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The Integration of Society in Latvia

Framework Document for a State Programme

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Introduction

Seven years have passed since Latvia regained national independence. Those years have been tense and full of change. In the course of time, memories of life under the Soviet regime increasingly fade. The young generation learns about the recent past only from history books, and through the memories of older generations.

Nevertheless, the past has not disappeared without a trace. In reality, seven years is too short a time to become fully liberated from the effects of fifty years of totalitarianism and occupation. We still mistrust institutions of state authority, and often feel alienated from them. Also, lack of respect towards law and order is a social consequence of totalitarian rule. From the Soviet era Latvia has inherited more than half a million immigrants; in the ensuing years, many of them have not yet become integrated into the Latvian cultural and linguistic environment, and thus do not feel connected to the Latvian state. These links are also lacking among some Latvian citizens.

National development may be significantly hindered if alienation persists between the individual and the state, between different parts of society, between society and the state. Social integration has become a matter of urgent necessity.

The need for a social integration programme

Latvia's future development requires a rational, politically balanced and financially secure social integration programme. Both in domestic politics and foreign relations, the current situation demands that Latvian society and government pay closer attention to the integration process than has previously been the case. The previous, often ad hoc approach to integration must be replaced by a goal-oriented national political strategy. This national strategy should be based on:

- An overall plan for social integration;
- A detailed programme for social integration;
- Institutional restructuring;
- Adequate funding.

The essence of integration

Social integration means mutual agreement and co-operation between various groups and individuals within the framework of a common nation. In Latvia the basis for this is loyalty to the Latvian state and the consciousness that each individual's future and personal well-being are closely tied to the future stability and security of the Latvian state. Integration is also based on a willingness to accept Latvian as the state language, and respect for Latvian and minority languages and cultures. Integration means consolidation, joining parts into a unified whole. (The word "integration" stems from the Latin word "*integer*" - whole). This does not mean that any one part must submit to the whole, but that each individual part is incorporated in and linked to a whole. The whole is formed by the parts complementing each other, and acknowledging the meaning and importance of a common goal. That is the fundamental principle of the social integration process.

If integration is to be a process that will influence the future development of Latvian society, then we must expect to change current attitudes toward non-Latvians. It is time to

replace the notion of "non-Latvians as strangers" with that of "non-Latvians as distinct, but co-existing with Latvians," the approach of "non-Latvians as alienated" with that of "non-Latvians as partners in co-operation."

The **goal** of integration is to form a democratic, consolidated civil society, founded on shared basic values. One of these basic values is an independent, democratic Latvian state, which guarantees the existence and development of this civil society.

Every resident of Latvia must be given access to the standard of living achieved by modern European civilization, one that provides welfare, education, security and favourable ethnic relations.

The **task** of integration is to help all faithful and loyal Latvian residents to understand their prospects in Latvia, and to achieve an understanding among all residents that we need a common nation, that only together can we improve welfare and security, and that each person must contribute his knowledge, initiative, and good intentions to the development of Latvian society.

Integration means broadening opportunities and mutual enrichment. It is better to know several languages than to know only one. Experiencing several cultural environments gives a better perspective than being confined to only one. The integration process reinforces common values, interests, and knowledge both at the individual level and within society as a whole.

Social integration includes processes that occur in ethnic, education, cultural, judicial, political, sociological, social, and personal realms. Integration takes place when all Latvian residents are actively involved in Latvian society, when non-Latvian rights and ethnic identity are preserved. The goal of ethnic integration is a society where non-Latvians freely command the Latvian language, have overcome alienation from Latvian cultural values, and are involved in realising the common goals of Latvian society.

Integration is founded on these basic postulates:

- The independence of the Latvian state is irreversible. All of the main political, judicial, economic and cultural formulations of the integration process are based on this conclusion. The development of the independent Latvian state and social integration are united and non-contradictory processes;
- global experience testifies that social divisions can threaten the existence of a unified state. The Latvian state is the main guarantor of progress for the Latvian people and Latvia's resident minorities; a threat to the Latvian state is a threat to Latvian society and to all residents of Latvia;
- Latvia has never been an ethnically homogenous nation. Society must take into account the current situation and future prospects. Among non-citizens, there are not many people who wish to emigrate from Latvia. The majority of non-citizens (around 90%) have decided to remain in Latvia;
- Latvia is a national state, in which every Latvian resident, the Latvian nation, and each national minority has the right to preserve their own national identity. The integration programme expects to develop specific mechanisms to ensure that the rights of national minorities to cultural autonomy are respected;

- in a psychological sense, integration is the ability to trust. Trust in society develops only when each member in the integration process feels safe and protected. For Latvians, this means guaranteed security for their traditions, lifestyle, Latvian identity, and cultural lifeblood. For non-Latvians the basis of trust is the conviction that it is not in the interest of the Latvian state to forcibly expel or assimilate them, or limit their rights;
- the successful outcome of integration depends on the support and trust of public opinion, and of educators, cultural leaders, religious representatives, and the entire intelligentsia. Social integration cannot be conceived without the support and active participation of Latvia's political institutions. The idea of social integration will become a social force when a majority of Latvian residents acknowledge its necessity and participates in the process.

The integration strategy does not support:

- The formation of a two-community state; the model of "two societies in one nation"; confrontation between elements of society, segregation, or forced assimilation;
- ethnofederalist tendencies, which would counteract the formation of a unified national Latvian state.

Historical conditions that influence integration

Latvians and Livs have lived in the territory of modern-day Latvia since ancient times, and immigrants have been arriving since the 13th century. The Latvian proto-nation was formed in the 19th century. In 1940 independent Latvia was occupied by the Soviet Union and violently incorporated into the USSR. Latvia also suffered heavy losses under Nazi German occupation from 1941 to 1945. Fifty years of occupation deformed Latvian economic, social, and cultural life, and submitted these to the demands of the totalitarian regime. During these years, Latvia received a heavy ethnodemographic blow - the Latvian population was substantially diminished, both in total numbers and in proportion to the entire population. Due to intensive immigration, the non-Latvian population increased by several hundred thousand. After Latvia regained independence, these residents found themselves in an unexpectedly complicated situation, because it turned out that they now lived in a different country with a different political system.

The principal changes that have occurred in Latvia since independence point to the need for Latvians and non-Latvians, citizens and non-citizens to acknowledge their new roles and opportunities in a democratic national state. Social integration in many ways depends both on Latvian and national minority development opportunities, which include not only rights to preserve ethnic identity, but also the need to accept Latvian as the sole state language, to learn this language and to use it in public life. Every national minority must be loyal to the Latvian state, must observe national laws, and must be ready to defend and strengthen this state.

The renewal of the Latvian nation has also renewed the Latvian majority at the national level; but in the largest cities Latvians are still in the minority, a fact which defines their consciousness. Latvians often continue to conceive of themselves as a minority, and do not feel like the rulers and masters in their land. Majority status assigns Latvians the important responsibility both to preserve their own language and culture, and to ensure that

Latvia's political and economic development will be beneficial to all permanent residents of Latvia.

Opponents of social integration do not believe it is possible to integrate non-Latvians into the national state. In reality, there is no alternative to social integration. Latvians must shed historical inferiority complexes and act with the conviction that they can control and positively influence the processes that occur in Latvia. For their part, non-Latvians must gain the conviction that they will be able to maintain their ethnic identity in Latvia and be full citizens of this nation. It is important for the non-integrated sector to discard the prejudices and insults spread by the propaganda of the totalitarian regime. It is important to realize that Latvia can develop into a nation that protects any person's free development, regardless of ethnicity.

Evaluation of the historical context as the basis for integration

In order to agree on Latvia's future course, we must reach an agreement on the interpretation of history. Without this basic agreement and historical evaluation there can be no forward movement. One of these prerequisites is the acknowledgment that Latvia was occupied and violently incorporated into the USSR. The Latvian people did not voluntarily choose the Soviet regime or life in a totalitarian system. A unified stance is needed concerning unlawful events during Soviet rule - nationalization of private property, demographic politics, forced collectivization and industrialization, deportations and all other forms of repression against the Latvian people. Condemnation must be based on a deep understanding of historical events, so that the historical consciousness of the younger generation of different ethnic groups does not become an obstacle to the integration process.

Integration as an outline for the future

Integration looks to the future, foreseeing the evolution and improvement of the Latvian nation and society. We must be aware that there are people of certain social backgrounds and generations who, because of old age, inadequate education or other circumstances, will find it difficult to join the integration process and who will not be able to see their place in a unified Latvian society. Integration, it seems, will occur most smoothly among young and educated people, because they are more open and oriented towards democratic values.

Integration can only occur voluntarily; the role of the state is to create favorable conditions. The integration process does not need to be advanced as a mass social community integration project. Projects must be individualized and specific according to each person and situation. If the older generations cannot themselves enter into the integration process, they will "achieve" this through their children, in this case maintaining their own favourable neutrality toward the state. Social integration cannot occur through a campaign, it needs time, possibly even several decades. Yet even if social integration is a matter of generations, the first positive results of integration policy will not be long in coming.

Participants in the integration process

Integration is a multi-faceted process - it incorporates not only non-Latvian integration into Latvian society, but also Latvian "receptiveness" toward non-Latvians. It has often been the dominant view in Latvia that integration is the concern of non-Latvians. Of

course, to implement the social integration programme, attitudes and understanding must also change among Latvians. Social integration in Latvia is a partnership between Latvians and non-Latvians, citizens and non-citizens, in which each side is actively involved.

Conditions that facilitate integration

- A renewed democratic nation in Latvia, in which power belongs to the people of Latvia;
- Latvia is becoming more and more incorporated into the international democratic community, gaining the relevant legislative and practical experience, and developing a law-based state which guarantees human rights and democratic freedoms;
- The close interdependence between the security and welfare of Latvians and non-Latvian minorities at the group level, as well as between that of individuals;
- The absence of intractable conflicts that would preclude the formation of a nationally unified, socially integrated civic community;
- Latvia has been characterized by benevolent ethnic relations and has acquired experience in non-violent conflict resolution;
- According to the sociological study "On the Road to a Civil Society," ethnic relations in Latvia are not strained. Friendships, work relationships, and mixed families are common occurrences between ethnic groups;
- In the Latvian social consciousness, good knowledge of Latvian, regardless of ethnicity, is the main indicator of integration;
- National economic growth has begun, which allows more attention to be focused on factors that promote integration;
- Legislation defines clear criteria for the naturalization of non-citizens, which is an important aspect of integration.

Factors that unite Latvian residents in the integration process:

- a common territory, in which we wish to live in prosperity, harmony, and security;
- a democratic state based on the rule of law;
- endeavors to maintain favourable relations between people of various ethnicities;
- a desire to preserve and develop one's ethnic identity
- a concern for environmental protection;
- endeavors to provide one's children with a good upbringing and education.

Latvia's social integration is a historical opportunity to develop a unified nation based on universal human values and interests, and to achieve coherence among the interests of ethnic communities, social groups, and individuals. It is a choice to listen and to co-operate. It is a choice for harmony among Latvia's residents. It is a choice for a secure future for ourselves, our children and children's children.

Education

A society's education system critically influences the development and longevity of its value system. Only a unified education system can ensure the development of Latvian society as a civic community with common values and responsibilities.

Introduction

The basic task of social integration policy is to secure the development and progress of Latvian society as a civic community with common values and responsibilities. In achieving this goal, the most important target groups are children and youth. Thus, Latvia's education system emerges as the main vehicle for advancing and implementing the social integration process. In this context the education system has two main tasks:

First, it must ensure that the Latvian language is learned sufficiently by all Latvian residents, but especially that the younger generation is able to use it freely as a means of communication.

Second, the education system must become the main instrument in creating a value system for civil society, and in developing tolerance, rational judgment and evaluation skills for in forming the political culture of the young generation.

This is a complex assignment, which spans the entire evolution of modern education content and methodology; it stresses the development of social science materials, the need to incorporate minority education into the Latvian education system, and extracurricular and after school programmes.

The factors that promote social integration can act at all education levels and types, essentially spanning a person's education activities during his or her lifetime. It is especially important, however, to envision and develop factors that promote social integration at the early stages of education - at the pre-school and mandatory primary education levels. The tasks assigned to the education system ensue in large part from Latvia's ethnodemographic situation.

The complex ethnodemographic situation in Latvia was formed during the years of Soviet occupation, when a large number of immigrants arrived here. As a result of the Soviet regime's russification policy, most non-Russian immigrants also became Russian-speakers. The majority of non-citizens have not become integrated into Latvian society specifically because of the language barrier, and this is the basis for divisions within our nation's population.

Although the population's ethnic composition is fragmented and very diverse, in terms of household languages Latvia's residents fall into two groups - Latvian and Russian-speakers. The number of people whose household language is Latvian is larger than the proportion of Latvians in the population as a whole (57.1%). Nevertheless, most non-Latvians in Latvia are russified - 37.8% speak Russian at home, even though the proportion of ethnic Russians in the population structure is approximately 30%. These two main groups comprise about 99% of Latvia's inhabitants.

Although the proportion of Latvians in the population has been increasing since independence, the situation with regard to Latvian language proficiency is still not satisfactory.

General education: Latvian language training

Upon finishing a minority primary school, the student must write correctly and speak freely in Latvian; knowledge must be sufficient to pursue further studies in Latvian.

Assessment of the situation One of the sharpest manifestations of social division is the parallel existence of Latvian and Russian language school systems, which differ not only in the language of instruction, but also in the students' and teachers' attitudes toward historical events and the like. Russian-instruction schools are only gradually obtaining the characteristics of minority education institutions. There are still essential differences between Russian and other minority education institutions.

Minority education institutions include education from pre-school to secondary education levels. They are local education institutions, and their number is based on the number of non-native-Latvian speaking children in each municipality. Since the restoration of independence in Latvia, six Polish schools have been founded (with 993 students in the 1997-98 school year), and one each of Jewish (302 students), Ukrainian (215 students), Estonian (103 students), and Lithuanian (76 students) national minority schools, as well as Romany and Belarussian classes (53 and 44 students, respectively).

In the 1997-98 school year there were 611 pre-schools in Latvia (584 national and state, 7 departmental, 20 private), as well as 174 group schools. Latvian-language pre-schools enrolled 48,520 children, Russian-language pre-schools -19,720 children, and others - 197 children. In pre-school institutions 67% of group study and conversation was in Latvian, 32% was in Russian, and 1% was in other languages. Poles, Lithuanians, and several other ethnic minorities have pre-school institutions or groups.

fig. 1. State and local school distribution by language of instruction at the beginning of the 1997-98 school year.

719 Latvian
199 Russian
149 Mixed
7 Other

Most non-Latvian students study in Russian. In the 1997-98 school year 124,400 students were enrolled in Russian-language schools, i.e. 36.2% of the total number of students enrolled in local and Ministry of Education and Science schools. The proportion of students in each school generally reflects the distribution of household language use.

Student population trends Data suggest that the number of Russian-language schools is declining along with the number of students enrolled in these schools. Nevertheless, in the large cities the proportion of Russian-language schools and students is still significant.

fig. 2. Student population trends in schools with Latvian- and Russian-language instruction (local and Ministry of Education and Science day schools).*

Students in Latvian-language schools
Students in Russian-language schools

* Ministry of Education and Science. Summary of statistical data of Latvia's general education schools from 1989-1997. The indicated year reflects the beginning of the school year.

As we see in the figure, since 1990 the number of students in Russian-language schools has declined, while the number in Latvian-language schools has increased. These changes are related mainly to migration processes occurring within Latvia.

Significant changes have taken place in the choice of instruction language for children beginning school. When considering their children's future competitive advantages, non-Latvians, especially parents in mixed marriages, choose schools with Latvian-language instruction. In the 1997-98 school year 69.5% of first-graders began studying in Latvian. In the last seven years the number of children beginning school with Latvian instruction has increased by 15.4%. These changes have been influenced by the increase in birthrate among Latvian families in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

fig. 3. Student distribution according to language of instruction in grade 1.*

Latvian
Russian
Other

* Ministry of Education and Science. Summary of statistical data of Latvia's general education schools from 1989-1997. The indicated year reflects the beginning of the school year.

Academic curriculum Curriculum is consistent throughout the education system regardless of instruction language. Pre-school education is geared towards children's socialization and development in various types of activities, as well as in 15 academic subjects. Pre-school education takes place in Latvian and minority languages. Non-Latvian children learn Latvian through organized activities.

In minority primary and secondary schools, required subjects (history, geography) cover both required material and minority studies, and develop appropriate national subjects (ethnic culture, national traditions, etc.). The curriculum also includes the relevant minority language. Moreover, in a minority school children usually learn ethnic-related subject matter in their native language.

Funding In state and local budgets, allocation and distribution of funds for minority education does not differ from funding for the entire education system. Since independence, local expenditures on minority schools have, per student, exceeded the national average.

Currently, state and local governments cannot cover the following expenses incurred in minority schools switching to instruction primarily in the state language.

- the state fee for teachers who must undergo language re-certification
- the cost of purchasing Latvian-language text books
- the cost of language courses for teachers
- the cost of retraining teachers

Legislation The 1991 Education Law states that the Republic of Latvia guarantees the right to education in the state language, while simultaneously guaranteeing the right to education in native languages for non-Latvian residents, provided that mastery of the state language is required in all education institutions regardless of the instruction language or school administration. The 1991 Education Law essentially did not address the language situation in education, and the standards set by the Law were aimed at maintaining the *status quo*. A greater role in changing the language situation in Latvia was played by the 1989 Language Law of the Latvian SSR, and especially by its 1992 Amendments, which declared that the state language must be used in record keeping and work meetings.

Changes in attitudes toward the status of the state language were facilitated by the 1995 amendments to Article 5 of the Education Law. These amendments declared that, beginning with the 1996-97 school year, in non-Latvian schools at least two subjects in grades 5-9 and at least three subjects in grades 10-12 must be taught in the state language. Nevertheless, without fundamental changes in the entire education system, decisive changes in Latvian language training cannot be achieved. And changes in the education system are always contingent upon significant supplemental funding for teacher training and preparation of new text books.

Currently two laws are being drafted which will directly influence the future course of minority education - the Education Law and the State Language Law. Both pieces of legislation call for education to take place primarily in the state language.

International documents Latvia has signed but not yet ratified the Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities. The Articles of the Convention that relate to education give countries broad leeway for shaping their education policies. Latvia's legislation guarantees equal education opportunities at all levels for persons who belong to national minorities.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages states that the use of a minority language in education must take place without harm to instruction of the state language (Article 8). Each nation has the right to decide which population groups in its territory are considered minorities.

Article 5 of the Education Law states also that in government-financed higher education facilities, the basic language of instruction is Latvian.

The National Programme for Latvian Language Training (NPLLT) In July 1994 the government of Latvia began negotiations with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and requested its assistance in drafting a comprehensive Latvian language training programme for non-Latvian speaking residents. In the course of developing the programme, attention was paid to the problems that hinder Latvian fluency: non-Latvians' poor integration society, the political and historical past; the relative prestige and hierarchy of

the Latvian and Russian languages; the attitudes of minority school teachers toward the Latvian language; and inadequate knowledge of Latvian by minority school teachers.

Underlying the programme are several fundamental conclusions that characterize the approach to this problem:

- the need to change the system of Latvian instruction,
- the need to introduce a new subject - Latvian as a Second Language (LAT2), abandoning the old methodology for teaching Latvian, which was based on teaching it as the native language,
- the need to recognize the needs of the target group,
- the need for instruction on using the language, rather than acquiring knowledge about the language and literature,
- the need for a new methodology and approach both in content and proposed requirements.

The Cabinet of Ministers approved the NPLLT on 31 October 1995. UNDP, with the help of donor nations, secured approximately US\$ 3.2 million in funding for the first two years of the programme. The programme began to be implemented in 1996.

Activities of the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) Using the NPLLT as a support structure for Latvian language instruction, the main task of the MES is to improve teachers' knowledge of Latvian in order to gradually increase the proportion of Latvian used for instruction at Russian-language schools. In order to effect this gradual transition from instruction in Russian to Latvian and to define how minority education can take place, the MES must prepare normative documents. In 1995 the MES published suggestions for subjects to be taught in the state language beginning with the 1996-97 school year. In 1996 the MES published Executive Order #175 "On Certification of Pedagogical Professionals in the Mastery of the State Language," which declared that all pedagogical employees of education institutions who have not received their education in the state language must demonstrate mastery of the state language corresponding to the third (highest) level of comprehension. Pre-school teachers and teachers who teach the state language or other subjects in the state language were to have completed their certification by 1 September 1997; all others by 1 September 1998.

Although the mandatory state language certification which applied also to teachers was to have been completed by 1993, in 1997 teachers from Russian-language schools submitted a request to the MES to extend their re-certification deadline. This was granted with the publication on 5 May 1997 of Executive Order #323, which stated that the requirement for third-level language certification would take effect as of 1 January 1998.

