



Master of Arts Thesis
Euroculture

University of Groningen

University of Olomouc

July 2018

**THE ROLE OF ETHNIC CITIZENSHIP IN THE GLOBALISED
EUROPE:
THE CASE OF RUSSOPHONES WITHIN ENDANGERED
LATVIAN CULTURE**

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ABSTRACT

European states are characterised by their linguistic, ethnic and throughout cultural diversity, yet their capacity for tolerance and integration is being tested when it comes to a real or imagined threat to one's identity, limiting the openness towards ethnic minorities. Since the mid-20th-century a large number of Soviet migrant workers settled in the territory of Latvia, yet, since the 1990s with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the independence restoration of Latvia, these mostly Russophones have had hard time endeavouring to integrate within the young state, largely due to language, citizenship and nationalism issues. This paper investigates the many facets of the struggle towards an integrated European civic society within the context of Latvia.

The theoretical framework of the paper also shows how the understanding of three concepts – citizenship, nationalism and ethnicity – varies, interweaves or overlaps in different social, cultural, political and historical contexts. The analytical part investigates the civic and ethnic perception of nation and what influence the latter has on the decision-making process. Moreover, it is questioned if such a model of citizenship, where language is not being included as a mandatory requirement of the naturalisation process, would endanger the culture and language of the smaller nations.

Characteristics and level of the conflict between the Latvian and Russophone population, political parties, alongside with the manner of discussing problems within political arena are explained within the following chapters. Considering all this, the solution of the situation is highly unpredictable, and many more decades will have to pass only to be able to reach an impartial assessment of the matter.

Keywords: Latvia, Integration, Citizenship, Ethnicity, Nationalism

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INTRODUCTION

European states are characterised by their cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic diversity, offering us an opportunity to learn about all those differences. At the same time, our capacity for tolerance, integration, and inclusion is being tested – a real fear or imagined threat to one’s identity can limit our understanding of “united in diversity,” thus, building fences towards the inclusion of ethnic minorities.

For centuries the territory of the Baltic States has been at the crossroads with strong geopolitical powers, serving as a ground for ethnic diversity, religious tolerance, linguistic assimilation and cultural dialogue. Back in 1918 several European borders were drawn and withdrawn, so that today, in 2018, the Republic of Latvia amongst others can celebrate a centenary of the nation-state independence. However, until today, almost thirty years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union many obstacles have remained towards an inclusive, undivided society in the Baltics, particularly Latvia and Estonia.

During the USSR occupation there was a massive influx of Soviet migrant workers in Latvia, many of whom (after an encouragement “to either assimilate or emigrate”¹) decided not to migrate back to their former homeland when the USSR dissolved in the 1990s but chose Latvia as their new home. Yet, due to the recent experience of oppression, the legislation of language and citizenship laws was made unfavourable to the Soviets – around 28 per cent of residents of Latvia, mainly Russophones from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, found themselves in a situation where their political status was unclear. Only later, in 1995 the non-citizens’ status of Latvia was created for those who had not yet obtained Latvian citizenship.² Consequently, until today the society remains divided, with two dominating cultures and languages – Latvian as an endangered majority and Russian as a self-sufficient minority.

¹ Aneta Pavlenko, “Language Rights Versus Speakers’ Rights: On the Applicability of Western Language Rights Approaches in Eastern European Contexts,” *Lang Policy* 10, (2011): 42, doi 10.1007/s10993-011-9194-7.

² Pavlenko explains that these Russophones, both in Latvia and Estonia, were delegitimised as colonisers, thus, being excluded from the elitist citizens’ circle. In Lithuania, however, former Soviet citizens (considerably smaller in numbers as in Latvia and Estonia) were granted with national citizenship after signing a loyalty oath, without requiring proficiency in the Lithuanian language.

