Union that some matters or some legislative acts for quite radical have become softer. Not that we have wanted to change something but we have been made to understand that we have to change something [to enter that European Union. For example, it is Citizenship Law with all naturalization windows [of opportunity], recognizing children as citizens, softening of the education reform, because the initial version was very strict in regard with language, there was a moment when we relinquished from much more radical requirements as we had wanted. It happened after we had acceded to the European Union, I always say that our politicians became self-content and they had a feeling that we did what you wanted us to do, and now we will form our politics ourselves. What we see in latter discussions is – we are strengthening Official Language Law, worrying about our identity, thinking about Education Law, discussions on amendments in Citizenship Law, we did our homework, I think, the politicians have this feeling that Europe cannot require anything else from us. It only shows that we are doing it not for ourselves, what we did before, but for Europe to please it.(…)”

The expert says that it is not easy to estimate the outcomes of various EU sponsored projects for the situation of ethnic groups in Latvia. The expert says:

“I think this is what I previously mentioned in regard with the Society Integration Foundation, because main portion of European money or financial means provided for European initiatives go through the Society Integration Foundation, therefore it is the institution that in accordance with projects allocate these means. In my opinion, lots of means have been spent but if these projects have significantly influenced something in the sphere of integration of society, it has not been fully studied. The only research that tried to analyze what has been promoted, and if these projects have promoted intercultural dialogue, unfortunately it states that to a great extent these financial means were dedicated to these events of monoethnic monologue and less to promotion of intercultural dialogue, but, of course, I think that also on elaborating various political documents, both these European integration plans and requirements of Europe must be taken into consideration, they must be embraced in these political documents, and it is being done, they strive to do it, but another question – how much we adjust them to ourselves.”

The expert (interview no.2) evaluates the impact of Latvia’s accession to the EU to the Russian population in Latvia with great reservation. The expert says:

“Honestly speaking, I think there is none. It is declarative – yes. And once our party supported accession to the European Union. Both the Russian community supported and the party supported. We were hoping that European norms will be put into effect, including the territory of Latvia. But I must say Latvia received a bunch of recommendations regarding situation of national minorities – in relation to schools, to many other things – they were simply ignored. And therefore I think there

was hope. And therefore I said that Russians in Latvia, no matter how funny, are more Europeans than residents of Latvia [латвийцы]. There was hope, and it was related to Europe. But it was not put into effect, and now they look at Europe most likely as an object that can provide with money, can provide with job opportunities, well, such a... that can be milked. But understand, these are not integrating, inner processes. These are processes that... short-term asylum, or something, if it is like this... That is, Russians have some discontent in relation to activities of the European Union. That is, recommendations, they remain recommendations and that is all.”

6 MAIN FINDINGS OF WEB-ANALYSIS (ENRI-BLOG)

Hans-Georg Heinrich / Olga Alekseeva

6.1 Methodology

ENRI-East is an interdisciplinary project which employs different methodological approaches. In the framework of the project, Content Analysis of Internet Resources uses internet websites attributable to ethnic minorities in order to analyse the identity-related cultural, social and political activity of minorities. The study analyses the situation of twelve minorities: Russians in Latvia and Lithuania, Ukrainians in Poland and Hungary, Belarusians in Poland and Lithuania, Poles in Belarus, Ukraine and Lithuania, Hungarians in Ukraine, Hungarians in Slovakia, and Slovaks in Hungary. Lithuanians in Russia, who were polled in the ENRI survey, were excluded due to linguistic problems. Instead, Ukrainians in Hungary were included.

Internet can be assumed to provide valid sources of information, because it is a modern and flexible means of communication. Analyzing the presence of minorities in the internet, the study can be expected to yield insights into actual concepts of identity. The internet research helps to understand not only special opinions and media activities of minorities, but also how the concept of ethnic identity evolves within new media like internet. Internet provides a forum for the democratic exchange of information, a free and unrestricted domain to escape the limits of political participation in real politics. The World Wide Web can be the communication medium of groups which are politically underrepresented. Among flows of information in the internet, such new patterns of social communication are observable as forums, live journals, or blogs that have an authentic nature and help to restore the public discourse in the most objective way.

The data base of the content analysis consists of online resources attributable to ethnic minorities, such as periodicals, organisations, blogs, forums, personal websites, and commentaries to articles. Collection of empirical resources from the internet has been carried out in two steps: selection of online resources and selection of text fragments within the online resources. Internet resources were identified by employing search engines like www.google.com for different languages and countries using key-words combinations, or checking websites which contain catalogues of resources like <http://kamunikat.org/>. Individual text fragments within a resource were selected for processing according to the criterion of theoretical relevance.

