

# **ETHNICITY**

## **Ethnic Identities and Integration of the Society**

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# ETHNICITY 2011/5

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**Mara Ustinova**

## **THE INTEGRATION OF LATVIAN SOCIETY: COMMON AND DIFFERENT INTERESTS OF ETHNO-LINGUISTIC GROUPS<sup>1</sup>**

Integration of third-country nationals is one of the most pressing problems in many countries of the European Union (EU). It is associated with the processes of numerous migrations and the need to support groups of people uniting them. In this article we will discuss one important aspect of society integration in Latvia. The main hypothesis of our study: one of the obstacles to integration of the society in Latvia is the fact that different segments of society have not developed a common understanding of the term “integration”. Ethno-linguistic groups perceive the goal of integration differently and they have different interests concerning this process. The following questions have been formulated and analyzed according to this hypothesis:

- What do the ethno-linguistic groups have in mind when they speak about integration?
- What are the interests of the ethno-linguistic groups in the process of integration?

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1 Article is a part of the project called «Conflict Transformation in Latvia: Promoting Integration by Comparing Differences and Similarities of Interests and Goals in Order to Strengthen Tolerance and Mutual Empathy», financed by Berghof Foundation studying conflicts (2010, grant № 09013). As foreseen by the project in August 2010, 16 extended interviews were carried out on society integration in Latvia. Groups of experts consisted of integration researchers, journalists covering this subject in mass media, leaders of NGOs of national minorities, state employees dealing with practical realization of various aspects of integration policy, and other active members of the society.

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- Which of these interests are shared by all, and which seem incompatible?
- What should be done to make perception of integration by ethno-linguistic groups more similar?

**Key words:** Integration, immigrants from third countries, Latvian society, ethno-linguistic groups

Integration of third-country nationals is one of the most pressing problems in many countries of the European Union (EU). It is associated with the processes of “new” EU member states have only recently experienced immigration and integration issues, while the “old” European countries have been having them for several decades. The deliberate policy of integration was initiated in 1999, when during the European Council meeting in Tampere (Finland), the member states voted in favor of a dynamic policy of integration of third-country nationals. As importance level of integration problems increased in the EU, it was decided to establish National Contact Points on integration (NCP), which would supply the European Council with reviews on migration and integration in specific countries. Five years later, in 2004 at a meeting in The Hague (the Netherlands) with the aim of coordinating and forming a coherent policy on integration of third-country nationals Common Basic Principles (CBS) have been developed and adopted. The purpose of these principles was coordination of integration policies in different countries, assessment of progress in these areas, improving the efficiency of information exchange and supporting a coherent structure dealing with integration of immigrants from third countries.

Common Basic Principles outline priorities that the national policies of integration of EU countries should focus on. Among them – employment, education, accessibility of social services, as well as language and culture<sup>2</sup>. For exchange of information on integration and dissemination of “good practices” among EU member states a Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners has been developed in three editions, along with other materials recommended for use when developing integration policies (Handbook 2004).

A comparative study on integration processes in different EU countries and development of indicators that measure success or failure in this sphere has also been initiated (Carrera 2008). In order to ensure equal opportuni-

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2 [www.enaro.eu/dsip/download/eu-Common-Basic-Principles.pdf](http://www.enaro.eu/dsip/download/eu-Common-Basic-Principles.pdf)

ties for all groups of people other guidelines were also adopted concerning employment, social and other spheres.

Depending on experience different sources of information were created in different countries to deal with certain issues, to manage exchange of experience regarding “good practices” in integration projects. A special website on European integration (European Web Site on Integration) has been created where one can find the European Integration Forum. The forum allows discussing various issues related to integration of migrants and outlines priorities for this work. There is also the European Integration Fund and other funds that provide financial assistance to projects aimed at integration of third-country nationals. A special website helps to carry out interactive search of the required data related to issues of integration, all the posts there are based on monitoring the situation with indices on integration of migrants in specific countries<sup>3</sup>.

This project is supervised by the British Council together with the Migration Policy Group. The integration index of immigrants was developed in order to compare legislation in 31 countries, including Europe and North America. Comparison is based on 148 indicators, such as, conditions for acquiring citizenship or employment opportunities and many others. If the situation in a country on any of these indicators meets the highest European and international standards, the country receives the highest score (100%). And vice versa – if the situation does not meet any of the standards or if the country does nothing to improve it, it gets the lowest score (0%). So far, there have been three reports by country (in 2004, 2007 and 2010), covering the situation in the seven following areas: availability of employment, non-discrimination, possibilities to get citizenship, political participation, education, long-term residence and family reunification.

These reports are valuable not only because they show the dynamics of data on the situation in the concrete country in the specified years, but also because they give the comparison with the situation and best practices concerning integration in other countries. Talking about the situation in Latvia, comparing these seven aspects reveals the existence of a number of unresolved issues (Niessen, Huddleston, Citron 2007, p. 104-109). In some aspects, such as access of non-citizens (immigrants in the past) to the labor market and their political participation in the life of the country, Latvia in 2007, ranked last among the EU countries and remained last also in 2010.

In this article we will discuss one important aspect of society integration

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3 [www.integrationindex.eu](http://www.integrationindex.eu) or [www.mipex.eu](http://www.mipex.eu).

in Latvia. The main hypothesis of our study: one of the obstacles to integration of the society in Latvia is the fact that different segments of society have not developed a common understanding of the term “integration”. Ethno-linguistic groups perceive the goal of integration differently and they have different interests concerning this process. The following questions have been formulated and analyzed according to this hypothesis:

- What do the ethno-linguistic groups have in mind when they speak about integration?
- What are the interests of the ethno-linguistic groups in the process of integration?
- Which of these interests are shared by all, and which seem incompatible?
- What should be done to make perception of integration by ethno-linguistic groups more similar?

Researchers from other European countries dealing with these problems have already pointed out the relevance of studying the problems connected with different perception of integration among various layers of society (immigrants and natives) (Castles, Korac, Vasta, Vertovec 2002, p.181). Studying the mentioned issues, in our view, will help to further understand the characteristics of integration of Latvian society and to work out the evaluation criteria.

However, before proceeding to the specific analysis of the results of the study, let's briefly talk about the accepted interpretations of the term “integration”.

*Integration* (Latin *Integratio* – renewal, completion, from *integer* – whole) – a concept that means the state of connectivity of individual differentiated parts and functions of a system, of a body, as well as the process leading to this state<sup>4</sup>. The term integration is popular in various fields of knowledge. According to Webster's it is used in 16 different areas ranging from computer science and agriculture to military affairs, family problems, and statistics.

Its interpretation in each of these areas of knowledge is polysemantic. For example, in sociology in the expanded interpretation the term refers to combining two or more economies, cultures, religions, etc. It describes the social, racial, political integration as well as integration of a different type, where each type interprets the specific properties of this phenomenon in a particular area. The concept of *integration*, as well as the phenomenon itself

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4 [www.vseslova.ru](http://www.vseslova.ru) – online dictionaries

is a multidimensional phenomenon and cannot be measured according to any single criterion.

As pointed out by researchers of integration problems in the UK, a single content of the term integration does not exist, as there is no generally accepted theory or model of integration (of immigrants and refugees). The concept of integration is all encompassing, unclear and contradictory, and subjected to numerous debates (Castles, Korac, Vasta, Vertovec 2002, p.112-114). The content of the term varies in different countries; it depends on who is formulating the process: it varies with time and depends on the interests, values, and the original point of view of different social, ethnic, religious and other groups. There is also no agreement on the operationalization of the term, i.e. transformation of this abstract concept into a concrete phenomenon possible to study and on what indicators can be used to study this process and to assess its results. Research data on integration problems in various countries show that the main factor determining direction of this process lies in the historical experiences with immigrants and minorities gained during formation of national states (Castles, Korac, Vasta, Vertovec 2002, p.201).

The social sciences widely use the term *social integration*, which also can have different meanings depending on the context in which it is used. The popular dictionary Wikipedia offers interpretation of the concept, *social integration*, which means: 1. Acceptance of an individual by other members of the group; 2. The process of establishing the best relations between the relatively independent social objects (individuals, groups, social classes, states) with little in common and their subsequent transformation into a single, integrated system, the parts of which are coordinated and interdependent, based on common goals and interests; 3. Forms of maintaining social stability and equilibrium of the system of social relations. Sociological dictionary of the project Socium 2003 determines integration as “a set of interactions, coherence, coordination of actions between the elements of a social system that provides its internal unity, integrity and harmonious functioning, invariability and dynamic stability” (Интеграция 2011).

Russian Sociological encyclopedia edited by Academician Gennady Osipov (1998) gives the following definition of integration:

1. a process resulting in achieving unity and integrity, consistency within the system based on interdependence and complementarity of separate specialized items.

2. By T. Parson – the process of establishing and maintaining social interactions and relationships between actors, one of the functional conditions of existence of equilibrium and a social system, along with adaptation,

goal attainment and preservation of valuable samples<sup>5</sup>.

In general, social integration is associated with the process in which a group of persons, such as ethnic minorities, refugees, and other sectors of society whose rights have been violated in some way, unite with the main part of this society and gain the same opportunities and rights as others.

V. Kasyanov and V. Nechipurenko in their book “Sociology of Law. Glossary of Terms” (2001) gives the following interpretation of *integration*: Integration means:

1. The set of processes due to which elements interacting in one social community connect, forming one whole system.

2. Maintaining stability and equilibrium of social relations by social groups.

3. The ability of the social system of self-preservation in the face of internal and external stresses difficulties and contradictions<sup>6</sup>. In the Latvian language *integration* has the following synonyms: integration, forming a single entity, gathering together, balancing, and coordination<sup>7</sup>.

Integration of a person occurs at different levels, from a particular social group or community to the awareness of belonging (identity) to a state and participation in public life.

It should be noted that the demographic and socio-economic conditions for social integration in Latvia are more favorable in comparison with Estonia and Lithuania.

Thus, in contrast with Estonia in its north-eastern part, there were not any entire regions formed historically in Latvia, where national minorities lived compactly and in isolation from the Latvians. Minorities in Latvia have settled more evenly throughout the territory of Latvia, especially in cities. In Latvia, historically, mixed marriages were more common and their share is slowly increasing. In the early 1990s, about 18% of male Latvians married women of other nationalities. For women, this figure was even higher. In 2008, already 19.8% of Latvian men married women of other than Latvian nationality. In Latvian women, the same figure is 20%<sup>8</sup>. In Estonia, the proportion of mixed marriages is comparatively small. According to calculations of Estonian ethnographers, only 9-10% of Estonians marry a partner of another nationality (Dribins 2008, p. 25). However,

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5 <http://voluntary.ru/dictionary/619/word/%C8%CD%D2%C5%C3%D0%C0%D6%C8%DF>

6 <http://voluntary.ru/dictionary/616/>

7 <http://vardnica.virtualis.lv>

8 Data from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. See: <http://www.csb.gov.lv>

according to a survey conducted by the Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvians are less prone to close relationship with Russians than vice versa. At the same time, two-thirds of the respondents that are Latvians (66%) responded that they would not object his son or daughter marrying a Russian partner (Zepa 2004 (1)). At the same time, in Estonia, only 9-10% of Estonians come into inter-ethnic marriages. In Latvia, unlike Estonia, there is no significant socio-economic difference between ethnic communities, particularly in relation to income (Rozenvalds 2010, p. 37).

As revealed in a survey devoted to the study of ethnic relations in Latvia in 2005, relations between people of different nationalities at the individual level are characterized as predominantly positive. However, at the group level, there are contradictions between different ethnic (ethno-linguistic) groups. These contradictions are manifested mainly in the following forms:

1. On a symbolic level, for example, as conflicting views on history, monuments, and important events at home and abroad, and related confrontation in public space,

2. In the political sphere – there is a division of the “Latvian” and “non-Latvian” political parties, ethnically motivated election campaigns and voting of the population, as well as contradictions of the state’s ethnic policies, and

3. In still divided information space – the existence of sharply different and confronting social and political discourses,

4. In the form of mutual perception and communication – in the negative ethnic stereotypes in everyday life,

5. In the growing activity of radical national organizations (Šņitņikovs 2007, p.10-11).

Integration of society in Latvia – a relatively new concept that emerged simultaneously with the development of policies in this area. Nevertheless, the history of discourse on integration problems of society in Latvia has already lasted for more than ten years<sup>9</sup>. Its appearance was due to the widely perceived need in social and political circles in Latvia, in the late 1990s, to develop a society that is cohesive, loyal to the state, shares common values and shows tolerance towards cultural, ethnic, social and other differences. The issue of social integration grew particularly acute in the late

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<sup>9</sup> In Estonia, a program of social integration was developed in the mid-1990s and presented for discussion in 1997, it was adopted by the Estonian government on March 2, 1999 and entitled “Integrating Non-Estonians in the Estonian Society.”

1990s – early 2000s due to the entry of Latvia into the European Union. Moreover, it is not an uncommon opinion that the idea of social integration was imposed from the outside with the entry of Latvia into the EU. To large extent this view is supported by the fact that in 1997 Latvia was not included in the list of six countries (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Poland, Slovenia and Hungary), invited to join the EU. Although a number of Latvian politicians have denied the connection between the decision of the European Commission and the problems of social integration, the report of the Commission testified to the contrary. It pointed out the need to facilitate the naturalization process in order to help with the integration of Russian-speaking non-citizens into the Latvian society (Rozenvalds 2010, p. 49). At the same time, we cannot disagree with the Latvian researcher and the leader of the team of developers of the concept of integration Elmars Vebers, who writes that “... the idea of the unity of society has its own backstory here in Latvia and there is no need to seek external confirmation of this, as it is considered by politicians who believe that the idea of social unity has been imposed on us by foreign countries and international organizations” (Vēbers 2007, p.117).

Researchers studying the experience of Western and Central European countries came to a conclusion that none of the models of European integration is applicable to the conditions of Latvia for several reasons.

First, people to be integrated in those countries do not constitute such a high proportion as in Latvia which in 1989 was 35%, in 1999 – 27% and in 2006 – 21%.

Secondly, nowhere the people potentially subject to integration have put forth such high demands on the country of residence, as it was in Latvia after the restoration of independence. There were demands of an automatic attribution of citizenship, providing migrant language as language of education at all levels, pension payments according to the calculations of work experience abroad, preservation of social privilege in payments from the budget of the country of residence, and the requirement of dual citizenship (of the country of origin and the country of residence).

Third, nowhere postwar settlers have put forward such broad political demands. In essence, rejection of the rehabilitation of the national state in Latvia was demanded and construction of a new bi-communal state with two official languages (Latvian and Russian) was suggested, with division of power between citizens and post-war settlers.

Fourth, nowhere in the Western and Central Europe a country of settlers' origin have imposed such an open and strong pressure on its neighbor, as was the case in relations between Russia and Latvia (Dribins 2008, p. 20).

These circumstances of the national situation explained searching for our own national way of integration of society in Latvia.

Since the beginning of the integration policy in Latvia, a lot of work has been done: development and, after extensive public discussion, adoption of the state program “Integration of Society in Latvia” (2001), which was implemented in 2001. The absolute achievement of the integration program was recognizing integration as state policy.

The preamble of the program said: “The integration of society stands for mutual understanding and cooperation of individuals and groups within a framework of a common state. The basis of integration of society is loyalty to the state, Latvia, the realization that the future of any individual and his personal well-being is closely linked with the future of the Latvian state, its stability and security. At the basis of it, there is a willingness to voluntarily accept the Latvian language as the official language, to respect the Latvian language and culture, and languages and cultures of national minorities”<sup>10</sup>. In the program, it’s repeatedly mentioned that integration is a two way process, as well as the suggestion is expressed of the need for cooperation and overcoming mistrust and feelings of threat between the two ethnolinguistic parts of society. Yet the emphasis in the program was placed on the necessity of minorities to accept the Latvian culture, speak the Latvian language, understand the history according to the official version, be loyal to the state, etc. The program included the promotion of naturalization and civic participation, and for the first time – the financial support of the integration policy from the state budget. However, already in the preparatory phase of the program a number of omissions were made, which subsequently affected the attitude towards political integration as a whole. One such omission was that the discussion of the State Program of integration of society included only a few representatives of national minorities. During the discussion they made a number of proposals relating especially to the interests of national minorities. However, the subsequently approved program was perceived by them in such a way that no proposals were adopted in the final version. As one of the experts we interviewed pointed out:

“... We, the Union of Ukrainians in Latvia, when the idea of creating a state integration program was announced, we had our meeting and, with fights, discussed this issue for four, five hours, because it affects the Ukrainians, like any minority here, and we made about two hundred proposals, amendments to the draft that had been designed. The project was devel-

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10 National Programme “Integration of Society in Latvia” approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in 2001.

oped by the working group under the Cabinet of Ministers, and then the integration project was approved. None of our amendments were adopted, and not just ours – none of the amendments brought up by the social organizations of national minorities was accepted by the working group. “

The program reflected the main concerns of various ethnic and linguistic groups regarding integration – it was differences in value orientation and interpretation of history, a sense (perception) of threat, mutual mistrust and others. However, the program did not offer how to eliminate these concerns (Rozenvalds 2010, p.54).

In addition, the program turned out to be a rather useless document as a guide of actions to take. Although it focused on important goals of the Latvian society (understanding of integration as a two-way process, cooperation between all groups, overcoming the mistrust, consistency with respect to a common understanding of history, etc.), the program also contained serious flaws. Priorities for these goals were not developed, nor were the various issues aimed at overcoming ethnic division of society described well enough (Kunda 2010, p.87).

It should be noted that already in the 1990s work was initiated to establish a dialogue between the state and national minorities, special state institutions were set up to deal with the practical implementation of social integration and focusing on the strategy of cooperation between the state and national minorities. Work in the area of integration was initiated within Department of Integration of the Ministry of Justice, which existed until 2001, then the Secretariat of the Minister for Special Assignments for Society Integration Affairs was created, which operated from 2001 to 2009<sup>11</sup>. The Secretariat of the Minister exercised a very effective policy supporting NGOs of ethnic minorities and through them -supporting the main part of the national communities. By doing this, the institution has earned the approval of their activities on the part of NGOs and national minorities in general. One of our experts evaluated the role of the Secretariat as follows:

“... This ministry, which was originally comprised of the Department of National Minorities only, managed to take 480 public organizations of national minorities under its wing and neutralize the influence of non-Latvian factor. There the question was – how we, Ukrainians, can express ourselves in the Latvian society. “

The Secretariat of this ministry initiated and carried out various cul-

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11 the Secretariat of the Minister for Special Assignments for Society Integration Affairs was created by the Latvian First Party, which won the parliamentary elections in 2002.

tural activities and in this way contributed to the support of ethnic and cultural identity of national minorities in Latvia:

*“We were told, ‘Let’s organize the days of Ukrainian culture in Latvia. We showed, one day – our national embroidery, Ukrainian towels, embroidered shirts and so on. The second day – Ukrainian cuisine. We invited others. And, among them, also Latvians visited us – the parliament members, as well as ministers and the Prime Minister came to these events. We showed Ukrainian films, folklore etc. Then, the gala concert was held where the best Ukrainian groups performed, we did not have our own place for this event, so it was held in the Jewish community house. Belarusians, Old Believers and other minorities organized their events too.”*

These activities have made a clear contribution to the integration of Latvian society through social acquaintance with the cultural characteristics of a particular nationality. They were also aimed at expanding the cultural beliefs of the Latvian society:

*“In order for us and for Latvians to understand that we are not some harmful, unacceptable representatives of minority population, but useful ones, actually, because we respect the Latvian culture, and Latvians understand now that there are other cultures, and it enriches us. The more a person of a particular nationality absorbs some cultural trends, the more content he becomes, the more interested in life he is, the more opportunities he can find to distract his attention from some kind of problems: social, economic and other.”*

*In 2009, under conditions of the economic crisis, the Secretariat was liquidated, and the corresponding issues were at first referred to the competence of the Society Integration Department of the Ministry of Children and Families, and since July 1, 2009, to the Department for Social Integration of the Ministry of Justice of LR, and then – to the Ministry of Culture of LR.*

In 2001 Society Integration Foundation was founded and it still operates, with the mission – promotion of national integration program in the Latvian society. Activities of the Foundation aim at supporting initiatives that promote ethnic and social integration. It should be noted that between the two structures – the Secretariat of Integration and Society Integration Foundation, the purpose of which was – promotion of social integration, there was no clear division of duties. Both structures were operated in accordance with particular laws and they were not subordinate to each other. Periodically, there was a tension between them, which was followed by a sharp exchange of statements about duplication of functions in relation to working with NGOs, about the Rights of the Minister of the Secretariat to

exercise supervision related to the Foundation and other matters. One of the reasons for these disagreements that were highlighted in the media, was competition for the control of sources for financing projects of social integration. If the budget of the Secretariat of Integration was 300 000 lats per year (about 428 000 euros), the Society Integration Foundation had 1.5 million lats (2.14 million euros) in 2003 and 10 million lats (1.428 million euros) in 2008 (Araja 2007). The Society Integration Foundation received a prompt administrative development. In 2001, its staff consisted of 5 persons, but in 2008 – of 75 people (Kunda 2010, p. 69).

The Foundation administered the program PHARE «Promotion of Social Integration in Latvia», which included a variety of activities in the field of intercultural education, promotion of inter-ethnic dialogue, cooperation and the use of best practices in bilingual education, etc. In general, the charter of all grants organized by the Integration Foundation covered all the topics on the program of integration – citizenship and naturalization, programs integrating the local governments, the exchange between schools, supporting NGOs of minorities, etc. In many cases, the Fund directly contributed to the development of inter-ethnic contacts and by this – integration of society in Latvia. For example, in 2002, 2003 and 2004 there was a competition of projects announced with the aim – to promote media coverage of Latvia as a multicultural state. In 2002, NGO projects were declared the priorities of the Foundation that would promote mutual understanding and harmony among the ethnic groups living in Latvia; in 2004, a priority in the contest of projects was given to multicultural education, competitions of the PHARE program in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 included six to ten priorities a year that were aimed at promoting the ethnic dialogue (Kunda 2010, p. 73-75). From 2002 to 2006 – the projects supported by the Foundation and aimed at ethnic integration in various areas were distributed as follows: the promotion of naturalization (~ 10% of projects), support for cultural heritage (30%) or language learning (40%), as well as projects aimed at integration of socially marginalized ethnic groups (less than 10%) and other areas (Kunda 2010, p. 80).

Along with the practical implementation of society integration policy, Latvian scientists started to evaluate successes and failures in this area. A number of fundamental studies were done on the experience accumulated in Latvia and other Baltic countries, on common problems in the area of integration of society in these countries, the role of language policy, systems of education, cultural policy in this process, the participation of national minorities (Vēbers 2000, p.514; Masaļska 2005, p.215-242), the role of civil society (Kruks, Šulmane 2002, p. 103), the causes and consequenc-

es of the confrontation to the process of integration (Dribins, Šņitņikovs 2007, p.140; Sabiedrības 2002, p. 103), the causes and consequences of the confrontation to the process of integration (Dribins, Ģņitņikovs 2007, p. 140; Sabiedrības 2008, p.84), issues of the relationship between tolerance and integration, the problems of integrating the youth in the context of the educational reform, practices and perspectives of the process as a whole (Zepa 2004 (1), p. 84; Zepa 2004 (2); Zepa 2006, p. 250) and other aspects of this important public process; public opinion on current issues of integration was monitored (Sabiedrības integrācijas aktuālākie 2006, p. 105; Sabiedrības integrācijas aktuālākie 2007, p. 81).

Researchers examining the theoretical aspects of integration emphasize that integration is not equal to assimilation, and it means maintaining the culture of groups and inter-group contacts (Muižnieks 2009). It runs constantly and at every level, ranging from the everyday communication of people of different nationalities to the higher realms of politics, culture and socio-economic relations. This process involves acting persons (actors) from different fields. In a democratic society integration can be interpreted as a process by help of which the entire population of the country owns civic, social, political, linguistic, cultural and other rights, at the same time creating conditions for deepening the equality of all layers of society (Muižnieks 2010).

It should be noted that from the very beginning of implementing the policy of integration, it was criticized by both acting persons and those that the process was directed to.