Data from the National Education Inspectorate showed that at the beginning of the 1998-99 school year, 715 teachers had not yet completed their language certification. Executive Order #175 was amended again, to state that these teachers, if they have completed the highest pedagogical education, must submit to their employers proof that they are attending Latvian language courses to prepare for certification. In Daugavpils (in Eastern Latvia) the effective start-date for the Order was postponed until 1 January 1999.

The state language proficiency of educators The Latvian language skills, along with the overall preparation and motivation of teachers play a decisive role in the successful

implementation of language policy in education. In 1997, of the 36,176 teachers employed by Latvia's general education schools, 22,879 or 65% worked at Latvian-language schools, and 12,297 or 35% at schools with instruction in other languages. In January 1997 the National Education Inspectorate compiled data about the state language skills of those teachers who taught subjects in Latvian at Russian-language schools.

The main subjects taught in Latvian at Russian-language schools (in descending order of frequency) are:

- physical education, music, visual arts,
- home economics, arts & crafts, earth science,
- history, biology, geography,
- mathematics, chemistry, health

In the 1998-99 school year a total of 58 subjects will be taught in Latvian. This number has been increasing every year.

In the 1998-99 school year, 2,392 teachers taught subjects in Latvian at Russian-language schools. Of these, 1,019 teachers, or 43%, are not subject to the language certification requirement, as their native language is Latvian. Of the remaining 1,373 teachers (57%), only 604 teachers, or 44%, had highest-level language skills, while 769 teachers or 56% had middle-level skills.

Although most of the teachers (80%) who teach subjects in Latvian at Russian-language schools are able to converse in Latvian at least about their own subject matter, there remains a disparity between the language skills of those teachers whose native language is Latvian and those for whom it is a second language. The biggest problems arise in subjects with considerable technical terminology - biology, physics, chemistry.

A survey of all regional and several urban Russian-language schools (a total of 63) showed that teachers' Latvian skills (563 were tested) were as follows:

- free command of Latvian - 53%
- able to discuss pedagogical topics - 20%
- able to discuss only their own subject matter - 16%
- can converse only on a casual level - 9%
- cannot converse in Latvian - 2%

New data compiled by the National Education Inspectorate in June 1998 showed that the number of teachers teaching subjects in Latvian has grown by 209 people - at the beginning of the school year 3,601 teachers were teaching in Latvian. Of those, 1,178 teachers (33%) are native speakers, while 2,189 (61%) have highest-level skills. In the past year, 1,585 teachers have gained highest-level language abilities. Only 234 teachers (6%) remain at middle-level ability.

Problems

The problems that arise in the transition to secondary education in Latvian and to bilingual primary education stem mainly from the ethnic composition of the population and non-Latvians' poor knowledge of Latvian - legacies of Soviet-era language and education policies. Securing the transition to education in Latvian requires re-training a significant

number of current teachers and/or training new teachers, integrating them into the school system, and providing schools with necessary text books.

Sociolinguistic analyses demonstrate positive changes in attitudes toward learning Latvian among non-Latvian youth; nevertheless, language-associated stereotypes change very slowly, and successful language mastery cannot be ensured without motivated teachers and pupils. This motivation is not generated by the school system alone; it depends largely on stereotypes cultivated by the mass media and by relations between ethnic groups. The NPLLT is attempting to address this problem by developing attractive language-study programmes for TV, but the limited resources of one programme cannot bring about fundamental changes in public stereotypes. We need the broader, goal-oriented support of various institutions, especially in the media. A new problem affecting the attitude toward learning Latvian stems from the trend that some non-Latvian youth in the larger cities do not plan to remain in Latvia, and therefore the priority to learn English replaces the motivation to learn Latvian.

The conditions for a successful transition to education in Latvian differ sharply between regions with diverse ethnic populations - between the large cities and rural areas, and between Latgale (Eastern Latvia) and the rest of Latvia. The low percentage of Latvians in most Latgale regions does not ensure a stable Latvian-language environment; consequently the motivation to learn Latvian decreases - "we can get by without knowing Latvian."

Daugavpils presents a particularly complex situation. Although the majority of residents there are Latvian citizens, only a small number of the non-Latvians know Latvian. In Daugavpils, of 33 schools there are only two Latvian secondary schools, two (growing) Latvian primary schools, and one Latvian pre-school. At the same time, in Daugavpils Latvian schools the first few grades are overcrowded, which indicates that the language and education policies are not getting financial and organizational support even where motivation among the public has grown.

Not all Latvians in Latgale command and use Latvian. As language and education policy is gradually implemented, in mixed families a return to Latvian identity, and the subsequent choice of Latvian education for their children, is taking place.

The problems caused by the shortage of teachers who use Latvian are exacerbated by an overall shortage of qualified teachers nationwide, which in turn is caused by the chronically low wages paid to teachers. Graduates of pedagogical universities seek better-paying jobs. Russian-language school teacher retraining does not always yield immediate results.

The lack of appropriate materials for teaching Latvian is a serious problem. NPLLT sociolinguistic analyses have shown that Latvian-instruction methodology that is based on teaching Latvian as the native language does not result in sufficient mastery of Latvian that is applicable in daily life. Even though NPLLT funds provide free books and methodology materials to non-Latvian schools, this process has just begun; the first books (Latvian for grades 8 and 9) arrived at schools during the 1997-98 school year. The supply of materials for other subjects to be taught in Latvian falls under a systemic problem - the lack of good teaching materials and insufficient funding to acquire new materials.

There are not enough spaces provided in pre-school classes. In 1997 there was a waiting list of 6569 children. The demand for places in pre-school classes differs sharply between urban and rural areas, and is influenced by the level of unemployment in the region. Social integration possibilities directly influence the socialization of children. The initial socialization experience is gained in pre-schools, and without this experience, problems carry over into the next levels of education.

The network of pre-school education facilities does not meet the public demand for enrollment or for instruction language. Since there is no integrated bilingual pre-school programme with sufficient instruction in Latvian, those non-Latvian parents who would like their children to pursue further education in Latvian choose Latvian pre-schools. In many places, native Latvian speakers and non-fluent speakers are in the same classroom. Teachers are not methodologically prepared to work under these conditions. On the other hand, at Russian-language pre-schools, Latvian comprehension among teachers is insufficient to meet demands by parents for instruction in Latvian. Minority schools lack materials and methods for adequate instruction in Latvian.

The Minority education system: bilingual education

The minority school system in Latvia is still being developed. It can evolve according to the standards of modern bilingual education. A bilingual person commands two languages with native fluency. Bilingual education is instruction of two languages at the level of native fluency. Bilingual education is a goal-oriented way to organize the learning process, and this process employs two languages of instruction. With this the second language (in this case Latvian) is transformed from a subject into a learning tool.

A bilingual education programme prescribes the parallel use of two languages. About 200 models of bilingual education exist worldwide. The most appropriate model for Latvia is the transitional bilingual model, which allows room for many modifications. The model proposes that children begin their schooling in their native (minority) language, but that the proportion of the majority language gradually increases throughout the education process. A prerequisite for the success of this model is that the teachers are bilingually educated.

Each minority's education contact with the Latvian language must be direct, without any intermediate languages. This task calls for the participation of ethnic minority parents and cultural organizations. It also calls for co-operation with the MES and curriculum development bodies. Not all minority education must be institutionalized as separate schools. Other education forms, such as Sunday schools, can be used as well.

The main assignment of bilingual education at the primary school level is to prepare the student to receive further education in the state language. Bilingual education must also guarantee the student the opportunity to preserve his or her national identity.

Justification of the necessity for bilingual education Bilingual education gives non-Latvians the opportunity to learn the Latvian language and culture without losing their sense of ethnic affiliation. They gain a sense of belonging within the Latvian nation, while maintaining their ethnic consciousness.

The model for bilingual education and its implementation into bilingual schools, creates a favourable sociolinguistic environment and positive attitude towards learning Latvian, which is one of the prerequisites for motivating non-Latvians to integrate socially.

The bilingual school model does not require much supplemental funding (just supplemental funding for teachers who use Latvian), but, as it furthers social integration, it generates conditions for economic growth and social welfare.

Only pedagogically prepared teachers can assure the success of bilingual education and positive attitudes towards integration in the schools. This process must be controllable.

Sub-programmes to establish bilingual education - goals and tasks

Goal To encourage mastery of Latvian in general education.

Tasks

1. To develop bilingual education programmes for implementation in minority pre-schools and primary schools;
2. To assist in training those teachers who could teach in Latvian at minority schools;
3. To promote the transition to Latvian-language curriculum in secondary education;
4. To implement the National Programme for Latvian Language Training;
5. While shifting to a mandatory pre-school programme for five- and six-year old children, to expand the network of pre-school education institutions to meet public demand.

Measures

1. Gradually increasing the number of pre-school establishments and groups, to ensure that five- and six-year old children will be prepared for first grade;
2. Developing a bilingual curriculum;
3. Improving the Latvian language skills of pre-school teachers to the highest level of proficiency;
4. Training teachers to implement the bilingual curriculum and providing them with continuing education;
5. Developing teaching materials and methodology to shape the integration-based content of the pre-school curriculum;
6. Approving and implementing a bilingual primary curriculum in minority schools;
7. Shifting to instruction in Latvian in secondary schools;
8. Establishing standardized tests in Latvian as a Second Language (LAT2) for grade 9;
9. Assuring supplemental regional funding for language teachers and teachers who teach other subjects in Latvian;
10. Implementing the National Programme for Latvian Language Training;
11. Developing the curriculum for primary and general secondary education.

Social studies

Assessment of the situation

Education curriculum Since the beginning of the third national awakening and the restoration of independence, many essential changes have been made in the content of social studies and humanities curricula. New materials for teaching history are being developed, mandatory civics and economics courses have been included in grades 8 and 9, and an ethics course for grade 7 is in the trial stage. Content guidelines and subject standards have been set for history, philosophy, ethics, and the history of religion, and teachers have been provided with some supplemental materials to use on an elective basis. A plan has been drafted to develop a social studies unit for primary schools. Within the next two years, it will expand the scope of this unit, creating an anthropology course in grades 5 and 6, as well as supplementing and editing existing civics and economics courses.

In secondary school social studies units, traditional history has been supplemented with basic economics, ethics, religious history, politics and rights, and cultural history. Under the new programme, secondary school curricula will be expanded to include social science and economics programmes, allowing students to pursue further study in the social studies area.

The Soros Foundation - Latvia and *Tempus* programmes have also assisted with the development of social studies units. With support from the Soros Foundation, many books have been translated in philosophy, political science, cultural studies, sociology, and law, thereby greatly increasing teachers' and students' access to classical and modern literature. The Soros Foundation Transformation of Education programme has organized methodology seminars for history teachers working on new teaching aids.

Civic education Along with the development of social studies units, a significant amount of work in shaping civic consciousness and promoting social integration is accomplished in extracurricular and after-school activities. In the first years of independence, the national policy of depoliticizing and “de-ideologizing” education was partially interpreted as rejection of any role for schools in teaching values; still, school activities in the realm of civic education have never ceased entirely. In this sense schools differ greatly. Organization of school social events, commemoration of national holidays, contests, projects and other activities depend largely on the enthusiasm of administrators and teachers and their belief in the importance of such activities. This type of work also brings in non-governmental organizations and political parties. Youth groups, girl scouts and boy scouts play a significant role in civic education. Schools could also benefit by collaborating with Youth Guard (*Jaunsargi*) and Home Guard (*Zemessargi*). Local governments have made noteworthy investments in organizing summer camps that are geared towards teaching Latvian.

To encourage civic education, beginning in 1997 the MES has issued guidelines for civic education activities and extracurricular work. Included in the appendix of these guidelines are several examples of successful projects and experiences. Projects from the most active schools are popularized through the magazine *Skolotajs* ("Teacher").

Problems

1. The qualifications of teachers and social studies units. Analysis of students' history exams reveals that their solid knowledge of facts is combined with an inability to orient themselves within a historical context and to analyze and compare various historical events in order to draw conclusions. These results mirror the methods and preparation of teachers. This phenomenon is a common symptom in the school systems of all post-socialist nations, and apparently is a legacy of the totalitarian era. Only 50% of history teachers have the appropriate professional training in their specialties. Until the implementation of the approved national programme which would raise teacher salaries to approximately those of government civil servants, we cannot hope to solve the problem of teacher shortages, neither in the social sciences nor in any other subjects.

2. The supply of school books and teaching aids. A major obstacle in the development of social studies curricula is the lack of up-to-date teaching materials and methods.

Even materials prepared since independence display conceptually dubious stances and "blank spots." They do not provide an accurate description of the roots of communist ideology or explain the 1917 Bolshevik revolution in Russia. One of the least developed themes is the period after World War II. There are essentially no materials about the violent occupation of Latvia, repression, resistance, the dissident movement in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, or Russia, the other Soviet republics, or the "socialist camp" in general. From the perspective of social integration, it would be very important to show the solidarity of the intelligentsia, including texts of Gunars Astra, Aleksandr Solzhenytsin, and Andrei Sakharov, because these have at their foundation universal intellectual and humanitarian values that can further integration.

In school and especially personal libraries, too often the only materials on Latvian society and historical problems are those published in occupied Latvia; they distort the truth and disseminate misinformation. Because of insufficient funding, teachers, students, and school libraries cannot obtain new books or supplemental reading material. The situation is particularly dramatic in Russian-language schools where, in switching over to teaching in Latvian, they need entire new sets of books. From the point of view of social integration, importing books from Russia is in principle not acceptable, because they are oriented toward another society and another nation.

3. "Blank spots" in history and political science. Insufficient funding has hindered the education of a new generation of political scientists, while those whose experience was gained in the Soviet era lack the expertise to address problematic questions, and cannot supplement their knowledge through the continuing education system. There has been constant reevaluation of the historical process since independence was restored; yet among political scientists and historians, there is no unified, conceptual evaluation of Bolshevism or National Socialism, or of the totalitarian phenomenon.

4. Promoting civic consciousness. There is a wide range of stances among schools on the necessity of promoting civic consciousness. Because teachers are already overburdened, this job cannot be accomplished through enthusiasm alone. To economize scarce resources, many schools have eliminated the position of Assistant Principle for Counseling. Without an organized and well thought-out system for counseling, we cannot hope that teachers alone

can neutralize all the negative influences that young people encounter in daily life - nihilism and alienation cultivated by the mass media, the escalation of violence on TV, ideological chaos and the degradation of values. The school cannot remain as the last and only crusader for social rejuvenation and integration. National institutions, local governments and non-governmental organizations must co-operate with schools to replace stereotypes of alienation with participation, and to give people the sense that they are shaping their own society and nation, which is the essence of a civil society. People raised under totalitarianism often mystify the state, and cannot comprehend that in a democratic society the state is, first of all, the sum of its citizens. They do not acknowledge that citizens must accept primary responsibility for the actions of the state. They expect various benefits and miraculous solutions from the government, but do exercise of their own real power or influence.

5. Minority education. In shaping new national standards for education, and switching to a bilingual curriculum, it is necessary to improve also those subjects pertaining to minority history, culture, and language.

6. Religious education. Religion could play a unique role in the social integration process as a factor that greatly influences the shaping of value systems. In 1996, the *Saeima* (Parliament) ratified amendments to the Law on Religious Organizations, which stated that traditional confessions have the right to teach denominational religious studies in schools. Still, these curricula should recognize the interests of social integration by accenting common Christian values, thereby forming a tolerant attitude toward all confessions and minimizing religious differences within society.

Goals and tasks

Goal To effect changes in the content of social studies units by creating content and methodology for social science subjects, inter-disciplinary subjects and extra-curricular activities that foster Latvia's national self-respect and democratic European social values.

Tasks

1. To ensure the training and continuing education of qualified teachers in social studies subjects;
2. To develop the conception and content of a coherent social studies curriculum;
3. To ensure the preparation and acquisition of teaching materials for subjects in the social studies and minority education;
4. To develop the conception of and content for a civic education programme;
5. To develop the conception of and content for minority education;
6. To develop the conception of and content for religious education;
7. To secure a research base for continuing development of social studies and civics units.

Measures

1. Teacher training and continuing education:
 - teacher training courses must include the following: 20th century Latvian and world history; foundations of political science and promoting civic consciousness; civics;

- new certification for social studies teachers, providing appropriate remuneration.
2. Social studies curriculum development:
 - the development of education guidelines, national standards, subject standards and teaching materials;
 - the preparation of teacher trainers, the promotion of methodological work groups;
 - beginning the horizontal and vertical integration of social studies courses;
 - finalisation of a social studies curriculum after a trial period;
 - preparation of primary school final exams in civics and history.
 3. Preparing teaching materials and ensuring their acquisition by schools:
 - increased government funding for preparing and buying teaching materials, projecting 1.5 - 2 years of financing for a long-term development project;
 - preparing a set of materials, "Latvian History During the Occupation Era"
 - preparing a reader about the dissident movement in Latvia, Eastern Europe and Russia;
 - preparing audiovisual materials for 20th century Latvian and world history.
 4. Civic education:
 - development of a civics programme, based on the experience of the most active schools. Preparing teachers' texts on civic education;
 - activities to counter alienation - school interaction with local governments, non-governmental organizations, and local chapters of political parties;
 - summer camps promoting social integration;
 - support for patriotic children's and youth programmes.
 5. Development of minority education:
 - drafting a model minority education programme for primary and general secondary schools;
 - supporting the development of minority education curriculum.
 6. Religious education:
 - developing integrated content for religious studies courses.
 7. Education research:
 - participation in international civics research;
 - research on the development of civic consciousness among teachers and students;
 - analysis of test results in social studies units.

Professional education: the transition to Latvian

Assessment of the situation

Currently, professional education in Latvia occurs in Latvian and Russian. In 1997-98 a total of 45,700 students attended professional education institutions; of these, 31,300 (68%) studied in Latvian groups, and 14,400 (32%) in Russian groups. In secondary specialized education in 1997-98, one in four students (26%) received instruction in Russian; in trade schools, the proportion was one in three (35%).

The situation in state education institutions is variable - much depends on the relevant Ministry. Only those institutions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Welfare offer the entire professional education process in Latvian. In Ministry of Culture institutions, 91 students (5% of the total) are educated in Russian, while the Russian total in Ministry of Agriculture schools is 1,500 students (12%).

The largest number of students educated in Russian is in the professional schools operated by the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) - 11,800 students (43%). In municipal professional schools, 279 students or 30% of the students learn in Russian, while in private institutions the Russian total is 696 students or 77%. Comparing 1997-98 with the previous school year, the number of students receiving instruction in Russian in state and local schools has declined, while in private institutions it has increased.

Analyzing the situation by regions, it can be concluded that the largest numbers of students learning in Russian are in Riga - 66,000, Daugavpils - 3,300, and Liepaja - 1,900. Of the total number of students in Russian study groups, 46% study in Riga, 40% in the Latgale region. In more than 50% of the Russian study groups, part of the general and specific subject matter is presented in Latvian.

The number of subjects taught in Latvian is gradually increasing. Professional schools are developing teaching materials and terminological dictionaries in Latvian. Instructors at professional learning institutions are being trained so that their Latvian language proficiency is at the highest level.

Problems

The following factors most hinder the implementation of a Latvian-language professional education programme:

1. The Latvian fluency of students who have finished Russian primary schools does not meet the primary school standards;
2. There is a lack of specialized teaching material in Latvian.
3. There are not enough teachers who could teach specialized subjects in Latvian.

Goals and tasks

Goal

By gradually increasing the number of subjects that are taught in Latvian, to switch over entirely to a Latvian curriculum for state and local professional education institutions.

Tasks

1. To ensure the continuing education of instructors at professional education institutions and the training of new instructors, once the new curriculum is taught in Latvian;
2. To ensure the development of the necessary materials in Latvian for professional education programmes.

Measures

1. Gradually increasing the number of courses taught in Latvian in professional education programmes;
2. Ensuring compensatory Latvian language training in professional education programmes;
3. Developing and distributing education materials for the transition to instruction in Latvian;
4. Training instructors for employment in professional schools shifting to instruction in Latvian;
5. Improvement of the methodology used in professional education institutions shifting to instruction in Latvian.

Adult education

Assessment of the situation

Since independence was restored, one of the main factors hindering social integration has been the low level of Latvian fluency among non-Latvians. Through the years, many adult education courses for Latvian instruction have been offered, but, as shown by sociological studies, one cannot learn a language without using it every day, without immersion in a language environment. According to Central Statistical Bureau data, enrollment in the ever-growing adult education programme is over 100,000 (about 5% of the population of Latvia). The highest demand is for adult professional development programmes. Of the total adult education programmes in 1997, 10 % were language programmes; of those, Latvian courses comprise 35% (in comparison, English courses make up 55%). Latvian language courses for adults are offered by education institutions, state, local, and private enterprises, public corporations, etc. Many people cannot afford to attend Latvian language courses.