The research discovered a large number of different resources of ethnic minorities. In the study, 154 online resources were randomly identified, from which 350 text fragments¹⁷ were collected and analyzed. Qualitative and quantitative content analysis of the text fragments was conducted using *simstat/wordstat6.2.1*. The data analysis consisted of the description of a resource or a text fragment according to formal criteria like “title”, “author”, or “intention”, as well as according to the content of text fragments. The former data were ordered and coded in a *simstat* data base. The data of the qualitative content analysis were generated by assigning single cases (usually combination of words or parts of sentences) to categories (keywords) which constituted the *wordstat*

¹⁷ The notion “text fragment” in this study indicates a unit of analysis in the *simstat/wordstat* program. These can be single texts like articles from websites of periodicals, blogs or organisations without postings of readers or with readers’ postings. Apart from that, a “text fragment” can be called a number of single short texts under particular title as represented by dialogues on internet forums.

dictionary. On the basis of simstat/wordstat data, research results were generated in form of figures which in turn have been qualitatively interpreted.

During the analysis, 69 categories could be created. 8 categories among them belong to the main categories: “cultural heritage”, “images of Europe”, “history”, “cultural encounter”, “minority rights”, “style”, “politics”, and “socio-economic situation”. These main categories include further categories (sub-categories). The following data presentation describes however only those categories, which represent the majority of coded cases within text fragments, measured in %. All other categories, which cover less than 5% of cases were left out in the presented study.

6.2 Description of internet resources

Among the ethnic minorities under study, the highest number of online resources in the content analysis is found with *Russians in Latvia*, all in all 25. Among them are 7 periodicals, 1 news/broadcasting portal, 5 organizations, 7 resources with blogs, 2 forums, 1 personal website, and 2 resources with articles/blogs containing postings. Text fragments were collected from periodicals “Telegraf”, “Novaya Gazeta”, and “Nasha Gazeta” as well as organizations – “Rodina”, “Russians in Latvia”, “Russki Mir”, and Jekabpils Russian Society “Rodnik”. While one forum was identified in “Novaya Gazeta” (<http://novaja.lv/forum/index.html>), the blogs were obtained from the periodical “Novaya Gazeta” and the news portal “NovoNews”. One text fragment was selected from the personal website “Elizaveta Krivzova”.

“*Telegraf*” (<http://www.telegraf.lv/>) is a daily edition funded by the private corporation “News Media Group” which represents the Europe-orientated wing of the Russian political spectrum in Latvia. The rubrics of the periodical include politics, business, social life as well as tabloid news. Apart from the news from Europe and international news, the periodical reports especially about local political parties and takes a critical stance toward host country politics regarding ethnic minorities. “*Novaya Gazeta*” (<http://novaja.lv/>) was founded in the Soviet era and has a 46 years tradition. This periodical has a circulation of 16, 000 and is issued by the media company “Di-ena” three times per week. According to its mission statement, the publication strives to inform the population of Elgava Region, support the strengthening of democratic values and the integration of society as well as the development of Russian culture.

The internet portal “*Ves.lv*” (<http://www.ves.lv/>) is a private internet project, owned by the company “Izdevniecības Nams Fenster”. This resource describes itself as a news portal for a modern and dynamic audience which expects to have new, interesting and up-to-date information from all aspects of life, politics, culture, society from different regions of Latvia, neighboring states and the international community. The news portal is not interested to be a “one-sided” source of information, but stresses its ambition to be a platform for an exchange of the readers’ views. The readers can contribute by publishing own information, interesting comments, articles and news on the portal’s website.

“*Rodina*” (<http://www.rodina.lv/>), the website of “Russian Latvia”, pledges equality of the Russian and Latvian people and tries to deny the negative historic memory of Latvians concerning the Russian occupation and around the foundation of the Latvian national state. In comparison to other organizations, this site reports about the life of the Russian community in tandem with the justification of the rights of Russians on Latvian territory while appealing to a national mythos. Consequently, the organization comes out very strongly for an amendment of the Latvian Constitution to the effect that Russian became the second state language. The site comments on some

historical issues, although with some “nationalistic touch” while accompanying its information with audio, video and text material.