Representatives of minority NGOs believe that the drawback of the state integration program has been its all-inclusive character:

*“... The first state program – it was comprehensive. There was a necessity to integrate everybody : the poor and disabled, and animal advocates, and lately also – gays and lesbians. But can you imagine, when you need to integrate many at the same time, you can achieve no integration. “*

As mentioned above, the main hypothesis of our study was that one of the factors hindering the integration of Latvian society are the differences in the understanding and perception of the integration by different ethno-linguistic groups. In the Latvian society, there is no common understanding of the key concept of “integration” and there is no common perception of adequate ways of implementing the state policy in this area. Ethno-linguistic groups have different perceptions of the goal of integration and they pursue different interests in this process. The perception of integration varies both in different segments of the national society as well as within them. As noted by one of the experts we interviewed:

*“Integration as such is not perceived the same by any group. Each group (not only ethnic, but also social) have their own views about the integration. Consequently, everyone understands integration as he wants, as far as it is allowed by one’s experience, education, inner resentment, stereotypes, etc.) “*

Despite the lack of common understanding of integration, in the opinion of the experts we interviewed, all ethno-linguistic groups of society are characterized by common interests: the vast majority of the republic’s residents want to see Latvia as an independent democratic state in which society shares common values:

*“In my understanding, integration – is when ethnic groups living in one territory has shared values that are not so much ethnic as they are values, which may be shared by any member of society regardless of ethnicity. It may be political, democratic, economic or other goals. “*

An absolute common value is the economic prosperity of the Latvian society and human well-being, social stability, solving economic problems and overcoming the consequences of the economic crisis (survival issues):

*“Every ethnic group believes that the community of Latvia’s population should be consolidated and everyone should have equal rights”*

*“There are Latvians and there are Russians, and there are more similarities among them than they think there are”*

*“I believe the economic crisis has shown to many that economic issues are more important than disagreements between ethnic communities or their representatives.”*

In general terms, one can speak about the differences in understanding and perception of *integration* between Latvians and ethnic minorities of the country. Latvian perception of the *integration* of society is that it’s a predominantly one-way process. *Integration* – the process by which non-Latvians adapt to the requirements of Latvians. *Integration* – is not a project of Latvians, as they constitute a part of their state. Latvians do not have to change anything in themselves, in relationships, in culture, as they are already in their cultural environment. Our experts have expressed this position with these words:

*“We have to admit that Latvians are looking at this (integration – M.U.) more as at a one-way process – it is your responsibility to learn the language, it is your responsibility to accept our values, our traditions, so it’s not us adjusting to you, but you adapting to our requirements “.*

*“For many Latvians it’s enough that people of other nationalities speak the Latvian language, not to feel animosity towards Latvia, Latvians and Latvian values”*

*“Talking about integration, one of the main problems is that most of the*

*Latvian society, especially the Latvian political elite are looking at integration as a one-way process. They must get integrated. We need not. We – are the way we are. As long as the political elite and the Latvian part of the society do not change this idea on a massive scale, it will surely be difficult “.*

Analysis of qualitative data suggests that Latvians, although wanting a society that is united, are still skeptical about the implementation of integration. Much of this can be attributed to weak motivation of Latvians themselves to integrate (Zepa 2005, p. 16). This kind of motivation to some extent is affected by the fact that the policy of integration in Latvia is to large extent reduced to the integration of minorities into Latvian society, and not the mutual integration of different ethnic groups.

*“The policy of integration is still distant for Latvians, because they have, in my opinion, no desire to integrate with any other peoples, national minorities in Latvia or other.”*

Latvians believe that they do not need to integrate into the state since they are already a part of this state. In the opinion of Latvians, integration – is the question of national minorities speaking the Latvian language and using the Latvian language in communication, as well as accepting Latvian culture, values and traditions.

*“Latvians view integration as something negative, they do not want to be integrated and why would they need to intervene? For positive perception, Latvians would accept integration where Russians and others who live here must speak Latvian and love this country or be patriots of this state. “*

*“... Latvians, in my observation, see it (integration – M.U.) this way: “Let them integrate, if they want it – it’s not our problem. “*

*“... Latvians do not think, at least most of them, that it is also their task to change something in their relations, to discover culture.”*

In the experts’ opinion, the Russian-speaking ethno linguistic group perceives the integration policy with apprehension. Representatives of this group believe that integration is an attempt to assimilate them, and it is imposed on them, that they have a subordinate role, while the “keys” of integration are in the hands of Latvians. The non-Latvian section of society, according to experts, believes that integration without full participation in the development of the state is not possible,

*“On a human level, of course, there are differences. Russian-speaking minorities (integration – M. U.) more associate integration with rights in various fields and aspects. They see it more as a two-way street – if they were given citizenship and they could change life here, since they pay taxes here. “*

*“In my opinion, of course, the difference in the perception of integration by Russians exists, it is significant and it is due to recent history. For example,*

*Russians are practically not represented in the public sector, they are more in the private sector, and, of course, it also leaves its mark. Russians have got alienated from the state apparatus, public administration, and, of course, from the government”.*

For the Russian-speaking part of Latvian society, it is important to make integration double-sided: we learn the language and accept your culture; however, we want you to accept the fact that we will preserve our language, culture and traditions.

Differences in perception of the integration process between the ethno-linguistic groups are based on the interest of both groups to maintain their own ethno-linguistic and cultural identity, and fear of losing it. Some experts say that ordinary people, regardless of nationality, are not interested in the integration policy.

*“I have watched my neighbors in Zolitude, Imanta, Bolderaja, I know them very well. They have never asked, “Why don’t you integrate?” or something like that. They have not even asked, “Why don’t you take citizenship?” These people are concerned about their own lives, and they are not interested if someone is or is not integrated.”*

Despite the identified differences in the perception of integration, the interviewed experts pointed out a number of possible solutions to this problem helping to optimize the process of consolidation of the society in Latvia, promoting and strengthening tolerance and empathy. One of these solutions is ensuring a balance between the different cultures and languages forming one society as well as cooperation of all the ethno-linguistic groups:

*“I believe that integration policy as such is necessary. Moreover, the integration project cannot come to an end, it goes on and on, same as the national issue, and all the questions connected with it cannot be answered in any state. If there are different ethnic groups, their interests need to be balanced all the time. “*

*“Integration of society – is the art of compromises.”*

The integration process foresees ensuring public support and funding of NGOs of minorities as well as increasing minority representation in local governments. The challenging, but not forcing the integration factors are of great importance in this process. The rhetoric of political leaders should not divide people along ethnic lines, it should be including. The cornerstone of integration is education policy; intercultural dialogue should begin already in school.

*“When it comes to public policy, I do not think that keeping national minorities away from political processes is a pragmatic step. Here we must say that if we want to integrate ethnic minorities, they should be provided with*

*the opportunity to participate in the formation of political power. The aim of integration is to make sure that the existing resources of national minorities are increasing Latvia's welfare."*

The interviewed experts believe that engaging the younger generation, the so called "Euro Latvians" and "Euro Russians" in the political process is one of the resources of integration.

Obviously, in the Latvian society, there are many possibilities to build and deepen trust between ethno-linguistic groups, using which it would be possible to strengthen the integration process. Expansion of communication in the ethnically mixed labor groups has been mentioned by the interviewed experts as one of such possibilities.

*"Mixed labor groups can increase trust between people. In such teams you can get to know people, in this way your job is not just a job. It also creates social interaction, where you can learn about the different characters, temperaments; learn about traditions, holidays, style of work, as well as values."*

Some experts believe that it is also important to expand the network of ethnically mixed schools and to develop the intercultural competence in children and school teams, to celebrate events together, *"At least tolerance of opinions is necessary. I do my thing – I do not bother you, and you do your work and do not bother me, everything is fine, we sit at one table, drink coffee and tea. Just like during our Midsummer Night celebration – people go out of town, nobody cares if you are a Russian or a Latvian."*

Leaders must emphasize the unifying aspects of society life and mitigate the dividing ones. It is important for mass media to represent society as a whole, not divided into ethnic or ethno-linguistic groups:

*"When planning programs on the television (analytical or cultural programs), we must focus on all the society as a whole."*

Of course, the above mentioned suggestions of the interviewed experts do not show all the diversity of opportunities which could be used to make ethno-linguistic groups in Latvia perceive integration similarly. The question about the existing possibilities for the development of positive perception of ethnic and cultural diversity by ethno-linguistic groups remains open, as it is a key factor in the life of a tolerant and democratic society. How can we encourage the development of empathy between ethno-linguistic groups? How can we promote the idea of a political nation as a basis for social integration?

It is obvious that the problem of integration of society in Latvia will be relevant in the nearest future, both for specialists and researchers of social sciences, and for employees dealing with the practical side of this question.

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**Denis Hanov**

## **LATVIAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 2011: VIRTUAL DEMOCRACY, FLASH MOBS AND THE RISE OF “NATIONAL ALLIANCE”**

The right-wing nationalist union of political parties, called “National Alliance”, gained a dashing success following the latest parliamentary elections in Latvia, in September 2011. This election success resulted in a twofold increase of parliamentary seats for the representatives of “National Alliance”, in comparison to the former elections results. This election success can be explained by a range of modern democracy components existing in Latvia. Most notably the shift of the means of dissemination of right-wing nationalist ideology (“National Alliance”) to internet-based communication networks thus ensuring electoral success in a democracy which is becoming more and more virtual.

**Key words:** right-wing nationalism, National Alliance, cyber protest, flash mob, ethnic minorities

### **Latvian politics goes online: cyber protests as civic participation?**

Let us take a trip back into the year 2007. February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007 was a very cold day in Riga, – 18 degrees Celsius. This made the bare torsos of four young men all the more striking, who had gathered around a noticeable group of demonstrators in front of the main entrance to the Parliament. On the torsos of the members of the right-wing nationalist party “All for Latvia!” one could see nails and bloodstains, symbolizing the demonstrators as political martyrs. This performance, with quasi-religious processional elements was directed against the ratification of the border treaty between

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One of the four demonstrators, Raivis Dzintars, the leader of the political party “All for Latvia!” (“Visu Latvijai!”), became a member of the Latvian Parliament (Saeima) in 2010. In total there were eight representatives of the union of parties “All for Latvia!” and “For Fatherland and Freedom” elected to the Parliament in 2010<sup>2</sup>.

When at that time the acting president of Latvia Valdis Zatlers announced on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May, 2011 in his TV speech a national referendum on the dissolution of the newly elected parliament, it became clear that the elections would be held soon (mid-September 2011). The referendum in July 2011, where ca. 95% of the eligible voters in Latvia supported the dissolution of the parliament, kicked off intense election campaigns. The two obvious winners of the election campaigns were the social democratic union of political parties “Harmony Centre” (*Saskaņas centrs*, SC) and the political party “National Alliance” (*Nacionālā apvienība*, NA), which boosted its representation in the parliament from 8 to 14 seats. In coalition talks the main topic was the choice of the third coalition partner for the two conservative-centre Parties, “Zatlers’ Reform Party” (*Valda Zatlera Reformu partija*, ZRP) and “Unity” (*Vienotība*), which took the initiative to form a coalition already on the evening of the elections.

Who would be the third coalition partner? This question received an answer at the end of October: the elections winner, “Harmony Centre” (SC), was left in the opposition and NA became the third coalition partner.

The NA parliamentary group is admittedly not comparable in size to the SC, however the NA had an important role to play in the coalition talks as a symbolic guidepost in many respects. The analysis of the coalition talks points out that the political parties portrayed it in general public as talks of political, economical and even cultural – hence identity setting – policy shift. Numerous actions initiated online and in urban regions (above all in Riga) shaped discourse about the question “SC or NA?”

When Zatlers’ Reform Party ZRP – a political newcomer in the last elections – announced the party board’s decision to cooperate with SC in

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1 Protest campaign: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3K1inWZf0A&feature=related>

2 Election results of the parliamentary elections in 2010 (10. Saeimas vēlēšanas) on the homepage of the Central Election Commission of Latvia (*Centrālā vēlēšanu komisija*): <http://web.cvk.lv/pub/public/29490.html>

the beginning of October,<sup>3</sup> the conservative political establishments and online conservative initiative groups reacted resentfully. The discourse about potential dangers resulting from such cooperation intensified again. Various protest campaigns were proposed in the social media above all in the most popular social network [www.draugiem.lv](http://www.draugiem.lv).<sup>4</sup> The newly elected members of Parliament of the NA parliamentary group – Imants Parādnieks and Einārs Cilinskis also participated in the campaign at the parliament building on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October. The campaign looked like a farmers' demonstration where the demonstrators had pitchforks in their hands with pierced wine bottle corks on the ends of the prongs. The internet media emphasized the multimedia character of this demonstration:

*“A group of activists on the portal draugiem.lv, which identifies itself as a grassroots movement called “No to SC in the government”, declares that the aim of the campaign is to show that Latvians are not indifferent to who governs the country and that they are willing to protect Latvia in every possible way.”<sup>5</sup>*

These and other protest campaigns indicate the new trends in informal political communication in Latvia. During the four weeks after the parliamentary elections mostly young people were politically involved in the aforementioned “Flash mob” campaigns. Also representatives of the established right-wing parliamentary parties contributed to forming *threat discourse* by means of regular interviews. The former president of the dissolved parliament (10<sup>th</sup> *Saeima*) Solvita Āboltiņa<sup>6</sup> emphasized, that she feared, that SC would prefer to turn to “the eastern partners instead of the western”<sup>7</sup>.

3 ZRP uzskata: SC jāstrādā valdībā; par premjeru aicina Dombrovski. (2011) [ZRP considers : SC must be in the government; Dombrovski must be prime minister] <http://www.delfi.lv/news/national/politics/zrp-uzskata-sc-jastrada-valdiba-par-premjeru-aicina-dombrovski.d?id=40925943>

4 About the political actions on internet in Latvia since the education reform 2003-2004 see: Valtenbergs V., Aizstrauta D. (2008) Individualized Forms of Internet Political Participation: The Case of Latvian Online Activism and Populist Electronic Democracy. In: *Annual Proceedings of Vidzeme of Applied Sciences*. P. 5.

5 Sociālo tīklu protests pret SC koalīcijā uz nepilnu stundu sapulcē ap 60 cilvēku. <http://www.delfi.lv/news/national/politics/socialo-tiklu-protests-pret-sc-koalicija-uz-nepilnu-stundu-sapulce-ap-60-cilveku.d?id=40949759>

6 On the 18<sup>th</sup> October Solvita Āboltiņa was elected again as the president of Parliament.

7 Interview with Solvita Āboltiņa in the daily newspaper *Diena*, 27.09.2011: <http://www.diena.lv/diena-tv/politika/aboltina-par-sc-un-vl-tb-lnnk-plusiem-un-minusiem-koalicija-13905730>

The results of the latest parliamentary elections became a catalyst for the ethnic tensions which till then were more or less latent in the various forms of political everyday life. Now the tensions found new forms and a hub of activity on the internet.

Media analysts regard the internet as an element of multimedia communication, which crucially reshapes the forms of political participation (Curran 2002, p. 242). Democracy, not only in USA, but also in the European democracies is becoming more and more shaped by the media and this process has been happening now for a long period. This means that entertainment gains more importance and the politicians “transform into hyper realistic media actors” (Dörner 2001, p. 117).

Regarding the latest parliamentary elections, Latvia can be identified as an Eastern European version of modern media democracy. The aforementioned protest campaigns illustrate the communicative transition in the functioning of Latvian democracy. The political parties and the voters are saying goodbye to the traditional carriers and channels of the political substances and starting to increasingly apply the tools of a virtual internet democracy. This thesis is confirmed by the results of the last two parliamentary elections in 2010 and 2011: two parties, “People’s party” (*Tautas partija*) and “Šlesers Reform Party/LPP/LC” (*Šlesera reformu partija / LPP/LC*) invested substantial resources in the traditional visual forms of an election campaign (posters in towns, newspapers) and the two parties were constantly present with public announcements via TV and radio. However, in 2010 the two parties jointly received only modest 8 seats and 2011 neither of the parties received a seat in the parliament<sup>8</sup>.

NA was among the political parties with a rare appearance in the media, gaining its success from internet, which is becoming more and more dominated by political discourse<sup>9</sup>. In this regard it is necessary to examine the interdependence between the election results of the right-wing nationalists NA and their media policy for the election campaign. The examination refers to following questions: What kind of content and what kind of forms are used in the election campaign in the virtual world for the purpose of communication between the NA and the potential voter? Is the claim “new media creates new content” also relevant to this version of the

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8 Shortly before the parliamentary elections 2011 the People’s Party dissolved. Šlesers Reform Party received just 2,4% and did not trespass the 5% barrier. Source: Central Election Commission newsletter: [http://web.cvk.lv/pub/upload\\_file/11\\_Saeima\\_provizoriskie\\_rezultati.pdf](http://web.cvk.lv/pub/upload_file/11_Saeima_provizoriskie_rezultati.pdf)

9 The statistics about the presence of the parties in Media before the elections 2011 see: [http://www.politika.lv/temas/velesanas\\_2011/19303/](http://www.politika.lv/temas/velesanas_2011/19303/)

Latvian right-wing nationalism discourse? Could we characterize NA as neo-nationalist regarding the typology of nationalisms by Andre Gingrich and Marcus Banks<sup>10</sup> or in this case of NA is it a matter of a technological renewal of primordial nationalism?

### **Internet and primordialism: NA as a right-wing alternative?**

The thesis about the role of media as breakthrough aide for a right-wing extreme party which previously was barely represented in public – especially before the elections – is relevant for the NA position before the parliamentary elections (Ellinas 2009, p.210). The younger part in age of NA, the leading persons of the political party “All for Latvia!” joined the “older party members”, political party “TB/LNNK”, not until the parliamentary elections in summer 2011.<sup>11</sup> During the election campaign 2011 Raivis Dzintars became one of the two chairmen of the NA. His public role, shaped by the media, increased before the elections in 2011. A strict hierarchical structure, supplemented by the strong visual charisma of the chairman Dzintars, completed with the efficiency of the virtual election campaign could explain the latest successes of NA.

The topos of a strong father figure has been present in numerous election campaigns across Europe: the militant masculinity of the Serbian radical politicians, presidential candidates as “the fathers” in Romania and the public portrayal of Vladimir Putin as “the father of the nation” are just some examples. Regarding this phenomena it is possible to construe the image of Dzintars as a right-wing nationalist politician in communication with the voters, including a notable increase of young urban voters in 2011 (Irvine, Lilly 2007, p. 99; Norocel 2010, p.710; Ihanus 2011, p.253)<sup>12</sup>.

The NA homepage and even its web address implies a message for its users. Rather than using a short and user friendly web address to avoid misentries, the address [www.visulativijaidodu.lv](http://www.visulativijaidodu.lv) (approx. in English: “all-

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10 Definition of neo-nationalism after: Gingrich A., Banks M. (ed.) (2006) *Neo-Nationalism in Europe and Beyond in Perspectives from Social Anthropology*. Berghahn Books. P. 2, 14, 23.

11 During the parliamentary elections 2010 it was an election union and not an union of parties – „Visu Latvijai!“ and „TB/LNNK“. The fusion of the parties to National Alliance was in Summer 2011.

12 Āboltiņa emphasised in her interview that numerous young people voted for NA in 2011 as a protest and declared it as manifestation of patriotism and they saw the possibility in NA. Interview with Solvita Āboltiņa for the newspaper Diena, 27.09.2011: <http://www.diena.lv/diena-tv/politika/aboltina-par-sc-un-ivl-tb-lnnk-plusiem-un-minusiem-koalicija-13905730>

for-Latvia-I-give”) implies a political statement portraying NA as a political union willing to sacrifice and to protect. This public self-perception is not only observable in the ethnic politics of the Alliance, but also in the economic programme of the party.

The populist version of paternalism was already depicted in the last local elections in June 2009. “TB/LNNK” ordered a short commercial. The commercial showed a Latvian family buying a Christmas tree. Thereby the figures of a Russian couple were depicted in a way, where the categories *We* and *They* are identified not only from the text but also in the plot: visual differences, the decision to buy a Christmas tree grown in Latvia or in foreign country, as well as the inability of the Russian couple to communicate in Latvian are thought as invisible boundaries between Latvians and Russians. Afterwards a commercial sponsored by SC as a counter- reaction to TB/LNNK was shown, which went down in Latvian media history as the “Christmas tree war”. The commercials showed that already in 2009 there was a shift in the ethnic tensions on internet conditioned by the elections. All commercials can be found on YouTube accompanied by anonymous parodies and occasionally also by obscene versions<sup>13</sup>.

The NA election campaign 2011 on the internet will be further analysed based on the following advertising material: 1) short film (1’35”) “A Letter to You”, 2) short film “NA Principles and Tasks in the new Parliament” (3’12”) and 3) the interview with Raivis Dzintars (15’).

### **Short film “A Letter to You”**

The aim of the short film is to create an intimate, comrade communication with the potential voter. Addressing the audience as “you” and a hip-hop-like teenager voice were chosen to create “an emotional community” (the definition of Stephanie Dechezelles) (Dechezelles 2008, p. 367). Another tool to create an ideological intimacy between the sender and the recipient is the recollection of the referendum in summer 2011 on making Latvian the only language in education. The referendum failed because the required

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13 The three TV commercials can be downloaded here: Commercial 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYynwubZwKc&feature=related>

Commercial 1 from SC: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQ5ew6uslfA&feature=related>

Reaction to the SC commercial respectively commercial 2 from TB/LNNK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ox-I0iUK8GA&feature=related>

signature number till the deadline of 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2011 was not obtained.<sup>14</sup> The memory of the joint campaign is still a unifying factor.

Subsequently after the wish list, which formulates the security and prosperity in an ethnically homogeneous surrounding, a message distinctive for European right-wing nationalist parties follows: the demand for fundamentally better politics than the politics driven by other political parties until now. This demand contains a combination of ethnic conditioned moral and aesthetic categories, which can have a strong visual impact on the recipient respectively on the voter in multimedia. The sender admits, that the message sounds like an election campaign or even like an agitation, but:

*„...nevertheless more open and direct than a bulldozer on a billboard or the distribution of balloons on the streets”.*<sup>15</sup>

At the end of the short film the message underlines the genuineness and the cordiality of NA in comparison to the political parties which comply only with the parliamentary procedure meaning they are not truly genuine, taking into account the NA value system:

*„If NA does something, it does with heart and conviction”.*<sup>16</sup>

At the end of the commercial the wish list was supplemented with another group of characteristics of an ideal state of affairs namely by the postulation, “that property is owned by Latvians, that the 18<sup>th</sup> November<sup>17</sup> should be celebrated and not the 9<sup>th</sup> May”.

The political opponents of NA are defined in a frame of topographic fears: the Kremlin as the place of potential political danger is interpreted in the tradition of archaic Greek epos about the defeat of Troy. “The Kremlin” is already active in Latvia through the representatives – the new Achaens in Latvian parliament – the SC representatives.<sup>18</sup>

14 The total amount of the signatures collected was ca. 113 000, the necessary amount was ca. 150000. The organisation „Protect the language and Latvia“, which supported the initiator of the signature collection, NA, organised in summer 2011 an internet-based campaign for collecting signatures. The Organisation emphasises on their homepage that the success is proven, because the young people were the most active: <http://www.sargivalodu.lv/ka-palidzet>

15 With the term „Bulldozers“ is the LPP/LV parties advertising campaign meant, where the candidate for prime-minister and the leader of the party Ainārs Šlesers was compared with a rocket and a bulldozer. [www.visulativjaidodu.lv](http://www.visulativjaidodu.lv)

16 Ibid.

17 Proclamation of Latvia's independence in 1918.

18 [www.visulativjaidodu.lv](http://www.visulativjaidodu.lv)

### Right-wing nationalist election manifesto in 3 minutes

The second film is different in many respects. The audio accompaniment to the text is different – a male voice replaces the teenager voice and the intonation changes. The voice becomes more reserved and more didactic. Similar to the film “A Letter to You” the concept of “Latvian Latvia” is considered as priority. The verbal, visual and acoustic messages have been summarised in the following table:

**Table 1. Semiotic analysis of the political NA discourse using the example of the election manifesto**

Nr.	Thematic scopes of the election manifesto (arranged by priorities)	Visual portrayal of the problems to solve respectively the ideal state of affairs	Text (quotations in <i>italic</i> )	Voice
1	<b>Ethnic policy</b>	A black dragon with two heads looking to each other	„ <i>To avoid the partition of society into two mutually estranged communities, the stepwise transition to Latvian language as the only language of education is needed in kindergartens and in schools.</i> “	Didactic, impersonal
2	<b>Regional language policy</b> (Region Latgale, spoken in Latgalian)	Two female figures with a symbol of communication, below a red question mark and a speech bubble	In Latgalian: „ <i>Latgalian is spoken in Latgale!</i> “/ In Latgalian schools it will be possible to learn the written Latgalian language and use Latgalian language when talking with the authorities in the municipalities.	The same as in the 1 <sup>st</sup> point
3	<b>Investment policy/ migration policy</b>	A pile of dollar bills connected with the document “Residence permit”.	Issuance of residence permits based on a property acquisition must be stopped. Quotation: „ <i>Latvia’s wealth shall be bought back and obtained by Latvian citizens.</i> ”	The same as in the 1 <sup>st</sup> point
4	<b>Tax policy</b>	Two statistical diagrams with salary amounts of 2000 and 200 LVL	The NA is for progressive income tax	No change

5	<b>Demographic policy / Pensions</b>	Figures of a family with three children and 5 suitcases with an address "Pension": two big and three small suitcases	As an incentive for improving the demographic situation: <i>"To increase the number of Latvians in their own country..."</i> The size of the pension should be determined by the in-payments in the pension funds by the children.	No change
6	<b>Industrialisation</b>	A map of the regions in Latvia	The economic policy should be developed by the EU funds and contributions from Latvia in the regions so that: <i>„People from countryside do not have to move to Riga and people from Riga to foreign countries.“</i>	No change
7	<b>Energy security</b>	A silhouette of a cow and a windmill	<i>„Every year more than 300 000 LVL are spent for overpriced Russian gas“.</i> NA supports green economics changing the existing trend.	No change
8	<b>Security policy</b>	1. The president on the tribune, voters forming a map of Latvia, in contrast a sketch of an assembly hall (amphitheatre) criss-crossed with red paint; 2. Campfire, two male persons in uniforms kneeling near to the fire; 3. A wallet with a heading on it MON-EY, out of which a hand appears and is moving the puppets hanging above the assembly hall of the Parliament.	1. <i>„NA is for a safe state. Therefore the nation has to elect the president and to extend the competences of the president.“</i> 2. <i>„In order for Latvia to defend itself, if it is needed, NA supports the education of the Youth Guard and the strengthening of the army forces.“</i> 3. <i>„The rulers of Latvia should be Latvians“.</i>	No change
<b>The end of the short film.</b> A cow and a fence in background and a phrase appears: "That is why I will vote for NA"				

Source: Short film „The NA tasks in the 11.Saeima“ [www.visulatvija.edu.lv](http://www.visulatvija.edu.lv)

A short film as a list of tasks designed for NA, defines *Latvianisation* as a political priority from all the political scopes, including education and youth policies. The concept of the *saimnieks* (from Latvian: master, owner, host also farmer) is the most common image to describe Latvians in the election manifesto. This concept has not been distinguished. The plural form “the Latvians” indicate a homogeneous demographic group, which thanks to a common language and to a collective memory is becoming an emotional community. Because of ethnic and social homogeneity, excluding other ethnicities as target groups for elections, the film derives a paternalistic responsibility of NA for the Latvian entity. Verbs and expressions like “protect”, “not to allow”, “to stop the wrong policy”, “to rule independently in one’s own land” point out a political rhetoric of a threatened community, which at the moment is discriminated in many respects. The imagined threats are internationally originated capital flows, especially from the ex-USSR republics, who raise a claim for a residence permit by investments and Russia, on which Latvia is dependent because of gas import.