There is also a psychological barrier associated with the examination process. To foster a free and positive attitude toward studying Latvian, the Latvian People's School (LPS), founded in April 1998, and its 9 branches, have begun testing an experimental programme. The LPS, along with the Naturalization Board and the MES Adult Education Division, created the Department for Promoting Social Integration, whose goal is to help non-Latvians prepare for the naturalization process. The Department offers an integrated approach to teaching Latvian - combining language with history, culture, and daily life, and creating a casual environment during exercises. This course will prepare students to pass a Latvian language examination that is in line with the requirements for citizenship.

The Latvian Association of Adult Education (LAAE), through courses, seminars, and discussion clubs explores the theme "Civic education in social democratization." Teaching materials are being developed on this theme.

In 1996 the State Language Centre, along with the MES, LAAE, and the Knowledge Society (*Zinibu biedribai*), implemented an EU-subsidized project, "Teaching Latvian to non-Latvians," which has resulted in a programme and teaching materials for Latvian instruction.

Adult education projects are also being implemented under the NPLLT.

Legislation The current Law on Education (passed in 1991), does not address adult education issues. In a general sense, Article 2 discusses Latvian residents' rights to education, and state and local responsibilities to create a lifelong education system and create favorable conditions and motivation for education, professional retraining and self-education. In 1998 the MES approved the Latvian Adult Education Plan, and in 1995, the Cabinet of Ministers published a proposal, "Sample Regulations for an Adult Education Centre."

Funding The national budget for adult education is allocated to projects through a competitive process. This system is based on the fact that adult education is a component of the education service market. National funding for adult education has tended to decline (national funding made up 48% of the total adult education budget in 1995, but only 34% in 1997); business sector funding has increased (from 10% in 1995 to 26% in 1997). National budget funding for adult education programmes in 1997 was 2,068,000 Ls, local government funding was 167,000 Ls, tuition was 2,005,000 Ls, business payments were 1,535,000 Ls. The total expenditures for adult education in 1997 were 6,004,000 Ls.

Problems

The supply of adult education does not meet the demand of the labor market and the process of social development. There is a lack of qualified adult education instructors, methodology, and instruction materials, and there is no organized examination and ranking system.

Adult education is not accessible to low-income individuals or socially at-risk groups. The availability of adult education in various locales does not meet public demand. The public is ill-informed about the options for adult education, which creates obstacles to access to adult education. The quality and practical applicability of adult education causes problems, as well.

There are not enough courses on civics, law, and national economic and political development. Research on adult education needs and the job market is needed for a goal-oriented approach to adult education policy.

Goals and tasks

Goal To offer adult education that meets public demand, incorporating civics into the curriculum.

Tasks

1. Adult education policies must advance understanding about the functions of a democratic society and the opportunities of citizens to influence decision-making at the national and local levels.

2. Topics that encourage social integration must be incorporated into adult education programmes.

Measures

1. Developing a civic education component for adult education and programme contests with themes pertaining to social integration;

2. Completing the training and qualification of adult education instructors;

3. Developing teaching materials for adult education on law, history, Latvian history and politics.

4. Developing methodology for adult education;

5. Publicizing the opportunities for civic education through adult education.

Language

Latvian fluency is a crucial prerequisite for social integration. Ignorance of Latvian delays integration and divides society.

Assessment of the Situation

In 1988 the Supreme Council of the Latvian SSR adopted a resolution which assigned state language status to Latvian. In 1989 the Law on Languages of the Latvian SSR was adopted, declaring Latvian the state language and outlining steps for renewing the functions of the state language. In 1992, amendments to the Law on Languages of the Latvian SSR reinforced Latvian as the sole state language of Latvia. Operating under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice, the State Language Centre (SLC) and its certification committees and inspectorates provide for the implementation of Latvian as the state language. The Academy of Sciences Terminology Commission provides linguistically appropriate terminology for all professional fields. A new Draft Law on the State Language has passed the first two readings in the *Saeima* (Parliament). In May 1998 the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Ministry of Education and Science's (MES) "Programme for gradual transition to secondary education in the state language, and increase in the proportion of subjects taught in the state language in the primary school curriculum."

Latvia is a sovereign, democratic nation, in which the Latvian language is used for all official business in national and local government institutions, and in public establishments, businesses and organizations. Yet Latvian society has a very diverse multicultural ethnic makeup. Latvia is a member of the Council of Europe and wishes to become a member-state of the European Union. This mandates that Latvian legislation comply with the appropriate international norms and conventions.

In 1995 Latvia signed, but did not ratify, the Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities, which requires the state, within the limits of its ability, to protect the use of native languages of members of national minorities living in historical areas or large communities. Latvia has not, however, joined the European Charter of Regional or Minority

Languages (1992), which requires the state to guarantee use of minority languages both in government institutions and in the private sector.

The Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, which supports the work of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, drafted the Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of Ethnic Minorities (1996), which state that "the right of persons belonging to national minorities to maintain their identity can only be realized if they acquire a proper knowledge of their mother tongue during the education process. At the same time, persons belonging to national minorities have a responsibility to integrate into the wider national society through the acquisition of a proper knowledge of the State language." These recommendations suggest addressing minority education issues with the active co-operation of representative minority institutions.

Also published by the Foundation, the 1998 Oslo Recommendations Regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities aim to regulate relations between the state and minority languages in all areas, assigning minority languages potentially wide-ranging rights, without diminishing the need for fluency in the state language or its priority status in national policy. These documents are intended as guidelines rather than laws, but they must not be left unheeded. In shaping national policy, these recommendations should be observed.

The changes in the language situation that took place in 1991 have not yet been fully evaluated. Data from various surveys shows that the status of the Latvian language is slowly but surely stabilizing. Surveys from the 1997-98 project, "On the Road to a Civil society" show that 47% of non-Latvians believe that it is very important for Latvian residents to know Latvian, and 44% believe that this is fairly important. The bi-annual *Valoda* ("Language") surveys conducted by the National Programme for Latvian Language Training (NPLLT) and the Baltic Data House show similar results: in February/March 1998, 90% of Russians and other non-Latvians in Latvia considered thorough knowledge of Latvian to be very important or fairly important.

This same survey also testifies that 70% of non-native Latvian speakers would like to improve their knowledge of Latvian. The largest disparities here occur among age groups. On average, 88% of respondents aged 15 to 34 would like to improve their knowledge of Latvian, while of those aged 50-74, only 41-50% said they would.

These positive indicators, along with the fact that between 1992 and 1997, 388,000 people passed SLC Latvian language proficiency examinations, still do not attest to a satisfactory language situation. Only 20% of residents whose native language is Russian use Latvian more frequently than Russian at work, on the street, and in shops.

Survey results show that television is the most popular form of mass media among non-Latvians. Of the respondents, 73% watch Latvian-language programmes. About two-thirds watch *Panorama* or other news programmes, while one-third watches entertainment films and series. Latvian newspapers are read by 40% (16% of non-native Latvian speakers read the Latvian daily newspaper *Diena*, but the rest read over 25 other newspapers). Thirty-five percent listen to Latvian radio broadcasts, but only 18% of non-Latvians read Latvian magazines.

Goal

To raise the prestige of the Latvian language, to make it available to all residents of Latvia, and to encourage learning and using Latvian, so that it becomes the common public language of all Latvian residents regardless of their native language. To support the preservation of Latvia's national minority languages.

Problems

1. The 1992 amendments to the 1989 Language Law have secured the status of the Latvian language, but this law cannot execute all its functions until the populace as a whole gains faith in the irreversibility of Latvia's independence and the fairness of its government institutions, and the conviction that these institutions serve the best interests of the population. Use of Latvian can be enforced in certain situations, but a positive attitude cannot be forced. The National Language Inspectorate cannot legally control language use everywhere, although this is often a formal requirement, as stated in the Language Law.

2. The very large number of non-Latvian speakers makes Latvian fluency a complex issue. Moreover, most non-Latvian speakers live in the large cities (or even in specific neighborhoods) - in Riga, Daugavpils, Jurmala, Jelgava, Liepaja, Ventspils, Rezekne. The Latgale region has a large proportion of non-Latvian speakers. Many of them get by in daily life speaking Russian, and therefore lack the motivation to learn Latvian. In many other places there is not a Latvian environment which would necessitate communication in Latvian. Many Latvian citizens do not understand Latvian.

3. Both Latvian- and Russian-speaking groups exhibit prejudices which are based on conflicting versions and biased interpretations of history.

4. Coercive methods and negative stimuli hamper the strengthening of a dialogue. Democratic methods are often considered naively liberal and unfit for Latvia's conditions. Government institutions sometimes continue the Soviet-era authoritarian approach to the individual, hoping to influence non-Latvians' attitude toward language through the force of law.

5. The language problem is exacerbated by the critical attitude presented in the mass media, which constantly emphasizes the degradation of the Latvian language and how incorrectly many Latvians speak, instead of the wide-spread use of Latvian and its modern applications and potential. There is unfounded emphasis on the difficulty of learning Latvian, but this is a subjective evaluation and does not encourage learning.

6. In order for Latvian to become the common language of all residents, we must remove the obstacles caused by the current education system's inability to provide quality Latvian instruction in non-Latvian schools.

7. The media propagates social divisions as well. Instead of informing all Latvian residents about common problems, analyzing the situation, and creating dialogue, the Latvian and Russian media give their readers entirely different sets of information. Many non-Latvians do not speak Latvian; this creates opportunities to manipulate the reader.

Solutions and Tasks

We must realize that over 40% of Latvia's inhabitants are non-Latvians. The situation is complex: Latvians still feel threatened in the realm of language and culture, but, in strengthening the Latvian language and culture, must allow non-Latvians to use their language, preserve their culture, and maintain their identity.

Solutions can be sought in many areas:

1. Legislation. The *Saeima* (Parliament) must ratify, in the third reading, the amendments to Article IV of the Constitution, stating that the state language in Latvia is Latvian, and that future amendments to this Article can be instated only through a referendum. This would embed the new Law on the State Language into the fundamental structure of the government, which would grant it added weight and authority. The SLC must increasingly become an advisory body. In order to regulate language use legally, it is necessary to define, in law, the rights of national minority languages in public life.

2. Schools. The education system plays a decisive role in stabilizing and improving the situation of the Latvian language. The Cabinet of Ministers has approved the Ministry of Education and Science "Programme for gradual transition to secondary education in the state language, and increase in the proportion of subjects taught in the national language in the primary school curriculum." The implementation of this programme is crucial in order to ensure that students finishing grade 9 at non-Latvian schools are fluent in two languages (Latvian and Russian or another language).

The next goal in language instruction is creating a situation in which every secondary school graduate would speak three or four languages.

To encourage participation in bilingual education both by Latvian and non-Latvian teachers, and especially in Daugavpils and elsewhere in Latgale, the following steps must be taken:

- providing supplemental salaries to teachers who teach Latvian at minority schools, and to non-Latvian teachers who teach other subjects in Latvian;
- reducing the workload of teachers who teach Latvian to their colleagues, as well as non-Latvian teachers who successfully learn Latvian;
- providing bonuses and exemptions for teachers who work in Latgale at non-Latvian schools;
- deducting tuition for teachers in training who agree to work for a given time in Latgale at non-Latvian schools;
- providing Latvian instructors in non-Latvian schools with regular in-service training and state-of-the-art technical teaching aids.

3. Examinations. It is necessary to enhance the status of the national language examination. Working together, the MES, Naturalization Board, and SLC must draft a standardized Latvian language exam so that a student finishing grade 9 at an MES-accredited institution can fulfill the requirements for national language certification and naturalization with one exam. The same applies to the history examination. School curricula and student language skills on finishing grade 9 must be sufficient for a standardized history

examination, administered at both Latvian and non-Latvian schools, and whose results will count toward the naturalization process.

4. The National Programme for Latvian Language Training (NPLLT). Since 1996 the NPLLT, under the supervision of the MES, has been trying to address the language problem. This Programme has been drafted as a 10-year plan to solve the language problem in schools and among adults with social integration as the specific goal in mind. The Programme includes Latvian as a Second Language (LAT2) for teachers - continuing education using modern language instruction methodology - as well as new teaching aids. Underlying the Programme is the belief that one should learn a language in order to use it, not to pass an examination. The Programme's scope also includes non-traditional instructional programming for television and radio, as well as the Internet.

5. The mass media. In order to compete with the influx of foreign selections in the mass media, a good supply of national broadcasts is important. With the help of interesting Latvian programming, a media strategy must attempt to attract the attention of non-Latvians. Close attention must be paid to the quality of language, diction, and the rate of speaking. It is important also to use Latvian subtitles. These must be clearly readable and understandable, and the rate must be geared towards viewers' comprehension. Latvian subtitles must also be provided for popular Latvian programmes such as *Panorama*, to make them easier to understand for people who do not yet speak Latvian fluently. The national government should support instructional programmes on Latvian television and radio.

6. Accessibility of the Latvian language and creation of a Latvian language environment. Each opportunity must be taken in the public and private sectors to make Latvian more easily understood by each resident of Latvia. The creation of a Latvian language environment will do much to advance the precise and logical use of Latvian in various public places (including public transportation), businesses, posters, signs, announcements, advertisements, etc. The texts must be easy to read and aesthetic, commercial psychologists should be consulted. Oral information must be audible, clear, with good diction.

Each Ministry, national institution or local government, as well as non-governmental organizations must participate and share responsibility in securing the position of the Latvian language. To encourage non-Latvians, more contests and awards should be used, in place of a system of punishments. It is important to popularize positive examples and achievements, and to create "idea banks" to inspire future projects.

Culture

Culture defines the values, moral norms, responsibilities, and rights of members of society, and it influences their individuality, way of life, identity, and *raison d'être*. Moreover, culture is the condition for mutual trust, tolerance, and solidarity between members of society, indeed for the survival of a civil society. Latvian cultural policy must ensure favourable conditions for maintaining the cultural values of the Latvian nation and national minorities; it must raise public awareness of the modern and historical value of the Latvian cultural environment, Latvian and national minority cultures. It must establish the terms for cultural dialogue, foster respect and tolerance of other cultures, and guarantee the individual's right to express, protect, and develop his or her ethnic, cultural, and religious identity.

Assessment of the Situation

Cultural processes in independent Latvia have maintained some elements of historical continuity but have also gained new traits. Continuity can be noted in the high prestige awarded to culture, widespread popular participation in amateur cultural activities such as singing in choirs and nurturing traditional folk art forms, and the close ties between the Latvian cultural profession and the processes of international cultural evolution. Radical changes have taken place in the relationship of culture to economics and politics. Intellectual freedom defines the new diversity of artistic self-expression, the development of subcultures, and the free progress of Latvian and minority culture. At the same time, values have begun to be influenced and leveled intensely by mass culture. The cultural infrastructure is unevenly developed, and the system for funding culture is disorganized.

The first laws that regulated Latvian cultural processes and protected the Latvian and minority cultural heritage were passed in the early 1990s. These were: the Laws on the Protection of Cultural Monuments, on Archives, on the Latvian National Library, on Religious Organizations, the many amendments and modifications of other laws, and Cabinet regulations that directly or indirectly related to the cultural sphere. Also, the Law On the Unrestricted Development and Right to Cultural Autonomy of Latvia's Nationalities and Ethnic Groups, was adopted already in March 1991. In 1995 Latvia joined the Bern Copyright Convention on the Protection of Works of Literature and Art; in 1997 the Geneva Convention on Protecting the Rights of Performers, Record Producers and Broadcast Organizations; in the near future Latvia is preparing to join the Rome Convention. Recently, the *Saeima* (Parliament) approved the Law on Museums, the Law on Libraries, and the Cultural Capital Fund Law. Currently, several bills are being prepared to regulate Latvian cinematography, the National Opera, and the National Library, both materially and creatively. Nearing completion are the Law on Charities and the Law on Cultural Institutions. These laws together create opportunities to protect ethnic identity, intellectual freedom, and Latvian and minority cultural values, but cannot guarantee the future development of these values.

The cultural goals and tasks of the public and the state, as well as the main principles underlying our understanding of culture are formulated in the **Foundations of Latvian National Cultural Policy**, ratified by the *Saeima* on 28 September 1995. At the 1998 Council of Europe Cultural Collaboration Council meeting in Strasbourg, the Republic of

Latvia presented its Report on Cultural Policy, which includes guidelines for continuing work in the area of social integration, and received a positive evaluation.

It should be acknowledged that the activities of national institutions and local governments do not always correspond to the declared ends of cultural policy. The Ministry of Culture has begun to draft a National Programme - "Culture," which is a long-term, goal-oriented plan. Projected to run until 2010, it contains 11 sub-programmes, including "Cultural Integration." The National Programme, based on analysis of the current situation, will be the theoretical and practical base for strategic implementation of cultural policy, and will also address current weaknesses. A general task for the Programme will be to foster the growth and establishment of a civil society.

Responsibility for the formation and implementation of cultural policy is divided among several executive institutions (the Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Culture and other Ministries), local governments, businesses (Culture Capital Fund) and non-governmental organizations (Latvian Culture Fund, creative unions, the National Cultural Council, the Booksellers' Council, etc.), whose rights and duties are defined by law. During the early 1990s, the majority of cultural establishments gained administrative and economic independence; simultaneously they lost much of their national and local funding. Currently, cultural establishments are still funded primarily from national and local budgets, with funding for individual projects from non-governmental agencies (the Culture Fund, Soros Foundation - Latvia, etc.). Private capital plays only a small role in promoting cultural activities, especially in preserving the cultural heritage.

The national budget allotment for culture is small (2.6% of total budget expenditures), and government spending on culture is about 4% of all investment funds. Local government budget expenditures are 7-13%; public purchasing power is small, thus the opportunity to increase revenue by raising ticket prices is limited. Most national and local funding goes toward maintaining the cultural infrastructure, paying wages, which are noticeably lower than the average for government employees, and financing cultural education centres. Although cultural funding is limited, the state has supported various minority cultural projects. Grants have been given to theaters, musical, art, and education centres; the Russian publication *Daugava* is partially funded; several literary and musical projects have been supported through a competitive process, including the festival *Latvijas vainags* ("Latvia's Wreath"). The state funds minority-targeted TV and radio programmes, protection of cultural monuments, maintenance of and additions to libraries, public amateur cultural activities, and other events in minority cultural life.

Latvian minority cultures are an indivisible part of Latvian culture. Minority languages are used on Latvian television and radio; the minority cultural heritage is distinct yet fitting in the Latvian architectural and cultural environment; historical minority place names are used throughout the territory of Latvia; the minority intelligentsia promotes Latvian culture in the non-Latvian community; the contribution of the minority intelligentsia to Latvian and world culture is impressive.

Inspired by the national awakening, the formation of national and ethnic cultural societies and associations since 1988 defined the terms of a renaissance within minority cultural life. This brought minorities closer to the Latvian nation, and facilitated the creation of common cultural spaces. Unfortunately, in the following years, no mechanism was developed to suit the cultural autonomy of the national Latvian state, which could widely

influence minority cultural life, protect minority identity, renew cultural traditions or pass those on to the post-war immigrant community. Therefore, the existing form of cultural autonomy insufficiently promotes non-citizens' integration into Latvian society. Non-Latvian participation in culturally-related legislation and its implementation has so far been inconsistent, because the renewal of cultural autonomy has not been fully guaranteed.

Problems

Uneven distribution of cultural values. In recent years our society has seen a rapid stratification both between and within social groups and ethnic communities. A decline in the quality of life and political polarization accentuated social trends toward segregation, mistrust and alienation. Under these conditions there is no development of a cooperative spirit or civic institutions, broad sectors of the population feel unclear about their life prospects, and there is limited access to cultural assets. Many members of Latvian society have an oversimplified, insufficient understanding of values, moral norms, their own responsibilities and rights, and other existential issues; they have serious problems maintaining their identity and consciousness, and often their way of life is antisocial. These groups disrupt the strengthening of mutual trust, solidarity, and civil society, and they do not display respect and tolerance for other cultures, human rights, or freedom.

Insufficient development of common cultural spaces and common cultural values. The national and local governments have only partially secured the preservation and development of Latvia's cultural values. Since conditions for Latvian cultural development and expansion are not beneficial, culture can play only a limited role in social integration; only an influential, active and tolerant Latvian culture can promote cultural dialogue in Latvia. Society does not share a common understanding about the nature of interaction between Latvian and minority cultures. Culture has not done enough to form social self-awareness and tolerance. Oversimplified and biased interpretations of history promote historical bitterness; cultural identities often are oriented only to the past, which creates an unfavourable environment for cultural dialogue. Contradictory perceptions of cultural values delay social integration and the convergence of Latvians and non-Latvians, citizens and non-citizens into a democratic, open civil society, with the equal interaction of cultures.