The NGO “*Ruski Mir*” (<http://www.russkimir.lv/>) aims at preserving values of the Russian culture in Latvia and at promoting Russian education and language. It organizes initiatives, actions and appeals to the Latvian authorities in order to implement the rights of Russians, for example, as far as election participation of Russian nationals is concerned who do not have Latvian citizenship. In comparison to “Rodina”, this organization follows its agenda in a more moderate way by appealing to the Latvian authorities. Among other rubrics like “Consultation” or “Bank of Ideas”, the website informs about Russian organizations in Latvia, who belong to the so-called “Russian World of Latvia”.

The website “*Russians in Latvia*” (<http://russkie.org.lv/>) introduces activities of the Russian Society in Latvia. This organization endeavours to develop the Russian community in Latvia, concerning language, culture, and Russian tradition and folklore. It supports opening and maintaining of Russian schools and popularizes the attitude to preserve and cherish its own language among the Russian population. The Russian Society was found in Riga and it counts its track record back to 1996. “*Rodnik*” (<http://rodnik-jekabpils.blogspot.com/>), the Russian Society of Jekabpils was founded in 2000. Among its 65 members are 90% Russians and 10% Ukrainians and Belarusians. Its stated objectives are the support of cultural heritage and popular traditions. Jekabpils was chosen as a location because of its high percentage of Russian-speaking inhabitants (45%).

6.3 Results of content analysis of internet resources

6.3.1 Dictionary

The following categories/keywords have the highest frequency in the text fragments attributable to the Russians in Latvia, here in the alphabetic order:

Citizenship

The term “citizenship” means the distribution of citizenship rights in the host country among the representatives of ethnic communities. It covers problems like repatriation politics as well as the problems of the so-called “card of Poles” in Lithuania and Belarus which on the opinion of the authorities of these countries questions the loyalty of the members of the ethnic groups as citizens of the host countries. The citizenship rights are violated if, for example, the Russian minorities in the Baltic States pay tax, but the freedom of the Russian media is not guaranteed, like in the case of the broadcasting of the Russian channels.

Civil Activity

The category “civil activity” refers to political engagement and involvement of the representatives of ethnic minorities in non-governmental organizations and unions regarding different socio-political matters and human rights issues. This category examines the development of deliberative democracy and the ability of the members of ethnic minorities to influence the political process concerning the matters of their own community and to take part in the negotiation process at the local and regional level of governance.

Community

The category “community” means in a general sense the communication between different ethnic groups and nations as the cross-border activity between neighbor countries or the activities of cooperation in the framework of a national state.

Discrimination

“Discrimination” concerns the violation of political rights of minorities in the host country. Discrimination becomes explicit in the violation of the freedom of speech and association, unequal distribution of the prime time on TV, and in the lack of translations of the official names into the minority language. One of the cases of discrimination is a complicated process to receive citizenship for the members of minorities who have been living in the host country since birth, like in the case of the Russians in Latvia. A result of discrimination can be the retarded development of national identity and of ethnic culture.

Ethnic and National Conflict

“Ethnic and national conflict” indicates ideological and political tensions between the mother country and the host country of an ethnic minority, conflicts between the host nation and the minority, especially as result of nationalism. Conflict between neighbor nations, for example between Lithuania and Russia, can arise because of different views on history. This category can also refer to ethnic minorities who lack the knowledge of the language of the host country, and to the refusal of ethnic minorities to learn such language. An example of the ethnic and national conflict can be the rejection of the representatives of the host country to support an ethnic minority by financing national schools, like in the case of the Belarusian minorities in Poland, or the rejection of the Russian minorities to go through the process of naturalization in Latvia.

EU Negative

The category “EU negative” reflects negative attitudes and criticism of the ethnic minorities in Eastern European countries directed towards the idea and politics of the European Union. Negative EU attitudes can be often an indirect reaction on the dissatisfaction of the minorities with the politics of their host country and with their own socio-economic situation.

Host Country Critical/Host Country Supportive

The category “host country critical/host country supportive” represents the views of an ethnic minority on the socio-political situation in the host country. Especially critical views shall be considered, how the members of an ethnic community position themselves towards official politics. According to such perception modes, the image and political views of an ethnic minority can be identified and the self-awareness as social group closely observed. The majority of ethnic groups share position of criticism towards the host country concerning the discrimination of their rights. However the politics of dialogue are typical especially when the host country supports the cultural programs of the minority. Some resources of the Russian minorities in Latvia report about “patriotism” of Russians towards the host country, their readiness to go through the naturalization process.

Integration

The category “integration” describes the politics of social consolidation of the host country with regard to the political and cultural differences in the country and of the rights of the ethnic minorities. It describes the forced integration of ethnic minorities with the society, culture and language of the host country and the process of assimilation, as well as the problems of integration and adaptation of the ethnic minorities in the conditions of the host country. “Integration” can have progressive aims but also can be used to “forge the nation” and to provoke nationalistic and xenophobic feelings toward non-members.