These threats can be characterised as “external threats”. However globalisation as a complex threat in the rhetoric of the right-wing (eg. immigration, multicultural society, general themes that can be found in the neo-nationalist populism) cannot be found in the Latvian election programme. There are no references which would suggest the “risks” caused by globalisation. In this context the topos of the little, harmonic, closed country has to be mentioned, which resembles the “Shire” from the J.R.R. Tolkien’s book *The Lord of the Rings*. The case of the Italian extreme party shows, whose members compare themselves to Hobbits<sup>19</sup>, that the reference to the Hobbits and their Shire is inter-textual and cross-regional, because the comparison to Hobbits has been expressed in the self-reflections of some Latvian intellectuals (Vegnere 2011, p.3).

The “internal threats” are the demographic crisis, the neoliberal tax policy, ethnic diversity in the education programmes and the scarcity of industrialisation.

Both of the threat-types can be solved by strengthening the ethnic Latvian population in all sectors of public life. Youth policy is one of the noticeable elements in the programme, because the planned formation of young guards organizations is ideologically and performative connected with the NA mass campaigns organized during the last three years.

In the interview with Raivis Dzintars a lot of the themes from the two short films are raised: (1) the threatened community, (2) ethnically defined

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19 As the footnote 21.

Latvian cultural heritage. Furthermore, the 15 minutes of the interview allowed enough time to include the NA formulated definition of Latvian nationalism.

### **An interview with the party leader: childhood's memories, sport and the nation as a family**

The analysts of the transformations of European national ideologies realized already at the turn of millennium, that the right-wing nationalist parties' electorate in Europe was becoming more and more differentiated. The research by Hans-Georg Betz, finalized at the end of 1990s, showed that the familiar picture of a male unemployed without a university degree has not disappeared fully, but it clearly has diversified (Betz 2001, p. 678).

This section will deal with the (till now) unanalysed concept of masculinity as an element of the public identity of the right-wing nationalist party leader in Latvia, referring, in concrete terms, to the image of Raivis Dzintars. The theoretical concepts of masculinity provide the following interpretation tools: masculinity discourse reflects the specific body and psychological features of the party leader,<sup>20</sup> of a political leader, thereby awarding and justifying the exceptional status. Already during the period of right-wing dictatorial regimes in the 30s, Mussolini, one of the spectacular examples, showed that the personal physical features were important elements for forming an image (Falasca-Zamponi 2007, p.91). Even in the younger days of Latvian history the image of the authoritarian president Karlis Ulmanis was shown with extraordinary physical strength, energy and communicative proximity to the nation. (Hanovs 2010, p.133-134)

In case of Raivis Dzintars the combination of body-mind-ideology is clearly defined; not only his physiognomy (tall, broad shoulders, athletic body, short hair cut) but also his short, but emotionally loaded phrases, supplemented by appropriate gestures which appeal to the voters and to the discussion partner. The overly emphasised masculinity of the party leader was not always a static phenomenon, but rather it experienced a development in the last eight years, associating itself with the approximation of the youth organisation "All for Latvia!" to the parliamentary decision-taking procedures in Latvia. This transformation is illustrated with the aid of a poster from 2003 with a picture of Dzintars. The picture which was used by the Russian-speaking media during the protest campaign "Do radicals have a place in Latvian government?" in October 2011, in Riga reveals Raivis Dzintars talking with the Russian origin radical politician Yevgeny Osipov. Both wear

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20 See footnote 20.

clothes which resemble the skinheads style, Dzintars a distinctly masculine young man wearing a pseudo-military jacket and dark glasses. Behind him stands a member of the organisation, likewise dressed (picture 1).

Which values are conveyed in this interview? As a tool for conveying values the formula “childhood’s memories as an impulse for the political activities” has been chosen. The interview starts with a childhood’s memory (“when I was 5-6 years old”) and the memory when he was 16, when the youth organisation “All for Latvia!” was founded.<sup>21</sup> Dzintars thinks that his momentum to engage for the political activities was the participation at the manifestations of Latvian People’s Front (*Latvijas Tautas Fronte*) together with his parents:

„The only thing what I can remember is the voice of Gorbunovs (a political activist of the People’s Front at the end of 80’s) somewhere far away... but then I understood that there was something important happening.”<sup>22</sup>

Another momentum for Dzintars being active in politics was the experience of his grandmother. When his grandmother was going home from her vegetable garden by trolleybus, for the first time after 1940, the year of occupation by Red army, she saw how the Latvian flag was set up. She cried, Dzintars underlines that this episode is really important to him and had a deep impact on him. Based on emotions, he formulates his relationship to the national symbols like the flag and emphasises that it is not tangible, but mobilising.

Another element is sport, especially ice hockey, as a symbol for the emotional and superhuman characteristics of the Latvian nation. Dzintars mentions the ice hockey player Artūrs Irbe and his team who defeated the Russian star team. Nation and nationality are not logically understandable. Dzintars criticizes his political opponents for addressing emotions and deeds in an “accounting manner” – that means logically and rationally. Dzintars thinks that is wrong. The time overlapping intertextuality of the dichotomic rhetoric of Sombart’s nationalism from “Merchants and Heroes” (1915) is visible at this stage of his memories. The ideological connections to the traditional enemy images of the European romantic nationalism period before the First World War are also recognizable in the case of the Latvian nationalism nowadays. *We* the community are a community of the idealists, *They* are cynical merchants respectively accountants of politics. It is important to highlight, that till now in the article analysed empirical sources suggest the tight link between NA ideology and the cultural

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21 [www.visulativjaidodu.lv](http://www.visulativjaidodu.lv)

22 Ibid.



*Picture 1. Poster of the media campaign “Mister President, do extremists have their place in the Latvian Government?” depicting Raivis Dzintars talking to a national bolshevick Jevgeny Osipov.*

nationalism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, taking into account the substance and the different forms. Dzintars continues:

*„They (the politicians) do not understand that often the answer is not rational, the answer lies in the ability to mobilise in the name of an idea.”<sup>23</sup>*

The conceptualised contrast conducted by the politicians – pragmatic, rational politicians versus irrational but “genuine” and emotionally engaged young people (or their representatives in the politics i.e. NA), is one of the pan-European right-wing populism examples. These contrasts are used as an explanation template for the voters. *We* and *they* categories are designed in the form of a homogeneous community and perceived as unalterable: “Latvian politicians lack conviction”, emphasises Dzintars and bolsters his dichotomy with other examples like political “plasticity” versus stable and firm convictions. The comparatively modest election campaign expenses are another piece of evidence of the efficiency of emotional nationalism: “We have something that is not possible to buy with money – that also helped Irbe to guard his goal net.”<sup>24</sup>

The foreign-policy dimension of the enemy image shall be looked at in connection with the analysed short films. Dzintars emphasises that a Latvia which is economically strong and is able to provide commodities is not interesting for others “outside” (another possibility for a comparison with the topography of the geographically freely isolated Hobbit). Moscow is mentioned as topos and representation of the dependence of the old Latvian politician generation.

The “bad 50 years” thesis, respectively the occupation period, justifies the next NA thesis concerning the discrimination of Latvians in nowadays Latvia. The economical discrimination, which allegedly exists, is described by Dzintars with the antithesis supermarket chain versus Latvian shop (as a rhetorical figure it is comparable with a small corner shop). The solution can be found if the minister for economic affairs agrees to a right-wing nationalist policy. According to Dzintars opinion the tasks for the minister would be to eliminate the supermarket chains by unfavourable tax policy and to support the small shops.

Other symbolic borders between *we* and *they* are defined by folklore, especially by folksongs as a means of communication. According to Dzintars the folksong is something that others would not understand. The song is illustrated as a weapon against the others to defeat them. In the tradition of German Enlightenment, the song is regarded by Dzintars as the spirit of

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23 [www.visulativjaidodu.lv](http://www.visulativjaidodu.lv)

24 Ibid.

the nation, the embodiment of folk wisdom, in short the soul of the nation. The so called NA “song evenings” are like a ritual purification from the cynicism of other politicians for the NA politicians.<sup>25</sup> As a matter of fact the interpretation of the song provides empirical arguments for the definition of a modern Latvian right-wing nationalism as a technologically renewed, virtual nationalism from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, reciting during the interview with an almost canonical precision the concept of a cultural nation, which gave impulse for the national movements in the Baltic provinces of Tsarist Russia.

Asked about the borders of belonging or exclusion, the politician responded, that the party is a family and this kind of perception of party members as family members will be conveyed to the whole nation. Dzintars asks a question himself and responses:

*„All for Latvia!” considers the nation as a family... What is nationalism? That is when we transfer the family relations to the level of the nation. The nation should also function just like a family.”<sup>26</sup>*

### **Summary: reality of virtual ethnic tensions?**

This article examined various forms and substances of current right-wing nationalist political discourse in Latvia using the example of National Alliance election materials. The visual messages of the party allow one to draw the following conclusions regarding the virtual tools of the election campaign in Latvian right-wing conservative spectrum:

*Firstly*, NA virtual agitation creates a public image of the party leader as the protector, friend and the father of the Latvian nation.

*Secondly*, the threat discourse is composed of arguments about the economic and cultural discrimination of the ethnic majority. In the NA election programme the threat is linked with the “sources” of the threat: ethnic minorities, “false” and “old” Latvian politicians and Russia, as an enemy image, is at the same time the source and the cause.

*Thirdly*, NA and its election programme does not contain the elements of risk caused by globalisation which stimulated west European neo-nationalism, but rather supports the thesis, that NA nationalism as an ideological programme and interpretive pattern has been determined and developed in the tradition of romantic nationalism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Globalisation and its neo-nationalist interpretation is barely present in the content of the NA election campaign. The political topography of

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25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

NA does not leave the ideologically shaped territory of an isolated, auto-centred state. The Latvia of NA is interpreted in a framework of a closed, socially and politically homogeneous “family ecosystem”. Disruptions of the system are caused only by internal or external enemies – meaning “the others”. The political teleology of NA regards the Latvian nation as a horizontally structured and emotional community composed of family members. Therefore the thesis of neo-nationalism in Latvia as related to the specific NA-substances is not applicable. Instead the primordial 19<sup>th</sup> century content (respectively the interwar period of the 1930s) has been conveyed via the new electronic media like spontaneous mass actions (flash mobs) and multimedia products. The right-wing nationalist ideology performative carriers and virtual information channels do not affect the “globalisation” of the content, but they mobilise new voters, especially the active youth.

By the example of NA it becomes obvious that the modern performative democracy shaped by media and put into practice, will also provide for the right-wing conservatives alter-activism the space for action. At the same time it can basically also contain new instruments for boosting the ethnic tensions.

This thesis is proven by the political events of autumn 2011 in Latvia with numerous empirical evidences.

Finally, three examples showing the cumulative character of the virtual tensions between the demographic groups in Latvia:

- protest campaign by the Russian-speaking newspapers against NA inclusion in the government (letters to president, posters in the city, pleas in the newspapers, protest in front of the parliament); (Picture 2)
- mass protest campaign was announced to take place in November 2011, organised by the radical, national-Bolshevik politician Linderman. The campaign should have taken place at the time of a signature collection for the Russian language as the second state language in Latvia. The first phase of the signature collection was successful and organised by the ethnic minority association “For the mother tongue”. During the writing of this article some 40 000 signatures (150 000 are needed), including the signature of the Riga mayor Nil Ushakov have been collected. Latvian politicians, including the speaker of the Saeima and the Prime Minister decided to publish a written appeal to the population stating that signatures may lead to ethnic escalations. Experts received this message with sceptical attitude – anthropologist Klavs Sedlenieks stated in his



*Picture 2. Protest against exclusion of SC in front of the Saeima building on October 17, 2011. Poster “Let us stay friends”.*

radio interview on November 17 to “Latvijas Radio 1” that the ethnic policy in Latvia is irresponsible and that similar politics for example in former Yugoslavia led to ethnic cleansing. Some signs of internal disagreements on Russian language issue are seen within the SC.

- The foundation of a new “Russian” party is announced for February 2012 by Vladimir Linderman. This political party could gather around those Russian-speaking voters who want to take more radical steps and are disappointed in the unsuccessful moderate policy of SC, especially after the coalition talks. The latest media analysis shows that SC may strengthen its discourse on ethnic policy after having failed to become a part of a coalition.

The latest developments in the inter-ethnic relations in Latvia prompt new questions for academic research: Is a modern “e-democracy” able to create a bridge to the reality of violent conflicts between ethnic groups in various European countries, taking into consideration the remarkable mobilising opportunities and the mix of virtual and real actions for the purpose of isolating the others? Is virtual democracy in Europe going to radicalise itself?

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**Baiba Bela**

**REMARKS ON DISCOURSE OF ETHNICITY AND NATION IN LATVIA:  
DYNAMIC CHARACTER OF “WE” AND “THEM”**

The focus of the paper is on the construction of a “we” group and a “them” group in the discourse of ethnic and national identity in contemporary Latvia. Even 20 years after regaining independence it is still not clear, who forms Latvia’s nation – Latvians only or others as well. This theoretical perspective is based on theories by Anderson, Castells, Wodak et.al. The study is the first step in the broader project and it is based on 21 interviews with opinion leaders – teachers, scientists, artists, NGO activists. The short outline of development of national identity in Latvia gives the context for further discussions. The construction of the “we” group and the “them” group from the perspective of Latvians and non-Latvians is analyzed in the context of discourse of national identity and place of ethnicity within it.

**Key words:** National identity, ethnic identity, Latvians and non-Latvians.

In my paper I would like to focus on the construction of the “we” group and the “them” group in the discourse of ethnic and national identity in contemporary Latvia. There has been 20 years since regaining independence – sufficient time to adjust private and collective identities to the new situation. However, the situation is complicated – almost half of the population is different ethnic minority groups. At the same time society dominates a discourse of national identity typical for 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe and still typical for Eastern Europe which identifies ethnic and national identity to a great extent. It is still not clear, who forms Latvia’s nation – Latvians only

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or others as well. How do Latvians see themselves and other ethnic groups in Latvia? How do other ethnic groups experience belonging to Latvia and how do they see themselves and as a titular nation? I am interested also to initiate discussion on a theoretical interpretation of national identity and to reflect on the premise stated by Ruth Wodak and her colleagues, that national identities are not completely consistent, stable and immutable and “they are, to the contrary, to be understood as dynamic, fragile, ‘vulnerable’ and often incoherent” (Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak 1999, p. 154).

At first I will provide some information about the data used in this study and will reflect on limitations of analysis. Then I will introduce the basic theoretical assumptions and will give a short outline of development of national identity in Latvia. Discussion on construction of the “we” and “them” groups in the context of discourse of national identity and place of ethnicity within it will follow. At the end will be a discussion of first results of analysis.

## **Data**

Research is based on interviews conducted for the research grant “Formation of consciousness of national identity after the re-establishing of independence in Latvia: tendencies and factors”. Around 60 structured interviews with artists, scientists, journalists, teachers, NGO activists and religious leaders of different age groups, ethnic origin and from different regions of Latvia were collected in the summer and autumn of 2010 by the team of the research grant. Interview questions were focused on development of personal sense of national identity; on thoughts about values on which national identity is built; relations between national identity and ethnicity, language, religion and culture; possibilities to influence the formation of national identity within professional life or civic activities; changes of national identity after regaining of independence at private, professional and societal level. This is the first step of the analysis, based on 21 interview – 13 with Latvians and 8 with non-Latvians, among which is 1 Estonian (first language Estonian), 1 Belarussian (first language Belarussian), 1 Hebrew (first language Russian) and 5 Russians. Although limited in scope, the study identifies some tendencies in the construction of discourse of national identity and of “we” and “them” groups, as well as reflection on some theoretical assumptions. I need to stress that the results are not empirically representative and actually I can’t generalize findings as discourse of nation and ethnicity in Latvia. However first results are interesting and wider discussion is of great importance.

## **Theoretical context**

Discourse of national and ethnic identities is interpreted using perspectives of constructivism and postmodernism. A nation is seen as a constructed or imagined community (Anderson 2006) and according to Manuel Castells we have to pay attention from which elements, and for whom and how particular identity is constructed (Castells 2004). In Latvia the most widely-known perspective on national identity is the perspective by Anthony Smith in which national identity is seen as the most important form of collective identification in the contemporary world and as constructed from three main sources: territory, history and community, including set of elements, like language, symbols, culture, ideology, sense of belonging etc. (Smits, 1997, p. 85, 172). Also Benedict Anderson stresses the importance of language and history in the construction of the imagined community (Anderson 2006). However theories already draw on different elements of national identity, and it is interesting to see, how people use them in their constructions, and to explore the stability and consistency of these elements. More recent theorists stress the dynamic and often incoherent character of national identities and cultural hybridity of modern nations (Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak 1999, p.155). Therefore, exploring construction of “we” and “them” groups, I will also pay particular attention to consistency of elements and to stability and instability of production, reproduction and transformation of discourse of national identity within interviews.

## **National identity in Latvia – in a few words**

Before I start analysis of the construction of „we” and „them” groups in the discourse of ethnic and national identity, I would like to say a few words on the historical development of national identity in Latvia. During the so-called first awaking of Latvians in the 1850s there were two conceptions of Latvians – some defined Latvians as peasants, but a few others – as a bridge between East and West, cosmopolitan adventurers (Schwartz 2006, p. 7). Lately, especially during the first independent Latvian state from 1918 to 1940, the discourse of the Latvian peasant nation came forward, which stressed the closeness to nature, the Latvian language and culture. During the Soviet period the dominated ideology of russification and the idea of a wide homeland, was why many immigrants saw Latvia as a developed region of Russia. After 1990 society in Latvia was radically split regarding interpretation of 1940, as well as the events of the Soviet period. Regarding 1940 all were insulted and probably still are – Latvians because of the occupation, Russians because they are identified with a totalitarian regime (Tabuns 2001, p.75). The different interpretation of recent history and dif-

ferent social memory do not contribute to the development of common identity. Not only does interpretation of history split society, plurality of visions regarding national identity also exists in the Latvian community. Flamboyant illumination of dissent were discussions in a leading newspaper of the time *Diena* during 1997, which echoed the competition between two discourses of historical self-understanding – romantic or ethnocentric and rational or Eurocentric (Schwarcz 2006, p. 81).

And before I will focus on the construction of „self” (“we” group) and „other” (“them” group) in the discourse of ethnic and national identity, a few words about interviews. The questions in the interviews were focused on belonging to Latvia, as well as on changes in national identity since regaining of independence in 1991 at private, professional and societal level. It is interesting, that at the very beginning of interviews the majority of Latvian respondents wanted to clarify the terminology, because it is not at all clear what “national identity” means. For many it is equal with ethnic identity, however a few noticed that “national identity” is a more political project and is connected with belonging to the state, but for some “national identity” means both – ethnic identity and state identity (paradoxically enough, notwithstanding on ethnicity). Among non-Latvians only one respondent mentioned that “national identity” is very complicated concept not only in Latvia, but in the all world. Most non-Latvian respondents do not use the concept “national identity” at all, but speak about belonging to Latvia (and four of them do not feel any belonging to the state at all). A social scientist admits in his interview, that administrators and scientists use terminology in a more narrow way, while in real life situations concepts like “ethnicity” and “national identity” are used in a more flexible and liquid way in really surprising combinations.

It is important to stress, that within the interviews respondents rarely used categories “we” and “them” as opposites. When speaking about different groups, respondents often stressed the interaction between ethnic groups, communication, mutual understanding and necessity of common goals. Actually, description of the group was based on the character of interaction between groups, and some particular elements were stressed (like attitudes), not on the descriptions of borders between them.

### **“We” group**

For Latvians the “we” group at first is Latvians, which seems somehow self evident. However, the slogan “Latvia for Latvians” is seen as narrow, naive and out dated. Respondents are aware, that other ethnic groups are part of Latvia and make our cultural and societal environment richer. And these groups belong to the “we” group, if they can meet some criteria – if

they know Latvian, know traditions, have Latvian citizenship and are loyal (and patriotic) to Latvia. Language skills and loyalty are most important. As stressed by one respondent: *“Language is one of the first indications, if it is not the case, you are the stranger, the feeling of strangeness, when you do not understand, why people laugh or cry, or speak. People who do not know the state language, feel needless”* (Woman, Latvian).

In interviews with non-Latvians we can identify three different discourses of the “we” group. The first one comes from the Soviet period and voices the official ideology of the USSR (we – Soviet people): *“Up to 1991 nobody thought about who we are by nationality. I do not know about Latvians, however my mother is Latvian”* (Man, Russian). This discourse clearly shows the impact and power of assimilation and russification politics in the USSR. The second one is the discourse of segregation, where “them” are Latvians and “we” are the particular ethnic group or Russian speaking population. This “we” group feels insulted and isolated from the group, which belongs to Latvia: *“I can’t accept that non-Latvians are regarded as strangers in this state and in the state’s economic development”* (Man, Russian). Here it is ignored that non-Latvians are a very broad group (for example, Latvian-speaking minorities or Russian speaking minorities, who feel a sense of belonging to Latvia) and grammatical construction (passive voice) allows to escape the definition of the agent who regards non-Latvians as strangers. It is not clearly defined, but according to binary logic they have to be Latvians. Actually this discourse stresses one important aspect – the subjective sense of being rejected indirectly indicates the necessity of the subjective sense of being accepted. In another interview it was mentioned that different sub-groups within the Russian population of Latvia and Soviet time immigrants were specially oriented towards Russia, the Russian language and culture. It seems that these people do not understand the concept of integration at all – Latvian as the state language for them somehow means deprivation of who they are. In everyday life level integration is often confused with assimilation. The third one is discourse of integration, in which the coexistence and mutual respect of different ethnic groups is stressed. Here all the population of Latvia belongs to the “we” group. Other ethnic groups are stressed as enriching Latvia’s cultural landscape. Only one respondent mentions the specific position of Latvians as a titular nation. The double identity is obvious – there are belonging to an ethnic group and ties with their native country (or country of ethnic descendant), as well as belonging to Latvia as to place of residence and homeland of children. Knowledge of Latvian language and culture is mentioned as an important aspect of integration and belonging. In the Russian-speaking population a new

term appeared – “*latvijec*” (Rus) – person, who belongs to Latvia regardless of nationality. Among Latvians there is a similar effort to create common identity regardless of ethnic affiliation through the concept “Latvia’s nation” instead of “Latvian nation”. However only two respondents (one Latvian, one Belorussian) mentioned this and in both cases were more like vision of ideal future – truly integrated society in Latvia.

### „Them” group

From the Latvian perspective “them” is not homogenous group and 1990 appears as an interesting demarcation point in time: “*At the beginning we together with other ethnic groups (Latv. – cittautiešiem) get back the independent state*” (Woman, Latvian). Then development of relationships went in two directions. As we saw previously, some persons are just of another ethnic descendent, but otherwise belongs to “us” group. Others are really strangers – those, who do not speak Latvian, are not loyal to Latvia and even clearly demonstrate loyalty to another power and values: “*Today as a Latvian I am insulted by those Russian flags in the cars, when they drive to visit my neighbors in Tūja. It is a serious problem that the identity of this state (where language is an important aspect) is not accepted*” (Man, Latvian).

In interviews with non-Latvians we saw different discourses of “us”, but the clear positioning of “them” is very rare. Only in one interview was there a clear discourse of segregation and hostile “them” group, blaming exiled Latvians as the cause of a negative attitude as if widely spread among Latvians towards other ethnic groups in Latvia. Discussing unsatisfactory aspects of ethnic relations or lack of togetherness in Latvia, non-Latvians often use the passive voice, thus putting the problem in the centre, but avoiding to name the agent and thus to delegate responsibility or guilt nor to “us”, neither to the “them” group. However we can only guess about the reasons of such discourse in interviews – is it true conviction of respondent or form of politeness due to the Latvian interviewer.

### Conclusions

Even this narrow sample of 21 interviews demonstrates the wide range of tendencies interpreting ethnic and national identity in contemporary Latvia. Focus on “we” and “them” group in the context of ethnic and national identity allowed discussion of the complicated question – who belongs to Latvia and Latvia’s nation and who does not. It seems, that both groups see Latvians as automatically belonging to Latvia, but with non-Latvians it not so straightforward. If you are born here, it is not enough – knowledge of the Latvian language and loyalty are the most critical aspects, as well

as a subjective sense of belonging and necessity to feel accepted. Borders between “we” and “them” are not fixed, but attuned to the situation and aspects mentioned above. Relations between “we” and “them” are emotionally very charged, even if clear confrontation is avoided, as well as the concept of national identity itself is emotionally very sensitive. Discourse of integration is emotionally more neutral, positive and open, but discourse of conflict and segregation is strongly negative and blinding. The discourse of ethnicity, national identity and belonging is strongly built on the social and historical background, where family history is as much important as present economic and political events. It is interesting enough, that it was often mentioned that in everyday life communication ethnic conflicts do not exist or are rare, but tension is specially produced by mass media and politicians.