Russians, Russian-speaking minority, Russophones, Latvian Russians – those are only some of the designations for the group of focus within this paper, – or as stated by Stanford University political science professor David D. Laitin they are all “the forgotten people in the drama of decolonization.”³ My aim is not to draw limits by the use of a specific terminology, but rather to explain the many facets building up the case starting from the identity shifts to everyday challenges of integration, and what makes the road towards integration so difficult, which are only some of the questions this paper investigates. The reader will also be introduced to general aspects of collective memory in order to comprehend how and why certain memories have persisted within a society as a uniting (or dividing) force, and how those could be modified by decision-makers.

There are numerous examples alike on the European stage today where the growing and transforming nationalism, various issues of citizenship, minority integration and cultural rights are considered as contentious matters. The history of European nations is not a homogeneous one, thus, our views on certain issues vary considerably. The so-called Western or civic perception of citizenship is fairly distant to Latvians, who have developed a strongly ethnic perception of nation due to the lessons taught by history. This paper investigates the struggle of how the latter perception clashes with the recommended European ideal of an integrated civic society.

Having the case study of Russophones within endangered Latvian culture in mind, Laitin's claim that the “divide is inevitable, no matter how fluid the actual cultural scene,”⁴ leaves one in a despair. With a support of theoretical literature analysis this paper aims to identify what are the characteristics and the level of the conflict between the Latvian and Russophone population, alongside with the political parties and the way problems are discussed in the Republic of Latvia. What are the components of the ethnic model of citizenship present in the Republic of Latvia, and what role does the ethnic citizenship play in an integrated Europe and globalised world? Further, if such a model of citizenship, where language is not being included as a mandatory requirement of the naturalisation process, would endanger the culture and language of the smaller nations?

³ David D. Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 30, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.32407.0001.001>.

⁴ Laitin, *Identity in Formation*, 33.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The first part of the paper looks into the general theoretical aspects related to the topic, namely, the understanding of nationality and ethnicity, citizenship and identity. The paper investigates closer such matters as national identity, collective memory, alongside with ethnic and civic perception of nation. Then the attention is drawn towards language, which is claimed to be the first and main tool towards social integration. Eventually, the practice of language testing as a part of obtaining a citizenship is being questioned.

1.1. Belonging at the times of ethnic perception of nation

1.1.1. Belonging and the role of national identity

Benedict Anderson writes that it was the developments of capitalism and the printing press that allowed wide masses of people to have an access to literature in a vernacular, thus having the first perceptions about a new type of imagined community, called a nation.⁵ There are various definitions to explain what a *nation* is, many of which include a common language, origins, territory and economy. However, as Ivars Ījabs writes, a nation is also a subjective and symbolically cultural phenomenon,⁶ thus, nation can be understood differently in different contexts, geographical and ideological settings.

Anderson says that even the smallest community of a nation is related with others by invisible, even invented ties, not necessarily real ones.⁷ Even if we do not know each member of this common community, we are still united by shared historical happenings (remembrance and memory), consuming more or less the same mass media, television, radio, newspapers, living within the same geographical frontiers, just to name a few specific things that can unite a nation and create a sense of belonging.

⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), 37.

⁶ Ivars Ījabs, "Between the Ethnic and Civic: Some Considerations on the Problem of 'National Identity'," in *Multiple and Changing Latvian Identities*, ed. Juris Rozenvalds and Aija Zobena, (Riga: University of Latvia Press, 2014), 25.

⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 15.

Eric Hobsbawm claims that the nations did not create nationalism, but vice versa, that the nationalist movements created nations.⁸ While Antony D. Smith writes that in the base of nationalism there is always a symbolic element such as language, myths, or religion, and around these then the nationalist movements are brought together.⁹

Nationalism as a political movement in Europe for self-determination of a nation became an uppermost trend in the 18th and the 19th-centuries when many former peasants and farmers that had acquired a proper education now felt the responsibility to expand their knowledge and promote the idea of a united nation and nationalism.¹⁰ Which was also when the Latvian nation's self-determination movement emerged.¹¹

The famous American psychologist and psychoanalyst Erik H. Erikson, who was among the first ones to use the term “national identity”, saying that it “expresses such a mutual relation in that it connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself [self-sameness] and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential characteristics with others.”¹² Now it is one of the most complicated, and at the same time also one of the most important types of identities. As we know there are various fundamental elements that are shaping national identity, such as common ideas, values, culture, language of communication, memories, political order and political capacity, economic order and joint economic life, legal order, feeling of social security, feeling of belonging, territorial belonging, assignation of “we” and “they” in an outer context, and many more.¹³

⁸ Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), quoted in Ījabs, “Between the Ethnic and Civic,” 27.