Multiculturalism

The category “multiculturalism” means respect of ethnic rights, implementation of ethnic rights at the state level, and the representation of the ethnic minorities in the legislative body. Multiculturalism indicates the coexistence of different ethnic and national groups in one society which can be historically shaped or influenced by the politics in the host country. The attitude of the ethnic minorities to the multiculturalism can be different, from the negative to positive one. One of the forms of multiculturalism on the level of the individual behavior is tolerance.

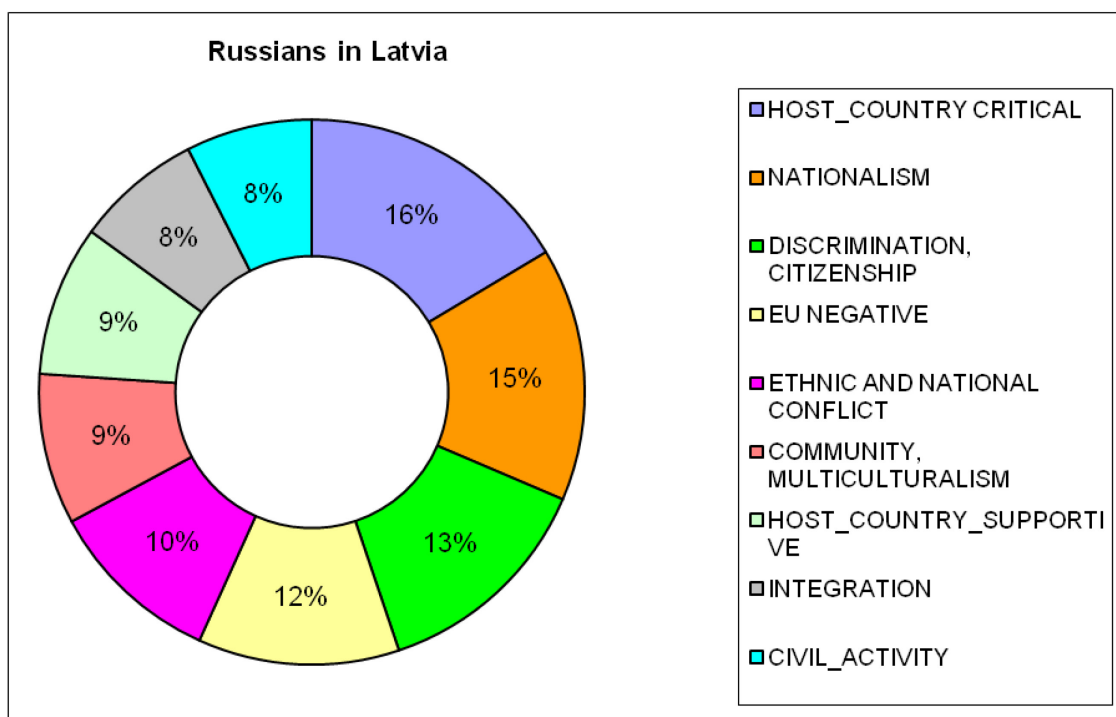
Nationalism

The term “nationalism” in this study means a forceful proclamation and protection of national rights on the one hand and declaration of the superiority of a nation on the other. It becomes explicit if the national rights are enforced with legal, linguistic or physical means. “Nationalism” is a highly controversial category as it is based on values and ideological positions and depends on the personal point of view of observers of particular events. Apart from that, “nationalism” can have a positive and negative connotation. To judge whether a particular utterance is an expression of nationalism is not an easy task. For example, to suggest, that the Latvian government acts nationalistically when it disregards the national memory of the Russian minority and prohibits to wear Soviet war medals in public or to organize demonstrations “in Socialist style”, is a highly controversial matter. The category “ethnic and national conflict” provides a more or less solution to this problem as it points only at existing conflict without looking for those who is guilty in this conflict.

6.3.2 Practical Realization

Figure 1 demonstrates keywords/categories distribution according to the % of coded cases for the Russian minorities in Latvia.

Figure 1: Keyword Frequency, % of Cases



During the analysis of the resources of the Russians in Latvia, the majority of the coded cases were attributed to the category HOST COUNTRY CRITICAL (17% of all cases). Russian minorities are critical of the government of the host country because of neglecting minority rights and tolerance of nationalistic organizations.