It is not surprising, that the “we” and “them” groups are not very clear in the interviews, because the very basis of the demarcation line between groups – the concept of national identity, is not very clear. A typical attitude is expressed in the interview with one of the leading scientists: *“Question: How do you think – can people of different ethnicities together form the Latvia’s nation? Answer: Be careful with concepts! What is the nation? It is not necessary for Russians to become Latvians, as Latvians didn’t become Russians during the Soviet time. It is not so simple”* (Man, Latvian). Even among the opinion leaders interviewed in this research the dominant thinking is of national as primary ethnic. Such interpretation of national identity is not at all promising for a vision of an integrated society and some common identity of all the population of Latvia. The majority of respondents are concerned, that the concept of a political nation does not exist in contemporary Latvia, however many of them at the same time stress the political aspect of national identity and belonging. Even if many interviewees speak about all ethnic groups as important in Latvia, and stress the necessity of mutual understanding and tolerance (it is the case also in the above cited interview), the basis for real common identity is thin – very few use the concept “Latvia’s nation” and very few say “our country”. Further research has to be done with Latvians who see the possibility of Latvia’s nation and with non-Latvians, who developed transnational identities and hybrid identities, whose ethnic identity (interpreted also as national identity) and political identity (interpreted as belonging to Latvia) are complementary, not contradictory. Results can be very interesting not only to test newest theories on transnational identities (in case of non-Latvians), but also to develop more acceptable politics of integration in Latvia. The need for real integration politics is self-evident – there are only a few weeks af-

ter elections and plenty of everyday life conflicts and public expressions of politicians show clearly that integration in Latvia is more superficial than it seemed to be.

First analysis shows the rather stable discourse of national identity by both groups, however individually differentiated. Interpretation of basic elements of national identity is more consistent than inconsistent – almost in all interviews with few exceptions ethnicity dominates as the main aspect in national identity. At the same time other attributes of national identity and sense of belonging to Latvia is individually differentiated and vary from very rich descriptions with complicated sets of elements to really modest interpretations. However a sense of national identity is not identical for respondents, nor is it totally individualistic, fragile nor completely inconsistent. It is important to stress that elements used are similar, only the combinations vary individually. The concept of national identity as the primary ethnic identity seems to be rather static than dynamic in Latvia – new ideas about national as primary political identity break through long standing tradition very slowly, if at all. It seems, that interpretation of national identity in Latvia is not very fluid and inconsistent, nor really fixed and without contradictions. It is hard to squeeze real life in any narrow box of theory.

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**LANGUAGES AND IDENTITIES IN THE EASTERN PART OF LATVIA  
(LATGALE): DATA AND RESULTS**

In this article we shall present the study “Languages in Eastern Latvia: Data and Results of Survey” conducted by university lecturers and students of Rēzekne University College (RA). The study was carried out during the period of 2006 to 2009 in order to characterise the multilingual environment of the region of Latgale, the vitality or vulnerability of languages and their functioning both in the private and social spheres.

**Key words:** Languages, Eastern Latvia, multilingual environment, language contacts and hierarchies

The prehistory of the study is to be attributed to the conference “Regional Languages in the New Europe” held in Rēzekne in May 2004. During the conference university lecturers of the Department of Philology at RA became acquainted with researchers from the University of Milan-Bicocca (*Università di Milano-Bicocca*) who had carried out socio-linguistic studies in various areas of Italy (Ladinia, Valle d’Aosta, Piedmont, Calabria) as well as in Milan. The focus on smaller languages and the way how the researchers studied their functions and development opportunities seemed attractive. Their data incited to think about our own multilingual environment, namely that of Latgale, about language contacts and hierarchies in them. We were aware of research which had been carried out in Latvia previously that focuses on the socio-linguistic environment, but those had mainly been centred round the two major languages – Latvian and Rus-

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sian – in order to clarify their sociolinguistic functions as well as to gather information on language skills and language attitudes of the inhabitants speaking these languages.

The work by sociolinguists in Latvia (Djačkova 2000; Baltaiskalna 2001; Ernstone, Joma 2005) also encouraged us, to some extent, to carry out the survey. Yet, we only wanted to research the eastern part of Latvia in order to understand more precisely the usage not only of Latvian and Russian, but also of other languages used in this region (Latgalian, Polish, Ukrainian, Belorussian, etc.) and to find out how the socio-linguistic situation of Latgale is perceived and conceptualised by the very inhabitants of the region. Also Druviete considers that “due to the ethnolinguistic situation of Latvia, language policy has been an important branch of home policy, therefore, it is natural that the most important task of sociolinguists in Latvia is precisely to study the theory of language policy and the dynamics of the socio-linguistic situation.” (Druviete 2007, p. 28)

The individual studies carried out by the project participants (mainly university lecturers of the Departments of Philology and of History and Philosophy of RA as well as students in the Master’s programme in Philology at RA; see the monograph “Languages in Eastern Latvia: Data and Results of Survey” published in 2009) revealed a contradiction between official data and the sense of ethnic belonging of the inhabitants and the roles of language and religion in the formation of identity. For example, the following is a quotation by a resident of the Kalniešu civil parish (age group 45-59 years):

*“here all Belarusians speak mainly Russian; even we, Latvians, went to a Russian school, since there were no Latvian schools in the civil parish. Being asked about Poles, she responds: Poles? Yes, we have Poles. If you drive there ... there it will be full of Catholics...”*

Poles and Catholics are here considered to be the synonyms.

### **The basic data of the study**

In collecting the data for the “Study of the Ethnolinguistic Situation of Latgale” the main principles were gender, age, ethnic belonging and territorial proportionality. A basic survey was conducted in 2006-2007. The data of the Central Statistical Bureau (<http://data.csb.gov.lv>) are as follows: in 2007 the total number of the population of Latvia was 2,281,305. The number of the population in Latgale was 354,554, i.e. 15.5% of the population of Latvia. The number of respondents, in turn, was 9,076, that is, 3% of the population of Latgale. Taking into account the linguistic situations, out of 159 civil parishes, cities and towns located in the survey area 74 language

areas were created. On average 100 respondents filled in the questionnaires in each area, except for the six district centres of Balvi, Ludza, Daugavpils, Rēzekne, Preiļi and Krāslava where the average number of the respondents was 300 (the study was carried out according to the administrative units before the territorial reform of Latvia of July 1, 2009).

The respondents were divided into five age groups in order to have the possibility to study specific linguistic attitudes, language skills and future prospects for each age group. The age group limits were determined taking into account psychological differences in age, historical circumstances of Latvia, and changes in political rule which had an impact on the socio-linguistic situation.

Thus, the first age group (12-17 years; 17.4% of the total number of respondents) consists of teenagers who never lived in the Soviet Union. The second group (18-29 years; 21.3%) includes young people who lived in the Soviet Union, but who never participated in its elections. The respondents of the third age group (30-44 years; 23.6%) have some experience to be able to compare the socio-political processes before and after the restoration of independence. The fourth age group (45-59 years, 21.4%) is the generation born after World War II and during the boom years of the Soviet Union and includes those who to some extent had already started adult life (both family and professional) before the change of the political situation. The last, the fifth age group (60-80 years; 15.7%) consists of respondents who were born during the time of the first Republic of Latvia or later during the war years, the oldest of whom may still have studied in schools of the first Republic of Latvia.

Respondents filled in the questionnaires anonymously, providing only the following information about themselves:

- 1) the civil parish/the town or the city where they reside;
- 2) their gender;
- 3) their age group;
- 4) their ethnic (national) self-identification;
- 5) their education;
- 6) their profession;
- 7) their faith.

During the project 9,076 respondents (57% women and 42% men) were polled; in 76 questionnaires (1%) gender was not indicated. Such a distribution is substantiated by the official statistics (<http://data.csb.gov.lv>: there were 54% women and 46% men in Latgale in 2007) as well as by differentiation of education and social status particularly in rural areas, thus justifying the dominance of women (see for more details the sub-chapter “Social roles

and attitudes towards language”).

Respondents’ answers on their ethnic identity (self-identification) reveal a more precise picture of the ethnodemographic composition of the population of Latgale. It is completely different from the one reported in the official statistics. The official data show the following proportion of ethnicities in the territory of Latgale: 44% Latvians, 39% Russians, 14% Poles, Belarusians and Ukrainians, 3% others (Centrālās statistikas 2011). The data acquired during the project are: Latvians 41%, Latgalians 27%, Russians 26%, other Slavic ethnicities 5%, others 1%. In this context it is important to discuss the importance of the concept *Latgalian* (see next subchapter). However, it becomes clear that the myth of the Slavonic character of Latgale, as cultivated by some politicians is dispelled. It also proves that several non-Latvian groups (and in particular Belarusians) belong to the region from a historical perspective, but that their language today is rarely present.

### Language and identity

**Language plays** an important role in the awareness of one’s self (identity). In one of the questions of the questionnaire respondents were asked which language they feel most of all affiliated with. The responses revealed the linguistic identity of the population of Latgale: almost half of the respondents (46.7%) feels an affiliation with the Latvian language, 29.3% with the Russian language, 21.1% with the Latgalian language, 0.4% with the Polish language and 0.2% with the Belarusian language. It was essential to compare the responses to this question to the responses on the population’s ethnic identity (cf. Table 1).

*Table 1: Comparison of linguistic and ethnic identity*

Linguistic identity	%	Ethnic identity	%
Affiliating oneself with the Latvian language	46.7	Latvian	40.7
Affiliating oneself with the Russian language	29.3	Russian	25.9
Affiliating oneself with the Latgalian language	21.1	Latgalian	27.0
Affiliating oneself with the Polish language	0.4	Polish	1.5
Affiliating oneself with the Belarusian language	0.2	Belarusian	3.5

This comparison reveals that the difference between Russian ethnic and linguistic identity is rather low – the linguistic and ethnic self-identification as Russian is similar (29.3% and 25.9%). Affiliation with the Russian language is perceived as the most essential factor for the awareness of Russian

ethnic identity. Greater differences, however, were encountered as regards the other ethnic groups.

For people claiming Latgalian identity language is one of the constituent factors of their identity, but it is not the only one. 21.1% of the respondents feel an affiliation with the Latgalian language, whereas 27.0% of the respondents consider themselves to be Latgalian. This suggests that the ethnic affiliation *to be a Latgalian* is slightly stronger than the linguistic affiliation with the Latgalian language. The ethnic belonging might also be addressed in the context of regional affiliation: to be a Latgalian means also to live in Latgale or to have grown up in Latgale. A part of the respondents who identify themselves as Latgalians feel a stronger affiliation with the Latvian language than with the Latgalian language. This can be explained both by the unclear status of the Latgalian language in the sphere of public life as well as by the difficult way in which the Latvian language has been consolidated as the state language. In this sense, caring for proficiency in the Latvian language and its functioning in areas where Latvians are a local minority is more important than taking responsibility for the consolidation and development of the Latgalian language.

Here it should be noted that in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the designation *Latgalians* as proposed by Francis Kemps was mostly associated with a common ethnos (Latvians of Latgale), with *different language* traditions (Kemps 1910, p.12). The data of the survey also show that Latgalians, first of all, identify themselves with Latvians, since historically, even up to the 1920s, Latgale had been separated from the rest of Latvia. Evidence for this can be found in designations used also in early writings (mostly chronicles): “Latgalians since ancient times have been named *latgaļi, lotygaļi, letigali or latvīši, latvi, lati, letti, lotva, latiši*. Others were only and solely: *selone, curone, semigallen*, that is, Selonians, Curonians, Semigallians. And more – in the ancient Slavonic chronicles, even in latest tsarist times in Russia, Latgalians were named *lotyši*. (...) In the territory of Latvia, until the 17<sup>th</sup> century only Latgalians were called Latvians.” (Cibuļš 2009, p.277) Further, the historical alienation determined that both the Latvian literary language and the Latgalian language developed in similar ways and had similar functions (although it is of course necessary to take into account the devastating impact of the printing prohibition on the development of the Latgalian culture and language between 1865 and 1904). In Latgale, older people still consider themselves as *Latvians speaking differently from those Latvians living in other regions than Latgale*, the so-called *Baltians*. Yet, it should be stressed that even if the research process placed on this linguistic identity, this does not exclude the possibility that the respondents

(as already indicated with regard to ethnic self-identification), associate the concept *Latgalian* mostly with the place of residence.

When filling in the questionnaires, some respondents had difficulties to identify themselves with one particular ethnic identity. For example, a Russian man in the Vīpe civil parish told that his wife is said to be a Latvian, yet, “we talk both in Latvian and in Russian, we celebrate both Latvian and Russian holidays, taking into consideration common and different traditions” (Pošeiko 2009, M9A, 2.5., 63). Also in Vīpe civil parish, the following comment was heard: “I am a Latvian, since I live in Latvia ... What else could I be? Nationality is one thing – Belarusian ... And what does it mean? What kind of Belarusian am I if I really do not know how to speak that language?” (Pošeiko 2009, M9A, 2.5., 64).

A mixed identity is therefore characteristic of members of a multicultural, multilingual society who are often at least bilingual. At the same time, one of the key criteria in determining one’s ethnic identity invariably is and remains one’s mother tongue.

### **The Latgalian language in the education system of modern Latvia**

Currently in no school in Latgale the Latgalian language is the language of instruction or a separate subject. In individual schools in Latgale (in the district of Balvi: in Baltinava and Tilža; in the district of Rēzekne: in Naurēni and Makašāni; in the district of Preiļi: in Galēni; in the district of Krāslava: in Dagda; in the district of Ludza: in Kārsava) the Latgalian language is taught in the classes of a hobby group or as an optional subject along with folklore and history (see for more accurate data: *The Latgalian Language in Education in Latvia*, 2009). The Latgalian language is learned optionally by pupils from Form 5 to 9 in one joint group.

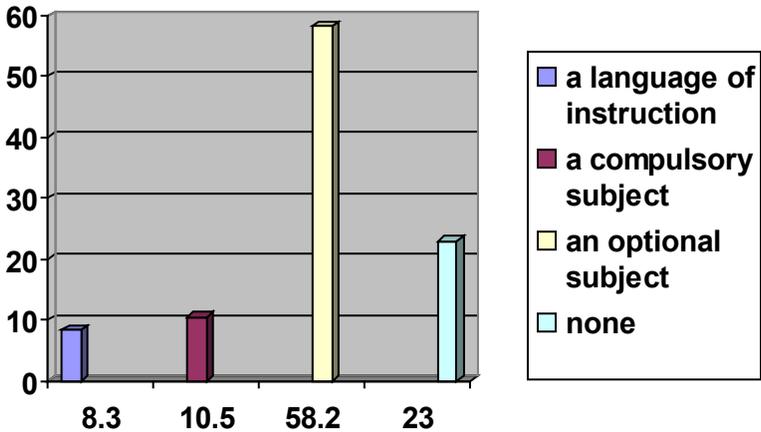
In the questionnaire of our project” the respondents were asked:

*How do you think – what role should the Latgalian language have at school?*

The options for answers were as follows:

- a language of instruction;
- a compulsory subject;
- an optional subject;
- none.

**The breakdown of answers of the 9,076 respondents is as follows:**



*Figure 1: The role of the Latgalian language at school: respondents' viewpoints (in %)*

More than half of respondents (58.2%) answered that they would like to see the Latgalian language as an optional subject at school. The proportion of the population who think that the Latgalian language should be a compulsory subject at school is smaller (however, it is still 10.5%); 8.3% of respondents even think that the Latgalian language might be also be a language of instruction in schools in Latgale. 23% of the respondents have the completely opposite view and claim that there is no place for the Latgalian language in the education system. In the 1920s the role of the Latgalian language was determined by education laws (Leikuma 1993). It supported the process of language acquisition through regular usage at school and thereby shaped a system which is important both for language teachers and pupils. Currently, teaching of Latgalian is chaotic; it takes place only thanks to individual teachers' initiatives and enthusiasm. This contributes to a rather superficial attitude by the pupils and a lack of loyalty towards the language.

It is in this context that language planning as one of the most important questions of socio-linguistic research becomes important. Any kind of planning (not only of sociolinguistic issues) requires the development of a long term strategy which includes regular routine activities to achieve certain goals (Coulmas 2005). Language planning processes basically in-

clude two categories: planning of language status and planning of language corpora. The third category of language planning – planning of language acquisition – is sometimes treated separately, sometimes it is included in language status planning (Coulmas 2005). Regardless of whether or not it is treated separately, language acquisition is an important aspect in the process of the preservation and development of a language. For Latgalian, this means that the tradition of the 1920s should be taken up again, even though this would have to be applied to the current situation and, of course, to the language users' preferences as shown by the sociolinguistic research data. For the language to have a successful future, it must be in regular circulation and used daily in different fields (including education). For an increase of the language corpus, Latgalian textbooks would be very important: new and modern ones which have colour illustrations and attractive linguistic examples.

### **Social roles and attitudes towards language**

Focussing on trends in gender studies, especially after the popularisation of the conception of androgyny by the American psychologist Sandra Boehm in the 1970s, it is today widely accepted “that masculinity and femininity are not contrasting values, but that a person in whose character only the characteristics of one gender are apparent is practically unfit for social life” (Красова 2003, p.54). Moreover, as recognised by another Russian representative of gender studies: “Recognition of gender conditionality and its ritualised nature leads to conventionality, manifesting itself differently in different cultural and linguistic communities at different stages of its development. All of this allows us to treat the phenomenon of masculinity and femininity not as a constant quality of naturalness, but as a dynamic and changing product of societal development which is affected by social manipulations and modelling” (Кирилина 2002, p.135). In our research, masculinity and femininity have been conceptualised as socially variable categories by analysing the professions as indicated in the questionnaires of 2,000 respondents (1,085 women and 915 men, i.e. 54% and 46%) and their correlation with linguistic and ethnic self-identification. The respondents' answers were correlated to their professions (Table 2 shows the professions which were repeated at least 10 times separately for male and female respondents).

**Table 2: The most common professions of the respondents of the survey**

Professions by female respondents (1,085)	Professions by male respondents (915)
teacher – 157 accountant – 78 seller – 72 cook – 38 seamstress – 33 agronomist – 27 economist – 21 housekeeper – 21 nurse – 20 physician, doctor's assistant – 14 veterinary, veterinary's assistant – 13 postal worker (postwoman, postal operator) – 13 confectioner – 13 kindergarten teacher – 11 librarian – 11 lawyer – 10 secretary – 10	driver, car driver – 63 mechanic – 54 builder – 47 teacher – 45 tractor driver, machine operator – 39 engineer – 21 carpenter – 18 electrician – 16 farmer – 16 agronomist – 15 computer specialist – 15 economist – 12 plumber – 11 entrepreneur – 10 accountant – 10 seller – 10

The overview of the most wide-spread professions shows, firstly, that female respondents much more confidently choose professions which require a higher education, greater accountability, or which are related to the public sphere (e.g. teachers, accountants, economists, physicians, librarians, kindergarten teachers, lawyers). The professional spheres typical for men are more related to technical or practical activities (e.g. drivers, mechanics, builders, tractor drivers, electricians, carpenters, farmers), for which it is quite often sufficient to have a specific secondary education.

Secondly, the most common female professions are directly connected to business-like activities (filling in documentation, following the changes in records, management or legislation, communication at various administrative levels) which is undoubtedly linked to the required (and in some professions compulsory) in-service training. Housekeepers, sewers, cooks, confectioners, and partially also shop-assistants can be seen here rather as exceptions to this principle. The most common professions of men, in turn, show that some professions for which “habits” of the business sphere are necessary ap-

pear in the list, such as teachers, engineers, computer specialists, economists, employers, accountants, agronomists, and to a certain degree also farmers and shop-assistants, but they are not the most common spheres for men.

Naturally, a closer link of the profession with the business sphere contributes to a stronger attitude to prevailing language norms and a closer following of the standard language (e.g. when filling in documents, in business communication, publicity etc.). When looking at the stronger business orientation of the most common professions of women, it is therefore evident that women are more critical in their jobs to non-standard behaviour and thereby also in their attitude towards otherness. In the case of Latgalian this attitude is reflected in perceptions of Latgalian as an official language which may be used in the civil parish or as the language of instruction at school.

Regarding the reasons of women's activity in social life it has to be mentioned that it has stereotypically been accepted to identify men with order and a system, and women with chaos. Therefore, eras of crisis and transition are more favourable for the manifestation of the feminine; it is seen as corresponding to female nature. At the same time, the contemporary social and economic crisis coincides also with respect for otherness as initiated by postmodernism, and with a stronger focus on the peripheral, the rejected. This strengthens women's activities (in the sense of a capability to change social roles) even more. However, in the attitude towards language, women are more "orientated to 'open social prestige', i.e. towards accepted norms of social and speech behaviour, whereas at the same time men are more oriented towards the so-called hidden prestige, i.e. a violation of accepted norms and rules of communication" (Маслова 2004, p.131). Thereby, although the choice of profession and language of men reflects a certain social inertia, this choice allows the preservation and the defense of one's native language. Thereby men become representatives of the sphere of otherness. In particular this applies to native speakers of Latgalian. It is a paradox, in its way, which proves that the paradigm of stereotypically female behaviour is the prevailing one. On the one hand, women make use of their otherness and, thanks to highly developed capabilities to communicate and to be involved in dialogues, distinguish themselves as leaders in the labour market and play more active and more required social roles. On the other hand, the behaviour of men and their thinking model strive to be feminine since they have more often chosen and are sticking to professions acquired in the past. Also regarding the choice of language to be used in communication, men face more passive roles and are unconscious of this themselves.

This research confirms that the change of the categories of feminine and masculine has been accelerated by the ethics of post-modern times and

the situation of economic crisis. At the same time, subconsciously guided stereotypes and basic conceptions of the world in the minds of men and women are changing only very slowly. A different attitude towards a language in the feminine paradigm is determined by women's flexible, emotional, adaptable nature. This, in turn, determines also the fact that women learn new languages in accordance with social conditions, thereby proving a utilitarian type of intercultural communication.

As acknowledged by researchers of language policy, sociology and gender studies, the *feminine* thinking type (Derrida 1997; Džozefs, 2008) at present prevails also in the world. Being skilfully used in administrative institutions and the mass media it can be applied in practice for the formation of a tolerant attitude towards any language. It would promote decisions that are more well-considered politically and more correct in any sphere. In the context of the particular research it should be added that this creates a more productive environment for a revival of the prestige of the Latgalian language and for expanding of its spheres of functionality.

## Conclusion

The support of regional and minority languages, regional development planning in the context of a consolidation of traditional culture, and the roles of languages as well as the teaching of regional languages at schools in Europe is nothing new. Valuable experience and useful ideas for tackling the questions discussed in this article can be found e.g. in the Netherlands (regarding the Frisian language), in Poland (Kashubian), in Norway and Finland (Sámi), in Spain (Catalan, Basque, Galician), etc.

The sphere of education and the mass media is one of the most important spheres for the preservation of a language and a promotion of its development. In such a way, by introducing teaching and learning of lesser-used (regional) languages at school by and providing both regional and national support for them, essential questions of language and education policies are tackled. The development of mass media in the regional language, in its turn, first of all enhances a language's prestige for its users, and secondly, contributes to the existence and development of the language.

The data of our research convincingly show that it is time to fill "the blind-spots of history" as regards the history of Latgale, the Latgalian language and its role in the development of the Latvian language and the state of Latvia. Ethnic and linguistic diversity in this is a way towards unity in Latvianhood.

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**Bedrudin Brljavac**

**Bosnia and Herzegovina between the process of nation formation (nf)  
and the European union (eu): minority groups as a collateral damage**

In spite of the fact that nearly twenty years Bosnia and Herzegovina has been going through democratic transition the country is still facing serious democratic challenges. In particular, the post-Dayton public sphere has been based on the ethno-nationalist paradigm which is clearly excluding non-nationalists and members of minority groups from the political processes. This is in a clear conflict with one of the most fundamental objectives of the process of integration of the European countries into the European Community, being the reduction of disintegrative and dangerous influences of nationalists forming peaceful and secure community. In this essay, the focus is on the process of the post-Dayton ethno-nationalists' attempts at nation formation or nation-building that has resulted in a massive discrimination against the so-called "Others" as they are defined in the country's constitution. In the post-war BiH democratic participation has become in fact a sort of a competition between the three biggest ethnic communities, Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats, building their nations respectively rather than a race of equal and free individuals having equal right of vote. That's why, Bosnian people are still living under the political system which resembles exclusionary ethno-democracy or ethnocracy rather than an open and democratic regime. Instead of building stable, democratic and homogeneous state what we have today is in fact heterogeneous and fragile country in which the three biggest ethnic groups are constructing their nations in a political modus operandi in which members of minority groups and non-nationalists are the largest collateral damage.