⁹ Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (London: Routledge, 2009), quoted in Ījabs, “Between the Ethnic and Civic,” 27.

¹⁰ Ījabs, “Between the Ethnic and Civic,” 27-28.

¹¹ Ibid, 27.

¹² Brigita Zepa, Evija Kļave and Inese Šūpule, “The Discursive Construction of National Identity in Latvia,” in *Multiple and Changing Latvian Identities*, ed. Juris Rozenvalds and Aija Zobena, (Riga: University of Latvia Press, 2014), 363, E-book, http://providus.lv/article_files/2882/original/Daudzveidigas_un_mainigas_Latvijas_identitates.pdf?1427115576. Using critical discourse analysis Zepa, Kļave and Šūpule have conducted a research in order to find out how and on what perceptions Latvians and Russians both living in Latvia construct their nationality, and how their sense of belonging has formed.

¹³ Rozenvalds and Zobena, *Multiple and Changing Latvian Identities*, 10.

Let me discuss shortly how this urge for self-determination is transformed into nationalist sentiment and nowadays calculated by the European institutions. “National attachment” and “national pride” are only some of the notions measured by the EC driven Eurobarometer, however, “national identity” *per se* is not explicitly included within the questions of the Eurobarometer.¹⁴ The Eurobarometer surveys questioning about the national pride have shown that Portuguese and Greek people tend to express the highest honour towards their country; along with the Spanish, Irish and Brits that are following in the list of the highest sentiment of national pride.¹⁵ Interestingly enough, in Greece, Denmark and Ireland almost every person living there, 97 per cent, admits “the highest degree of attachment to the nation,” which is followed by Portugal and Finland. All of these are relatively small countries, as one can realise, confirming the hypothesis of social scientist and senior lecturer in Loughborough University Marco Antonsich who states that “small countries usually have a strong sense of national identity,”¹⁶ while, on the other hand, there are many other factors that are influencing the answers of the people, such as if they are coming from a poor/rich region, the level of their education, etc. The high levels of national pride and national attachment could be explained by the fact that historically these states have been standing next to bigger and more influential neighbours, hence confronted several times, which to some extent is also the case of the Republic of Latvia, where the statistics on national pride, even if still high, are one of the lowest in the EU – 83 per cent.¹⁷

Within the Eurobarometer survey, there is a differentiation of the feelings – it is being measured whether a nation is attached to the rest of the nation, and apart from that, also if the nation feels particularly proud (national pride) about their country, thus having a strong sense of national identity. Theorist and senior lecturer at the London School of Economics Dr. Damian Tambini concludes that “[t]he experience of contributing to a common project is clearly dependent on the perception of collective

¹⁴ Marco Antonsich, “National Identities in the Age of Globalisation: The Case of Western Europe,” *National Identities* 11, no. 3 (2009): 282-284, doi: 10.1080/14608940903081085.

¹⁵ Standard Eurobarometer: “Would you say that you are very proud, quite proud, not very proud, or not at all proud to be [nationality]?” in Antonsich, “National Identities in the Age of Globalisation,” 287.

¹⁶ Antonsich, “National Identities in the Age of Globalisation,” 287-288.