As follows from the Russian online resources, a high percentage of the Russians do not possess Latvian citizenship and they reject to go through the process of naturalization. Allegedly, the citizenship had been unfairly taken from ethnic Russians at the beginning of the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The dissatisfaction of the Russians exists upon the fact that they have to pass exams to receive the citizenship even though they have been living and working in Latvia their whole life.

Discrimination concerns such issues like difficulties to open national schools as well as freedom of the media and association, especially regarding the operation of national channels and the organizing of “Soviet style”. While the younger generation is influenced by assimilation, the elderly people feel nostalgia towards the communist past. The categories DISCRIMINATION and CITIZENSHIP make up 13% of cases.

The criticism towards the host country can be illustrated by the following citations:

- The ex-legionary Visvaldis Lacis rejected the possibility of integration as a fact: “At this point, we are just squandering our money: we are financing the minority schools, pay language courses...Exams are not tantamount to integration: the minority has to preserve its identity at its own cost.”

Translation from Russian: Экс-легионер Висвалдис Лацис отрицал возможность интеграции как факт: «Мы сейчас просто транжирим деньги: финансируем школы нацменьшинств, оплачиваем курсы по обучению языку... Экзамены не означают интеграцию. А идентичность нацменьшинства должны сохранять на свои деньги».

- The main shortcoming of the document is the contradiction between the stated goals and the action plan, said deputy Boris Cilevich (“CS”): “The idea to reduce the number of children belonging to the minorities and receiving education in their mother tongue, does not correspond to the term “integration””.

Translation from Russian: Главный недостаток документа - противоречия между заявленными целями и планом мероприятий, констатировал депутат Борис Цилевич («ЦС»). «Идея сократить численность детей нацменьшинств, которые получают образование на родном языке, не отвечает понятию «интеграция»». ¹⁸

One of the biggest problems, as follows from the sources of the Russian minorities in Latvia, is the socio-economic situation which is connected with layoffs and reduction of social benefits. Russians argue that Latvia remains a developing country which after the joining of the European Union did not receive many economic benefits; corrupted and nationally orientated authorities failed in socio-economic policy. Negative attitudes regarding the EU reach 12% of analyzed cases (EU NEGATIVE).

The issues discussed by the Russian resources in Latvia suggest, that the Russian minority is involved into ethnic and national conflicts with the host country (ETHNIC AND NATIONAL CONFLICT, 10% of cases) concerning the reception of history and attempts at revising of history by some Latvian politicians. In turn, the Russians demonstrate an inclination towards nationalistic and occasionally chauvinistic rhetoric (NATIONALISM, 16%). The Russian minorities feel discriminated by expressions like “Soviet occupation” which convey the image of enemies in Latvian society. In the nationalistically tuned political debates, the society is split between those who are being called “occupants” and others who are being called “fascist”.

While the Latvian government is concerned about the cultural and political integration of society to normalize the “ethnic-demographic situation” (INTEGRATION, 7%), the Russian minority is worried to lose its “mentality” and “identity”. The memory of the Second World War among the Russian pupils – for example – would deteriorate if attention were not paid to the teaching of the war history. Russia as mother country supports the participation of the Russian community in cultural and educational programs. It initiates support of minority families who are in a difficult socio-economic situation.

The meaning of ethnicity and culture for the Russians in Latvia explains the following citation:

- Ethnicity, the ethnic determination of a person is its natural condition, which helps to preserve language, traditions, and life style. In an intensively changing world, ethnicity especially gives stability to our existence.

¹⁸ Gluchich, A. (2010) «Многострадальная интеграция латвийского общества остается под вопросом» (The woe-ful tale of integration in Latvia remains a question mark), *Telegraf* (periodical), 31 March, internet WWW-Site at URL: <http://www.telegraf.lv/news/mногоstradalynaya-integraciya-latviiskogo-obshtestva-ostaetsya-pod-voprosom>).

Translation from Russian: Этничность, этническая определенность личности - ее естественное состояние, помогающее сохранить язык, свои традиции, образ жизни. В бурно меняющемся мире именно этничность придает стабильность нашему существованию.¹⁹

According to the opinions expressed in the Russian resources, civil organizations of the Russian minorities look for chances of cooperation with the authorities. The fact that the ethnic rights are being violated can be explained by the low activities of the non-governmental organizations (CIVIL ACTIVITY, 7% of cases). The ethnic organizations are constructive towards the dialogue with the government (HOST COUNTRY SUPPORTIVE, 9%). The Russians in Latvia appreciate that the government structures are ready to involve the civil society in all stages of the political process from the agenda setting and planning until the implementation and control of the political programs. According to the opinion of the representatives of the Russian community as well as the Latvian government, there can be only the relations of cooperation between the authorities and the civil organizations of minorities, where both sides see each other as partners.