Currently, ethnic stereotypes are being reproduced vigorously, cultural differences and singularities are overemphasized, common or similar traits are ignored, and mutual enrichment between cultures is undervalued in principle and practice. Moreover, there is no institutional structure that could promote a unified and diverse cultural life as part of the social integration process, bringing together Latvians and minority representatives. The protection of cultural autonomy and minority language rights must be balanced with social integration, with mechanisms to protect and invigorate Latvian as the national language. The opposite scenario could provoke separatism and ethnic isolation, whereby culture would become a barrier to communication. The politicization of culture, wherein culture begins to lose its unifying humanitarian aspects, should be avoided. To prevent this, social integration must enter the realm of culture, creating a process that would overcome ethnic boundaries and develop cultural dialogue as the dominant paradigm. This calls for fairly radical changes in the situation of Latvian culture.

Gaps between cultural policy and social needs. Current Latvian cultural legislation only partially addresses social needs and the necessity for social integration. The Cultural Autonomy Law ought to guarantee minorities the right to cultural self-expression, and the

opportunity to maintain and freely shape their cultural identity; this would not only aid in preserving minority ethnic identity, but also in strengthening minority loyalty to the Latvian nation.

Responsibility for supporting the cultural activities of ethnic groups and for protecting cultural heritage is divided between the Ministries of Justice and Culture. With the changing of governments, consistency in implementing cultural policy and completing projects suffers; in government declarations, emphasis and departmental priorities shift; central and local governments often lack funding for their administrative decisions. Under existing financial conditions, there are limited opportunities for a goal-oriented cultural policy to promote cultural dialogue. Additional problems are caused by the uneven regional distribution of qualified cultural professionals. The cultural infrastructure is in a critical state, and support for professional art and the humanities is insufficient.

Goals

The goal of the sub-programme is to create an understanding, characteristic of a democratic society, of values, moral norms, responsibilities and rights, that fosters trust, tolerance, and solidarity within society; to create the preconditions for a balanced and dynamic civil society; to safeguard cultural assets and to encourage cultural dialogue; to guarantee the individual the right to freely express, protect and develop his/her ethnic, cultural and religious identity.

Sub-programme goals:

- to strengthen government support for the protection of Latvian cultural wealth and research for cultural development, which are prerequisites for cultural integration;
- to guarantee the protection and development of Latvian and minority cultural values;
- to enhance the public's understanding of national and ethnic cultural values, and to create favorable conditions for dialogue between cultures;
- to foster respect and tolerance for other cultures, free expression of individual rights, and the protection and development of ethnic, cultural and religious identity;
- to encourage participation of all national and ethnic groups in nationally significant legislation; to support the creation of civic organizations;
- to encourage ethnic understanding, to reconcile the historical perspectives of various ethnocultural groups, and to encourage participation in cross-cultural activities;
- to ensure the implementation of the integration programme and the mechanism of evaluation and control.

Measures

1. To draft bills "On the National Cultural Heritage" and "On Folk Art"; to draft proposals for revenue bills to support cultural development; to prepare to ratify international conventions and protocols dealing with cultural and inter-ethnic relations.

2. To draft a new Law on Cultural Autonomy. In order for cultural associations to more effectively influence non-Latvian integration into the Latvian nation, we must create a

system of cultural autonomy much more broadly based on the experience and traditions of Latvia's historical minorities. The Association of Latvian National Cultural Societies would play an important role here. The state must ensure minority rights to cultural self-determination; this would aid in renewing, protecting, and developing minority identity, involving minority populations in national public activities, and establishing friendly relations with neighboring countries. These tasks must be assigned to those minority cultural societies and organizations which are closely linked with the citizenry, are able to promote learning of the state language, and can introduce their members to Latvian cultural values, historical traditions of inter-ethnic tolerance and good relations in Latvia, and their own history and unique culture. A new Law on Cultural Autonomy would allow the creation of broad and authoritative minority cultural organizations, which could become elements of minority cultural self-government, and minority-delegated cultural embassies. This goal would be supported by Articles in the expanded text of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia which deal with minority rights, obligations and cultural autonomy. The state must help minorities to create a powerful mechanism for cultural autonomy and must financially support such actions.

3. To draft suggestions for cultural funding mechanisms which would create favorable conditions for cultural dialogue, understanding, and development; to set a legal minimum for national and local budgets in funding cultural needs; to draft a proposal for an Integration Fund and to begin its activities; to join EU and Council of Europe programmes which promote inter-ethnic dialogue, preservation of cultural heritage, and development of cultural values.

4. To increase funding of minority cultural societies and associations.

5. To encourage grassroots organizations and the emergence of integrative ties at the local level - in townships, regions, and city neighborhoods. This requires funding of initiatives that widen cultural contact between social and ethnic groups, and creating combined Latvian and minority cultural activities and local cultural projects; projects to improve the environment and local territory; international collaboration at the township, city, and regional levels. These projects must involve NGOs and youth, women's and other groups, which would represent a diverse population.

6. To attract press, radio, television, and publishing attention to Latvian and minority cultural activities and interactions; the Ministry of Culture must gather Latvian and minority artists, writers, scientists, and educators to discuss cultural issues, as well as set up summer camps for diverse cultural activists, especially youth. To increase funding for minority-g geared cultural TV and radio broadcasts.

7. To develop mechanisms that would increase the translation and publication of Latvian authors' works into Russian, paying special attention to children's literature; to ensure that school libraries can obtain culturally oriented books, with special emphasis on rural and small town schools; to ensure that public libraries can obtain books that will increase the cultural competence and understanding of the population; to support the preservation of Latvian and minority cultural heritage in the National Library and Latvian Academic Library; to draft a proposal for spreading cultural information through the electronic media through Internet projects.

8. To organize events that would allow more active involvement of minority representatives in self-organized cultural activities; to support minority cultural days in Riga and other cities where minority cultural life can be renewed; to evaluate possibilities for developing choir programmes in minority schools; to find ways for the state, local institutions, cultural and education establishments, creative associations and other non-governmental organizations to increase minority understanding of Latvian cultural values and Latvian understanding of minority cultural values; to evaluate how such projects could be supported.

9. To provide free theater tickets to school children and to popularize Latvian visual art (including free museum tickets for school children); to explore options for improving the public's understanding of Latvian visual art, as well as increasing minority enrollment in art schools and colleges; to evaluate the role and potential of cinema in raising national consciousness in order to promote the social integration process.

10. To fund cultural education events for adults (lectures, courses, free activities); cultural-historical research and publications; preservation and popularization of archives, libraries, and museum treasures, and publication of encyclopedias.

11. To support Latvia's participation in EU and Council of Europe cultural programmes and the popularization of European cultural values.

Citizenship and Naturalization

Assessment of the Situation

International legal norms pertaining to citizenship embody universally accepted principles. One of the basic principles is that **each nation determines, according to law, who are its citizens**, taking into consideration international legal norms and principles.

In accordance with the 4 May 1990 Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR on the Renewal of the Independence of the Republic of Latvia and the Latvian SSR Supreme Council's 21 August 1991 Constitutional Law On the Republic of Latvia Status as a Sovereign State, Latvia was recognized as an independent, democratic republic and the 15 February 1922 Constitution of the Republic of Latvia was reinstated within the territory of Latvia. On restoring statehood, it was necessary to define the citizenry of the Republic of Latvia. Therefore, on 15 October 1991 the Latvian Supreme Council adopted the resolution For Renewing Citizen Rights and Setting the Conditions for Naturalization. This resolution declared null and void from the moment of its adoption the USSR Supreme Soviet's 7 September 1940 Decree On the Order in Which the Citizens of the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian SSR Receive USSR Citizenship. It also declared that the Republic of Latvia acknowledges the citizenship of persons who were Latvian citizens on 17 June 1940, and of their descendants, provided that they register at the Republic of Latvia Registry of Residents before the given deadline. Other normative acts were adopted to regulate citizenship-related issues, defining the status of citizens, the terms for acquiring and losing Latvian citizenship, the state relationship with its citizens and so forth. Thus on 22 July 1994 the *Saeima* (Parliament) adopted the Law on Citizenship, which was signed by President Ulmanis on 11 August 1994. The Law took effect on 25 August 1994. Modifications to the Law on Citizenship were made in 1995, 1997 and 1998. The passing of this law was one of the most important steps taken by Latvia in terms of organizing the legal inter-relationships of residents, as well as a significant factor on the road to integration into the European Union. The Law on Citizenship states that **"citizenship of Latvia is a person's permanent legal bond with the State of Latvia."**

The Law on Citizenship defines the body of persons who are considered Latvian citizens, the rights of aliens and non-citizens to gain Latvian citizenship, and the procedure for acquiring citizenship through naturalization; it also regulates other citizenship-related questions.

Latvian citizenship can be obtained in two ways:

1. Latvian citizenship can be acquired through naturalization;
2. Latvian citizenship can be granted by the *Saeima* in recognition of outstanding service on behalf of Latvia.

If an individual's status complies with the terms of Article 2 of the Law on Citizenship, then his or her citizenship is recorded in the Republic of Latvia Registry of Residents. The acceptance of Latvian citizenship cannot result in dual citizenship.

The Naturalization Board (NB) of the Republic of Latvia was founded on 18 October 1994. Its main functions are:

- to review applications requesting Latvian citizenship through naturalization; to prepare and present to the Cabinet of Ministers legal acts relating to the granting of Latvian citizenship through naturalization, and to take rulings on refusing to grant citizenship;
- to examine applicants' knowledge of Latvian language and history as stated in the Law on Citizenship; of the basic principles of the Constitutional Law - The Rights and Obligations of a Citizen and Person; and of the text of the national anthem;
- to analyze and summarize other nations' experience in dealing with issues of granting citizenship, to collaborate with appropriate foreign institutions, and to organize international conferences, seminars and discussions, using the results to improve the performance of the NB.

The question of granting and receiving Latvian citizenship has become increasingly urgent. The situation is exacerbated by the large number of resident non-citizens and the slow naturalization process. According to the latest data of the Citizenship and Migration Affairs Board (CMAB), of the 2,434,000 residents of Latvia, approximately 646,000 are non-citizens. The breakdown of Latvian residents according to ethnicity and citizenship is as follows (CMAB data from 8 January 1998):

Ethnicity	Latvian Citizens	Citizens of the Former USSR	Foreign Citizens	Total
Latvian	1,381,674	8,536	557	1,290,767
Russian	289,432	429,272	10,291	728,995
Belarussian	21,133	79,783	1,023	101,939
Polish	39,205	22,083	447	61,735
Lithuanian	13,518	20,008	965	34,491
Ukrainian	4,876	59,763	1,788	66,427
Other	20,517	27,278	2,320	50,115
Total	1,770,355	646,723	17,391	2,434,469

The current demographic situation in Latvia is a result of the russification policy enacted during Soviet occupation. During the Soviet era, immigration was the main source of population growth and the source of the extremely large increase in the non-Latvian population. Today in the majority of large cities, including the capital, Latvians are a minority of the population. Latvians comprise 57% of the total population, compared with 75.5% in 1935. The non-Latvian population is divided among many ethnic groups: Russians (30%), Belarussians (4%), Ukrainians (3%), Poles (2%). Of about 2,430,000 registered residents, about 74% are Latvian citizens. Almost 400,000 citizens are non-Latvians.

The 1994 Law on Citizenship defines a specific procedure for naturalization. February of this year marked three years since the naturalization process began. In 1995, the potential number of applicants for citizenship was 738,386.

According to the Law on Citizenship, the following number of non-citizens will have the right to apply for citizenship:

Year	Number of Potential Applicants
1995	approximately 60,000
1996	33,327
1997	31,252
1998	27,605
1999	51,284
2000	65,865
2001	120,783
2002	214,456
2003	133,814

Between February 1995 and 31 August 1998, 11,200 applications were received, and citizenship was granted, through Cabinet orders, to 10,262 persons. At the same time, some 148,000 persons had the right to apply for citizenship.

Problems

The current slow rate of naturalization attests to the fact that citizenship problems are not being solved in the way that the Law on Citizenship intended; this attests also to the low prestige associated with Latvian citizenship. This issue is continuously being analyzed, especially in the research and action programme "On the Road to a Civil Society in Latvia." All research points to a **number of problems**:

- many people are ill-informed and have little interest in their options and rights to gain Latvian citizenship;
- naturalization is treated and perceived only as a formal act, and people do not link it with the broader process of social integration;
- education institutions do not pay sufficient attention to teaching civics and the related themes of social development;
- potential Latvian citizens form their impressions of citizenship and naturalization primarily through the mass media, which gives a one-sided portrait of problems often based on hearsay without explaining or providing regular information;
- various political forces maintain destructive stereotypes, using them to further their own political ambitions and goals.

There are other factors that burden social integration and the formation of a civil society:

- in all post-socialist nations, among both citizens and non-citizens, there is a considerable passivity and alienation from the political, economic, and social life, from government institutions, and in relations between groups;
- according to data from the Baltic Data House study "Human rights," problems associated with citizenship are often perceived by minorities and non-citizens as human rights violations. Answers to the question **"In your opinion, what are Latvia's most important human rights problems?"** are as follows:

Rights of the elderly	51.2 %
Citizenship issues	42.3 %
Right to education	39.6 %
Children's rights	37.5 %
Right to a fair trial	36.1 %
Disabled rights	28.6 %
Renters' rights	27.4 %
Equal right to state support	26.6%
Right to privacy	19.2 %
Domestic violence	15.4 %

- poor knowledge of Latvian among non-citizens delays the integration process - about 20% of non-citizens do not understand any Latvian, and 40% understand very little. At the same time, 10-20% of non-citizens claim that they hear Latvian very rarely in daily life. This attests to the fact that they have few options for learning and using Latvian.

Goals and Tasks

Goal To raise the prestige of Latvian citizenship, thus creating a positive attitude toward naturalization, which in turn will give a larger segment of the population the opportunity to enter an integrated society.

Tasks

1. To advance social integration with naturalization as part of this process.
2. To dispel the formal and hesitant attitude toward naturalization so that becoming a Latvian citizen becomes a psychologically noteworthy event in an individual's life.
3. To make appropriate changes in the legal and normative acts of the Republic of Latvia in line with international obligations and Latvia's national interests vis a vis citizenship for permanent residents who are stateless or are citizens of other countries.
4. To develop broader social studies courses in civics, political science, etc. and incorporate them into nationally accredited school curricula, thereby raising the level of civic and legal education for schoolchildren and students.
5. To encourage collaboration between government institutions and minorities, as well as non-governmental organizations in forming national policy on ethnic issues.
6. To create opportunities for a range of Naturalization Board activities, taking into account possible changes in the Law on Citizenship.
7. To organize systematic research on social integration questions and/or naturalization and to ensure the efficient solution of any problems.
8. To distribute informative and educational materials and teaching aids to facilitate the integration of non-citizens.

Measures

In order to effect a positive change in attitude regarding citizenship and naturalization issues, it is necessary to create and implement a wide range of activities geared toward informing the public and raising the prestige of citizenship. The main projects would be as follows:

1. **Creation of an Information Centre (IC)** To ensure broad accessibility of NB information. Its main functions would include:

- compiling, publishing, and distributing the IC's most recent material in monthly information bulletins;
- compiling, publishing, and distributing a quarterly bulletin on Latvian and EU citizenship, social integration and multicultural issues (with EU expert assistance);
- compiling, publishing, and distributing a publication entitled "Latvia's Residents on the Road to the European Union" - general information about EU citizenship and Latvian citizens' rights and responsibilities as EU citizens (biannually with EU expert assistance);
- publishing a brochure on citizenship and naturalization questions (yearly);
- organizing regular information and education activities in Latvian cities, regions, and townships;
- organizing conferences, meetings, "information days," etc.;
- preparing information for central, regional, and town libraries, schools, and other information centres in Latvia;
- organizing school competitions at four levels on the topic "The Latvian Citizen in the European Union;"
- preparing audio-video materials for schools on Latvian and EU citizenship issues (yearly);
- organizing regional information field trips (with funding from the NB budget);
- supporting sociological research to prepare for an annual conference "On the Road to a Civil Society";
- collaborating regularly with the mass media.

The IC will operate indefinitely; every two years its main activities will be reviewed and, if necessary, adjusted.

2. Creation of a standardized system which will aid non-Latvians - citizens and non-citizens alike - as well as repatriates to learn the foundations of the Latvian language, history, and cultural history in any administrative region of Latvia. This system will also serve as a civic education programme for adults.

Collaboration partners: the Naturalization Board (NB) of the Latvian Republic, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Latvian People's School (LTS), adult education centres, the Citizenship and Migration Affairs Board, etc.

Target audience:

- permanent residents of Latvia who are preparing for naturalization,
- citizens who are not yet fluent in Latvian,
- repatriates (especially from the East),
- any resident of Latvia who is interested in Latvian history, legal issues, civil society, etc.

Predicted time frame of operation - 1998-2005, with yearly statements of main activities and budget needs.

3. Publication of popular accounts of Latvian history and cultural history in three languages: Latvian, English, and Russian.

1998-1999

4. Regular research on individual social integration questions.

1998-2000

5. Yearly organization of the conference "On the Road to a Civil Society."

1998-2000

Repatriation, migration and collaboration with Latvians abroad

An important prerequisite for Latvian social integration and for the unification of the citizenry of the Republic of Latvia is organizing the repatriation process and eliminating obstacles that hinder the return of potential repatriates. The Latvian nation is a social-political entity that can maintain and develop the Latvian language and culture within Latvia itself, but can also form integrative ties with Latvians living abroad. The integration of the Latvian nation worldwide is not only an important moral and historical obligation, but also a condition for the modern existence of the nation.

Assessment of the Situation

Immigration During the occupation years, Latvia unwillingly became a land of immigration. Moreover, the influx of foreigners can only conditionally be called "immigration," as the functioning of Latvian laws had been suspended. Thus, this immigration had no legal basis - it was illegal and violently coerced.

The influx of foreigners dropped significantly when, after the restoration of Latvian independence, the immigration process began to be legally regulated. Statistics show that 1992 was the critical year for the decline in immigration from the east. This year saw the ratification of the Law On the Entry and Residence of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Latvia. This law, regardless of Latvia's undefined borders, began to be enforced by the Ministry of the Interior's Citizenship and Immigration Department (now the Citizenship and Migration Affairs Board, CMAB).

Repatriation The concept of repatriation stems from the Latin word *repatriare* which means "to return to the homeland."

More than 200,000 Latvians live abroad, most of them in the U.S., Russia and other CIS countries, Canada, Australia, and also in Great Britain, Germany, and Sweden. Included in this figure are those Latvians born abroad, who, from generation to generation are losing the language, are not active participants in Latvian communities, etc. The many overseas Latvian communities have various ties and connections with Latvia, and are quite diverse with regard to their citizenship status, historical awareness, Latvian language proficiency, and ideological stances. After Latvia regained independence many Latvians living abroad began to show interest in returning.

The 1995 Law on Repatriation states that "The Republic of Latvia supports the reunification of the Latvian nation and calls upon Latvians and Livs, who recognize their Latvian identity, to return to their ethnic homeland."

The Law on Repatriation formulates the following goals of repatriation:

- to create conditions and guarantees for persons of Latvian and Liv heritage to relocate permanently to Latvia;
- to promote the voluntary return of non-Latvians to their ethnic homelands;
- to determine the functions of institutions dealing with repatriation and emigration.

According to statistics, an average of 700-800 people repatriate to Latvia annually, of which approximately 80% arrive from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, etc., but 20% from the U.S., Germany, Canada, Australia, Great Britain, etc.

Most of the people who repatriate from the west went into exile after World War I. As indicated by data analysis, these are predominantly older Latvians. In general, most repatriates are ethnic Latvians or their descendants, although non-ethnic Latvian citizens return as well.

The repatriation process has generated the need for a government institution that would address this issue. As of 1991, this position is being filled by the CMAB Repatriation Sector.

Assistance to those who wish to repatriate is offered by various social organizations, such as the Latvian Association of Russia (now called the Eastern Latvian Association), the World Federation of Free Latvians (WFFL), and others. In recent years the WFFL has united almost all of the large Latvian associations abroad, including the recently founded Latvian Congress of Russia.

The Law on Repatriation prescribes the establishment of a Repatriation Fund funded by the following:

- state budget resources;
- donations from legal entities and individuals;
- donations from other countries and international organizations.

Currently this Fund is supported solely by the national budget. Additional funding has yet to come from donations, even though the "Law on Corporate Income Taxes" states that a private or mixed enterprise that has donated to repatriation funds is eligible to receive tax relief in accordance with the law.