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**Key words:** Nation Formation, Dayton Agreement, European Union, Minority Groups, Citizen, Ethno-nationalism

“Nationalism is an infantile disease. It is the measles of mankind”.  
Albert Einstein, *The World As I See It*, 1934

### **Ethnic Reality in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The problem of ethnic question in today's Bosnia and Herzegovina is not relatively new as it may seem to many observers. Its emergence, evolution, nature and shape are all related with the historical events and social context in which they happened. In fact, during the Ottoman rule people of different religions, world views, and cultures in BiH lived peacefully together as a part of one common 'millet system' where every single individual was equal before the regime. However, in the aftermath of the Treaty of Westphalia signed in 1648 which signifies the rise of the modern system of states and formation of nation states the similar trend dispersed into the Ottoman empire in which the national movements demanded their legitimate right for sovereignty (Seyhanoglu 2006, p.1). This was the sign of first attempts towards formation of the national identity among the Balkan's national groups. After that the question of ethnicity or national identity has become one of the most threatening problem and the most visible feature that divided societies in the post-Ottoman era. However, the communist or socialist regime successfully and systematically repressed any nationalist and ethnic feelings and tendencies among the ethnic groups in the country because it was clear threat to the communist principle of 'brotherhood and unity' and the country's coherent, peaceful and homogeneous existence. However, dissolution of the communist regime and establishment of multi-party system has brought about exclusively nationalist political parties ending the monopoly of the communist party within the country and initiating extensive nation-building process among all the three ethnic groups (Blagojevic 2009, p.13).

Although it all seemed in the former Yugoslavia that ethnic differences have been minimal and insignificant in the multi-ethnic community the dissolution of the country in early 1990s clearly demonstrated ethnic tensions between different ethnic communities. However, the largest blame goes to nationalist leaders which used idea of ethnicity and re-emergence of the ethnic identity to increase mistrust of other ethnic groups. Thus, ethno-nationalist elites used the idea of ethnicity to manipulate their ethnic groups respectively and in this way strengthen their political position

(Blagojevic 2009, p.13). Even today, ethnically-focused politicians are making political movements and calculations so that they further empower the nationalistically-based state modus operandi, rather than being sensitive to, and responsible towards, interests of all citizens regardless of their ethnic origin (Brljavac 2011). For example, even the economy of the country has been under the strong influence of ethnic politicians blocking the urgently needed creation of a single economic area (SEA). Then education, as a platform where universal humanistic values should be taught, has been manipulated for political purposes. In addition, civil society has been seriously divided along ethnic lines instead of being strong integrative factor pushing for multi-ethnic cooperation. Since the end of the war, the media too has remained deeply fragmented along the lines of ethnic interests. Even the Bosnia religious leaders from each ethnic community have openly interfered in politics, supporting candidates of their own communities. Thus, ethnicity still divided BiH threatening its fragile stability and even peace (Fischer 2006, p. 442).

### **Democracy with Ethno-nationalist Matrix**

Parallel to widespread democratization processes in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), in November 1990 the first multi-party elections were organized in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereinafter, Bosnia or BiH). These elections were among the first indicator that demonstrated the democratic transition of the country from the centrally organized communist regime to liberal democracy. However, political parties in the country were allowed to be organized along ethnic lines resulting in the nationalist political parties together collecting 84% of the vote (Arnautović 2007, p. 7). Thus, an organization of the first democratic elections in the country marked the long era of the political domination of nationalist parties as majority of electorate voted for nationalist parties. In other words, Bosniaks voted for Party of Democratic Action (SDA), Bosnian Serbs for Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), and Bosnian Croats for the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) (Freedom House 2010, p. 122). To illustrate, even the post-election distribution of power was based upon the ethnic principles so that the President of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was a Bosniak, president of the Parliament was a Serb, while the prime minister was a Croat representative. Furthermore, the war that broke out in 1992 further increased ethnic hatreds and intolerance resulting in ethnicity and ethnic solidarity as a dominant social and political frame of reference.

That is, the conflict between the three ethnic groups intensified inter-ethnic polarization and massively strengthened the political hegemony of

ethno-nationalist political parties in the decision-making processes. What's more, the Dayton Peace Agreement, signed in 1995 and brought the war to the end, not only created an extremely cumbersome policy process that would frequently result in deadlock, it also left unresolved the conflicts that had come to the fore in the 1992-1995 war and enshrined the ethno-nationalist principle as the foundation of public discourse (Vogel 2006, p.2). While the DPA brought the war to an end and laid the foundation for consolidating peace, many observers also believe that the agreement as a document reflects wartime circumstances cannot by itself ensure BiH's future as a functioning and democratic state (Ashdown 2005). Thus, the post-war political and social space has been largely dominated by three ethnic groups leading to institutional marginalization of minority groups and their members. In the post-Dayton Bosnia vast majority of citizens are in a position of homo duplex or a divided human since their in struggle between being a genuine human being or loyal ethnic being. While transition to democracy should bring about participation and inclusion of diverse groups into public policy-making the post-war Bosnian public sphere has been dominated by ethno-political matrix causing discrimination against minority groups. As Seyhanoglu points out, "Nietzche argued that there was no God and that everything that nation-states did in the name of their national interests was justified" (Seyhanoglu 2006, p. 4).

### **Nation Formation (NF) in BiH**

Furthermore, in the aftermath of the dissolution of Yugoslavia ethnic groups from former republics started an extensive process of nation formation in their respective independent states. The same scenario has taken place in Bosnia and Herzegovina where three biggest ethnic groups, Bosnian Muslims or Bosniaks, Bosnian Serbs, and Bosnian Croats all have a tendency to build the post-war Bosnia along the ethnic lines and in this way strengthen their attempts of building their respective nations. In fact, nation-building or nation formation is a process in which a national identity is structured using the power of the state (Wimmer 2002). The central objective of the process of nation-building is unification and homogenization of the people living at the state to make it coherent, homogeneous, and politically stable. However, what happened in the post-war Bosnia has been completely different story. In fact, nation-formation process in Bosnia has resulted in a process of deteriorating power and image of central state while three ethnic groups attempted to empower their ethnic positions within the state. As a result, members of the three ethnic groups in the country are highly privileged in the current political system which practically recog-

nizes only them as “legitimate citizens” (Donais, Pickel 2003, p.16).

Such a system of institutional nation-building has produced seriously fascist and intolerant regime in which members of the country’s *minority groups and those that declare as non-nationalists are facing extensive discrimination and societal marginalization.*

From time to time there have been attempts, and especially among the international community, to construct the Bosnian national identity by molding different ethnic groups into a single nation. For instance, international community has made substantial efforts to construct a single Bosnian nation through the creation of national paraphernalia such as anthem, flag, national days, country passport, car licence plates, and so forth. In other words, the most apparent figures of the international community in BiH the High Representatives so far have enacted a significant number of decisions and laws which are fundamental for the state building of Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as country’s passport, flag, national anthem, the coat of arms or the single Ministry of Defence – not to mention many other key reforms like border police etc. (OHR 2011). However, such efforts have produced more symbolic results rather than more long-term value of reconciliation and peace-building through creation of single national identity. So, is the pre-war multiethnic society in Bosnia dead since the three ethnic groups are today living side by side rather than together. What’s more, central tendencies and attempts among the three ethnic groups go in a direction of extensive ethnic homogenization rather than genuine inter-ethnic reconciliation. The most obvious proof to this thesis is the current reluctance among the nationalist leaders of all three ethnic groups regarding the implementation of the ECHR’s historic ruling protecting minority groups (Rossini 2010). Instead, the respective political elites are trying to find a solution to the problem of discrimination against minority groups by strengthening the positions of their respective ethnic communities.

### **The Europeanization Process in BiH**

What’s more, such an discriminatory political system strictly based on ethnic matrix is incompatible with the country’s aspirations to enter the European Union in the foreseeable future. In fact, in the end of 1990s through the newly initiated Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) the EU has aimed to encourage the path of the region’s states, including BiH, integration into political and economic structures of the Bloc (Becker 2008, p.20). Additionally, in June 2000 in the Feira European Council it was decided that all the SAP countries, including Bosnia, are potential candi-

dates for the EU membership. Following difficult reform process Bosnia and Herzegovina has signed the Stabilization and Association Agreements (SAA) with the EU in June 2008 which was the first pre-accession tool for this Balkan country towards its eventual EU membership. Thus, for BiH and for the whole Western Balkans, the EU-related reform process means adjustment to stable and functional western models as well as security and prosperity for the future (Anastasakis 2005, p. 80). In other words, the so-called Europeanization process has had substantial impact on the political, economic, administrative and social policy-making in the country.

Thus, Kubicek points out that the process of Europeanization not only guarantees new opportunities for societal forces that had been previously excluded from the policy-making but also it contributes to transformation of other structural elements such as a political ideology (identity politics), the legal framework, and the party system, and triggers changes in them all, finally resulting in internal reforms. Furthermore, mentions transformative power of Europeanization process putting influence on the citizenship and national identity (Kubicek 2005, p. 374; Ladrech 1994). However, it is highly debatable to what extent the Europeanization process in Bosnia has influenced the idea of citizenship since the three ethnic groups in the country are building national identities what contributes more to ethnic polarization rather than to national homogenization in the country as a whole. Although there have been a number of difficult problems slowing down Bosnia's EU reform process, widespread ethnic attempt at building exclusive ethnic identity and omnipresent ethnic domination over public sphere have become the most staggering challenge on the country's route to the EU. That is, the current process of nation formation amongst the three ethnic communities has limited realization of citizens' individual identity that should be an unavoidable dimension of the Europeanization process.

### **The EU's Support to Individual Rights**

One of the main objectives of establishing the European Community, later European Union, was to reduce disintegrative and harmful influences of nationalists and thus integrate the European countries into a peaceful, democratic, prosperous, and secure community. That is, a peaceful and harmonious coexistence between different national, linguistic, religious, sexual, and racial groups have been encouraged in the EU institutional framework (Zofia Wilk-Woœ 2010, p.79). Especially, at the beginning of the 1990s the EU intensified its activities in the field of minority protection prior to the enlargement of the Central and Eastern European countries. Thus, in June 1993 the European Council held in Copenhagen agreed on

the so-called Copenhagen Criteria that, among other things, emphasizes the protection of minority groups. That is, the EU's Copenhagen political criteria require candidate countries to achieve "stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities" (Harryvan & van der Harst 1997, p. 285). This being said, the applicant countries are supposed to implement necessary reforms and pass the laws that will effectively protect a minority groups.

Thus, the Copenhagen Criteria has considerably contributed to extension of individual rights because it cemented the agreement that "persons belonging to national minorities can exercise and enjoy their rights individually as well as in community with other members of their group" (OSCE 1990). Additionally, the Article 12 of the TEC had prohibited discrimination based on national identity. Following the Amsterdam Treaty the Article 13 of the TEC forbids the discriminatory acts on the basis of eight following grounds, namely, sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Most importantly, in the Treaty of Lisbon the minority groups were legally recognized in the text of EU primary law (FRA 2010, p.46). Thus, in the Article 1a it was stated that the rights of persons belonging to minority groups have become the central values and principles that the EU protects. Furthermore, the EU Fundamental Rights Charter paves the way to the principle of the non-discrimination and encourages the member states to protect religious, cultural and linguistic diversity (Vouters 2001). This brought the EU much closer to its visionary ideal of "Unity in diversity".

### **Habermas's Theory of Inclusive Participation**

On the other side, the contemporary Bosnian public life has been marked by extensive exclusive political model based on extreme violation of fundamental human rights marginalizing both the citizens that do not sympathize with nationalist politics and the members of minority groups. Thus, the post-Dayton political system has been concerned with the extent and nature of political participation of the citizens belonging to the three largest nations in the country. In order to thoroughly comprehend and analyze the process of political participation of the citizens in the country Jürgen Habermas's notion of citizen recognition provides adequate theoretical framework as a basis for constructive debate. For instance, Habermas examines cases where cultural or national identity of citizens prevents their political participation in the public sphere with the rest of society denying them the basic human rights. According to Habermas, the public spaces characterized by serious violation of basic human rights by other citizens

there exists “an incomplete or unequal inclusion of citizens, to whom full status as members of the political community is denied” (Habermas 2005, p. 16). Simply put, Habermas supports the thought that democracy is only possible with widespread presence of inclusive participation in a society.

That’s why, Habermas has strongly defended democratic principles such as popular sovereignty, rule of law, constitutionally guaranteed rights, and civil liberties as an indispensable component of the open and democratic regime. Therefore, Habermas argues that constitutions are the basis for creating peaceful and democratic society in a heterogeneous contexts. In this regard, he also points out that it is the constitutional principles based on a rule of law that unite and integrate the citizens of a society in which there is a wealth of social, cultural, national, philosophical values and ideas (Habermas 2003). That is, inclusive constitution is the basis of democratic order in every free and open society. As O’Neill points out: “no citizen, or group of citizens, should be excluded from a democratic process of legitimation. Relevant interests and needs, values and aspirations, convictions and conceptions of identity, must somehow all be factored into our law-making procedures” (O’Neill 2000, p.1). Therefore, societies perceiving themselves as democratic can not set up its political order on exclusionary or discriminatory constitutional principles or marginalizing social mindset. Furthermore, it is even more problematic from democratic point of view when ethnic or societal polarization is built into constitutional framework.

### **Institutional Domination of Ethno-nationalism**

More than 15 years since the Dayton Agreement was signed the political tensions are still omnipresent across Bosnian society and national leaders are challenging the Peace Accord more openly and more harshly than ever before continuously emphasizing ethnic differences and specificity. That is, in the post-Dayton Bosnia the ethno-nationalist attempts at exclusive nation-formation has managed to gain upper hand over the reconciliation and consensus (Bianchini 2000, p. 9). Thus, BiH is still far from functioning and democratic state that the DPA had promised. Today the country still consists of de facto three mono-ethnic territories, three education systems and a national government where ethnic key is the rule of the game. In fact, the whole state structure is built according to omnipresent ethno-nationalist model. Therefore, the three majority ethnic groups dominate the public discourse in every aspect of life excluding minorities and non-nationalists. The best example is the Bosnian rotating presidency consisting of three members: one Bosniac, one Croat and one Serb, each of whom must be directly elected in their respective entity. That is, the Bosnian constitution is treating a non-eth-

nic members of its community as aliens or an apostates. Whats more, under such political regime it is shameful and sometimes even dangerous to declare yourself as non-nationalist or minority member. As a result, today situation in Bosnia is such that “the use of ethnic and political relationships is a key element of many people’s survival strategies” (Ehrke 2003, p. 143).

In fact, as stated in the Dayton Agreement the Constitution of BiH prevents candidacy of “others”, which are minority groups, to the Presidency and the House of Peoples on the ground of their ethnic origins because these positions are guaranteed for the so-called ‘constituent’ peoples, i.e. Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats. Thus, ethnic groups are represented as communities in different power-sharing levels institutionalizing the ethnic nationalism as a dominant political objective. The hegemony of ethno-politicians has been perpetuated by vague and manipulative idea of “constituent peoples”. As a result, minority groups and non-ethnic members of Bosnian society are completely excluded from the current power-sharing model. It is a kind of heresy to declare yourself non-ethnic or sympathizing minority identity. As Touquet and Vermeersch argue that “these people have now been excluded from mainstream accounts of the outcomes of the recent conflict: it is not possible to be a Yugoslav, a Bosnian or an Eskimo in a situation in which ethnic nationalism has transcended all else and in which there are intensely localized variations in identity and ‘national’ sentiments” (Touquet and Vermeersch 2008, p. 280).

### **“The Strangers” in Their Own Country**

To put it differently, a number of scholars regularly point out that DPA was negotiated by the nationalist actors, who actually were one of the main causes of the war, and thus it just extended the power of the ethnic-nationalist parties and their leaders (Kaldor 1997, p. 28-30). Bosnian citizens that do not belong to the so-called “constituent peoples” were forgotten during the negotiations in Dayton and latter completely excluded from the institutional framework. Thus, the so-called “Others” in the Bosnian constitution, namely Jews, Roma and all other national minorities together with those who do not declare affiliation with the three ethnic groups have become citizens without institutional space to exercise their political and social rights. Given such an unlawful provisions of the Bosnian constitution the country has faced deep institutional and constitutional crisis which openly threatened an idea of democratic participation. As the post-war Bosnia was designated to become “ethnic state” in the eyes of ethno-nationalist leaders the national minorities as an argument of genuine multi-national Bosnia have been marginalized from public space.

Thus, through extensive institutionalization of ethno-nationalization Bosnia has become a place where only citizens declaring themselves to be nationalist have a right to take part in the country's policy-making processes. In fact, the category of "others" and non-nationalists are openly perceived as a threat to the power-sharing model of rotation where three ethnic groups chose their representatives respectively. The "rotation model" is clear mechanism of political engineering in order to achieve the objective of ethnically-divided Bosnia. Thus, democratic participation in the country is competition between ethnicities or ethnic communities rather than race of equal personalities having right of vote. As a result, the post-war hegemony of ethno-nationalists has paradoxically resulted in increasing democratic deficit of the country. Consequently, all these that belong to category of "others" who number 17 in BiH, namely, Albanians, Montenegrins, Czechs, Italians, Jews, Hungarians, Macedonians, Germans, Poles, the Roma, Romanians, Russians, Ruthenians, Slovaks, Slovenians, Turks and Ukrainians (Hammarberg 2010, p.6) are just playing a role of mere spectators during democratic elections. In this way, the "others" and non-nationalists among the Bosnian population has become the "strangers in their own country".

### **Systemic Marginalization of the Minority Members from Political System**

The Dayton Agreement resulted in a power-sharing structure dividing Bosnia into two "ethnic" entities, the Bosnian Serb-populated Republika Srpska, and Bosniaks and Croats-populated Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also, at the state level there is rotating presidency consisting of three ethnic representatives respectively, and a state parliament which are superior to the entity institutional structures. Nevertheless, as stated in the Dayton Agreement the Constitution of BiH prevents candidacy of "others", which are minority groups, to the Presidency and the House of Peoples on the ground of their ethnic origins because these positions are guaranteed for the so-called 'constituent' peoples, i.e. Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats. This includes national minorities who have lived in Bosnia and Herzegovina for centuries." (Claridge 2010, p.1). This power-sharing arrangement has considerably contributed to the process of ethno-nationalization since non-ethnic elements are completely excluded from the political participation in the country where they were born. That is, the citizens from minority groups such as the Roma, Turks, or Jews, are granted only a limited degree of self administration (Soberg 2008, p.715). Although BiH joined the Council of Europe on 24 April 2002 there has been increasing discrimination against minorities in the country.

By forbidding minority members the right to run for office Bosnian constitution violates fundamental human rights though in 2002 its government ratified the ECHR and its Protocols. Thus, Jakob Finci and Dervo Sejdić who are respectively Jewish and Roma by their ethnicity, contested these provisions before the ECHR since they were banned from running for office. On December 2009 the Court ruled that the exclusion of minority groups from Bosnia's highest elected offices constituted unjustified discrimination. Thus, "the European Court has made it clear that race-based exclusion from political office has no place in Europe," said Clive Baldwin, senior legal advisor at HRW (Guardian 2009). The Chairman of BiH's division of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Srđan Dizdarević, claimed that this was a historical decision: "We have been waiting for this for 15 years. [...] I hope that Bosnian politicians understand the urgency to re-draft the Constitution as soon as possible in order to implement the European Convention of Human Rights arrangements and to allow each one of us, Bosnians, Herzegovinians, to enjoy the same rights as Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats" (RFE 2009).

If correctly implemented, the decision of the ECHR will assist in breaking down ethnic and religious divisions in Bosnia and Herzegovina by encouraging political participation and representation, and promoting social cohesion. (Claridge 2010, p. 2). However, two years passed from the Court decision and the country's politicians have not yet removed discriminatory provisions from the constitution due to their different ethnic interests. As a result, Bosnia is still profoundly undemocratic country. While most of Europe is going towards multi-national structures Bosnia is still pushing the process of "exclusive nation-formation".

### **The Roma Population are not Part of the Nation**

For instance, discrimination of the Roma population in the country is the most illustrative case. Although in 2008 Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the Action Plan to Address the Problems of Roma in Employment, Housing and Healthcare, this minority group is still highly marginalized. Similarly, both in the pre-war and the post-war Bosnia the Roma members have been one of the most marginalized and repressed minority group. According to the Roma NGOs, between 75,000-100,000 Roma are living in BiH and they are considered to be one of the largest national minorities in the country. Although the country is on the way to the European Union there has been profound discrimination against Roma from education, employment, health to political representation. For instance, Roma are the most numerous ethnic group amongst the homeless in BiH. More

than 70 % of Roma do not have a house, while the rate of Roma returnees is very low (2009). According to a 2007 report by UNICEF, up to 80% of Roma children in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not attend school, only 20% of Roma participate in secondary education, and less than 1% in higher education (2007). The proportion of Roma employed within the public sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina is estimated at 2–3%. Thus, they are discriminated against even in the terms of basic human rights.

In addition, even in the media the Roma members are degraded and describing them as “problematic”, “violent”, “dangerous” etc. For instance, when an incident involving the Roma happens, their full names are given in sensational headlines, even if they are minors, with almost an obligatory remark that they belong to the Roma minority (Turcilo 2009). In addition, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr Thomas Hammarberg, and his delegation visited Bosnia and Herzegovina, from 27 to 30 November 2010 in order to evaluate the living conditions of minority groups in BiH. As far as Roma minority is concerned, the Delegation summarized that their lifestyle prevented the State from including them in statistics. The government knows they live in difficult situations and is serious about this issue. But the delegation said the question was more one of prejudice than discrimination (2011). Further, the Delegation recommends to the Bosnian government to intensify efforts in order to improve the social and economic conditions of Roma community drawing upon the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation on the Policies for Roma and/or Travellers in Europe (CM 2008). In fact, tackling the Roma problem is understood by ethnic leaders as incompatible with widespread attempts of strengthening their respective ethnic group.

### **Exclusive Nation-building through Education Policy**

The Bosnian education system has been widely manipulated by the ruling ethno-nationalists to strengthen their ethnic regime. In fact, ethnic leaders have not demonstrated necessary political will and commitment to establish genuine multi-ethnic schools. What’s more, education policies have played significant role in the promotion of ethnic segregation. As the European Commission pointed out in its 2009 Progress Report for BiH: “Divisions in the education system through continuous development of mono-ethnic schools in both entities are still a matter of concern and result in de facto segregation of pupils from the very beginning of their schooling” (2009). For instance, educational system in Federation of BiH is built on the model of “two schools under one roof” where children from two ethnic groups, Croats and Bosniaks, attend classes in the same building,

but physically separated from each other and taught separate curriculum. Today, there are 57 such schools in this part of Bosnia. Some ethnic politicians oppose integrated multi-ethnic schools free from political, religious and any other discrimination arguing they would lose their ethnic identity mixing with others. Ethno-nationalists have used education for the systematic indoctrination of their respective ethnic group.

What's more, the education system in BiH instead of playing a role of integrative platform in which democratic values and norms are being thought it has been under the vehement influence of ethno-nationalist political elites resulting in serious discrimination of minority groups. Put simply, the children of minority groups in Bosnia have been the collateral damage of the ethno-nationalist policy-making in the sphere of education. On the other side, the OECD stresses in its report published in September 2001 that "education systems should not just be 'fair' to minorities – they should promote a spirit of equality and tolerance among ethnic and cultural groups" (2001). However, in the post-Dayton Bosnia minorities have become "invisible" in the education system which is hammering out ethno-nationalist paradigm. As Valery Perry argues: "Let us take a look at language. The official language in the Republika Srpska is Serbian, and in the Federation the official languages are Bosnian or Croatian, depending on the canton. The 'others' learn the language that is dominant in their particular surrounding. It is worth stressing that we have three official languages in one country. 'Others' have been assimilated into an official language, but only the language of their specific territory, which in my opinion is not in accordance with their human rights" (Perry 2002, p. 27).

### **The Peace-building without Equality Principle**

The process of marginalization of minority groups from the Dayton negotiations and from the agreed peace accord conception was a result of speedy reaction to end the war and find difficult compromise solution. The most important thing was to end the horrible war and find a power-sharing model in which each ethnic groups will take part without being discriminated and dominated by other two groups respectively. That is, the main objective of the Dayton agreement was peace rather than equality, thus discriminating against non-nationalist groups. As the European Court of Human Rights concluded in their ruling concerning Sejdic-Finci case, "a very fragile cease-fire was in effect on the ground. The provisions were designed to end a brutal conflict marked by genocide and 'ethnic cleansing'. The nature of the conflict was such that the approval of the 'constituent peoples' ... was necessary to ensure peace. This could explain, without

necessarily justifying, the absence of representatives of other communities ... at the peace negotiations and the participants' preoccupation with effective equality between the 'constituent peoples' in the post-conflict society" (Sejdic-Finci 2009, p.34).

As a result, BiH has become a bicameral legislature in which the three so-called "constituent peoples", Bosniacs, Serbs and Croats, are represented in parity (5:5:5) in the second chamber, the House of Peoples (Marko 2005, p.6). In addition, both state presidency and national government with a ministers and their deputies are composed according to the ethnic power-sharing. Thus, the post-Dayton institutional framework is to a large extent based on the consociationalist model of power-sharing (Lipjhart 1994). Consociationalism is a form of power-sharing whose main purpose is reconciliation of diverse social preferences along ethnic and religious lines (Schneckener 2002, p. 203-206). In other words, Dayton Agreement has resulted in an institutional framework in which the largest three ethnic groups are officially recognized in the constitution and which take equal part at all administrative decision-making levels, and also enjoying the same right of veto when their respective "vital national rights" are endangered (Bieber 2004). However, consociationalist model of power-sharing in Bosnia has not bring about necessary democratic transformation and reconciliation even after the 15 years of transition period. What's more, while envisaged to keep the equilibrium between three ethnic groups the Dayton-based consociationalist model completely excluded the non-nationalists from the decision-making process.