The Russian resources like the personal website of the political activist E. Krivcova (<http://www.krivcova.lv>) pledge for principles of COMMUNITY and MULTICULTURALISM which can be associated with 9% of analyzed cases. This can especially be seen on debates concerning linguistic rights. According to such debates, the state policy in Latvia should go in direction of multiculturalism when the Russians and Latvians respect tradition and language of each other and protect them mutually. While the official language is the Latvian, the Russians shall have the spheres where they could use their language, especially in the social and educational sphere.

¹⁹ Apine, I. (2007) «Этнический компонент в гражданском обществе» (Ethnic component in the civil society), Russki Mir (organization), internet WWW-Site at URL: <http://shh.neolain.lv/seminar14/apine1.htm>.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Research conclusions

The Russians have been living in Latvia since historical times (Volkovs 1999). The Russian population resides mainly in the urban centres of Latvia – Riga, Daugavpils, Rēzekne, Jelgava, Jūrmala, Liepāja, and Ventpils (Zepa et al 2005:15). In 2006 the Russian population constituted 28.6 per cent of Latvia's population and reached up to 652,200 (Latvijas iedzīvotāju sadalījums pēc nacionālā sastāva un valstiskās piederības cited in Волков, Пейпиня 2007:43).

In 1991 Latvia's Independence was restored and the Latvian parliament voted that Latvian citizenship should be granted only to those who were citizens of Latvia in 1940 and to their descendants²⁰. Soviet period immigrants to Latvia were not granted citizenship automatically. The right to vote at the elections, as well as to establish political parties is granted only to the citizens of Latvia (Open Society Institute 2001:295). In 1991 Latvia regained its Independence and Latvian became the state language. Fluency in the Latvian language is compulsory for certain job positions (in national government, in education) (Zepa et al 2005). International organizations and other international bodies expressed their concern regarding the situation of Russian speaking population and non-citizens in Latvia (Amnesty International 2008, Amnesty International Report 2009, Open Society Institute 2001:297).

7.1.1 ENRI-VIS results

The survey used a questionnaire translated into Russian language. Survey Sample - 800 Russians living in Latvia. For the sampling, two methods were applied: random route sampling classic (718 respondents reached) and random root focused enumeration (82 respondents reached). The survey took place in six regions: Riga, Kurzeme, Latgale, Pierga, Vidzeme and Zemgale. Fieldwork: 16 November 2009 – 23 December 2009. Survey agency - Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

The majority of the Latvian Russians (87.4 per cent) speak Russian most often at home. Nearly one tenth of the sample (9.5 per cent) speaks both Russian and Latvian most often, while only 2.8 per cent of the Latvian Russians mainly speak Latvian at home.

The majority of the Latvian Russians fell very close or rather close to the local environment as 84 per cent maintain their closeness to the settlement where they live, 81 per cent – to the Latvian Russians and 78 per cent – to the country they live in – Latvia. The other dimensions of closeness received far more deliberate attention of the Latvian Russians as 40.6 per cent feel close to Russia (including the answers very close and rather close), 27.9 per cent maintain their closeness to the Baltic country region, 24.9 per cent – Europe, and 18.8 per cent – to the Eastern Europe.

When analysing the statistically significant differences among various socio-demographic groups it was noticed that the elder age survey participants (aged 50 and over) feel closer to the settlement place they live in and Latvia. Oppositely, the youngest, up to 30 years old tend to maintain they feel rather not close or not close at all with the aforementioned categories. The elder less often feel close to such entities as Baltic countries, Eastern Europe and Europe in general.

²⁰ Non-citizens (Latvia), in Academic dictionaries and encyclopedias, available at: <http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/6235492> (accessed on 20.01.2010)

When analysing aggregated choices, it is obvious that ethnic/ civil identity is not as important as demographic – while describing who they are being representative of their occupation is the most important for 35 per cent of the Latvian Russians, being representative of certain age group – for 34 per cent and being representative of certain gender – for 30 per cent of Russians living in Latvia.

While considering the components that are important for being truly Russian, the great majority of the Latvian Russians maintain that it is very important or rather important (93.4 per cent) to be able to speak Russian. Also, most of the Latvian Russians give priority to the feeling being Russian (91.3 per cent) and to having Russian ancestry (79.7 per cent). For about a half of the Latvian Russians being Russian means to respect Russian political institutions and laws (53.1 per cent) and to be an Orthodox (47.3 per cent). While a significant share of the Russians surveyed do not consider such factors as being have lived in Russian for most of one's life, being a citizen of Russian Federation, and having been born in Russia as significant factors for being a Russian as majority maintain that these are rather not important or not important at all (69.6 per cent, 65.6 per cent, and 63.2 per cent, correspondingly).