The Repatriation Fund has not been particularly successful thus far. Even the relatively small budget received from national funds (51,000 Ls annually) is not used entirely. In 1996, four individuals received aid from the Fund, averaging 1,690 Ls each; in 1997, 20 individuals received an average of 5,044 Ls each.

Emigration Current migration processes in Latvia have reversed direction, and Latvia has become a country of emigration. Beginning in 1990, more people leave Latvia annually than enter. Reasons for emigration are various. Since the renewal of independence, many Russians, Ukrainians, Belarussians, and other former USSR citizens are returning to their ethnic homelands. The desire to return to one's homeland is not, however, the only reason for leaving. Statistics show that not all ethnic Russians return to Russia and not all ethnic Belarussians and Ukrainians - to Belarus and the Ukraine, respectively. Also, not all Jews go to Israel. This indicates that emigration has other economic and social causes.

Emigration occurs primarily to the east. The majority of emigrants are of Russian, Ukrainian, Belarussian, and Jewish ethnic background. Jews have been departing since Latvia regained independence, emigrating to the west or repatriating to Israel.

Problems

1. The Law on Repatriation states that local governments **must provide** repatriates with housing that meets the Cabinet's yearly quotas. The Law on Housing Support Granted by the Sate and Local Governments states that a local government **may provide** repatriates with assistance in finding apartments.

Currently, a repatriate can receive housing in the same manner as any Latvian citizen, foreigner or stateless person with permanent resident status. Guaranteed immediate rent options are offered only to those repatriates with the status of politically repressed, or those unlawfully convicted and subsequently rehabilitated.

Contradictions abound both among existing laws and between laws and established daily practices. Although the law states that repatriates will be provided with adequate housing, the mechanism for ensuring this does not exist.

Repatriation has other serious problems, as there are no established prerequisites for repatriate integration, such as professional retraining, Latvian instruction, or unemployment assistance until work is found. Thus far, repatriation policy has not been successful. The Latvian government officially supports the reunification of the Latvian nation, but assistance toward this end is not goal-oriented or consistent.

2. Emigration is occurring without assistance from either the Latvian government, or the destination countries of most emigrants - Russia, the Ukraine, Belarus. Even those social organizations which have tried to help emigrants have had limited success. Therefore, the emigration process eastward is chaotic. For this same reason, the number of people who would like to emigrate remains larger than those who already have. Needy and older non-citizens cannot return to their homelands, even if they truly desire to.

3. Latvians abroad encounter many complicated problems. It is difficult to pass on the language within a family, especially to today's younger generation. An undeniable obstacle in maintaining active ties with Latvia is the need to integrate within one's country of residence, which for most people now is also their birthplace.

There are many Latvian social organizations abroad and, since independence, many focus their activities on contact and networking with Latvia. Nevertheless, more and more overseas organizations are encountering financial, organizational, and other difficulties. In Russia, Latvian organizations are just emerging. Latvian grass roots organization in Russia is burdened by poverty.

Goals and tasks

Goals To bring more order to legislation by eliminating internal contradictions, creating favorable conditions for repatriation, and strengthening ties with Latvians abroad.

Tasks

1. To develop a system for supporting repatriates, helping them to return to their homeland and integrate into the Latvian environment.

2. To assist those non-citizens who wish to emigrate from Latvia, but are unable to do so due to financial limitations or other reasons.
3. To develop a programme for collaboration with Latvians abroad, and to begin its activities.

Measures

1. Aid for repatriates who relocate to Latvia permanently. To secure moral, psychological, social and financial support to repatriates, to encourage their return for permanent residence in Latvia and their integration into the Latvian environment. The essence of this measure: a repatriate integration project that would help solve many of the problems associated with repatriation and integration, and which, in time, would evolve into a permanent and efficient system for repatriate (and immigrant) integration into Latvian society. To begin such an integration system in Latvia, we must become familiar with the experience gained by countries such as Germany, Sweden and others in developing similar systems, promoting government and NGO collaboration.

A support system for repatriation must provide:

- a one-time financial grant;
- opportunities for learning Latvian;
- financial and practical assistance in finding housing, getting loans, etc.;
- aid in finding a job in line with one's training or in professional training and retraining;
- aid in clarifying pension questions and negotiation of social security contracts with the relevant foreign countries;
- social assistance to older repatriates, including emergency housing in retirement homes, etc.

This integration system must pay special attention to providing moral and psychological support.

The system must provide special help to children and students:

- organization of Latvian language courses and aid in Latvian studies at school;
- granting of student loans credit to students who wish to continue their education in Latvia;
- psychological support for integration into the peer group;
- organization of special events (summer camps, etc.).

The creation of a repatriate and immigrant integration system in Latvia requires the co-operation of the Ministries of the Interior, Justice, Finance, Education and Science, Welfare, and Culture, as well as non-governmental organizations. We must realize that most Latvians living abroad are citizens of other countries, and Latvia's efforts at repatriation may be interpreted as meddling in other countries' domestic affairs. This may be especially evident in relations with Russia. The best way to deal with this might be through a Repatriation Social Fund, whose existence would also be supported by non-governmental organizations and private individuals. The RSF could act as part of the Social Integration Fund.

Regular research must be conducted on repatriate integration and adaptation to conditions in Latvia since independence. These studies would help develop the integration system and would illuminate problems associated with repatriation.

2. Support for non-citizens who wish to leave Latvia. Latvia, in co-operation with Russia, the Ukraine, Belarus and other countries, must create favorable conditions for emigration for persons who arrived during Soviet occupation and now desire to return to their homeland, but for various reasons are unable to do so. To solve this problem, we need appropriate legislation, as well as the following:

- identification of low-income and older single people who wish to leave Latvia;
- initiation of an inter-state dialogue with destination countries on support for non-citizens wishing to emigrate from Latvia;
- generating NGO interest in helping to address these issues;
- addressing financial questions pertaining to emigration and providing assistance for low-income non-citizens.

The success of this project depends on the co-operation of western countries as well. In co-operation with foreign embassies, it would be advisable to create a database of potential emigrants, including possible housing and job slots, information on schools and child care, retirement homes, etc.

3. **Collaboration with Latvians abroad.** A separate programme must address collaboration with Latvians abroad, supporting the maintenance of diaspora communities and strengthening contacts with Latvia. Latvians living abroad are often of invaluable help in upholding Latvia's image and in establishing contacts with their host countries' governments and public. Such activities should actively include Latvia's non-governmental organizations.

Such projects must include:

1. Creation and implementation of a Diaspora Policy.
2. Creation of a government position (for example, in the future Social Integration Bureau), to address diaspora issues and activities.
3. Research on various Latvian groups and their needs outside of Latvia.
4. Events to encourage Latvian children and young people who live abroad to visit Latvia regularly, learn the language and culture, and study in Latvian schools and universities.
5. Education of diaspora cultural and education leaders in Latvia, and consultation with diaspora organizations.

A social centre for Latvian culture and information would be beneficial to relations with Latvians abroad. (Such a centre could operate within the Social Integration Fund.) The responsibilities of such a centre would include maintaining cultural, economic and academic ties with appropriate individuals and organizations overseas.

Information

National information policy (or the lack thereof) influences public opinion and the formation of a common system of social values. It influences relations between various social groups and their respective attitudes toward the state. Latvia's information policy must actively assist the mass media in providing each member of society with access to objective and multi-faceted information. Freedom of the press should not be used as a front for attempting to manipulate a segment of society, by taking advantage of ignorance, ethnic prejudices or other kinds of bias. Government information policy plays an important role in national development, and it must stimulate constructive dialogue between various groups to create mutual understanding and respect.

Assessment of the situation

The Latvian information arena began to regain autonomy in 1988-1991. The growth of national consciousness among Latvians and the desire to regain independence and shed communist ideology characterized the change in orientation of the Latvian mass media. This change saw the media shift from service to the communist regime to an active role in renewing a democratic nation. During this critical time for Latvia, the actions and civic stance of journalists were crucial forces in generating strong public faith in our mass media.

In the last years of the USSR, with democratic processes already underway, there was a split within the Russian-language media: one faction consistently supported the democratic changes, the other staunchly opposed them. This split did not take place in the Latvian-language media, because the pro-communist/empire media outlets did not have a large enough audience to sustain operations. The Russian-language media outlets in Latvia generally supported democratization within the structure of the USSR, while their Latvian counterparts saw democratic progress in the form of a national reawakening.

When the Law on Citizenship began to be discussed, it became one of the dominant issues in the Russian-language media and one that united otherwise disparate views. There were objective reasons for this. Russian newspapers reflected the concerns of their readers about the future and took advantage of those fears. This situation persists to this day.

On the other hand, the Latvian media took little interest in the non-Latvian milieu. The Latvian press and public had no clear stance and behavior toward people who became non-citizens as a result of Latvian independence. The slogan of "3 Ds" (de-occupation, debolshevization, and de-colonization) did not gain particular support among the Latvian public. Due to the characteristic tolerance of Latvian society, the term "invader" or "occupier" was not widely used in reference to people who entered Latvia during the occupation; nevertheless, there was also no clear answer to the question "What next?"

Russia increasingly sought special rights throughout the former USSR, using as a pretext the defense of the rights of Russians that remained beyond its new borders. Russia claimed the role of defender of the rights of all non-Latvians ("Russian-speakers") in Latvia, including not only Russians, but also Ukrainians, Belarussians and other groups that had undergone intensive russification during Soviet times. The Latvian government could not convincingly assume the role of defender of its minorities and organize effective counter-

propaganda, and this allowed Russia to achieve its goal rather successfully. Additional support for Russia's policy was provided by the stance of the Russian-language press, as well as the influence of Russia's mass media (especially Russian TV). The attraction of the Russian mass media in Latvia is not based so much on its political orientation as on its professional quality, which is higher than that of the Latvian media.

The media situation in Latvia is shaped by economic constraints which limit media diversity and do not provide for the long-term security of many publications that are essential for a developed society. At the same time, the rapid stratification of Latvian society is affecting public access to mass media sources. A significant change in the media situation arises from the spread of new information technology worldwide, resulting in Latvia's rapid entrance to the global information arena.

Sociological data

Most non-Latvians do not read Latvian newspapers or listen to Latvian radio broadcasts. On the other hand, most non-Latvians watch Latvian TV programmes (*Panorama* and other news programmes, and entertainment films and series are watched by about one-third of the non-Latvian audience). The main obstacle to access to the Latvian media is insufficient knowledge of Latvian.

The role of the mass media in the social integration process is very significant, though often negative. Latvia's non-citizens watch comparatively many TV news programmes originating in Russia. (From the project "On the Road to a Civil Society," BDH, November 1997 - January 1998.)

Legislation

The mass media in the Republic of Latvia are regulated by:

- the Law On Press and Other Forms of Mass Media (passed on 20 December 1990), which is outdated and incomplete. A new bill is currently being drafted;
- the Law on Radio and Television (passed on 24 August 1995, with modifications in 1996, 1997, 1998), which is in accordance with EU Directives 89/552/EEC and 97/36/EC, and the Council of Europe Convention ETS no. 132;
- the Law on Languages of the Latvian SSR passed in 1989, supplemented and amended in 1992. The new Draft Law on the State Language has passed two of three readings in the *Saeima*.

Problems

It can be said that two information arenas exist in Latvia; they barely overlap, and serve two distinct audiences - Latvian- and Russian-speaking. Since the information arena of Russian-speakers is still largely a part of Russia's information arena, Russia's media significantly influence the consciousness of many Latvian residents.

These information arenas are dominated by different themes, but in those cases where interests overlap, the two arenas often defend conflicting, even opposite positions. Skepticism, bitterness, and irony characterize many Russian-language publications in Latvia.

These accent the wrongs committed against non-citizens (used interchangeably with "Russian-speakers" or simply "Russians") by the Latvian government, and interviews with foreign, often Russian politicians, are created to bolster this stance. Latvian- and Russian-language publications often contain similar content and viewpoints on social problems, local events, and criticism of the government and *Saeima* (Parliament). They usually differ on foreign affairs: the Russian-language press in these cases bases articles largely on material from Russian news agencies which reflect Russia's stance. Media aimed at the Latvian-speaking audience comes mainly from western news sources and its presentation generally complies with Latvia's official foreign policy; when various parties disagree on foreign policy issues, media presentation often reveals domestic political biases.

Currently, the low standard of living for many Latvian residents precludes widespread access to several sources of information. This diminishes people's ability to orient within or influence a situation. The government does not pay sufficient attention to informing the public about its actions. The government has no clear or deliberate role in protecting cultural values and national interests within the globalized information arena.

Goal

The ability to influence the flow of information that is distributed within a nation is, to a great extent, an indicator of that nation's true independence. While preserving and strengthening freedom of expression, the press and other democratic values, it is in the public's best interest that the flow of information promote the unity of the nation and society. This does not mean prohibiting information that is hostile or destructive to national interests, but rather the ability to neutralize it effectively, to maintain a flow of positive and constructive information within a nation. It is important for Latvian-language publications and broadcasts to contain themes that interest a non-Latvian audience. It is very important for the mass media to have a constructive approach to social integration.

The state must fulfill its responsibility to provide all residents of Latvia with essential information.

Solutions

1. Developing a unified national information policy. Among its functions is to popularize integration as an important aspect of national policy.
2. Creating a series of broadcasts on social integration.
3. Paying special attention to language instruction programmes. A crucial factor in uniting the media arenas is Latvian-language instruction for non-Latvians. This would remove linguistic barriers to accessing Latvian-language press, radio, and TV.
4. Investing more effort into public radio and TV development, while providing for its political neutrality.
5. Increasing the role of professional journalistic organizations in the mass media. This would allow the defense of public interests in cases where administrative intervention is prohibited. The professional training and responsibility of mass media leaders and journalists is essential.
6. Increasing support for journalistic training programmes, and introducing students in other specialties to the functions of the mass media.

7. Improving the technical capabilities of Latvian radio and TV. Currently, Latvian national radio and TV broadcasts do not even cover the entire territory of Latvia and do not reach neighboring countries.

8. Dividing TV time flexibly between Latvian- and other-language broadcasts. Proportions must reflect the real language situation in each region to ensure maximum information distribution.

9. Paying special attention to regional mass media resources. This involves developing programmes suited to local conditions.

10. Supporting many diverse publications. This is necessary to ensure public access to diverse and objective information for a broad audience. This will prevent monopolization of any one information sector. Special additional support is needed for the most essential mass media sectors.

11. Improving co-operation with other countries in preparing broadcasts and publications for non-Latvians. This type of co-operation would ease the tension caused by media material that are prepared in other countries but intended for their minority audiences in Latvia. This would also aid in non-Latvian integration into Latvian society.

12. Promoting cultural, artistic, and athletic events that could act as socially unifying elements. In such events, the success of Latvian representatives of any nationality is Latvia's "calling card" abroad. This is a powerful tool for social integration, though its potential is not realized at home.

13. Remembering the role of minorities in the struggle for Latvian independence, and facilitating discussions of history to unite perspectives. We must not promote the view that achieving and defending Latvian independence is solely a Latvian issue. In discussing Stalinist regime repression, we must remember that the repression was aimed at all Latvian residents.

14. Promoting Latvia's achievements. These must be presented as achievements of Latvian society and its individual members; they should cultivate patriotic feelings.

15. Improving coordination of government institutions in preparing and distributing information.

16. Using EU themes as powerful integrating factors. This should be done alongside informing the public about the EU.

17. Introducing the Latvian public to the experience of other nations in promoting social integration. Many countries have been working to create unified societies. Latvia must learn the history of their successes and failures.

Non-governmental organizations

Assessment of the situation

The integration process requires close co-operation between the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which provide information and give expert advice on society's needs and goals. NGOs are a basic component of civil society, created by free, active public participation and involvement in voluntary organizations.

As Latvia moves toward integration into the European Union, we must be aware of the expanding role of NGOs in many democratic processes, including social, regional, and ethnic integration. The transition to democracy also changes the structures, functions, and roles of NGOs in society.

NGOs promote social and political integration, working in areas that lack government funding and that are not valuable to the market sector. They offer new solutions to problems, encourage a diversity of opinions in the public, articulate the demands and needs of the public, and defend its interests by furthering dialogue with the government and political powers. NGOs are one of the most efficient instruments for social integration. In Latvia the integration process has just begun, and the government, the business community, and NGOs are only now becoming aware of one another.

The *Saeima* (Parliament) is preparing amendments to the Law on Social Organizations and Their Associations, while the Cabinet of Ministers is preparing a draft Charity Law, as well as Regulations for delegation of state functions to NGOs. The passing of these bills would boost NGO activity, financial security, and membership.

Many NGOs have successfully organized their infrastructures, entered international networks, and run nationally significant programmes; they are more and more authoritatively involved in the legislative process and in solving complex problems at both the national and local levels. Government committees and Ministries show more and more interest in collaborating with NGOs. NGOs hope to receive financial support from the Latvian government and entrepreneurs, although 95% of funding now comes from foreign taxpayers. There is much to be done in improving our tax legislation and ethic of philanthropy.

According to official statistics 5% of Latvia's current population is involved in some type of NGO. There is dynamic growth in NGO activity outside Riga. Many NGOs have gained valuable experience working internationally, and this can benefit the integration process. The NGO Centre can supply individuals and organizations with information, such as the "Latvian NGO Directory," and the latest statistics from its data base. Unlike the registry of businesses, which charges users, the services of the NGO Centre are free. At the moment, there are more than 5,000 registered NGOs in Latvia. Their areas of operation are as follows:

- social and health protection
- environmental protection
- education
- culture
- ethnic minorities
- entrepreneurship
- sports, recreation, etc.

NGOs can illuminate and help to solve many problems associated with integration, although NGOs themselves face many obstacles and weaknesses.

The post-soviet legacy influences NGOs, and is evident in the structural disorganization, lack of efficiency, and lack of self-confidence that plague many NGOs. Despite these weaknesses, NGOs actively seek opportunities to work with local governments, the national government, and the private sector. This is reflected in the several far-reaching initiatives - the NGO forums, the Environmental Protection Fund and the Culture Capital Fund. State funding for some NGOs and some delegation of functions to NGOs is already provided by the Ministries of Welfare and Education and Science. Improved legislation and the removal of obstacles would increase NGO participation in the social integration process.

Gaining NGO experience

A survey of NGOs conducted by the NGO Centre in March 1998 shows that 95% of respondents highly value co-operation with other NGOs. While 75% believe that co-operation with Latvian-speaking organizations as well as ethnic minority organizations is desirable in all cases, 14% are willing to cooperate only with those ethnic minority organizations that primarily speak in Latvian. Only 1% stated that such co-operation is undesirable. Further, 57% are willing to work on specific inter-ethnic projects, and 53% would agree to help NGO employees who are learning Latvian. Finally, 65% are not opposed to occasional use of Russian at NGO seminars. All minority organizations that responded to this survey expressed willingness to attend seminars held in Latvian.

Both newer and older NGOs are setting positive examples: "Save the Children," the Latvian Children's Fund, "Culture - Tolerance - Friendship," the Club "the House", and organizations that help the disabled or chronically ill. Their activities reflect universal values, including human rights, handicapped and children's rights, compassion, and tolerance. These values not only unite people, but also help people understand one another regardless of ethnic or linguistic differences. Representatives of many ethnic groups participate in these organizations. Ethnicity is not a factor in determining their target populations.

Organizations such as "Culture - Tolerance - Friendship" are working to provide a common language for youth of various ethnic groups. A successful path is learning Latvian through contacts with one's peers who have common problems, similar views and philosophies.

The capacity and efficiency of NGO activity rests on financial security. Few NGOs currently have stable economic bases, and those that do depend on donors.

Goal

To facilitate dialogue between ethnic and social groups and regions, and to create a base for integration and ethnic harmony by involving NGOs that operate in the ethnic minority, social, health, environmental protection, education, culture and civics fields. To support integrative social and ethnic policy as the best means to maintain social harmony and tolerance.

Solutions

Integration as a mechanism of inclusion Non-governmental organizations can help the integration process occur at many levels and in many social and ethnic groups. The June 1998 Aarhus, Denmark Convention For Accessibility to Environmental Data and Public Participation in Legislation, signed by many countries including Latvia, is a good beginning for such processes.

The NGO is a model of integration that allows members with common interests to solve problems through compromise and conflict resolution, avoiding bias, estrangement, and intolerance. Voluntary civic inclusion motivates individuals toward ethnic, social, and regional integration and, if necessary, language acquisition. Within its flexible and informal structure, the NGO cultivates the humane and friendly environment - solidarity - that is most favorable to integration. Loyalty to a common goal, which unites all members of an NGO, is the prototype for loyalty towards national interests, which should be formulated and defended with similar solidarity. This loyalty, however, has several prerequisites, which cannot be guaranteed by NGOs alone.