### **Constructing Stable and Democratic State**

Thus, post-war power-sharing order in Bosnia has heavily relied on the constituent ethnic groups. However, weak performance of democracy and ethnic tolerance under the current rules reveals limits of institutional engineering (Manning & Antić 2003, p.55-56). It is of crucial importance to apply institutional engineering in the post-conflict societies in order to bring peace and stability among warring fractions. In fact, institutional engineering is the art of providing for rules and institutions in order to pursue political goals – such as creating a functioning multi-ethnic democracy (Grofman & Stockwell 2003). Nevertheless, the war in Bosnia was thought to end through ethnic balance of power-sharing which resulted in a political concept that was counterproductive further increasing ethnic tensions among warring groups. As Prof. Zarije Seizovic points out: "The "ethnic criteria" introduced in the Preamble of the Constitution of BiH (being reinforced in number of places in its normative part) prevents BiH authorities from

sharing power equally within the civil society, favouring ethnic groups to the detriment of the individual citizen” (Seizovic 2007, p. 2). In fact, such a power-sharing model has been viewed in essentialist and absolutist terms by ethnic groups or a clear example of zero-sum game.

In fact, while minority groups were completely marginalized during the negotiations among warring ethnic groups their presence and political inclusion could be utilized for the development of democratic and open system of governance. While today after the ruling of the ECHR they have become a huge problem on the country’s integration into Euro-Atlantic associations they could actually be a part of a long-term solution. In fact, the Constitution of BiH recognizes basic human rights and protection of minority groups and requires the State institutions and both Entity government to ensure the highest level of internationally recognized human rights and freedom from discrimination (Art. II 4). Yet, in practice all the country’s citizens do not enjoy the human rights and fundamental freedoms on equal basis. That is, the current constitutional order was unsuccessful from the very outset in BiH, as it has not provided for protection of individual citizens but their collective identity (Seizovic 2007, p. 2). Were the minority protected from the discriminatory acts the whole concept would turn from ethnic to civic eradicating the ethnic homogenization as a main source of political and social tensions in Bosnia. This would lead to strengthening of universal human rights as prescribed by the liberal-democratic order.

### **Ethnicity as a Religion**

In the aftermath of the ethnic conflict in 1992-1995 and subsequent domination of the ethno-nationalist paradigm the citizenship in Bosnia has acquired unique features based extensively on the primacy of group rights over individual rights. In fact, the Dayton constitutional framework guarantee both state and entity citizenship for population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That is, acquisition of the entity citizenship has further intensified the process of ethnic homogenization and also exclusion of non-ethnic elements in the country. As Sarajlic points out: “In addition to the malaise of postsocialist transition, shared by all the Yugoslavian successor states, the existing Bosnian citizenship regime has been strongly influenced by a heritage of ethnic conflict and the provisional constitutional set-up of the country, ... the conceptualization of citizenship in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been dependent on the definition of the community of citizens who constitute the state. Since Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a nation-state (and has never been one) but a federal union based on the sovereignty of ethnic groups which have political supremacy over individuals, making

clear-cut assumptions and definitions of Bosnian citizenship is close to impossible (Sarajlic 2010, p.2).

That's why, it has become almost illogical to talk about the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina since more than half of the country's population do feel as Serbs, Croats, or Bosniaks rather than Bosnians. In other words, BiH political discourse has become limited and even restrictive for the members perceiving themselves as Yugoslavs, Bosnians, Romas, Jews, and so forth. In that regard, Prof. Atajic points out that, "Everything – from the greeting you use to the dialect you speak and the newspaper in your coat pocket – is judged, commented upon and categorized in terms of an omnipresent, mysticised 'ethnicity'. Under such circumstances, defining oneself as a citizen of the BiH state is tantamount to a betrayal of one's national identity" (Atajic 2002, p.118). In fact, by vast majority of people in Bosnia ethnicity is perceived as a religious dogma that has to be respected. Such situation has produced negative consequences on the development of common Bosnian citizenship. In this context, there is also a kind of absurdity; namely, even those citizens who are Bosnians (instead of being Serbs, Bosniaks or Croats) constitute a minority in BiH (Turcilo 2009, p.1). In other words, every person not aligning himself/herself with one of the three ethnic groups is automatically considered as minority or a kind of foreign element.

### **Institutional Engineering of Ethnic Dogma**

Furthermore, the idea of collective ethnic identity has dominated over individual preferences of the citizens preventing development of free discussion and inclusion of non-ethnic elements of society. As Mujkic and Husley point out: "Since the first democratic elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1991, politics has been characterized by ethnopolitics rather than interest-based politics. The result is that political competition for voters has been warped, with the role of voters reduced to a kind of ethnic census" (Mujkic, Husley 2010, p.144). What's more, before the day of elections the vast majority of the members of three ethnic groups decide "collectively" to give vote to their ethno-nationalist political parties respectively. Not only that non-nationalists and members of minority groups are excluded from the public discourse but they are very often under strong pressure to give their vote to one of the nationalist political party. In other words, the post-war ethno-nationalization discourse has created an omnipresent "ethno-nationalist pressure" over the members of Bosnian society to identify with one of the three national groups. That is, the post-war ethno-nationalist paradigm "naturally" exerts a pressure on Bosnian Muslims, Bosnian Catholics, and Bosnian Or-

thodox, to align with their respective nationalist political parties.

In terms of the institutional ethno-nationalization, the Bosnian system suffers from institutional blockades that emerge because politicians elected separately by each ethnic community do not manage to agree on compromises that can withstand the manifold veto powers. The exclusionary Bosnian institutional structure under Dayton has allowed the representative of each of the three ethnic groups to enjoy the veto power over any proposed legislation and it created the tripartite state presidency consisting of each group and empowered each member with a veto over any legislation. While “veto power” of the ethnic representatives is their guarantee mechanism that they will be equally included in the decision-making process it is clearly discriminating against civic interests. As Lyon claims, “the concept of “constitutionality of nationalities” permits legalized discrimination on the basis of ethnic background, and prima facie contradicts principles of the Council of Europe. Indeed, the entire constitution enshrines ethnic discrimination as a principle of law (Lyon 2006, p.52). In fact, each and every civic initiative is discredited by the highly institutionalized ethno-nationalist discourse.

### **“Vital National Interest” as an Imperative**

In addition, massive institutionalization of ethno-nationalist politics in the post-Dayton Bosnia has been realized through structural framework where ethnic rights are safeguarded on the basis of the so-called “vital national interest” (VNI). That is, in the House of Peoples of BiH the representatives of each constituent nation has a right to block law if it is against the VNI of their nation respectively. In a similar fashion, tripartite state presidency have the power of veto on legislative decisions if they believe they represent a threat for the vital interests of their nations. However the notion of the VNI in the Bosnian case it employs a rather vague sense of „national.” „National” is usually interpreted simply as „ethnic” (Mujkic 2007). Therefore, at the heart of notion if VNI clearly lies the ethnic dimension of political representation rather than a kind of state or national interest. That’s why, the principle of VNI is highly discriminatory against minority groups and non-nationalists since they do not have a right to use veto in state and entity level. Simply put, widespread politicization of ethnicity and the success of ethnically-oriented political parties are serious obstacles in front of the long-term democratization process (Chandler 2000, p. 111).

The main idea behind the vital national interest was to provide a sophisticated system of checks and balances to guarantee the rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s “constituent peoples”, i.e. Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs.

State and Entity constitutions establish blocking mechanisms protecting the “vital interests” of these constituent peoples (EC 2005, p.9). However, while VNI completely marginalizes each member of the society not declaring as nationalist it is further slowing down legislative process on the country’s road to the Euro-Atlantic integration. This power-sharing provision based on the concept of VNI has impaired the quality of Bosnian democracy where citizens are represented only as members of one of the three constituent peoples, placing ethnic representation before general interest and making “nations rather than citizens the bearers of all rights” (Katana, Igric 2005). As stated in the report of the USAID, “Bosnia’s constitution enshrines the “vital national interests” of the constituent peoples and in doing so guarantees both political inclusion and exclusion by ethnicity... Bosnians filter public discourse by ethnicity, including as valid their group’s views, excluding as invalid the views of other groups. The public square is available to all – one opinion, one voice and one group at a time” (USAID 2007, p.6).

### **Ethnocracy vs. Democracy**

The post-war Bosnian political system does not contain democratic values such as equality and freedom and it does not ensure all its citizens to feel equal before the law and having equal access to legislature. As Bojkov stresses democracy in the post-war Bosnia can not be said to be constitutionally framed (Bojkov 2003, p.60). Democracy is a form of government in which all citizens can participate on equal basis in the decision-making process that affects their lives. The term democracy was invented in ancient Greece in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC to define the political order in some Greek city-states, and meaning “rule of people” coined from *demos* meaning people and *kratos* which means power. In terms of ontology of power, in the post-Dayton Bosnia the political power has been in the hands of ethnic oligarchies and ethnic communities as a group rather than in the hands of individual citizens. That is, Bosnian social context has been dominated by the idea of *Volksgemeinschaft* or *the people’s community rather than community of free individuals*. In this manner, Prof. Živanović highlights the post-war political constellations in Bosnia and Herzegovina as following: “Here, we do not live as human beings but as Serbs, Croats and Bosniacs” (Živanović 2005). In fact, the post-Dayton regime has dehumanized public space in Bosnia.

Thus, today’s Bosnia resembles rather a kind of “illiberal democracy” as Fareed Zakaria explains the phenomena of promotion of free elections around the world without provision of basic human rights and freedoms

(Zakaria 1997). Thus, post-war Bosnian political regime is a kind of ethnocracy rather than representing democratic system. An ethnocracy is a regime that facilitates “the expansion, ethnicization and control of contested territory and state by a dominant ethnic nation” (Yiftachel, Ghanem 2004, p.649). In fact, extreme prioritization of ethnic values over individual principles has made it threatening to democracy. As Mujkic points out: “I call a community characterized by the political priority of the ethnic group(s) over the individual that is implemented through democratic self-legislation, and a community characterized by the political priority of the ethnic group’s right to self-determination over the citizen’s right to self-determination where the citizen’s membership in a political community is determined by her or his membership in ethnic community, Ethnopolis. And I call the political narrative and practice intended to justify this ethnically-based social construct, ethnopolitics” (Mujkic 2007, p.116).

### **No Europe with Current Dayton Agreement**

In addition, Dayton-based constitutional framework is in contradiction with European Union values of fundamental and human rights. Simply put, the Dayton Agreement ensures the protection of collective rights of ethnic groups while rights of minority groups have not been included into legal framework. Thus, in March 2005 the Venice Commission proposed the range of the constitutional reforms that are necessary to prepare Bosnia and Herzegovina for the future EU membership. The main recommendations that the Venice Commission made are:

- Transfer of competencies from the entities to the state,
- Reform of inefficient state legislative and executive structures,
- Elimination of “prerogatives for ethnic or group rights”,
- Strengthening citizens’ rights,
- Clarification of the entities’ future relationship to the state (Joseph, Hitchner, 2008, p.5).

The Venice Commission also states that Bosnian integration into the European bloc is under threat since its institutional framework is in direct breach of ECHR stated rules highlighting “the existence of tensions between a constitutional system based on collective equality of ethnic groups on one hand, and the principle of individual rights and equality of citizens on the other.” (Venice Commission 2005, p.17).

Also, persons not belonging to the three biggest national groups may align with one of the three nationalist political affiliations respectively in order to feel on equal basis with the members of the three ethnic groups. For instance, there have been high-positioned officials at state government

that have preferred one of the ethnic political parties in order to “exercise their citizenship rights”. However, this is not a long-term solution that can guarantee an equality of citizens in whole country. In this regard, the Venice Commission highlights that, “First of all, the interests of persons not belonging to the three constituent peoples risk being neglected or people are forced to artificially identify with one of the three peoples although they may, for example, be of mixed origin or belong to a different category. Each individual is free to change his political party affiliation. By contrast, ethnic identity is far more permanent, and individuals will not be willing to vote for parties perceived as representing the interest of a different ethnic group, even if these parties provide better and more efficient government. A system favoring and enshrining a party system based on ethnicity therefore seems flawed.” (Venice Commission 2005, p.12).

### **Concluding Points**

Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of former communist countries that started widespread democratic transformation in the aftermath of turbulent dissolution of Yugoslavia in early 1990s. While democratic transition in the country was expected to bring about stable nation-building and wide participation of numerous societal groups into policy-making the post-war Bosnian public discourse has been dominated by ethno-nationalists’ attempts at “exclusive nation formation” causing omnipresent discrimination against minority groups and those that declare as non-nationalists. That is, democracy brought about collectivist doctrine rather than promotion of individual rights. In addition, in spite of the fact that BiH is going through omnipresent Europeanization process in which country’s political, economic and administrative system are supposed to help build stable, functional and democratic country the members of minority groups and non-nationalists are widely marginalized and excluded from the decision-making processes. Although the Copenhagen political criteria require applicant countries to achieve “stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities” BiH is even today facing serious democratic deficit, and especially with regards to widespread discrimination against a community members who do not declare as adherents of the three ruling ethnic groups.

As a result, in the post-Dayton Bosnia the public sphere has become limited only for the members of the three largest ethnic groups constitutionally recognized as the so-called constituent nations. While it was expected that stable and democratic state will be built through constitutional principles

of equality and freedom today's political system is designed on exclusive rights of ethnic communities which increasingly tend to constructing their respective nations through institutional channels. In fact, democratic participation within the public space has turned into a competition between ethnicities or ethnic communities in terms of nation-formation or nation-building. The question of ethnicity has become a *raison d'être* of the three ethnic groups since they believe that their physical survival depends on the permanent struggle for ethnic identity. Such political model is a kind of ethno-democracy or ethnocracy which vehemently violates the human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus slows down country's progress towards the EU membership. BiH can not enter the EU while its public sphere is extremely dominated by ethno-nationalist school of thought which openly blocs development of open and democratic society. Therefore, BiH politicians, media, civil society and other pro-EU societal actors must make additional efforts in order to include diverse societal groups, including minority members and non-nationalists, into the decision-making process. Including the members of minority members and non-nationalists into the constitutional framework can become a meaningful start of building single Bosnian national identity.

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**Ivans Jānis Mihailovs**

**A DIVERSE CIVIL SOCIETY: AN ISSUE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE RIGHTS.  
(GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION)**

Development of the theory of law and application of theoretical consequences of law in the practice of social relations and legal acts have already in the second half of the 20th century become a basis for the conclusion that the models of behaviour of an individual as well as a certain group/community, and a society (nation, humanity) are determined and their interests are protected by a number of legal norms which frequently contradict each other (are in collision). The presence of these contradictions is the basis for searching solutions for the revealed collisions in the theory and legal practice of law and other social sciences such as political science and sociology, as well as a possibility to discuss, at least on the theoretical level, the frameworks (namely, the frameworks, since the borders are becoming more and more vague and indistinct) of the individual (what the natural rights are) and collective rights (the rights which are implemented collectively, that is, they can be implemented by a certain community, nation, as well as an individual which belongs to this community, nation) (Лукашева 2004, p.86). At the same time, these collective rights are not natural because they are formed when a group, nation, etc. is formed in the process of crystallizing of a status, aims, interests, specific character.

At the same time, the collective rights cannot dominate the individual ones; their task is to directly complement for the natural individual rights introducing an element of the mentioned above collective interests. Furthermore, the individual has to make an independent decision about his/her

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belonging to a certain group, otherwise the democracy of a political regime and realization of human rights for choice, speech, views, etc are subject to doubt. Thus, if the collective rights contradict the individual rights of the individual who has been formed by this collective body, then the legitimacy of these collective rights is subject to doubt (Катъко 2008).

The concept of a democratic constitutional state suggests that the rights express not only the desires of the majority but protect the interests of the minority as well. At the same time, the active general public whose representatives (in the form of formal and informal groups) with their actions collaborate on the issues of implementing the state policy and decision making expressing their opinions on the significant issues of the state/public development is considered a keystone of any democratic constitutional state. One of the tasks of the civil society is expression, representation and protection of various (group) interests.

That is why the issue of the balance between the individual and collective rights as well as the rights of various collective bodies (for example, the rights of a group/community, the rights of a nation, and the rights of humanity) in a diverse civil society is becoming topical.

It is obvious that the complex character of these rights makes the possibility to create a unified list of the individual and collective rights impossible, and also it does not allow to create a unified "balance" theory of these rights (since the existence of a single/unified theory is doubtful as well as doubtful is the possibility to understand certain social relations unambiguously). Nevertheless, the practice of modern social relations more and more frequently emphasizes the issues related to equalization/balance of the individual and collective rights and, respectively, interests, the rights and interests of various collective bodies (for example, the issues related to the possibility to express the identity of various individuals in the society/public sphere, relations between various minorities and the majority in the public sphere, etc).

Therefore, in order to identify the above-mentioned frameworks at least on the theoretical level, the discussion with the representatives of various sciences and practitioners is needed. Moreover, one of the aims of the given paper is to motivate such discussion. It also attempts to spot some problems/references of relations of the individual and collective rights, it is also an attempt to identify various approaches towards the interpretation of the individual and collective rights.

Analyzing the development of various political regimes and ideologies in the 20th century, it is possible to conclude that political priorities change wave-like, emphasizing individual or collective rights, and their dominance

respectively. For example, the tragic events of September 11, 2001 in the USA (Factor 9/11) have become the basis for unprecedented safety measures (in fact, often violating the individual rights and the human rights of separate groups of people), as well as having enriched the political power which objects to multicultural values and does not recognize any successful possibilities for a policy of integration, and encourages limiting migration, rhetoric to the uttermost. They have also allowed to emphasize in the political agenda the necessity for the individual to belong to a certain group/political nation but not to recognize the individual as an autonomous “world wanderer” whose identity is fragmented and who is self-sufficient (Bloss 2008).

Thus, it is possible to single out at least three main approaches to interpretation of individual and collective relations. It should also be pointed out that identification of these approaches can exist only on the level of assumptions and conventions because the views of scientists as well as the practice of legal relations is highly diverse.

1. The doctrine of multiculturalism dividing the society into various communities and cultivating the recognition of and respect to various kinds of differences, for example, ethnical, religious, sex and cultural ones, and singling out ethnic, religious or even linguistic identity as a basis for the individual's actions and behaviour, accepting not only the individual rights but the rights of a community as well, notwithstanding which criteria – ethnical, religious, cultural or any other – the community is based on. In addition, not objecting to the individual rights and their natural character, the rights of a community are seen as primary as compared with the individual rights, assessing the individual rights within the context of the community's rights. Proceeding from this, the individual is always seen as belonging to a certain group (Berdnikovs, Mihailovs 2005, p.27 – 39).

The multicultural approach also recognizes the existence of specially supported groups which should gain specific status/privileges using a positive discrimination in political and legal measures.

At the same time multiculturalism cannot be considered a unified approach. According to Will Kymlicka, the representative of these ideas, in the beginning, multiculturalism was aimed at protection of the rights of minority groups from the attacks of a liberal individualism (till about 1989). Later, the main task of multiculturalism was connected with the attempts to prove that some (but not all) demands of the minority groups meet the liberal values, respectively, producing the necessity to correlate the interests/policies of the state and groups. (Kymlicka 2010, p.413 – 468; Clarke 2008).

2. The multiculturalism approach contradicts the liberal values singling out an autonomous individual and his actions trying to achieve that they correspond to the actions of other individuals, respectively, allowing to avoid conflicts. Separating the private and public spheres, liberalism traditionally recognizes all individuals in the public sphere notwithstanding their “differences”/belonging as equal before law and their administrative and political procedures/limitations. In its turn, the identity features of an individual or group “are allowed” to express in the private sphere (this is your own private business providing it does not influence the public sphere) (Kymlicka 2010, p. 84 – 137). Thus, the minority groups (more precisely, their representatives) are mainly guaranteed the individual but not collective rights. It should be pointed out that this approach, with some exceptions, is popular in the united Europe (Dribins 2008).

3. Another approach – republicanism – as such rejects the significance of existence of various groups/communities within the context of the state development, emphasizing the role of an individual not for the benefit of existence of a community but for the benefit of functioning and development of the state. Thus, a loyal individual is a keystone of the state, in some cases even admitting that the interests of the group/community can prevent the individual from fulfilling his responsibilities and realizing his rights as a citizen of the state. In connection with this, such concepts as a political nation, national state, patriotism/patriotic education, civic consciousness, one state language, etc. have been emphasized in the traditions of republicanism. (It should be noted that, similar features can be traced in the views of the present Minister of Culture Sarmite Elerte (the Latvian identity – the Latvian language, culture, social memory are common to all people in Latvia) and in the project “The Guidelines for the National Identity and Integration Policy” elaborated under her guidance. For example, “The state creates the frameworks within which the democracy can act, and the democracy cannot function without the people who recognize themselves as belonging to this state and they are responsible for this state. The Latvian language and culture are an inherent worth and a resource at the same time for attracting people to Latvia, they are the basis of the Latvian state” (Ēlerte 2011).

Therefore, multiculturalism can be interpreted as a threat to republicanism and its values; it also can be seen as a set of ideas which enable the rift within the society, which can seriously impede the individual’s loyalty.

At the same time, considering the above mentioned character of the origin of the individual and collective rights and a certain dependence of the collective rights on the individual rights, it is obvious that in a democratic

legal state where the boundaries are open and the individual is provided with the possibility for a wide choice, these feelings of loyalty, patriotism and belonging can be formed only by the means of free choice and confidence (especially taking into account that none of the above mentioned approaches do not suggest a solution for the collision of the individual and collective rights). Besides that, the loyalty and belonging to the society, that is political nation and state, does not exclude for the individual the possibilities, at least in the private sphere, to freely develop his national, cultural, linguistic and religious peculiarities.

But, taking into consideration that, for example, in Latvia the number of these “different” individuals is higher in relation to the total number of population (about 40%), the problem of the degree of “collectivization” of the individual rights of these individuals, in the author’s opinion, has become urgent (otherwise the possibility for formation of a loyal patriotic community of individuals which “convincingly” legitimates the majority of collective rights can be subject to doubt). Notwithstanding the fact that “The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities” ratified on May 26, 2005 stipulates relatively wide guarantees for the individual rights, it also determines the possibilities to develop the collective rights of the minority groups in Latvia (including a language, educational institutions, mass media) (The Law on “The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities”).

This means that despite the fact the Latvia did not choose the way of implementing the ideas of multiculturalism, it is now possible to look for the possibilities which allow to correlate the collective rights of separate groups and the majority, which, in fact, would not contradict the idea of a common loyal political nation, and at the same time, allowing the individual rights of some individuals to be expressed as collective rights (which would be recognized by the majority and the state respectively), which is one of the prerequisites for functioning of a fully-fledged civil society within the state.

How this idea can be implemented is the question of the discussion (it should be pointed out that the discussions of such type are held abroad, for example, see Morse, Groves, Vermette 2010), which embraces a wide range of opinions and views. Otherwise, as it has been already mentioned, the process of formation of collective rights can affect dramatically the individual rights.

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**Hans-Georg Heinrich, Alexander Chvorostov**

**INTERPLAY OF EUROPEAN,  
NATIONAL AND REGIONAL IDENTITIES:  
NATIONS BETWEEN STATES ALONG THE NEW  
EASTERN BORDERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Project abstract**

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

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were frequently drawn into interstate 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.

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 (see [www.enri-east.net/project-results](http://www.enri-east.net/project-results)).

Individual papers are written by ENRI-East experts from all project teams and the whole series is edited by the Coordinating Team at the CE-ASS-Center of 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
2. Interplay of European, National and Regional Identities among the ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe (main results of ENRI-East empirical program)
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 Belarusian Minority in Lithuania
5. The Belarusian Minority in Poland)
6. The Hungarian Minority in Slovakia
7. The Hungarian Minority in Ukraine
8. The Lithuanian Minority in Russia (Kaliningrad oblast)
9. The Polish Minority in Lithuania
10. The Polish Minority in Ukraine
11. The Russian Minority in Latvia
12. The Russian Minority in Lithuania
13. The Polish Minority in Belarus
14. The Slovak Minority in Hungary

15. The Ukrainian Minority in Poland

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)

## **1. Project goal and scope**

ENRI-East is aimed at a deeper understanding of the ways in which the modern European identities and regional cultures are formed and intercommunicated in the Eastern part of the European continent. The multinational research team is committed to European values, recognizes and fully supports the assets of ethnic and linguistic diversity. 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 the Eastern part of Europe, along with the problems resulting from it was generated by dramatic shifts of borders, populations and political affiliations over the last century and 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 interstate conflicts and subjected to repression, ethnic cleansing and expulsion.

ENRI's central research question targets this complexity and concerns the *interplay of identities and cultures*: theoretical assumptions on the sig-

nificance of ethnic, linguistic, regional, professional, gender and other identities were tested and the change of the patterns found in field work traced over age groups. The focus of research was not only on attitudes, but also on practices such as language use, social networking, media consumption or reports on perceived or experienced discrimination.

*Figure 1. Europe's moved borders in 1914-2010.*



In geographical terms, the project is limited to the following regions:

- Eastern Europe (about 630 thousand ethnical “splits” living in the border areas of Poland, Belarus and Ukraine);
- Eastern Central Europe (about 200 thousand people belonging to ethnic minorities in Western Ukraine, Slovakia and Hungary);
- the Baltic region (at least, 1.65 million of “non-titular” nations living in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the north-western part of Russia)
- Germany which plays the role of a modern European “melting pot”, hosting almost 4 million recent migrants from former USSR.