While considering the components that are important for being truly Latvian, several issues could be considered. Nearly one tenth of the sample could not express their opinion on the issue and the categories provided are assessed with less certainty. Still, the great majority of the Latvian Russians maintain that it is very important or rather important (84.3 per cent) to be able to speak Latvian for being Latvian. Also, majority of the Latvian Russians give priority to the feeling being Russian (72.4 per cent), respect the Latvian political institutions and laws (70.9 per cent) and to have Latvian ancestry (66.5 per cent). More than half of the Latvian Russians (58.9 per cent) tend to ascribe great importance to having citizenship of the Republic of Latvia, being have lived in Latvia for most of one's life (54.6 per cent) and having been born in Latvia (51.6 per cent) for being Latvian.

The great majority of the Latvian Russians maintains that an opportunity to speak Russian in everyday life (91.7 per cent), an opportunity to read newspapers and magazines in Russian (92.1 per cent), an opportunity for their children to study the ethnic history and culture of Russians (90.8 per cent), and an opportunity to preserve Russian folk customs, traditions, culture (89.3 per cent) are very important or rather important. Also, the majority maintain that an opportunity for their children to get education in Russian and an opportunity to have the Russian representatives in the parliament are of great importance (82 per cent and 77.7 per cent, correspondingly).

The respondents of the survey have maintained that it is of highly importance for them to use the media in Russian language and to give school education for their children in minority language. According to the survey data, majority of the Latvian Russians can take advantages of reading newspapers and magazines in the Russian language, issued in Latvia (95.5 per cent), watch TV programs of the Latvian TV channels in Russian language (92.9 per cent) and listen to the radio programs of the Latvian radio stations in Russian language (90.1 per cent). Three quarters of the Russian sample maintain that they have and opportunity to give school education for their children in Russian language (76.4 per cent).

Respondents were asked about the languages they speak. The great majority of Russians questioned declared their knowledge of Russian (99.3 per cent) and Latvian (72.9 per cent) languages. There are statistically significantly larger shares of people aged 50 or more (70 per cent), widowed (28 per cent), not working (74 per cent) and retired (54 per cent), having Russian (14 per

cent) or no citizenship (57 per cent) among the Latvian Russians who state they do not know the Latvian language.

Considering manifestations of ethnic tension, a certain distribution of opinions could be observed. Nearly half of respondents (48.9 per cent) maintain that there is some tension between Russians and Latvians in Latvia, and 15 per cent – there is a lot of tension. Still, 32.3 per cent maintains that there is no tension.

According to the survey data, 22.4 per cent of Russian respondents indicated that in the past 12 months they have personally felt discriminated against or harassed in Latvia on the basis of one or more of the following grounds: ethnic or national origin, gender, age or religion.

Among the grounds listed, ethnic or national origin was most frequently mentioned: 16 per cent of the Russians have felt discriminated against or harassed on the grounds of ethnic origin in the last 12 months. 9.1 per cent of respondents indicate experienced discrimination or harassment on the ground of age, 3.6 per cent – on gender. The discrimination on the basis of ethnic or national origin was statistically significantly more often experienced by people having no citizenship (these people more often say they also experienced discrimination because of their age), discrimination because of certain gender – by females, having university education.

While analysing the survey data on respondents' interest in politics, the Russians surveyed express their relatively high interest in all areas of politics as the majority is interested in politics about the Latvian Russians – 73 per cent ('very interested' and 'rather interested'), politics of Latvia – 71.9 per cent, politics of Russia – 68 per cent of respondents.

While considering the European Union, it must be said that it has pretty negative character among the Latvian Russians as most part of the respondents surveyed (45.5 per cent) has very negative or rather negative image of the EU. One third of the Latvian Russians (33.8 per cent) have neutral and a relatively small share of respondents (16.8 per cent) has a very positive or fairly positive image of European Union. (See Table 25) The youngest respondents (up to 29 years old) statistically significantly have positive image of the EU more often than the seniors (50 years old and elder) who tend to have negative one.

Also, more than a half (60.6 per cent) of the Latvian Russians tends to think that Latvia does not benefit from being a member of the European Union. One fourth (25 per cent) of the respondents maintains that Latvia benefits a lot or rather benefits from being a member of the EU. (See Table 26) In this case, the younger Russians surveyed (up to 29 years old) are more optimist with regard to the benefits from the membership in the EU.