The inclusion process, which refers to the mutual integration of individual interests, supersedes ethnic, cultural, linguistic, educational and other differences.

The goals for which an NGO is created unite interested like-thinking people from various ethnic and social groups - both citizens and non-citizens. NGOs are prepared to accept representatives from all ethnic groups, to use Latvian as the mutually agreed-upon means of communication, and to provide language instruction. They require a mutual desire to prevent conflicts, and a readiness to share experience with institutions that can benefit from such experiences, such as schools, government establishments, political parties, etc. Many NGOs in Latvia were created to promote understanding and integration, to enrich society as a whole, and to preserve ethnic identity. Among these we must include the Ita Kozakevich Association of National Cultural Societies, the Multinational Cultural Centre in Daugavpils, the Riga Jewish Community, the Riga Russian Community, the Russian Cultural Society of Latvia, the Lithuanian Community of Latvia, the Liv Union, the Riga Belarussian Cultural Society "Svitanak," the Romany Society of Latvia, the Estonian Society of Latvia, the Polish Society of Latvia, the Ukrainian Cultural Society "Dnipro," the German Cultural Union of Riga, etc. National and local funding and moral support for these organizations is important. Ethnic minority NGO participation should also be encouraged in joint NGO activities (e.g. conferences, forums, seminars, networking).

NGO support for social integration Many social and health problems should be delegated to NGOs that have gained public credibility through good work. Below some examples from the nearly 600 NGOs in Latvia working in these areas are given.

NGOs dealing with integration of disabled persons The Association of Disabled Persons and their Friends (*Apeirons*), the Tukums NGO Support Centre, the Disabled Children's Athletic Club, the Latvian Association of Disabled Persons, the Latvian Invalid Club, the Latvian Union of the Visually Impaired, the Latvian Society of the Visually Impaired, "Chernobyl," etc.

NGOs dealing with children's problems The Latvian Children's Fund, Save the Children, Children at Risk (*Rupju berns*), Hope for Children, the Latvian Association for

Large Families, the Mission *Pakapieni*, the Latvian Society of Orphans, the Coalition to End Child Homelessness, etc.

NGOs dealing with other social problems The Red Cross, the Riga Samaritan Union, the Latvian Diabetics Association, the *Caritas* Movement, the Latvian Youth Movement "For a Life Free of Alcohol and Drugs," etc.

Regional integration issues. To facilitate the integration process in Latvia, taking into account the weak connections between NGOs, the private sector, and government institutions, the government should:

- be more receptive and tolerant of NGO perspectives;
- be acquainted with the day-to-day activities of NGOs, and aid in securing their sustainability;
- assess the potential contribution of NGOs towards implementing the Integration Programme;
- coordinate government and NGO working group activities;
- coordinate regular the exchange of information;
- popularize the positive achievements of the Integration programme on a domestic and international level.

NGO activities that would encourage social integration

1. Involving more NGOs, especially youth organizations, in addressing integration issues.
2. Using the NGO centre more for cultural exchange programmes - exhibits, poetry readings, folklore and visual art activities, and NGO networking.
3. Continuing conflict resolution seminars in the NGO community.
4. Presenting positive examples of integration to NGOs that deal with youth, social, health care, human rights, multi-cultural/international, cultural, and historical themes and problem areas.

A public relations campaign "For Ethnic Harmony and Integrity"

1. Publishing an information report - *Ethnic relations issues in the NGO community*.
2. *Round Table* discussions in the media to present NGO perspectives on social and ethnic integration issues.

Conferences and seminars on the theme "A civil society is an integrated and tolerant society"

Activities that:

- reinforce NGO projects in the social, environmental protection and cultural exchange spheres, while also encouraging participation of various social sectors and ethnic minority groups;
- facilitate regional project development, in order to counteract the differences caused by uneven urban and rural development

Conference on Wheels - "The Traveling Tower of Babel" The NGO Centre has developed an education project to promote tolerance and understanding between diverse cultures in Latvian society.

A conference working group is composed of experts in anthropology, cultural history, communication psychology, conflict resolution, international relations. A mobile library accompanies the group, which visits various regions to hold discussions, gives advice, explains the global aspects of ethnic relations in light of UN principles, and dispels the unhealthy two-community perspective that persists in Latvia.

The NGO Regional Development Programme is organized by the NGO Centre. Its goal is to cultivate public life in Latvia by encouraging participation in legislative processes, establishing regional NGO support centres, thereby strengthening civil society and promoting integration. Currently there are three regional NGO support centres: in Liepaja, Daugavpils and Aluksne. Their task is to provide technical information, consulting, and education services to local NGOs. Eight more regional NGO support centres are planned for 1998. Within this network, the regional centres can promote integration by distributing information and organizing activities. Along with other information centres, they can develop a directory of sources and literature on regional development, NGO activity in regional development programmes, and civil society building. Such a network will aid in information exchange, and will promote regional NGO centres as the consolidating local NGO force.

NGO Forum Programme The NGO Centre has developed a project to continue the dialogue between NGOs and state authorities. The project was begun in connection with the National NGO Forum, and is intended to facilitate dialogue in each of Latvia's regions and in Riga. It will evaluate development possibilities in the NGO sector and pay particular attention to questions of co-operation with local governments. Statistics show that about 600 NGOs have participated in NGO forums, along with over 50 government institutions, local government representatives, and entrepreneurs in various fields. Each forum highlights that region's NGO activities and results, experience in co-operation, and involvement in local decision making. Forum participants discuss the current situation in the NGO sector, recent changes and their effects (possibilities and problems). NGOs, government authorities, and private sector representatives participate in these discussions.

Each regional forum's (two-day) **main events:**

- an exhibit (of collaborative projects);
- dialogue with government authorities and business representatives (plenary session and work groups);
- NGO dialogue (various forms, sectors or spheres);
- special events for community outreach (e.g., a concert).

The NGO Centre develops the basic outline for the forum programme. Each regional forum can have a different agenda and programme, as they are developed in consultation with regional task forces.

Regional Aspects

Assessment of the situation

The integration process in Latvia also has a regional dimension. In the Regional Development Framework Conception prepared by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development and approved by the Cabinet in 1996, a region is defined as a "relatively homogeneous portion of Latvia's territory (a group of townships or cities, a county or a group of counties) united by specific characteristics or common problems."

Latvia's regional diversity is a product both of Latvia's traditional ethnic mix (Latgallians, Livs, Courlanders etc.), and of varied historical trajectories (the dominance in different regions of different imperial powers and religions). Indeed, the Constitution states that Latvia comprises four historic regions (*apgabali*).

The development of regions has also been affected by migration processes, especially in Latgale and the large cities, during both the imperial Russian and Soviet periods. This is reflected in the ethnic composition of the various regions. A marked regional distribution of religious faiths also remains in evidence in Latvia. Protestants (Lutherans, Baptists, Adventists and Methodists) live primarily in Kurzeme, Zemgale and Vidzeme, and Catholics, Orthodox and Old Believers - in Latgale. However, a small community of Orthodox Latvians has remained in Vidzeme. Riga, on the other hand, is a religiously mixed city, with no single dominant faith.

Equal opportunity for all inhabitants in employment, income, and in the social and cultural spheres is in the best interests of the Latvian state and the people of Latvia. However, critical disparities have developed among Latvia's regions in terms of living environment and economic opportunities. These are manifested in disparate levels of economic development, employment, and the availability of social and cultural amenities. The most important causes of uneven regional economic development are distance from markets and transport corridors, demographic structure and education levels. These regional disparities were exacerbated by changes in property ownership patterns and economic structure brought on by the restoration of Latvian independence.

However, not all regional differences should be seen as problems. The intra-ethnic diversity of culture, language and traditions among Latvians of different regions enriches our country. Particularly important in this regard are the Latgalian and Liv identities. The Russian Old Believers of Latgale are also a unique cultural phenomenon of global significance.

Problems

Economic and social spheres The restoration of Latvian independence, transition to a market economy, property restitution and privatization have brought about deep structural transformations in the national economy. Unemployment has grown, and many people find it difficult to adapt to the new conditions, especially in rural areas. The latter are characterized by low levels of employment diversification, high communication and transportation costs, and in many cases, an unfavorable demographic structure.

The bulk of industrial, intellectual and financial potential, as well as the opportunity to exploit it, is presently concentrated in Riga and a few large cities. Cities such as Riga, Ventspils, Liepaja and Jurmala, as well as Daugavpils, Rezekne and Jelgava, enjoy not only better opportunities to take advantage of the potential concentrated there, but also geographic advantages.

A dangerous disproportion has emerged between larger cities and rural areas in the pace and nature of development. In April 1998, unemployment rates were 3.2% in Riga and 3.5% in Ventspils, but 27.1% in Rezekne county, 21.9% in Balvi county, 21.2% in Kraslava county, and 18.6% in Ludza county (Monthly Statistical Bulletin of Latvia, Riga, May 1998).

Another cause for concern is the fact that a significant portion of the population of the Latgale region is of retirement age. Thus, for example, the proportion of inhabitants who had reached retirement age in 1997 was 28% in Rezekne county, 26% in Preili county, 26% in Balvi county, 25% in Kraslava county and 30% in Ludza county (the national average is 22.4%).

A similar picture emerges if we consider income disparities. In 1996 the average monthly wage was 101 Ls in Riga and 166 Ls in Ventspils, but 64.5 Ls in Rezekne county, 65 Ls in Preili county, 67 Ls in Balvi county, 69 Ls in Kraslava county and 61 Ls in Ludza county. Per capita income tax collected by local governments in 1996 was 85.5 Ls in Riga and 165 Ls in Ventspils, but 20.5 Ls in Rezekne county, 25.8 Ls in Preili county, 28.6 Ls in Balvi county, 25.3 Ls in Kraslava county and 27.6 Ls in Ludza county.

Although in these comparisons we have focused on Latgale as a depressed region, other rural regions of Latvia, especially in Selija and Northern Vidzeme, are also extremely troubled.

Rural social and economic conditions have been explored in sociological studies (S. Davis, B. Sly and T. Tisenkopfs, *Social and Economic Conditions in the Latvian Countryside*, Riga 1997), and were the focus of the 1997 UNDP Latvia Human Development Report. These studies reveal serious economic, social and psychological problems in Latvian rural areas and small cities. Many people are unable to pull themselves out of semi-subsistence farming, and are thus trapped in the so-called cycle of poverty: low income level - low savings level - low consumption level - low level of investment in human capital - low education level - low labor productivity - low income level.

Integration of non-citizens Around 80% of Latvia's non-citizens live in the large cities - Riga, Liepaja, Ventspils, Daugavpils, Rezekne, Jelgava, Jurmala - and Riga county. These cities were most affected by immigration from the USSR during the Soviet period. At the same time, although Slavs comprise a high proportion of the residents of Latgale, the majority of residents there are Latvian citizens. In contrast to rural areas and small towns, characterized by significant non-Latvian integration into Latvian society, in the large cities a self-sufficient non-Latvian environment has developed (primarily among Slavic residents), in which contact with the Latvian environment and Latvian-language media is often very limited. The most important force for integration here is the school, which brings non-Latvian students closer to the Latvian language and culture.

A self-sufficient non-Latvian environment has also developed in some Latvian rural regions. In these areas the ethnic structure is changing due to internal migration, and thus here, too, the school is the sole force for integration. To remedy this situation, a special programme must be designed and implemented for support of Latvian education in the Latgale region.

Other Latvian minorities are concentrated in specific regions (Lithuanians along the Lithuanian border, Roma in Kurzeme, Poles in Latgale). Statistics indicate that the level of integration of these groups is significantly higher than for residents of Russian, Belarussian and Ukrainian descent.

Political behavior While Latvia's regions manifest significant economic, social, and ethnic disparities, fundamental differences in political behavior have not been identified. The sole exception is Latgale, where a larger percentage of votes were cast for the Socialist Party in the elections to the 6th Saeima than in other regions of Latvia.

The elections to the 5th and 6th Saeimas indicate that, in contrast to the period of the first Saeimas, Latvia today does not have purely ethnic-based political parties. This suggests that a significant proportion of today's non-Latvian citizens are integrated into Latvian society and do not really separate themselves from ethnically Latvian citizens. But at the same time, in large cities with large non-citizen populations, especially Riga, Ventspils and Liepaja, their political integration is progressing very slowly.

Psychology Several studies indicate that one of the key factors impeding rural and small town development is psychological difficulties in adapting to new conditions.

New social structures, new social relations and new values have emerged during the transition period. In the cities change is more rapid, and the level of welfare is different. Thus, psychological alienation has developed between rural and city dwellers, which poses an obstacle to integration.

The Latvian intelligentsia, and especially writers, glorified the idyllic rural life during the years of Soviet occupation, because the countryside at that time was the chief preserve of Latvian identity. Rural property restitution had primarily an emotional and ethical, not an economic character. Thus, people often contrast city and countryside on the ethnic dimension. A portion of society continues to believe that an agricultural livelihood is most characteristic of and appropriate for Latvians, in contrast to non-Latvians. Such beliefs impede the process of integration.

Potential threats Every country has objective conditions which make some regions more competitive than others, and thus regional problems, notwithstanding targeted efforts to minimize regional differences, exist in all countries. In Latvia the problem is that in the relatively more economically vibrant cities, the majority of residents are citizens or non-citizens of non-Latvian ethnicity, while in the depressed regions, the majority are Latvians or citizens of non-Latvian descent. Rural-urban economic relations thus become perceived as relations between the "Latvian" countryside and "non-Latvian" cities, or between Latvians and Russians, with the accompanying ethnic and political tensions. If eastern Latvia's economic problems continue and deepen, Latgale may become alienated from the rest of Latvia.

Ethnic differences can also be seen among the various sectors of the Latvian economy. Non-Latvians are active in business and primarily work in relatively vibrant sectors (transit, services). This is a consequence of the Soviet-cultivated deformation of the professional structure, when Latvians were intentionally pushed out of such currently important sectors as railroads, shipping and aviation. Training for these professions was available only in the Russian language.

In Latvia a very high percentage of the working population is still employed in agriculture, and Latvians make up the bulk of this group. Agriculture will be less competitive, at least in the near future, than other sectors (especially transit and services), and will not be highly profitable. Profound and wrenching restructuring is to be expected in agriculture in the coming years. This situation reduces the economic competitiveness of Latvians relative to other nationalities in Latvia, thus leaving open the possibility of increased ethnic tension.

In recognition of the problems linked to uneven regional development, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development was established in 1993. In the ensuing years work has begun on developing and implementing a comprehensive regional policy. A Regional Development Framework Conception was drafted and approved by the Cabinet in 1996, and a National Rural Development Programme in 1998. Local and regional development plans are being drafted by local governments, a Regional Development Fund has been established, critical regions have been identified for government aid, and the financial, legal and institutional mechanisms for allocating this aid have been established.

State support of regional development projects was inaugurated with the passage on 22 May 1997 of the Law On Regions Targeted for Aid and the accompanying Cabinet regulations (Procedure for assigning Targeted Region status, Regulation on the Regional Development Council, Regulation on the Regional Fund).

Prognosis In the near future, several processes currently underway are likely to continue in rural areas and small towns:

1. A portion of farmers, especially of the older generation, will continue subsistence or semi-subsistence farming, remaining incapable of pulling themselves out of this cycle.

2. At the same time, effective, competitive traditional farms will continue to develop in Latvia, at times even increasing their acreage. However, new, effective farm development will not create new rural jobs (Davis et al, 1997).

3. This means that not all current rural dwellers will in the future be able to find agricultural employment. Therefore, it is particularly important for national policy to combine market regulation efforts with direct support for structural change of the rural economy, thereby broadening the range of employment opportunities for rural and small-town dwellers. Along with agriculture, new non-agricultural jobs must be created by supporting business development in rural areas and small towns. This process is already underway (rural tourism, logging, organic farming etc.), but it is doubtful that these activities will be able to fully absorb excess labor supply in the immediate future, especially given that rural tourism or organic farming, for example, require knowledge and qualifications which many rural dwellers lack.

It is possible that some rural dwellers (in the first place the landless) will have to move to larger cities in search of work.

Goals and tasks

The chief goals and tasks of regional integration are:

- to achieve the greatest possible equality of living and employment conditions in all regions of the country;
- to mitigate and prevent unfavorable regional disparities, while promoting preservation of valuable natural and cultural diversity;
- to promote integration of non-citizens into the mainstream of the Latvian citizenry and the Latvian nation and to unite Latvian citizens of non-Latvian descent more closely with Latvian society.

The following rural and small-town development goals and tasks are set forth in the Regional Development Framework Conception and the Rural Development Programme: to lay the foundations for guaranteeing equal environmental, living and employment conditions for all of Latvia's regions; to promote local development efforts by townships, cities, counties, and regions; to encourage local independence in social and economic activity; to promote balanced infrastructure development throughout the national territory; to facilitate structural economic transformation by creating a favorable environment for business development in all regions of the country; and to diversify the national economy.

Policy tools for regional development

The mitigation of regional disparities will require coordinated and focused action on the part of the national and local governments, with the assistance, as needed, of non-governmental organizations and international agencies. The most important regional development policy tools in Latvia today are:

1. Targeted investments in infrastructure development, which will encourage private investment and increase property values in the regions, and the coordination of the national investment programme with regional development policy;
2. The joining of market regulation policies (subsidies for agriculture, public transportation etc.) with direct support for structural economic change and diversification of the rural economy;
3. Use of the Regional Development Fund to support businesses and structural social change, through loan programmes, loan guarantees and the financing of regional development projects. In allocating fund resources, priority must be given to regions targeted for aid. (Targeted regions are selected on the basis of long-standing negative development trends. Targeted region status is assigned and revoked by the Cabinet);
4. Employment retraining in line with structural economic transformation, support for retraining and adult education centres, strengthening of the rural school network, support for regional institutions of higher learning, and development of a student loan system with the goal of making higher education available to all, regardless of means;
5. Support and strengthening of the network of business support centres, agricultural extension centres and adult education centres;
6. Promotion of new, hitherto unfamiliar methods of fostering business activity: free economic zones, innovation centres, technology parks and business incubators.
7. Promotion of international projects in infrastructure development and cross-border co-operation, given that border regions are often economically depressed.

8. Drafting and implementation of a special development programme for Latgale, given the particularly unfavorable social and economic conditions in this region.

9. Drafting and implementation of a special programme for support of Latvian education in the Latgale region.

10. National and local government support for preservation and promotion of the Latgalian and Liv cultural identities, through support of cultural activities and the programme the "Liv Coast."

11. Development of special programmes for Latvia's largest cities, given the serious social integration problems posed by the large proportion of non-citizens there.

Scientific foundations

Successful social integration is only possible if regular scientific investigation is conducted and if institutions that influence decision-making in the realm of integration take note of recommendations resulting from research.

Assessment of the situation

In a broad sense, social integration is a subject for all humanitarian, social, political and environmental sciences. Each study or publication in these fields addresses one of social integration's many aspects. The investment and potential of scientific study in promoting integration is reflected in many successful and in-depth studies, in their popularity, and in their ability to raise public awareness and to affect the prevailing moral and psychological climate.

Social integration is directly affected by theoretical writings and practical studies that deal with these problems. However, social integration research is not the priority of any one science or discipline. Research on the prerequisites and mechanisms of social integration is a multi-disciplinary task that requiring the co-operation of historians, sociologists, linguists, philosophers, cultural critics, psychologists, demographers, ethnologists, political scientists, and educators.

Since independence, relatively few representatives from the aforementioned disciplines have joined the social integration cause. A positive exception is found in the linguistic field (see Bibliography (1.) in the Appendix). Linguists have participated actively in language policy formation, and have effected changes in the language situation in recent years. Since Latvia regained independence, the field of sociology has developed free from censorship. Many sociological studies have been carried out, funded both locally and by foreign donors. Much empirical data has been collected, some quantifying specific aspects of social integration. This data, however, is not always analyzed immediately or objectively, and is rarely used in publications for a general audience. Thus there are only a few sociological studies that deal with social integration, and are accessible to the general public (see Bibliography (2.) in the Appendix). The social integration theme has attracted a handful of representatives from other scientific fields (see Bibliography (3.) in the Appendix).

The theme of social integration is reflected in research on ethnopolitics and ethnic relations. In recent years, the Ethnic Research Centre of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology has published more than ten books and many articles, on ethnopolitics, ethnic minority history, citizen unity and social integration (see Bibliography (4.) in the Appendix).

Publications on the integration process in Latvia appear mainly in the following periodicals: "Latvian Academy of Sciences Herald" (Section A), the University of Latvia Journal "Humanities and Social Sciences: Latvia" (in English), "Journal of Sociology and Political Science" (1992-1995), the annual "Latvia Human Development Report" (1995-1997), the newsletter of the Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, the Journal "Daugava" (in Russian), etc.