The project includes a detailed statistical survey of these groups and the selection of a number of them for an in-depth description and analysis. Sampling is to reflect the statistical weight of a group in European countries as well as to represent “Western” and “Eastern” parts of the European continent. The sample is stratified in order to represent “bigger minorities” (100 thousand people and more), “small minorities” (less than 10 thousand people) and “medium-size minorities” (20 to 50 thousand). In a series of case studies the social, cultural and political components of the daily lives of at least 10 ethnic groups living along and across the Eastern borders of the enlarged European Union and the Western borders of its neighbouring NIS countries are explored. These groups have been chosen for detailed sociological surveys and contextual historical and political analysis using standardised quantitative and qualitative sociological methods (such as formalised and in-depth interviews, expert interviews) as well as a music survey as a pilot methodological effort).

From the 30-odd major minorities in 20 countries, we selected the following groups for in-depth scrutiny:

- Russians in Latvia [ru(V)]
- Russians in Lithuania [ru(LT)]
- Belarusians in Poland [by{PL}]
- Ukrainians in Poland [ua(PL)]
- Slovaks in Hungary [sk(HU)]
- Hungarians in Slovakia [hu(SK)]
- Hungarians in Ukraine [hu(UA)]
- Poles in Ukraine [pl(UA)]
- Poles in Belarus [pl(BY)]
- Lithuanians in Russia (Kaliningrad oblast) [lt(RU)]
- Poles in Lithuania [pl(LT)]
- Belarusians in Lithuania [by(LT)]

## 2. The ENRI portfolio of empirical methods

The *methodological toolbox* developed for the specific requirements of the region and the minorities under study consists of an interlocking smart mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. Since the major objective of the study was to generate comparative data, the key component was a large-scale formalized survey dubbed “ENRI Values and Identities Survey” (ENRI-VIS), which also serves as a common point of reference for all other data sets produced by other methods.

Depending on certain characteristics of the individual minorities (such as their numeric proportion in the total population), sub-sample sizes of 800 and 400 were determined using national statistical data. This approach permitted to construct samples which represent at least 75% of each minority. Data collection used random route sampling (RRS or RRFE), and for locations where ethnic density was below 10%, snowballing techniques (TLS, RDS).

Data collection took place in winter 2009/2010 and the interviews were carried out face-to-face by professional in-country sociological agencies. In order to be an eligible respondent, the approached persons had to fulfill three formal criteria: to be 18 years or older, to have been living in the country for at least 12 months and to identify themselves as members of the particular ethnic minority group. The interviews were carried out in the preferred language of the respondent (either in the language of the host country or in the language of the ethnic home country).

In order to ensure high data quality, internal peer-reviewed data control was applied. After all data have been cleaned and homogenized, the full, unified data set consists of 6,800 respondents and covered 12 ethnic minorities in 8 countries.

Many questions in our questionnaire are compatible with several major international surveys. The questionnaire covers the following broad topics: (a) General information about the respondent; (b) Ethno-national perceptions, practices, networking; (c) Social and political attitudes and practices.

Further components of project’s accomplished empirical portfolio include:

- Data obtained from biographical interviews (ENRI-BIO). For each minority, 12 biographical interviews were conducted, yielding a total of 144 interviews
- Data generated by 42 expert interviews (ENRI-EXI). This data set also includes Germany as a special case (ethnic Germans and Jewish quota refugees from CIS countries). Experts interviewed included

governmental or non-governmental representatives of ethnic minority groups and organizations.

- Data produced by a computer-assisted content analysis of relevant web sites (ENRI BLOG) Sources include online periodicals, home pages of organizations, blogs, live journals and discussion forums. The total number of documents subjected to analysis is 340. This piece of research also includes a study of the Ukrainian minority in Hungary.
- A pilot study focusing on music and identity (ENRI-MUSIC) was conducted in Lithuania and Hungary. It had the objective of linking musical memory to identity and to trace the resulting patterns over generations.

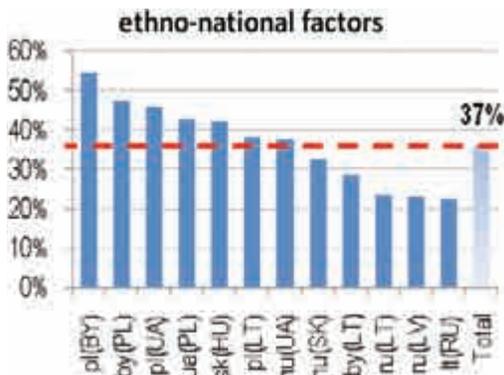
All databases are a collective IPR of the ENRI-East consortium and can be made available to researchers outside of the consortium in collaboration with one of the ENRI teams, subject to cooperation agreements.

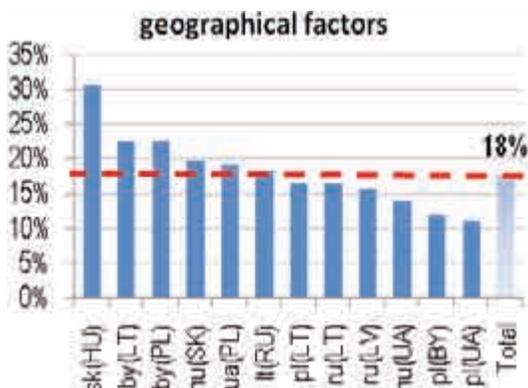
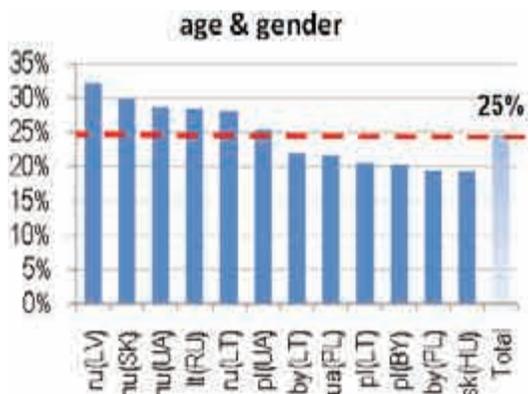
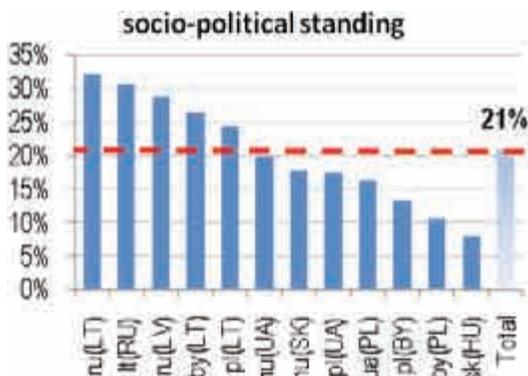
### 3. MAJOR EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

#### 3.1. Identity and its main components

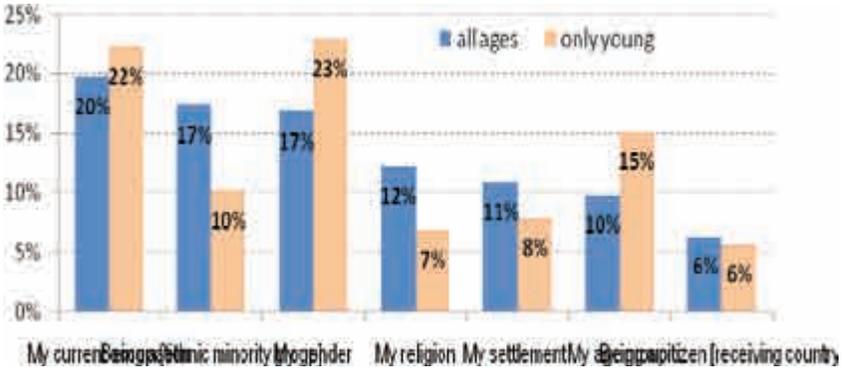
*Ethnicity* is one of many salient characteristics individuals or groups use to describe their “self” or are used by others to position them within the social order (“ascription”). Members of ethnic minority groups in the ENRI region are well aware of their ethnic identity, but, generally speaking, the relative importance of this type of identity is decreasing over the generations and substituted by others, like profession or gender.

*Figure 2. Main identity components preferred by respondents (multiple choices)*





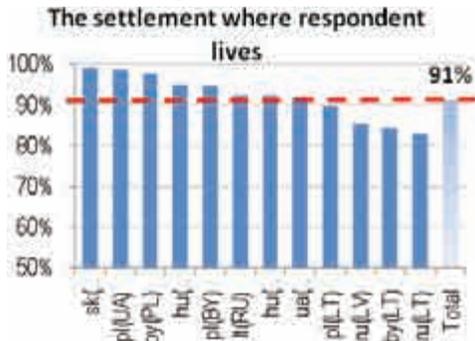
**Figure 3. Relative importance of self-identification markers (all age groups versus youth)**

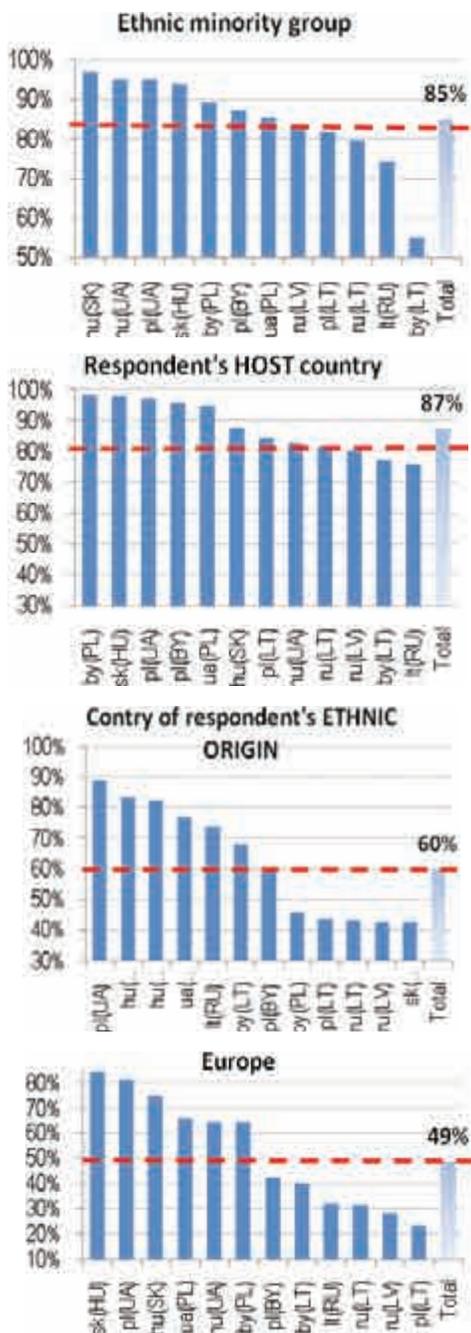


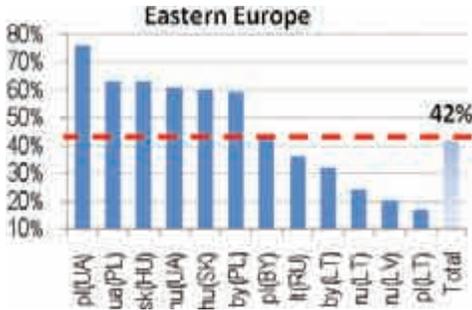
*Ethno-national identity* includes such factors as closeness to different reference objects (own ethnic group, country of ethnic origin, affiliation with particular religion or geographical area, linguistic habits and preferences, etc.). It is strongest in those states where the minorities were (or are) under political pressure. In the first line, this relates to Russians in Latvia and Lithuania, and to Hungarians in Ukraine and Slovakia. Together with the Poles in Lithuania, these minorities share the feeling that they have lost their former status as a ruling nation.

However, strongest feelings of closeness are directed to the locations (settlements), where respondents live (91% on average), followed by the own ethnic minority group (85%) and the “hosting” country (87%). These three strongest objects of attachments are followed with a considerable distance by a country of respondents’ ethnic origins (60%) and Europe or Eastern Europe (49% and 42% respectively).

**Figure 4. Respondents feel close to: ...**



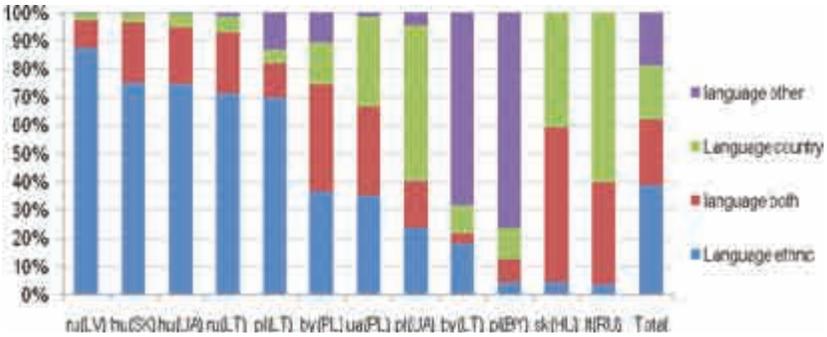




### 3.2. Vehicular languages of ethnic minorities in the CEE region

Russian minorities in the Baltic states and Hungarians in Ukraine and Slovakia appear to be most adamant to use their own *mother tongue* as far as this is possible in every-day interactions. Lithuanians in Kaliningrad region, and Poles in Ukraine use the language of the host country most frequently, closely followed by the Slovaks in Hungary. The latter minorities can therefore be called the “most adaptive” ethnic groups, the former the “most self-assertive”.

Figure 5. Languages most often spoken at home



Thus, it appears that the Russian and Hungarian languages are the most “resistant” native languages among the corresponding “residual” ethnic minorities, while the Polish, Slovakian and Lithuanian languages are the most “neglected” native languages of the relevant residual ethnic groups.

With regard to the use of language of the host country, Russian language is a preferred means of communication at home among Lithuanians in Kaliningrad oblast, and Ukrainian is a vehicular language for Poles living in Ukraine.

In contrast, Lithuanian and Latvian are the most “neglected” languages among the groups under study: it is NOT the actively spoken home language for all three ethnic minorities in these countries. Russians and Hungarians, once again, are “champions” in their non-usage of the language of the country they live in.

**Table 1 Three groups with regard to the usage of own ethnic language at home**

Own ethnic language is most spoken (>70%):		Moderate usage of own ethnic language: 37% – 19%		Own ethnic language is largely neglected (<5%):
ru(LV)	ru(LT)	by(PL)	pl(UA)	pl(BY)
hu(SK)	pl(LT)	ua(PL)	by(LT)	sk(HU)
hu(UA)				lt(RU)

**Table 2. Three groups with regard to the usage of COUNTRY language at home**

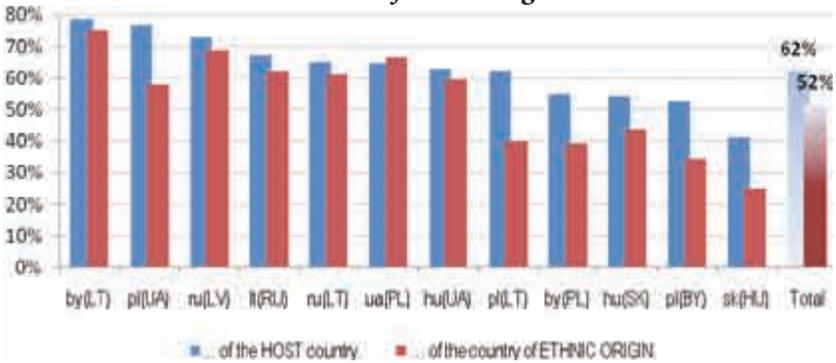
Country language most spoken at home (>50%)	Country language moderately accepted at home (41%-32%)	Country language largely neglected at home (<15%)			
lt(RU)	sk(HU)	by(PL)	by(LT)	hu(UA)	hu(SK)
pl(UA)	ua(PL)	pl(BY)	ru(LT)	pl(LT)	ru(LV)

### 3.3. Ethno-national distinction versus adaptation

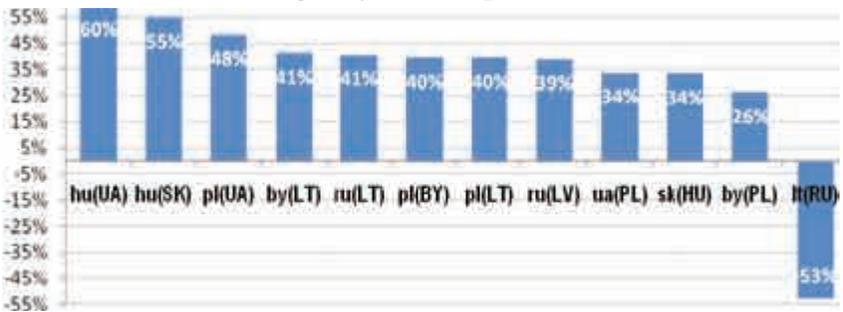
Nevertheless, the adherence to the “native ethnic language” does not translate into a feeling of being closer to the kin country (a country of factual or historical ethnic origin). On the contrary, with the exception of Hungarians in Ukraine and Slovakia, all minorities are much more “at home” in their host countries than in their countries of ethnic origin. They are more interested in “home affairs” than in events in their kin country. Younger generations become estranged from their kin group abroad. Needless to say, they regard themselves loyal citizens of their host countries.

In order to define the degree to which minorities were ready to adapt, respondents were invited to express their position toward two options: “*It is better to adapt and blend in larger society*” and “*It is better to preserve own customs and traditions*” (four-points scale for each option).

**Figure 6. Respondents' interest in politics in their host countries and countries of ethnic origins**



**Figure 7. Instinctive and adaptive strategies: diasporas' balances (simple differences between the sums of "strongly agree" and "rather agree" for ether option)**



“Champions” in distinction:

- Hungarians in Ukraine
- Hungarians in Slovakia
- Poles in Ukraine

“Champions” in adaptation:

- Lithuanians in Russia (Kgd.)
- Belarusians in Poland
- Slovaks in Hungary
- Ukrainians in Poland

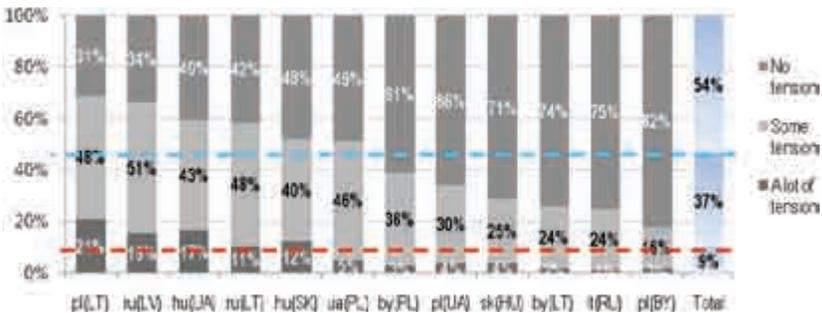
**3.4. Perceived ethno-national tensions and experienced discrimination**

The ENRI-VIS data reveal that among all types of social tensions that one can observe in any society, the most disturbing factors are the “classical” types of social anxiety, such as strains between poor and rich people (a general stress factor for up to 80% of the respondents) or between older and younger generations (up 68% on average). However, the *ethno-national*

*types of tensions* have been reported by almost every second respondent in the whole sample. Regarding the tensions between respondents' own ethnic groups and the majority of country population, on average 9% of respondents reports "a lot of tension" and 37% "some tensions"; these values vary considerably from country to country in the ENRI sample, as shown in the chart below.

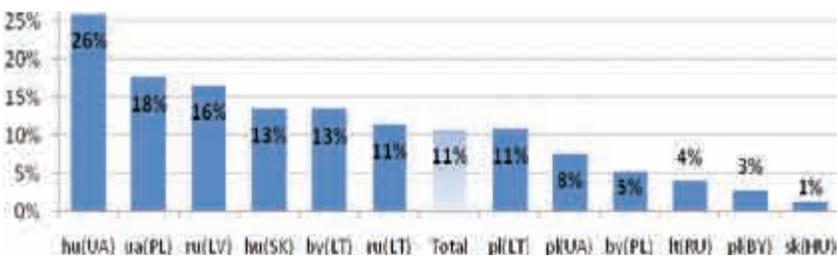
Reports of Poles and Russians in Lithuania, Russians in Latvia, Hungarians in Ukraine and Slovakia as well as Ukrainians in Poland on tensions between their ethnic groups and the majority of the population are above the average values in the ENRI sample.

**Figure 8. Perceived tension: between respondent's ethnic group and the majority**



There is, of course, a significant distance between the “perceived tension” and the factually *experienced discrimination of harassment* due ethnographical factors. The chart below demonstrates the gap between 46% of respondents perceiving tension between their ethnic groups and the majority and the 11% of respondents who reported having indeed experienced discrimination or harassment due to their ethnicity or national origin during the last year.

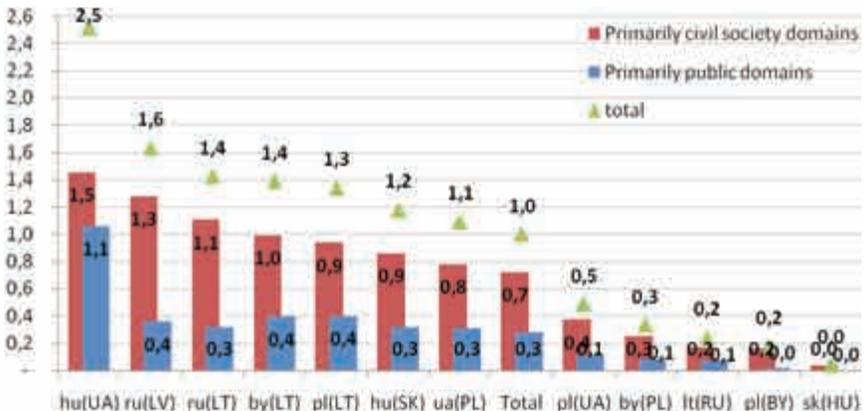
**Figure 9. Experienced discrimination or harassment during the last 12 months due to ethnic or national origins of a respondent**



Hungarians in Ukraine, Ukrainians in Poland and Russians in Latvia report factual discrimination during the last 12 months above average values in the whole sample.

Cases of ethno-national discrimination or harassment require a closer look. We can distinguish between two distinct venues of discrimination, namely public institutions governed by explicitly stated legal rules (authorities, universities, schools, etc.) and everyday “private” encounters governed by informal rules of conduct (neighborhoods, streets, shops and restaurants, etc.) The chart below illustrates that the probability of ethno-national discrimination or harassment in the traditional social domains is much higher than at the locations, which are under stronger governmental control.

**Figure 10. Overview of the probability of ethno-national discrimination in public and civil society domains per ethnic minority groups (with the relation to average rate)**



Respondents from the following groups report highest rates of experienced discrimination in 2008-2009 (i.e. during the twelve months before the survey): Hungarians in Ukraine with especially high values of reported discrimination in public domains; this group is followed by all minorities in the ENRI sample from Latvia and Lithuania. However, the latter groups point to the “private domains” as major venues of discrimination or harassment.

The groups reporting the lowest levels of discrimination or harassment, or even the absence of such negative experience at any domain are Poles in Ukraine, Belarusians in Poland and Poles in Belarus, Lithuanians in Russia and Slovaks in Ukraine.

### 3.5. Attitudes toward Europe and the European Union

The general *image of the European Union* among the ENRI respondents is generally positive or neutral and it is somewhat more positive among the ethnic minority respondents from non-EU countries. Nevertheless, for most minority members, Europe and the EU provide no emotional point of reference. For some, like the Hungarians in Ukraine, the EU is a potential moral and financial support partner. Most minority members in the new EU member states have mixed feelings about the Union. Some respondents mention the protection from globalization that small member states receive from the big community.

Figure 11. General image of European Union

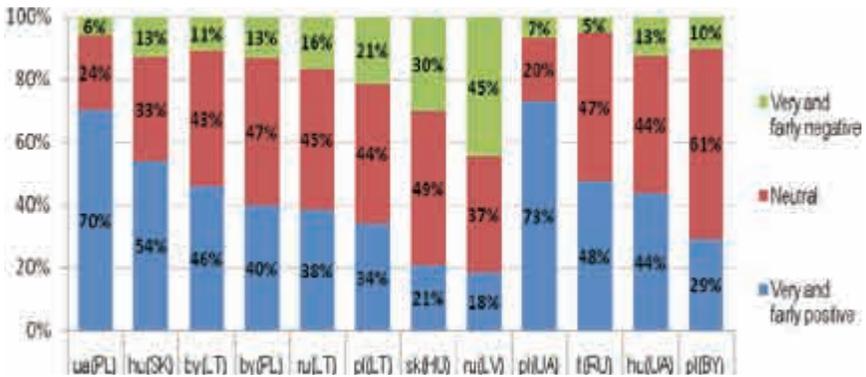
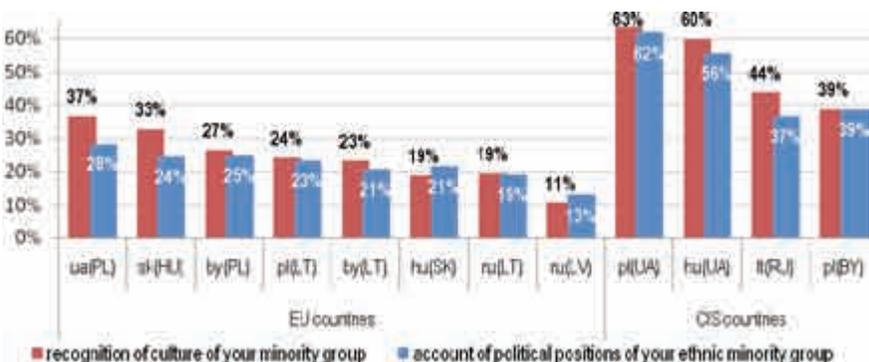


Figure 12. Respondents saying there is a considerably improved situation after the (for CIS respondents: would improve after a hypothetical) joining the EU with regard to...