Most of Russians surveyed (40.4 per cent) provided the interviewers with negative answers that they would never leave. Nearly one third of respondents (31.6 per cent) said they would definitely leave, while nearly a quarter (22 per cent) expressed their doubt saying that they perhaps would leave. (See Table 29) The intentions to leave Latvia are much stronger among the younger and middle age respondents (up to 49 years old), those who are citizens of Latvia, and those who have either the lowest or the highest income level.

Those who have expressed their willingness to leave Latvia, were asked which country they would prefer. Most often Russian respondents (N=146) mentioned Russia (30.6 per cent), then United Kingdom (9.6 per cent), Germany (8 per cent) or Ireland (4 per cent).

7.1.2 ENRI-BIOG results

The interviews were conducted in accordance to the methodological guidelines developed by the ENRI-EAST team and described in the project manual. Survey agency – Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

Answering to the questions on European identity, conceptualization of Europe, the respondents used to talk of the EU and Latvia's accession to the EU. Part of respondents expressed criticism towards EU as a political organization. These respondents were talking of rising emigration, unemployment, less possibilities to travel to Russia and other former republics of the Soviet Union. Other respondents, especially the representatives of youngest generation, named a number of advantages related with Latvia's accession to the EU: possibilities of travelling and studying, career opportunities.

The major part of respondents described themselves as Latvia's Russians, i.e. closely connected with Latvia. Some respondents described themselves as connected with both – Latvian and Russian cultures.

The issues related with the status of non-citizens were raised by the respondents in the interviews. The informants were giving examples of ethnic tensions in everyday life, pointed to the issues of language use in everyday communication. The issues related with the education reform were also raised during the interviews.

7.1.3 ENRI-EXI results

The interviews were conducted in accordance to the methodological guidelines developed by the ENRI-East team and described in the project manual. Survey agency – Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia.

The expert (interview no.1) pointed attention to the following issues: a)The Russians in Latvia is not a homogeneous group since part of Russians have been living in Latvia for centuries, others came during the Soviet times. The attitudes towards host society and evaluation of present situation differ among Russian population; b)The mass media in Latvia is divided into the Russian and Latvian mass media oriented to the Russian and Latvian population; c) There is a lack of research and statistics on the situation of ethnic minorities in Latvia in the spheres of housing, labour, other spheres. The expert admits that at some spheres there are more Latvians employed and this is related to the issues of state language skills and citizenship; d) The expert claims that non-citizens should be granted the possibility to vote at the municipal elections.

The expert (interview no.2) pointed to the following issues: a) the law on the state language diminishes the employment possibilities of ethnic minorities in Latvia; b) the fact that there is such group as non-citizens in the Latvian society is interpreted as discrimination of part of the population. For example, those who do not have a status of citizen cannot be employed at some positions, C) the expert suggests that there should be either zero option of citizenship or automatic allocation of citizenship to the newly born children.

Both experts interviewed estimated the influence of Latvia's accession to the EU on minority situation in a reserved manner.

7.2 Practical recommendations

The research conducted in Latvia encompasses quantitative and qualitative surveys. The research data is revealing on different aspects of Russian minority situation in Latvia and presents perspectives of different social groups in Latvia. The initial data analysis is presented in the report and raises a number of questions to be further investigated. Some basic practical recommendations can be drawn at this stage.

7.2.1 Recommendations for civil society organizations

Civil society organizations in Latvia carry the work of the highest importance in fostering and disseminating the cultures of ethnic minorities, in the spheres of minority rights, human rights. It is of highest importance that in their work they seek for interethnic communication, promotion of communication between different ethnic groups, between titular nation and ethnic minorities.

7.2.2 Recommendations for governmental bodies and officials at local, regional, national and supra-national levels

The issues related with the law of citizenship, the status of non-citizens and the law on state language were of key importance for the respondents of Russian origin in Latvia. This legal basis affects people's participation in job market and other social spheres. The highest level of sensitivity and sensibility should be demonstrated in developing the laws that affect broad spectrum of population.

7.2.3 Suggestions for future research and follow-up studies

The follow up studies should focus on the development of ethnic minority situation, interethnic communication, minority-majority communication in Latvia influenced by political processes, legal changes, economic situation and so on. For comparative reasons it were of highest importance to conduct research not only among the groups of ethnic minorities, but among titular-Latvian residents as well. The perspectives on ethnic situation, ethnic communications should come from "both sides", i.e. from ethnic minority and titular nation.

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