¹⁷ “Standard Eurobarometer 64, National Report: Latvia,” (Brussels: European Commission, Directorate-General Press and Communication, 2005), 38, http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/eb/eb64/eb64_lv_nat.pdf.

identity that has generally been provided by the idea and myth of the nation, but it consists also in a broader cultural narrative that is constitutive of the nation itself.”¹⁸

1.1.2. Nationalism among civic and ethnic perception of nation

There are numerous shades of understanding the orientation of nation, which include certain aspects from the theory of citizenship as well (together with other legal and democratic institutions), which De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak have put under an umbrella-term of *Staatsnation* (model characterising Western European states), and more conservative or traditional perception of nation with cultural and ethnical association, or else *Kulturnation* (understanding typical to the post-Soviet states).¹⁹

In the classical work “The Idea of Nationalism” by Hans Kohn,²⁰ a comparison between Eastern and Western nationalisms is made by the use of terms illiberal and liberal, accordingly.²¹ The illiberal Eastern nationalism used to be built by intellectuals (instead of the bourgeoisie of the West) that manipulated with the memories, symbols, myths, identities, together with the ongoing romanticism movement with its focus on the soul of the nation, mythical past, irrationalism, etc.²² Whereas, the Western model from the beginning has been build in a “top-down” manner, so to say, where the aristocratical elite developed a civic statehood, which Antony D. Smith labelled as a lateral development.²³

Ethnies of the vertical development of the East, which is another global phenomena, usually face difficulties in transforming themselves into a nation, with a common system of laws, economic, labour division and social differentiation.²⁴

¹⁸ Damian Tambini, “Post-national Citizenship,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24, no. 2 (2001): 210, doi: 10.1080/01419870020023418.

¹⁹ Rudolf De Cillia, Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak, “The Discursive Construction of National Identities,” *Discourse and Society* 10, no. 2 (1999): 169, doi:10.1177/0957926599010002002.

²⁰ Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background* (New York: Macmillan, 1944).

²¹ Ījabs, “Between the Ethnic and Civic,” 28.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid, 29.

²⁴ Ibid, 30.

Moreover, often these ethnies have had a long-term oppression experience to go through, as a consequence gaining a reserved, closed identity, which is the case of the Latvian nation under the rule of Swedes, Germans, Russians.

The relationship between national and ethnic identities is being debated within the political circles of Latvia, yet there is no consensus, so to say. Şener Aktürk, a researcher focusing on comparative politics of ethnicity, religion, and nationalism, has examined several state policies that regulate the relation between ethnicity and nationality, looking at how persistent or changeable they are, and what happens with the ethnicity when a deviation of nationality occurs.²⁵ He has introduced a designator “regimes of ethnicity” which is dividing states into mono-ethnic (as Germany and Japan), multi-ethnic (as USSR, Russian Federation, Canada, India), and anti-ethnic (as France and Turkey) regime categories.²⁶ In order to create a mono-ethnic regime, a nation-state has to restrict its membership (citizenship) to an exclusively privileged ethnic group,²⁷ which was performed in a manner alike during the 1990s when the independence of Latvia was restored. Aktürk encourages us to look more closely to issues related to ethnic politics and nation-building, and to question the tendency of changes within state policies regarding ethnicity, what causes these changes, and what makes them last.²⁸

One of the general prejudices of nationalists and ethicists on how they see the Other is that all of the foreigners embody all of the world’s greatest problems.²⁹ Still, in many European countries, this perception is alive and being fortified with the rebirth of such premises as national and ethnic identities. Now and during the last decades with the present trends of globalisation nationalism and nationalist movements have taken up

²⁵ Şener Aktürk, “Regimes of Ethnicity,” in *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia, and Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 3, doi:10.1017/CBO9781139108898.002.

²⁶ Aktürk, “Regimes of Ethnicity,” 4-5.

²⁷ Ibid, 7.

²⁸ Aktürk, “Dynamics of Persistence and Change,” in *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia, and Turkey*, 261.