When it comes to the cultural and political recognition and protection of the rights of ethnic minorities, the European Union serves as an ultimate reference point for ethnic groups outside of the EU. This contrasts with rather skeptical assessment of the ethnic minority groups within the eastern part of the EU regarding the factual improvement of the cultural and political situation of these groups after their countries have joined the European Union.

### 3.6. Institutional trust, political participation and civil society

ENRI-VIS data on the distribution of *trust in institutions* of the respondents' home (host) countries reveal a quite diversified pattern. One can observe two distinct groups of countries: The institutions in Belarus, Poland and Russia are trusted by representatives of the minorities under study well above the average values in the sample. In contrast, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine appear as countries with the least trusted institutions in the eyes of the ethnic groups in the sample.

A possible explanation for this pattern is the higher or lesser stability of political regimes in these countries and the degree of general social and economic satisfaction of population, as well as the levels of political freedoms and civil security.

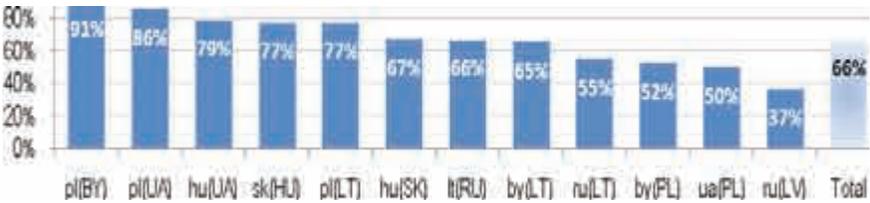
**Table 3. Trust in institutions among ethnic minorities in CEE (trust completely + rather trust)**

	Police	Media	Government	Parliament
Poles in Belarus	higher (75%)	higher (66%)	higher (80%)	higher (78%)
Belarusians in Poland	higher (82%)	higher (63%)	higher (41%)	higher (37%)
Ukrainians in Poland	higher (71%)	higher (57%)	higher (45%)	higher (39%)
Lithuanians in Russia (Kgd)	average (45%)	higher (50%)	higher (65%)	higher (54%)
Slovaks in Hungary	higher (65%)	lower (26%)	average (28%)	average (30%)
Belarusians in Lithuania	higher (61%)	average (46%)	lower (23%)	lower (15%)
Russians in Lithuania	average (48%)	lower (38%)	lower (18%)	lower (13%)

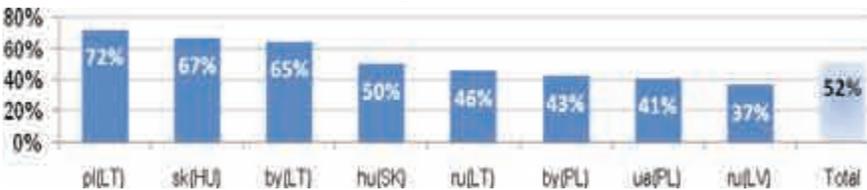
Hungarians in Slovakia	lower (40%)	average (46%)	average (29%)	average (29%)
Hungarians in Ukraine	lower (24%)	lower (34%)	lower (26%)	average (28%)
Poles in Ukraine	lower (27%)	average (44%)	lower (25%)	lower (17%)
Poles in Lithuania	lower (36%)	lower (36%)	lower (16%)	lower (10%)
Russians in Latvia	lower (41%)	lower (30%)	lower (9%)	lower (7%)
average for ENRI sample	51%	44%	32%	28%

Nevertheless, the level of *participation in national and European parliamentary elections* is quite high among the ethnic minorities in CEE region, with the exception of groups with higher shares of recent migrants or those who are not eligible for voting (i.e. non-citizens).

**Figure 13. Shares of respondents that took part in the last parliamentary elections in the HOST country**

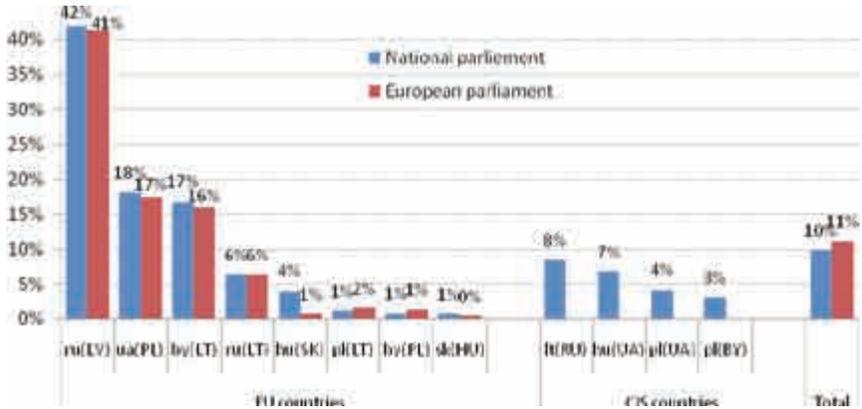


**Figure 14. Shares of respondents that took part in the last elections to the European Parliament**



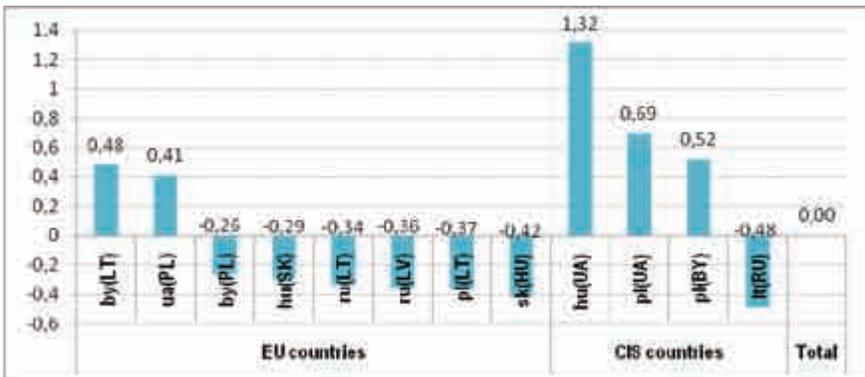
The following chart illustrates the situation with members of particular ethnic minority groups who cannot vote at national or European elections.

**Figure 15. Respondents reported being NOT eligible for the participation in parliamentary elections**



The dominant form of *self-organization of ethnic minority groups* is to set up cultural NGOs. Churches and religious organizations are centers of community life, particularly in the CIS countries under study and with Ukrainians in Poland. With the notable exception of Hungarians in Ukraine, membership in political parties has remained limited (around 3% on average). Overall, the most vibrant civil societies among the minorities can be found with Hungarians in Ukraine and Poles in Ukraine.

**Figure 16. Index of participation in civil society organizations (any reported membership related to the total sample)**



### 3.7. Collective ethno-national identities: historical memories, feelings of pride, trust in people and cross-border networking

*Collective historical memory* is a precondition for group identity. Living memory tends to be substituted by myths if it is repressed or dissolved in a dominant national narrative. “Tacit”, non-recognized narratives and myths can leap over into a perception of being discriminated, harassed or in other ways disrespected, as the example of Ukrainians in Poland shows, where no ethnic group concerned has come to terms with the common violent past and there are still unresolved redistribution issues such as entitlements to land, etc.

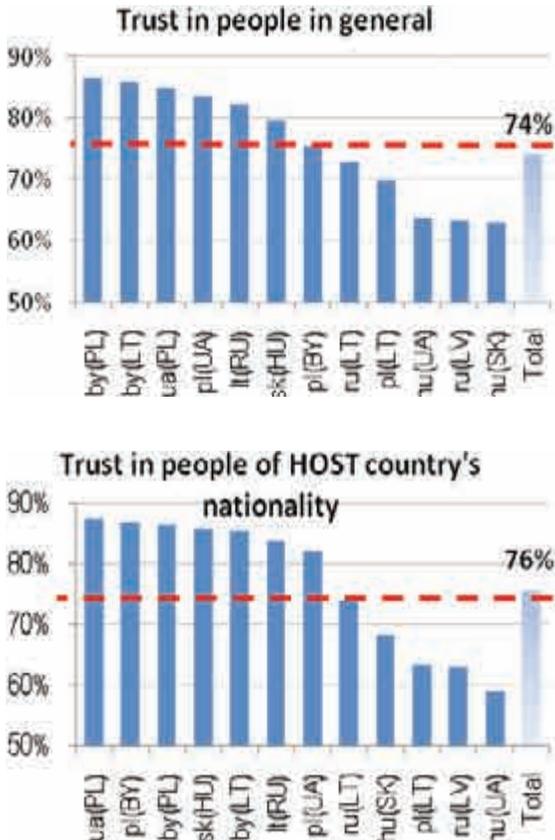
Pride in one's own ethnic group is strongest with Hungarians in Ukraine, Poles in Ukraine and Poles in Lithuania and weakest with Slovaks in Hungary as well as Lithuanians in the Kaliningrad region. Russians in Lithuania and Latvia, although they share with Poles and Hungarians the historical role of a ruling nation in multinational empires, express no pride in the history of their own ethnic group. Only very small percentages of Belarusians in Poland, of Poles in Belarus and of Russians in Lithuania assess their Soviet past as positive.

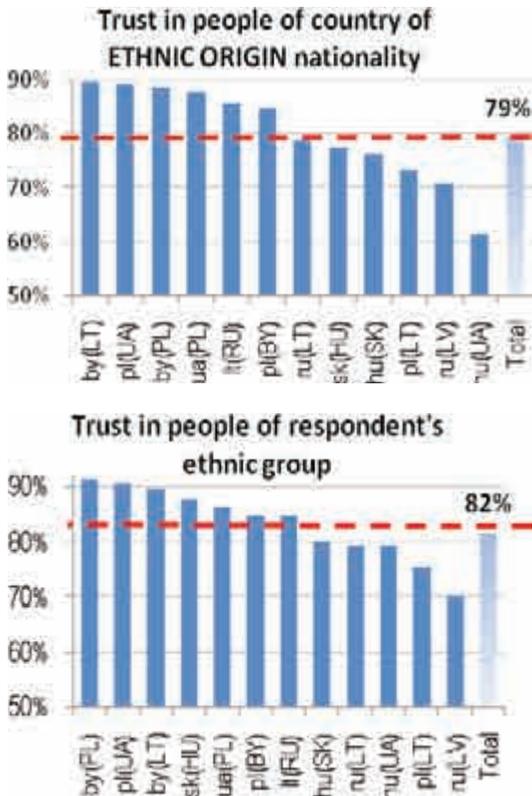
**Table 4. Minority groups with highest and weakest degrees of pride per different objects pride (triplets)**

Degrees of pride in...	Highest pride (“very proud” + “rather proud”)	Weakest pride (“rather not proud” + “not proud at all”)
... own ethnicity	Hungarians in Ukraine (95%) Poles in Ukraine (95%) Poles in Lithuania (91%)	Slovaks in Hungary (53%) Lithuanians in Russia (Kgd.) (23%) Belarusians in Lithuania (18%)
... country of residence	Belarusians in Poland (89%) Ukrainians in Poland (88%) Poles in Ukraine (83%)	Poles in Lithuania (60%) Russians in Lithuania (59%) Russians in Latvia (58%)
... own ethnic minority group	Belarusians in Poland (97%) Poles in Ukraine (93%) Hungarians in Slovakia (92%)	Slovaks in Hungary (40%) Russians in Latvia (37%) Russians in Lithuania (25%)
... being an Eastern European	Belarusians in Poland (84%) Poles in Ukraine (83%) Ukrainians in Poland (76%)	Russians in Latvia (78%) Slovaks in Hungary (58%) Russians in Lithuania (55%)
... being a European	Poles in Ukraine (90%) Belarusians in Poland (87%) Ukrainians in Poland (84%)	Slovaks in Hungary (63%) Russians in Latvia (59%) Lithuanians in Russia (52%)

A further observation from the ENRI-VIS data demonstrates the distribution of the level of *trust in people* depending particular types ethnographical relations to a respondent. On the next chart one can see that on average, members of ethnic minority groups would have more trust toward the people of their own ethnic group (the average value for the whole sample is 82% and the variation among different groups is the lowest in that case). This most trusted group is followed by the people from the country of respondent's ethnic origin (79% on average) and third-turn-trust would be given to the compatriots of the "main" nationality of the country a respondent lives in (76%).

*Figure 17. Trust in people in general and different groups of people among ethnic minorities in CEE*

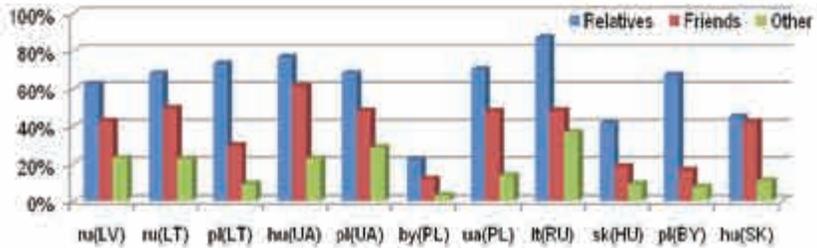




A natural strength of ethnic minorities is their *multi-cultural capital* that includes the various forms of cultural heritage of the host country and the country of their ethnic origin. As a rule, members of ethnic minorities are fluent in two or more languages and they understand and appreciate music of both countries they relate to. The multiple personal ties that connect them with their kin-countries are an additional asset. The results of ENRI-VIS show how intensive these contacts of ethnic minority respondents are with their relatives, friends and other people in the countries of their ethnic origins.

Cross-border networking is most intensive with Hungarians in Ukraine. Belarusians in Poland and Slovaks in Hungary have the fewest regular contacts with relatives, friends or others in the kin country.

**Figure 18. Respondents having regular contacts with relatives, friends and others in the country of their ethnic origin**



## 4. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1. General remarks

Overall, ENRI confirms the finding that a tolerant political and social environment promotes integration processes which preserve cultural and ethnic identities, while discrimination and political pressure generates defiant nationalism as a response.

Members of studied ethnic minorities:

- demonstrate clearly multi-faceted types of identity (a highly pragmatic mix of a variety of available cultural and social “assets”);
- they are mostly attached to the areas where they have been born and educated;
- are loyal citizens-cum-patriots-cum-Europeans.

Preferred patterns of identities have *dynamic character* and depend primarily on *social status*, *settlement patterns* and *visibility*.

- Ethnicity and ethnic languages of minorities are important, but not dominating factors contributing to identity formation;
- The strongest predictors for particular types of identity would be age and social status of minority members, followed by their religious affiliation (in specific cases);
- Settlement patterns vary significantly over different among different ethnic minorities;
- In a European context, attempts to discriminate minorities lead to higher visibility.

EU (Europe) is popular as an ideal and a model to emulate with regard to peaceful and respectful approach to resolve possible inter-cultural and social conflicts and the European Union in general as well as individual

national and regional governments have the *responsibility to moderate* in complex ethno-political conflicts involving minorities, titular nations and sending nations;

Inter-ethnic conflicts and tensions could be resolved most efficiently, if their individual components are properly addressed (cultural heritage, languages, social justice) and the socio-economic environment in general is favorable;

Targeted support should be extended to interethnic action. This may range from PR support for such action to support for member states (or Eastern Partnership states) for granting tax breaks or extending beneficial loan schemes to interethnic start-ups.

Since the integration of the young generation (under 30 years of age) is rapidly progressing and their attitudes toward Europe are more favourable than those of the 30+ generations. Efforts should therefore concentrate on the young generation which is more receptive to European liberal values. Linguistic diversity is highest among the ENRI minorities, but its assets are not always honored appropriately.

An investment into student mobility, from high school to universities can improve the attitude towards the EU. An attempt should be made to involve the governments in the kin countries, civil society, organizations and the media to stimulate the “Europeanness” instead of the exclusive ethnic affiliation of young minority members.

#### **4.2. The Interplay of Identities, cultures and politics**

The empirical data generated by ENRI corroborate findings and observations made in the framework of previous studies and represent a snapshot which permits to draw conclusions about the evolution of identities and identity construction in the region under study. Our data show the enormous importance of such everyday practices as language use, information retrieval and communication, and the patterns of social contacts for the reproduction and evolution of identities. A tolerant political and social environment promotes assimilation processes, discrimination and political pressure generates defiant nationalism as a response. The minorities in the ENRI region are well aware of their ethnic identity, but, generally speaking, the relative importance of this type of identity is decreasing and substituted by others, like profession or gender. This process can be precisely traced over the generations. The Eastern borderlands of the EU are a specific region where distant and recent politics characterized by conflicts between superpowers have created numerous ethnic enclaves in the states existing today. Consequently, ethnic identity is strongest in those states where the

minorities were (or are) under political pressure. In the first line, this relates to Russians in Latvia and Lithuania, and to Hungarians in Ukraine and Slovakia. Together with the Poles in Lithuania, these minorities share the feeling that they have lost their former status as a ruling nation. For minorities which report little or no political pressure, culture, not politics, becomes the main repository of identity and the major focal point where ethnic awareness is kept alive. Particularly for minorities in Poland with its strong presence of the Catholic Church, this role is played by the minority churches. Close-knit groups like the Slovaks in Hungary, the Poles in Ukraine or the Belarusians in Poland have the strongest local identity and the strongest links to the local community.

#### **4.3. Nations between the states**

Russian minorities in the Baltic states and Hungarians in Ukraine and Slovakia appear to be most adamant to use their own mother tongue as far as this is possible in every-day interactions. Lithuanians in Kaliningrad region and Poles in Ukraine use the language of the host country most frequently, closely followed by the Slovaks in Hungary. The latter minorities can therefore be called the “most adaptive” ethnic groups, the former the “most self-assertive”. Nevertheless, this does not translate into a feeling to be closer to the kin country. On the contrary, with the exception of Hungarians in Ukraine, all minorities are much more “at home” in their host countries than in their countries of ethnic origin. Younger generations become estranged from their kin group abroad. Needless to say, they regard themselves loyal citizens of their host countries. This is despite reported cases of discrimination on ethnic grounds as well as perceived ethnic tensions: Close to 50% of minority members experience “some” or “a lot of” tensions between the majority population and minority members and a little over 10% of all respondents has reported harassment or discrimination on ethnic grounds during the preceding year. This, however, varies greatly over the individual minorities. Hungarians in Ukraine and Slovakia, Poles and Russians in Lithuania report ethnic tensions in their host countries. Lithuanians in Kaliningrad, Belarusians in Lithuania and Poles in Belarus experience no tensions between ethnic groups. Complaints about discrimination and harassment are most frequent by Hungarians in Ukraine, followed by Ukrainians in Poland, Russians in Latvia and Hungarians in Slovakia. The inclination to migrate is relatively low: 35% of Russians in Latvia and Lithuania consider emigration, in case they would find appropriate conditions in the target countries (for around 30% of potential migrants, Russia). For comparison, 15% of Hungarians in Ukraine and less than 3% of Slovaks

in Hungary consider (e-)migration.

For most minority members, Europe and the EU provides no emotional hub. For some, like the Hungarians in Ukraine, it is a potential moral and financial support partner. Most minority members in the new EU member states have mixed feelings about the Union: On the one hand, it is blamed for such social ills as drug trafficking and for aggressive and greedy business practices, but open borders and increased opportunities for education are welcomed in a pragmatic way. Some respondents mention the protection from globalization that small member states receive from the big community.

#### **4.4. Self-organization and representation of ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe**

ENRI-VIS data on the distribution of trust show a persistent pattern over the minorities. Hungarians in Ukraine and Slovakia, Poles in Lithuania and Russians in Latvia and Lithuania are the most “cautious” nations in dealing with people in general. This picture is reproduced in the low trust of these populations toward members of their own ethnic group, toward people of their home country as well as those from their kin country. When it comes to trust toward specific host country institutions (police, media, government, etc.), the “usual suspects” are joined by the Poles in Ukraine. Low trust in political institutions translates into low interest in politics. Nevertheless, the level of political participation is surprisingly high and comparable to European democracies (participation in national elections close to 70%). The dominant form of self-organization is to set up cultural NGOs. Churches and religious organizations are centers of community life, particularly in the CIS countries under study and with Ukrainians in Poland. With the notable exception of Hungarians in Ukraine, membership in political parties has remained limited (around 3% on average). Overall, the most vibrant civil societies among the minorities can be found with Hungarians in Ukraine and Poles in Ukraine.

Cross-border networking is most intensive with Hungarians in Ukraine. Belarusians in Poland and Slovaks in Hungary have the fewest regular contacts with relatives, friends or others in the kin country.

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#### **4.5. Historical path and collective memories of ethnic minorities in CEE**

Collective historical memory is a precondition for group identity. Living memory tends to be substituted by myths if it is repressed or dissolved in a dominant national narrative. “Tacit”, non-recognized narratives and myths can leap over into a perception of being discriminated, harassed or in other ways disrespected, as the example of Ukrainians in Poland shows, where no ethnic group concerned has come to terms with the common violent past and there are still unresolved redistribution issues such as entitlements to land, etc.

Ethnic pride can be used as indicator of identification with the historical legacy of one's own nation. Pride in one's own ethnic group is strongest with Hungarians in Ukraine, Poles in Ukraine and Poles in Lithuania and weakest with Slovaks in Hungary as well as Lithuanians in the Kaliningrad region. Russians in Lithuania and Latvia, although they share with Poles and Hungarians the historical role of a ruling nation in multinational empires, express no pride in the history of their own ethnic group. This finding is complemented by the results of the ENRI web analysis, according to which Stalinist rule is experienced very negatively by factually all minorities. Only very small percentages of Belarusians in Poland, of Poles in Belarus and of Russians in Lithuania assess their Soviet past as positive.

Musical preferences carry information on ethnic identity in general and the degree of identification with the legacy of one's own nation. Folk music is the preferred musical genre for Slovaks in Hungary and Poles in Lithuania, while this is the case for only a small percentage of polled Russians in Latvia and Lithuania.

### **5. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROJECT FINDINGS**

#### **5.1. Implications for civil society organizations**

The comparative approach used by ENRI suggests that best practices should be taken into account. In particular, in politically volatile contexts the establishment and the presence of ethnically mixed NGOs or political parties (such as HID-MOST in Slovakia) can make sense.

Attempts at creating concerted ethno-national narratives have failed in the past or have not been undertaken. As the interaction among the local ENRI teams have demonstrated, significant scientific consensus can be achieved despite the sometimes staggering differences in the official histor-

ical and political narratives. The elaboration of consented historiographical and political narratives by mixed teams of historians, sociologists and political scientists should be promoted and supported.

## **5.2. Implications for governmental bodies and officials at local, regional, national and supra-national levels**

Targeted support should be extended to interethnic action. This may range from PR support for such action to support for member states (or Eastern Partnership states) for granting tax breaks or extending beneficial loan schemes to interethnic start-ups.

ENRI data show clearly that, overall, minorities are loyal citizens of their host countries. On top of that, the integration of the young generation (under 30 years of age) is rapidly progressing and their attitudes toward Europe are more favourable than those of the 30+ generations. Efforts should therefore concentrate on the young generation which is more receptive to European liberal values. Linguistic diversity is highest among the ENRI minorities, but its assets are not always honored appropriately.

An investment into student mobility, from high school to universities can improve the attitude towards the EU. An attempt should be made to involve the governments in the kin countries, civil society, organizations such as the World Union of Hungarians (Magyarok Világszövetsége) and the media to stimulate the “Europeanness” instead of the exclusive ethnic affiliation of young minority members.

## **5.3. Suggestions for future research and follow-up studies**

The methodological package elaborated in the ENRI framework has delivered a validated comparable data base and is available for both in-depth and wider geographical applications. The comparative data should be complemented and deepened by case studies, particularly in the problem regions (Baltic states, Ukraine). A geographical extension could be considered for the West Balkan. An study of best practices could cover the entire EU territory.

## Details about the ENRI-East project

ENRI-East research consortium and primary funding ENRI-East Project Partners (Full details on and project partners and contacts can be found at <http://www.enri-east.net/consortium/project-partners/en/>)

TARKI Research Institute Inc. (Hungary) (Team Leader Prof. Endre Sik)  
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Project Website:

[www.enri-east.net](http://www.enri-east.net)

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For further information on the Socio Economic Sciences and Humanities programme in FP7 see:

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ssh/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ssh/home_en.html)

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**Monographs** (books, brochures):

Turner J. H. (1974) *The Structure of Sociological Theory*. Homewood (Illinois): The Dorsey Press.

**Articles in collections:**

Turner R. H. (1990) A Comparative Content Analysis of Biographies. In: Øyen E., ed. *Comparative Methodology: Theory and Practice in International Social Research*. London, etc.: Sage Publications.

**Articles in magazines:**

Bela B. (1997) Identitātes daudzvalsība Zviedrijas latviešu dzīvesstāstos. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*. A, 51, Nr.5/6.

**Articles in newspapers:**

Strazdiņš I. (1999) Matemātiķi pasaulē un Latvijā. *Zinātnes Vēstnesis*, 8. marts.

**Materials from the Internet:**

Soms H. Vēstures informātika: Saturs, struktūra un datu bāze Latgales dati. <http://www.dpu.lv/LD/LDpublik.html> (2002. 20. 10).

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