Problems

Misunderstanding the nature of social integration and underestimating the urgency of the task stem from a lack of thorough scientific research and publications on the topic and related issues. In this sense Latvia trails many other Eastern European nations, where sociological, political, and popular science publications stress the importance of social integration and an active citizenry in creating a unified, democratic society.

The social integration literature published thus far in Latvia addresses only individual aspects of this large issue. There is a shortage of publications about the inter-relatedness of these aspects, about the overall meaning of social integration, and about its goals and aims. Thus far, concrete proposals for crafting social integration policy have not been put forth and openly debated by the public. In such circumstances, public opinion is based more on stereotypes and prejudices than on rational thinking or comprehension of the realistic potential of and obstacles to social integration. A serious obstacle to social integration in Latvia, and one that cannot be overcome in the next few years, is the existence of contradictory interpretations of Latvia's recent history. There are widespread, sharply differing opinions on Latvia's occupation and World War II, on russification policy and migration processes during the Soviet occupation, on Latvia's potential to develop as a national state, and on several other insufficiently-debated historical events and processes, as well as predictions for Latvia's future. These conditions are not conducive to social integration. There is a need for more objective, less politically and ideologically biased information on 20th century Latvian history, paying particular attention to those historical events which were omitted or distorted in the works of Soviet historians. Political scientists, sociologists, and philosophers must, for their part, develop and popularize a vision for Latvia's future, based on a realistic assessment of Latvia's economic and political development potential in the modern world.

There is also a lack of appropriately qualified researchers. The meager remuneration for research is one reason that the humanities, social and political sciences (and sciences in general) do not attract young specialists; nor do they generate the new research themes which are needed to advance the development of the Latvian state and society. Although various surveys, polls, and studies are conducted fairly systematically in Latvia, there are few broader analytical works that address the interpretation of the accumulated data.

Latvia has very few qualified social scientists, political scientists, linguists, and international relations specialists. Most often, integration policies are analyzed and evaluated by politicians or journalists. Universities with political science departments have not become centres for political thought and public debate. The faculty of these departments rarely participate in political debates. Latvia has few scientifically-oriented periodicals that publish scientific or popular-scientific works on integration problems. There is no tradition of

criticism and evaluation of scholarly works in Latvia. Finally, there are insufficient efforts to publish for a broader public the findings of sociology and political science.

Goals and tasks

Goals To facilitate humanitarian, social, and political science development in Latvia, and to encourage the active participation of representatives from these disciplines in creating an integrated society and a democratic nation.

Tasks

1. Developing a scientific research centre which would conduct regular studies of the integration process.
2. Funding periodicals that regularly publish scientific works on social integration, thus stimulating further research and popularizing discoveries.
3. Systematically and regularly conducting historical, sociological and other scientific studies on social integration and national identity in Latvia.

Projects

Creation of a scientific research centre for studying social integration A government-supported, small scientific research centre (4-5 scientific employees), would cooperate with existing scientific institutions to research the complex processes of social integration in Latvia. The centre's main responsibility would be to coordinate scientific research on social integration and analyze the progress of social integration in Latvia. Other responsibilities would include preparing annual reports for the Social Integration Bureau. The centre would publish information on the social integration process in Latvia, develop proposals for specific events, organize seminars and conferences (some international), and publish papers and books. The centre could also contact international social integration research centres to obtain international funding for research and publishing.

Support for the Journal "Latvian Academy of Sciences Herald" The "Latvian Academy of Sciences Herald," (LASH) is the only Latvian-language academic journal in Latvia to publish a broad spectrum of scientific papers in the humanities and social and political sciences. For several years already, the journal has been publishing scientific works on ethnic relations in Latvia. In recent years, the journal has been experiencing financial difficulties. It is necessary to save and support this journal in order to popularize scientific ideas and conclusions, including those dealing with social integration.

Regular research on social integration To provide the public with access to data on social integration, it is necessary to conduct regular research (every two years), and publish the accumulated data and analyses thereof (as was done in developing the programme "On the Road to a Civil society" in 1997-1998).

Support for ethnopolitical research The work of the Ethnic Research Centre of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the University of Latvia must be expanded to address the ethnic aspects of the social integration process. To this end, new, detailed research must be conducted.

Support for other scientific fields that can directly affect social integration Many scientific fields (political science, history, psychology) could contribute more than they currently do to promoting social integration. It is important to encourage these fields to conduct research on individual aspects of integration. All institutions of higher learning must teach the fundamentals of social science.

The University of Latvia, and other institutions of higher learning and scientific centres, must create task forces to study the most pressing historical themes, paying special attention to 20th century Latvian history and the history of ethnic relations. The history of the occupation can be divided into two topics - the Soviet occupation and the Nazi occupation.

It is necessary also to provide greater support to the national, Riga, and regional museums, as well as the Latvian National Library and Latvian Academic Library, so they may assist in studying the history of ethnic relations in Latvia. Museum expositions should include materials on minority history and minority participation in Latvian economic, cultural, and political life.

Support of individual themes that promote social integration

1. Social space in life histories. The Philosophy and Sociology Institute's Oral History Archives already contain about 500 audiovisual recordings of life histories, reflecting the historical destinies of Latvia's people. This collection must be expanded and supplemented, adding minority life histories as well. This is necessary to ensure a multi-faceted analysis of social development, of the overlap between the fates of many ethnic groups, and of the progress of social integration.

2. History of ideas in Latvia. We must continue to research the history of ideas and public opinion from its inception through the end of the 20th century. The history of ideas shows how, through the centuries, the most diverse European and Russian intellectual tendencies have met and merged in Latvia. Ideas, sentiments, and cultural directions have always influenced integration processes in Latvia, and must therefore be considered the intellectual driving forces of integration.

3. Russian cultural expression in Latvia. Work in this field has begun, though it must be expanded and deepened to include a larger time frame, and to analyze the interactions of Latvian and Russian cultures throughout the centuries. A book should be published on this topic.

4. Latvian identity: formation, consolidation, and interaction. The primary focus of this theme is the consolidation of the independent Latvian state, in the context of cultural development, ethnic heritage, and the connections between Latvian and minority identities. Books and conferences should address this topic.

5. Latvia: Crossroads of East and West. Diverse research must address Latvian social, economic, social-psychological, and cultural traditions, as well as the religious, demographic, and artistic situation that defines Latvia as the crossroads of two different civilizations, illustrates Latvia's unique situation throughout the centuries, and demonstrates the influence of history on modern integration processes in Latvia.

Appendix

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National institutions

Social integration can succeed only if a system of national institutions is developed to collaborate with non-governmental organizations in promoting social integration. Each politician and civil servant is responsible for promoting social integration.

Assessment of the situation

Each nation has institutions whose **direct and immediate** function is to maintain and strengthen the potential for social integration. In Latvia these are the Ministry of Education and Science (Social Integration Department, National Programme for Latvian Language Training - NPLLT), the Ministry of Justice (Naturalization Board, National Affairs Office, State Language Centre, etc.), the Ministry of the Interior (Citizenship and Migration Affairs Board, Immigration Police Board, Repatriation Fund, etc.), the Ministry of Culture, and other government institutions. Local governments also have social integration responsibilities. Still, the institutional system in Latvia is incomplete, and co-operation among institutions is weak. Without taking several important steps, it will be impossible to ensure goal-oriented and coordinated progress toward social integration.

To coordinate social integration within Latvia (internal integration) with Latvia's integration into the European Union and NATO (external integration), there must be co-operation between the institutions that promote social integration and those that promote integration into the EU and NATO.

Problems

Existing government institutions cannot guarantee a seamless solution to all the problems of social integration. The nation is lacking a system of government institutions that can ensure social integration, including repatriate and immigrant integration. Government institutions and NGOs have not established ongoing co-operation in addressing social integration issues and coordinating a unified integration process that would pave the way for a civil society.

The structure of government institutions does not include an institution that could solve these problems and coordinate the development and implementation of State Programme for the Integration of Society.

Goals and Tasks

Goals

To create a government institution system that would promote:

1. The goal-oriented and irreversible progress of social integration.
2. Co-operation with non-governmental organizations so that certain state tasks in the realm of social integration could be gradually delegated to them.

Tasks

1. To establish a Social Integration Bureau: to draft statutes and begin operations.
2. To establish a Social Integration Fund and begin operations.

Measures

1. Establishing a Social Integration Bureau. To coordinate social integration activities and solve acute problems, an institution must be created with the authority to coordinate the social integration efforts of Ministries and other administrative bodies. This independent institution could be an advisory office to the Prime Minister, with 5-7 employees who would continue their work even in the event of a change of government.¹

Each institution that deals with social integration must appoint a committee or contact person with the authority to solve specific problems as they arise. The social integration programme must define each government institution's responsibility for executing sub-programmes or other specific functions.

¹ The creation of a new State Minister position would not achieve the desired results, as such a position could be too easily influenced politically (or even liquidated); the creation of a new Ministry would be too expensive, and could not efficiently coordinate the work of other Ministries to solve social integration problems.

2. Establishing a Social Integration Fund. This Fund would deal with popularizing the idea of social integration, collaborating with NGOs, and obtaining funding, donations, etc. for social integration and other activities.

3. Supporting other government institutions that deal with social integration. To facilitate social integration and encourage minority participation and the advancement of minority cultural autonomy, the National Affairs Office of the Ministry of Justice must be elevated to the status of the National Affairs Department. The social integration programme must plan specific measures to support the State Language Centre.

The draft Framework Document for a State Programme for the Integration of Society in Latvia was prepared by:

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National institutions: E. Vebers, E. Aldermane

October 1998

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM
S/S

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECL: 04/14/03
TO: The Deputy Secretary
FROM: EUR - Marc Grossman
SUBJECT: Status of Russian Minority in Latvia

SUMMARY: A key part of our strategy with regard to the ethnic minority in Latvia is to focus both sides on the facts and avoid exaggerated statements. This memo provides you facts and statistics on the situation, our analysis of the OSCE recommendations, and our assessment of Latvian progress in addressing the problem.

STATISTICS:

Total Population: 2.5 million
Ethnic Latvians: 56.7%
Ethnic Russian: 30.2%
Other ethnic Groups: 11.0%

Naturalized Russians: 38.9% of Russian Minority
(about 300,000)

Non-Citizen Russians: 65.9% of total non-citizen population
(about 453,000)

Eligible to Naturalize under "window system" 1995-1997: 124,000
Applied for Naturalization 1995-1997: 8,200

THEIR PLACE IN SOCIETY

Unlike in Estonia, the Russian minority plays a major role in the Latvian economy. Ethnic Russians control most of the commanding heights of the economy, especially in the areas of energy, transit and financial services. A Latvian newspaper recently reported that among the fifteen wealthiest persons in Latvia, a majority of them were ethnic Russians. Prime Minister Krast originally planned to include ethnic Russian businessmen in the private sector group accompanying his delegation to Washington. One estimate is that the Russian control 75% of Latvia's GDP.

Latvia has the highest rate of intermarriage among the Baltics (e.g., in 1996 34% of all marriages were mixed); almost 50% of all Latvian families have some relative of another nationality.

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Classified By: Ron Asmus, EUR DAS
Reason: 1.5 (b) and (d)

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- 2 -

Survey research conducted by Western firms in Latvia has also shown that a solid majority of Russian speakers in the country feel that they are better off than they would be in Russia and intend to stay. At the same time, there is resentment against what they see as a second class status.

These same statistics make some Latvians nervous. Many Latvians still see the Russian speaking minority as a symbol of forced Sovietization. Many Latvians are still not certain of the political loyalties of the Russian-speaking minority. For example, only 56% of non-citizens support Latvia's status as an independent state. Moreover, the fact that ethnic Russians do play such a major role in the economy reinforces the concern that Latvians do not really run their own country. One of the major factors determining Latvia's official naturalization policy, i.e., the "windows" system, was the fear that the Russian speaking minority would rush to become citizens and swamp the political process. Ironically, they made the offer and almost no one took them up on it.

NATURALIZATION TRACK RECORD

The window system of naturalization allows successive age groups of non-citizens to apply. Applicants must have resided in Latvia for five years, pass language and history tests, and pay a \$52 fee. With the opening of the 1998 window, the total number of non-citizens eligible for naturalization between 1995 and 1998 is 152,000, about 23% of the non-citizen population. To date, only about 8,500 have applied for naturalization indicating fundamental problems with the system, the perception of one's chances of success in the system being one of the key ones. The March 1998 NGO-sponsored study "Towards Social Integration" indicates that only 27% of those eligible under the window system plan to apply for naturalization in the next year, and 18% of all non-citizens do not wish to obtain Latvian citizenship at all.

Studies indicate that language remains a real barrier. Both language and history tests were simplified in 1997, and the overall passing rates for both tests are now above 95%. Nevertheless, the tests are broadly perceived by non-citizens as a major obstacle to naturalization. The March study indicated that some 56% of non-citizens over 30 cited lack of confidence in their ability to pass the exams as a reason for not pursuing naturalization.

KEY OSCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The OSCE Mission in Riga and the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities (HCNM) Max van der Stoep have recommended simplification of the naturalization system, elimination of the "window system" of application, naturalization of stateless children born in Latvia since independence without language and history testing, simplified language and history testing

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requirements, and adoption of state language laws in conformity with Latvia's international commitments. While many of these proposals appear commonsensical, they in fact are more liberal than those in effect in many, if not most, West European countries, e.g., Germany, Sweden or Switzerland.

Progress to date has been slower, for example, than in neighboring Estonia. Estonia has implemented 29 out of 30 of HCNM van der Stoel's recommendations, and has developed a national integration plan. Latvia's larger minority, complicated coalition politics and greater anxiety over Russian influence in society have combined to slow the naturalization and integration process.

The OSCE, while noting that there is no systematic pattern of human rights abuses, has encouraged Latvia to make progress in implementing the HCNM's recommendations. The 1997 U.S. Human Rights report notes similar findings, and calls on Latvia to expedite naturalization and integration. The biggest hurdles remain:

- The window system (which initially was an OSCE recommendation) remains in place;
- There have been no changes in citizenship laws for children;
- There is no consensus on language and labor laws that conform to international standards;
- Shortages of qualified Latvian language teachers continue to hamper the integration of non-citizens.
- Non-citizens are barred from certain occupations and private land ownership.

CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

In a significant break though on April 15, a Special Cabinet Meeting of the Latvian Government decided to propose legislation on a number of significant measures to address these problems, including elimination of the "window" system, and the immediate granting of citizenship to all stateless children born in Latvia since 1991. The government mandated that the amendments to the citizenship law be presented to Prime Minister Krasts by April 21st, and be introduced in the Saeima by the 23rd. The Government also plans to introduce amendments to proposed language and labor laws pending before the Saeima that would bring those bills into conformity with international legal norms.

These measures represent a major step forward, and we plan to issue a press statement praising the Latvian Government and encouraging the Saeima to pass this legislation. Continuing pressure from Russia may decrease the likelihood of passage, since hard-line parties will not want to be seen as "bowing" to Russian threats. In his April 2 letter to FM Primakov, HCNM van der Stoel noted the potential for Russian pressure to backfire in

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this way. Van der Stoel will be in Latvia on the 17th, and plans to issue a statement praising these measures.

The Latvians have been edging toward making some significant breakthroughs on these issues for some time. When Ulmanis met with POTUS, he underscored his desire to use the Baltic Charter and the confidence it gave Latvia to move on the minority issue. However, Prime Minister Krasts's party has been skeptical if not opposed. Our strong and vocal support for passage of the bills, as well as Russian moderation, will be critical to success in teh Saeima

Attachment: Latvian Performance on Key Non-Citizen Issues

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Drafted: EUR/RPM:SPenhune ok
EUR/RPM:JRosenblatt
EUR/NB:GMilovanovic ok
EUR/RUS:SGwaltney
EUR:RDAsmus

Flanagan, Stephen J.

From: WHSR
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 1998 7:57 AM
To: Braden, Susan R.; Davidson, Leslie K.; Flanagan, Stephen J.; Fort, Jane B.; McEldowney, Nancy E.
Subject: LATVIAN SOCIAL INTEGRATION: ACTION PLAN

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MSGTO: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1538
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 07 RIGA 001155

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USAID FOR AA/ENI DAVID COWLES, AND ENI/ECA PAULA
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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PHUM, RS, US, LG
SUBJECT: LATVIAN SOCIAL INTEGRATION: ACTION PLAN

REFS: (A) RIGA 1061, (B) RIGA 0155

1. THIS IS AN ACTION MESSAGE. SEE PARA 3.

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST

2. IN PREVIOUS CABLES, WE HAVE PROVIDED BACKGROUND ON
LATVIA'S CURRENT POLITICAL CRISES AND AN ACTION PLAN
IN WHICH WE SUGGEST WAYS IN WHICH LATVIAN INFLUENCE
CAN ASSIST LATVIA MOST EFFECTIVELY. THIS MESSAGE
BUILDS ON REFTELS BY FOCUSING SPECIFICALLY ON THE
CENTRAL ISSUE - SOCIAL INTEGRATION - WHICH IS
BEDEVILING LATVIAN-RUSSIAN RELATIONS AND LATVIA'S
STANDING WITH WESTERN GOVERNMENTS. IT SUGGESTS
CONCRETE ACTIONS WHICH WILL HAVE TANGIBLE AND LONG-
LASTING EFFECTS ON THE SITUATION. I UNDERSCORE,
HOWEVER, THAT THESE ACTIONS WILL REQUIRE (A) URGENT
USG ATTENTION, AND (B) ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES.
I ENVISION THAT THESE PROPOSALS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED
WITHIN THE CURRENT MANDATE OF OUR USAID MISSION, WHICH
IS SCHEDULED FOR CLOSEOUT IN SEPTEMBER 1999.

3. ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS:

O ALOG THE DIPLOMATIC TRACK, I RECOMMEND WE
PROVIDE STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE DECISIONS OF A SPECIAL
LATVIAN CABINET MEETING ON APRIL 15 WHICH CALLED FOR
(1) ABOLISHING ARTIFICIAL AGE RESTRICTIONS (E.G.
"WINDOWS") THAT HAVE IMPEDED NATURALIZATION OF NON-
CITIZENS; (2) GRANTING CITIZENSHIP TO STATELESS
CHILDREN BORN IN LATVIA AFTER AUGUST 21, 1991 (THE
DATE ON WHICH LATVIA REGAINED ITS INDEPENDENCE); AND

(3) STATING THAT ANY AMENDEMENTS TO LATVIA'S LABOR CODE AND LANGUAGE LAW BE "IN LINE WITH THE NORMS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW." IF IMPLEMENTED, THESE DECISIONS WOULD APPEAR TO FULFILL THE MOST IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY OSCE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR MINORITIES MAX VAN DER STOEL. OF COURSE THERE ARE MANY HURDLES TO CROSS AND MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR BACKTRACKING BETWEEN NOW AND ENACTMENT OF THE NECESSARY LEGISLATION. WE WILL DOUBTLESS HAVE TO USE OUR INFLUENCE TO HELP SEE THIS PROCESS THROUGH. HOWEVER, THIS CABINET DECISION REPRESENTS THE MOST PROMISING BREAKTHROUGH ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION SINCE LATVIA'S INDEPENDENCE IN 1991. WE MUST MOVE NOW TO PROVIDE CONCRETE SUPPORT.

0 WE SHOULD WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH LATVIAN INSTITUTIONS, ESPECIALLY THE NATURALIZATION BOARD, TO PROVIDE NON-CITIZENS WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NATURALIZATION PROCESS. THE NATURALIZATION BOARD HAS PLANS TO ESTABLISH AN INFORMATION DEPARTMENT FOR OUTREACH TO POTENTIAL NON-CITIZEN APPLICANTS FOR NATURALIZATION. AN AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION OF FUNDING OR ADVISORY ASSISTANCE WOULD BE IMMEDIATELY AND EFFECTIVELY UTILIZED AND WOULD BE PIVOTAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE OUTREACH EFFORT.

0 A THIRD APPROACH IS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO STRENGTHEN LATVIA'S NATIONAL PROGRAM TO TEACH THE LATVIAN LANGUAGE TO THOSE NON-CITIZENS WHO DON'T SPEAK THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE. UNDP IS ALREADY CONTRIBUTING CONSIDERABLE ASSISTANCE TO THIS EFFORT AND COORDINATING THE EFFORTS OF OTHER DONORS. A DONORS GROUP HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO CONSIDER HOW ADDITIONAL INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE COULD BE MOBILIZED IN SUPPORT OF THE LANGUAGE PROGRAM. IN ADDITION, THE LATVIAN GOVERNMENT H
UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 07 RIGA 001155

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AS ANNOUNCED PLANS TO DEVELOP A NEW PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION THAT IS BEING PREPARED BY AN INTER-MINISTERIAL WORKING GROUP. A TROIKA OF THE UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE, THE U.S. AMBASSADOR AND THE EU HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO WORK WITH THIS GROUP. THIS PROCESS MAY OPEN OTHER NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MINORITIES IN LATVIA.

SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN LATVIA: THE PEOPLE SPEAK

4. OUR ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING PORTRAIT OF THE STATE OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN LATVIA DRAWN FROM SURVEY DATA COMPILED BY THE LATVIAN NATURALIZATION BUREAU IN ITS LANDMARK STUDY, "TOWARD SOCIAL INTEGRATION," PUBLISHED IN MARCH, 1998. THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED IN NOVEMBER 1997-JANUARY 1998 WITH SUPPORT FROM THE SOROS FOUNDATION, THE UNDP, THE

EU PHARE PROGRAM, AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL DONORS. THE SURVEY DATA WAS DEVELOPED FROM DIRECT INTERVIEWS OF 1,507 CITIZENS AND 1,502 NON-CITIZENS RANDOMLY SELECTED AND INTERVIEWED AT THEIR RESIDENCES. THE SURVEY BUILDS UPON EARLIER, LESS COMPREHENSIVE SURVEYS CONDUCTED IN 1991 AND 1994. THE NEW SURVEY FORMS THE FACTUAL BACKDROP AGAINST WHICH LATVIAN LEADERS WILL CONSIDER CHANGES IN THEIR POLICIES ON SOCIAL INTEGRATION, CITIZENSHIP, AND NATURALIZATION.

A SNAPSHOT OF LATVIA'S POPULATION

5. THE TOTAL POPULATION OF LATVIA IS APPROXIMATELY 2.5 MILLION PEOPLE, WITH THE FOLLOWING ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION: LATVIAN (56.7%), RUSSIAN (30.2%), BELARUSSIAN (4.2%), UKRAINIAN (2.8%), POLISH (2.6%), LITHUANIAN (1.4%), AND LESS THAN ONE PERCENT FROM EACH OF SEVEN OTHER NATIONALITIES. AMONG THE RUSSIAN ETHNIC POPULATION, 38.9% (ALMOST 300,000) PERSONS ARE CITIZENS OF LATVIA. THESE RUSSIAN ETHNIC CITIZENS COMPRISE 16.3% OF LATVIA'S TOTAL CITIZENRY. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RUSSIAN ETHNIC NON-CITIZENS IN LATVIA IS ALMOST 453,000 OR 65.9% OF THE ALMOST 688,000 NON-CITIZENS RESIDENT IN LATVIA. THE ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE REMAINING NON-CITIZENS IS BELARUSSIAN (12.1%), UKRAINIAN (9.2%), POLISH (3.4%), LITHUANIAN (3.3%), AND SEVEN OTHER NATIONALITIES WITH LESS THAN ONE PERCENT OF THE NON-CITIZEN POPULATION.

SOE HOPEFUL SIGNS

6. THE SURVEY DATA REVEALS A RANGE OF POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOCIAL INTEGRATION THAT CAN SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR A MORE GENEROUS NATURALIZATION POLICY.
O 80% OF BOTH CITIZENS AND NON-CITIZENS FELT THAT THEY HAD "CLOSE" OR "VERY CLOSE" TIES TO LATVIA.

O 94% OF CITIZENS AND 90% OF NON-CITIZENS RESPONDED THAT THEY INTENDED TO STAY IN LATVIA. LESS THAN 1% OF BOTH GROUPS SAID THAT THEY HAD DECIDED TO LEAVE LATVIA. INTERESTINGLY, AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE (15-30 YRS.), MORE CITIZENS (17%) THAN NON-CITIZENS (12%) INDICATED THAT THEY ARE CONSIDERING LEAVING LATVIA.

O LATVIA HAS A VERY HIGH INCIDENCE OF INTERMARRIAGE. IN 1996, 34% OF ALL MARRIAGES WERE ETHNICALLY MIXED, RANGING FROM 17% FOR LATVIANS TO UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 07 RIGA 001155

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ABOUT 90% FOR BELARUSSIANS, UKRAINIANS, POLK, AND LITHUANIANS.

O ALMOST 50% OF ALL LATVIAN FAMILIES HAS SOME RELATIVE OF ANOTHER NATIONALITY.

O ALMOST 90% OF LATVIANS SAY THAT THEY HAVE FRIENDS OR ACQUAINTANCES OF ANOTHER NATIONALITY.

SOME TROUBLING SIGNS

7. NEVERTHELESS, THE SURVEY RESULTS INDICATE SIGNIFICANT FEELINGS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL UNCERTAINTY AND ISOLATION AMONG THE POPULACE THAT COULD HAMPER SOCIAL INTEGRATION EFFORTS.

O ONLY 56% OF NON-CITIZENS SAY THAT THEY SUPPORT LATVIA'S STATUS AS AN INDEPENDENT STATE (THE FIGURE WAS 35% IN 1991 AND 53% IN 1994).

O 28% OF LATVIANS SAY THAT THEY FEAR LOSING THEIR ETHNIC IDENTITY.

O 73% OF NON-CITIZENS (COMPARED TO 43% OF CITIZENS) EXPRESSED A FEELING OF "PSYCHOLOGICAL UNCERTAINTY ABOUT ONE'S STATUS TODAY AND TOMORROW". 47% OF NON-CITIZENS (COMPARED WITH 17% CITIZENS) SAID THAT THEY FELT "HUMILIATION" IN THEIR LIVES.

O AT THE SAME TIME, 74% OF NON-CITIZENS (COMPARED WITH 83% OF CITIZENS) AGREED THAT, IN EVERYDAY LIFE, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CITIZENS AND NON-CITIZENS. (THE SURVEY CONCLUDES THAT THE DATA UNDERSCORES THE IMPORTANCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL UNCERTAINTY RATHER THAN EVERYDAY LIFE EXPERIENCE AS THE BASIS OF NON-CITIZEN ANXIETY.)

O BOTH LATVIANS AND NON-LATVIANS FEEL ECONOMIC HARDSHIP. 62% OF CITIZENS AND 61% OF NON-CITIZENS ESTIMATED THEIR MONTHLY EXPENDITURES PER FAMILY MEMBER AT LESS THAN 50 LATS (APPROXIMATELY \$100).

O 30% OF NON-CITIZENS AND 26% OF CITIZENS REPORT DIFFICULTY IN FINDING A JOB. APPROXIMATELY 33% OF ETHNIC RUSSIAN CITIZENS REPORT DIFFICULTY FINDING A JOB. SURVEY INDICATES THAT CITIZENS AND NON-CITIZENS WITH POOR LATVIAN LANGUAGE SKILLS HAVE MORE TROUBLE FINDING A JOB.

O AMONG BOTH CITIZENS AND NON-CITIZENS RESPECT FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IS LOW (21% OF BOTH GROUPS SAY THEY TRUST THE PARLIAMENT; 26% OF CITIZENS AND 22% OF NON-CITIZENS SAY THEY TRUST THE CABINET OF MINISTERS; AND 10% OF BOTH GROUPS SAY THEY TRUST POLITICAL PARTIES).

O PARTICIPATION AMONG BOTH GROUPS IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IS LOW: TRADE UNIONS (12% CITIZENS, 5% NON-CITIZENS); CHURCHES (6% CITIZENS, 2% NON-CITIZENS); SPORTS OR ENTERTAINMENT ORGANIZATIONS (4% CITIZENS, 1% NON-CITIZENS).

THE LATVIAN LANGUAGE: UNIFIER OR DIVIDER?

8. ACCORDING TO THE SURVEY DATA, MOST RESIDENTS OF LATVIA WANT TO USE THE LATVIAN LANGUAGE, BUT MOST NON-UNCLAS SECTION 04 OF 07 RIGA 001155

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CITIZENS FEEL THEIR LATVIAN LANGUAGE ABILITIES ARE
VERY POOR.

O 90% OF BOTH CITIZENS AND NON-CITIZENS BELIEVE
THAT ALL INHABITANTS OF LATVIA MUST KNOW THE LATVIAN
LANGUAGE.

O HOWEVER, 20% OF NON-CITIZENS SAY THAT THEY KNOW
NO LATVIAN AT ALL, WHILE 40% OF NON-CITIZENS JUDGE
THEIR LATVIAN AS "VERY POOR".

O 73% OF NON-CITIZENS AND 60% OF CITIZENS WHOSE
NATIVE LANGUAGE IS NOT LATVIAN SAY THAT THEY WOULD
LIKE TO IMPROVE THEIR LATVIAN LANGUAGE.

O YET, 79% OF NON-CITIZENS SUPPORT DESIGNATION OF
RUSSIAN AS A SECOND OFFICIAL LANGUAGE.

O 76% OF LATVIANS SAY THAT THEY SPEAK MORE RUSSIAN
THAN LATVIAN OR RUSSIAN ONLY IN BUSINESS AND SOCIAL
CONTACTS WITH NON-LATVIANS. ONLY 6% OF LATVIANS SAY
THAT THEY SPEAK PREDOMINANTLY LATVIAN IN DAILY
CONTACTS WITH NON-LATVIANS.

CITIZENSHIP AND NATURALIZATION: COMPLEX
CONTRADICTIONS

9. THE SURVEY REVEALS SIGNIFICANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN
CITIZENS AND NON-CITIZENS ON THE PRIORITY TO
NATURALIZE NON-CITIZENS BORN IN LATVIA. HOWEVER,
THERE ARE CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION OVER THE
FAIRNESS OF THE EXISTING LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR
NATURALIZATION, INCLUDING THE AGE QUOTAS OF THE
"WINDOWS" SYSTEM, AND THE LATVIAN LANGUAGE AND HISTORY
EXAMS.

O DESPITE THEIR REPORTED FRUSTRATIONS WITH NON-
CITIZEN STATUS, ALMOST ONE IN FIVE NON-CITIZENS (18%)
DOES NOT WISH TO OBTAIN LATVIAN CITIZENSHIP. 80% OF
THOSE WHO SAY THAT THEY DO NOT WANT LATVIAN
CITIZENSHIP REPORT THAT THEY WANT NO CITIZENSHIP AT
ALL.

O OF THOSE NON-CITIZENS NOW ELIGIBLE TO APPLY
(YOUNG PERSONS AGE 15-25), ONLY 27% PLAN TO USE THAT
RIGHT IN THE NEXT YEAR.

O 66% OF NON-CITIZENS HAVE NOT PERSONALLY INQUIRED
ABOUT THE NATURALIZATION REQUIREMENTS.

O NON-CITIZENS CITE THE FOLLOWING REASONS FOR NOT
PURSUING NATURALIZATION:

O LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THEIR ABILITY TO PASS
THE LANGUAGE AND HISTORY EXAM (40% OF THOSE UNDER AGE
30, 56% AMONG OVER 30);

O LACK OF INTEREST (26% OF THOSE UNDER AGE 30,

• 37% AMONG OVER 30);

○ ALIENATION FROM THE LATVIAN STATE (20% AMONG BOTH UNDER AND OVER AGE 30);

○ UNWILLINGNESS TO UNDERTAKE THE DUTIES OF CITIZEN (20% AMONG BOTH UNDER AND OVER AGE 30);

○ NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE NATURALIZATION

PROCEDURE (33% AMONG BOTH UNDER AND OVER AGE 30).
UNCLAS SECTION 05 OF 07 RIGA 001155

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○ 54% OF CITIZENS AND 34% OF NON-CITIZENS SAID THAT LATVIAN LANGUAGE AND HISTORY EXAMS SHOULD BE REQUIRED FOR NATURALIZATION (26% OF CITIZENS AND 34% OF NON-CITIZENS REPLIED "MAYBE" TO THIS QUESTION).

○ 48% OF CITIZENS AND 56% OF NON-CITIZENS BELIEVE THAT THE EXAM REQUIREMENTS ARE TOO HIGH. YET, ONLY 7% OF NON-CITIZENS REPORT ANY PERSONAL CONTACT WITH THE NATURALIZATION BOARD (THE ONLY SOURCE OF AUTHORITATIVE INFORMATION ON THE EXAMS) DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS. (THE SURVEY CONCLUDES THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF NON-CITIZENS GET THEIR INFORMATION ON NATURALIZATION REQUIREMENTS FROM INDIRECT SOURCES.)

○ 69% OF NON-CITIZENS AND 28% OF CITIZENS BELIEVE THAT THE LAW ON CITIZENSHIP SHOULD BE CHANGED. 33% OF CITIZENS AND 66% OF NON-CITIZENS FAVOR SIMPLIFICATION OF THE HISTORY EXAM. 20% OF CITIZENS AND MORE THAN 50% OF NON-CITIZENS SUPPORT SIMPLIFICATION OF THE LANGUAGE EXAM. HOWEVER 15% OF CITIZENS BELIEVE THAT NATURALIZATION REQUIREMENT SHOULD BE MORE STRICT.

○ 25% OF CITIZENS AND 66% OF NON-CITIZENS SUPPORT CANCELING THE AGE QUOTAS OF THE "WINDOWS" SYSTEM. (NOTE: UNDER THIS SYSTEM, MOST NON-CITIZENS MAY APPLY FOR NATURALIZATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH A SCHEDULE THAT BEGAN IN 1996 AND ENDS IN 2003. IN 1996, APPLICATIONS WERE ACCEPTED FROM PERSONS AGE 16-20 WHO WERE BORN IN LATVIA. IN 1997, APPLICANTS BORN IN LATVIA UP TO 25 YEARS OF AGE MAY APPLY. EACH YEAR PROGRESSIVELY OLDER NON-CITIZENS MAY APPLY UNTIL BY 2003 ALL NON-CITIZENS WOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR NATURALIZATION.)

○ 66% OF NON-CITIZENS SAY THAT, IF THE "WINDOWS" WERE ABOLISHED, ALL MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILY WOULD SEEK NATURALIZATION TOGETHER.

○ 82% OF CITIZENS AND 95% OF NON-CITIZENS AGREE THAT PRIORITY IN NATURALIZATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO NON-CITIZENS BORN IN LATVIA. HOWEVER, ONLY 28% OF CITIZENS WOULD DROP THE LANGUAGE AND HISTORY EXAMS FOR NON-CITIZENS BORN IN LATVIA.

○ ONLY 15% OF NON-CITIZENS REPORT HAVING RECEIVED THE LATVIAN GOVERNMENT'S NON-CITIZEN TRAVEL DOCUMENT.

, 60% OF NON-CITIZENS REPORT A NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THIS DOCUMENT.

COMMENT:

10. THESE SURVEY RESULTS SUGGEST THAT CURRENT NATURALIZATION RATES ARE SO LOW (LESS THAN 7.3% IN THE TWO "WINDOWS" THAT ARE NOW OPEN) BECAUSE THERE IS NO "PUSH" AND NO "PULL" ON NON-CITIZENS TO ENTER THE PROCESS. WHILE NON-CITIZENS EXPRESS PSYCHOLOGICAL UNCERTAINTY AND FRUSTRATION, THEY DO NOT EXPERIENCE THE KIND OF NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF NON-CITIZEN STATUS IN THEIR DAILY LIVES THAT MIGHT "PUSH" THEM INTO NATURALIZATION. AT THE SAME TIME, NON-CITIZENS DO NOT SEE LATVIAN CITIZENSHIP AS CONFERRING ON THEM INCENTIVES SUFFICIENT TO "PULL" THEM INTO THE NATURALIZATION PROCES. THE RESULT IS THE SORT OF DRIFT AND INDECISION THAT IS REFLECTED IN THIS POLL DATA.

11. IN ASSESSING A POSSIBLE AMERICAN ROLE IN ACCELERATING THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION, WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT CONSIDERABLE RESOURCES WOULD BE REQUIRED AND THAT THE RESULT WOULD BE UNCERTAIN. IT UNCLAS SECTION 06 OF 07 RIGA 001155

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MAY BE THAT ONLY GENERATIONAL TRANSITION AND THE INTEGRATION OF LATVIA INTO THE EUROPEAN UNION AND OTHER WESTERN INSTITUTIONS CAN DECISIVELY ACCELERATE SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN LATVIA. HOWEVER, IF WE WANT A ROLE IN THIS PROCESS, THREE APPROACHES COULD BE CONSIDERED.

RECOMNENDED U.S. ROLE

12. CONTINUE CAREFUL DIPLOMACY WITH THE LATVIANS TO CONVINCE THEM TO IMPLEMENT THE VERY POSITIVE DECISIONS ANNOUNCED DURING THE APRIL 15 SPECIAL CABINET MEETING. THE CBSS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR MINORITIES OLE ESPERSON WILL VISIT LATVIA PRIL 16, AND OSCE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR MINORITIEMAX VAN DER STOEL WILL VISIT APRIL 16-17. WE ANTICIPATE THAT BOTH VISITORS WILL PROVIDE STRONG SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE DECISIONS. THE U.S. SHOULD DO THE SAME BOTH IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND PRIVATE DIPLOMACY. IN PARTICULAR, IF THE OSCE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE IN FACT IMPLEM
ENTED, ANY REMAINING RATIONALE FOR RUSSIA'S CONTINUING OVERBLOWN CAMPAIGN OF PRESSURE AGAINST LATVIA WILL VANISH. WE WILL NEED TO CONTINUE TO USE OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE LATVIANS TO SEE THAT THESE DECISIONS ARE IN FACT IMPLEMENTED. WITH THE RUSSIANS OUR MESSAGE SHOULD BE PLAIN: "ENOUGH IS ENOUGH."

13. LATVIA WILL NEED MUCH PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE TO ACHIEVE THE BREAKTHROUGH ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION THAT IS NOW WITHIN REACH. I BELIEVE THAT A CONCRETE AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION IS ESSENTIAL. WE SHOULD WORK WITH LATVIAN INSTITUTIONS, ESPECIALLY THE NATURALIZATION BOARD, TO PROVIDE NON-CITIZENS WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NATURALIZATION PROCESS. THE NATURALIZATION BOARD HAS ESTABLISHED AN INFORMATION DEPARTMENT FOR OUTREACH TO POTENTIAL NON-CITIZEN APPLICANTS FOR NATURALIZATION. A PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR US \$540,000 TO GET THE CENTER LAUNCHED HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO EU PHARE FOR FUNDING. THE GOVERNMENT OF LATVIA WILL CONTRIBUTE AN ADDITIONAL \$162,000. THE PURPOSE OF THE CENTER IS TO PROVIDE NON-CITIZENS WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION ON THE NATURALIZATION PROCESS. FIELD OFFICES IN LIEPAJA AND DAUGAUPILS ARE ALSO ENVISIONED. USAID/RIGA HAS HAD DIRECT DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATURALIZATION BOARD (WHO IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE INTER-MINISTERIAL WORKING GROUP MENTIONED IN PARA 3) WHO HAS REQUESTED USG ASSISTANCE TO RECRUIT AND FUND A LONG-TERM (1-2 YEARS) ADVISOR TO HELP THE CENTER DEVELOP A NATIONWIDE INFORMATION CAMPAIGN. THE BOARD IS DEVELOPING A SCOPE-OF-WORK. AN AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION FOR FUNDING ADVISORY ASSISTANCE THIS FISCAL YEAR WOULD NOT ONLY BE TIMELY BUT EFFECTIVELY AND IMMEDIATELY UTILIZED AND MAY BE CRITICAL TO THE CENTER'S SUCCESS, AS IT COULD BE A WHILE BEFORE EU FUNDING IS MADE AVAILABLE.

14. PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO STRENGTHEN LATVIA'S NATIONAL PROGRAM TO TEACH THE LATVIAN LANGUAGE TO THOSE NON-CITIZENS WHO DON'T SPEAK THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE. UNDP IS ALREADY CONTRIBUTING CONSIDERABLE ASSISTANCE TO THIS EFFORT AND COORDINATING THE EFFORTS OF OTHER DONORS. A DONORS GROUP HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO CONSIDER HOW ADDITIONAL INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE COULD BE MOBILIZED IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM. IN ADDITION, THE LATVIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED PLANS TO DEVELOP A NEW PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION THAT IS BEING PREPARED BY AN INTER-UNCLAS SECTION 07 OF 07 RIGA 001155

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MINISTERIAL WORKING GROUP. THIS GROUP IS DUE TO SUBMIT ITS REPORT IN LATE JUNE. HERE AGAIN, A TIMELY AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION WOULD HELP KEEP UP LATVIAN MOMENTUM AND LEVERAGE ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHER DONORS. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER ON OPPORTUNITIES DEVELOPED DURING THIS PROCESS AS THEY DEVELOP.
NAPPER