²⁹ De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak, “The Discursive Construction of National Identities,” 150.

the role of the opponents to globalisation.³⁰ Meanwhile, however, this does not exclude the birth of the so-called European identity.³¹

The civic and ethnic elements of understanding the concept of a nation are standing in the way of forming a modern, open, inclusive society. On the one hand, there are parts of society that would be willing to modify *Satversme*, the State Constitution of Latvia, in such way that it would express the necessity to secure the longevity through centuries of the Latvian nation, language and culture. On the other hand, there are more liberal opinions circulating that nation means citizens of a certain state, whatever their self-identification would be, or the language they use to communicate at home.³² The interpretations of the term “nation” can vary considerably, thus promoting radical conflicts or contradictions within a particular social reality. Alarming statistics show that the Baltic States are not only European anti-recordists of wealth and income inequality, but also “citizens of the Baltic countries are further divided along ethnic lines.”³³

Ethnic identity, as by the prominent American anthropologist Clifford Geertz, cannot be chosen by a person during their lifetime, but it is rather primordial, given beforehand.³⁴ There is an inevitable conflict between the primordial ties and the civic ties in such new countries as Latvia. Ethnic ties demand them as given, while the civic ties are seeking to put the state and the law as primary players, drawing such ethnic loyalty backwards.³⁵ The State, thus, creates a fertile soil for inter-ethnic conflicts – questions about the official language, the presence of different ethnic groups in the state apparatus, etc.

³⁰ Raluca Levonian, “Friends and Foes: The Construction of National and Supra-National Identities in Contemporary Romanian Public Discourse,” *Language and Dialogue* 5, no. 3 (2015): 410, doi: 10.1075/ld.5.3.03lev.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ījabs, “Between the Ethnic and Civic,” 24.

³³ Jaan Masso and Kerly Espenberg, “Between Economic Growth and Social Justice: Different Inequality Dynamics in the Baltic States,” in *Changing Inequalities and Societal Impacts in Rich Countries: Thirty Countries' Experiences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 32, doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199687428.003.0005.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid, 26.

It is interesting to consider the importance of understanding the proximity of cultures, i.e., how close or distant they seem to members of the diverse society. Sometimes the actual similarity of cultures is not that important as its perception by the members of an ethnic group constructing any particular nation. Aktürk reminds that in many cases, though not always, ethnic identity will also be a linguistic identity, or in another case, it can be a religious identity as well.³⁶

Contemporary social sciences claim that ethnicity³⁷ as such has little to do with nation, as the latter is a relatively new formation, an imagined community, a category to construct a society.³⁸ Many of the Eastern European countries historically have been based on the ethnic state formation model. Now, however, the dominating social construction is that of a need for deconstructing the strong national identities in order to foster the integration of new migrants into the European societies, or else the civic orientation of nation.

Stepping away from the previously described theoretical perceptions, one can summarise that the development of Latvian nationalism, with characteristics of ethnical or ethnocultural nationalism of Eastern Europe, has been compared and counter-positioned with the political or territorial nationalism of Western Europe. The differences in these two perceptions are clearly seen, having civic conduct and individualism as dominating values within the latter, and common roots, shared language and culture within the former, making one wonder about the influence of historical heritage on the formation of national identities in certain regions. Hence, the way in which a nation sees itself is not a mere coincidence and cannot be easily modified.³⁹

³⁶ Aktürk, "Regimes of Ethnicity," 9.

³⁷ Ethnicity as a subjective perception of belonging to a group that has common origins, language, skin colour, customs, a name of the community, territory and religion.

³⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Martin Ehala, "Ethnic and National Identities in the Baltic States," in *Multiple and Changing Latvian Identities*, ed. Juris Rozenvalds and Aija Zobena (Riga: University of Latvia Press, 2014), 34.

³⁹ Ījabs, "Between the Ethnic and Civic," 28.

1.1.3. Nationality and the understanding of an empire today

The term *empire* acquired a nuance of national self-determination into its meaning in the late nineteenth century, which was when many ethnic groups with nationalistic sentiments stood up against the big European empires of the time. “A closer inspection shows that our modern conception of empire is itself a product of the rise of nationalism.”⁴⁰

The preceding ideas of nationhood and social participation had spread all over Europe, making people realise and oppose the traditional and long-established order of the empires.⁴¹ However, formerly, none of the empires defined themselves in ethnic terms, how it is today in the modern nation-states, but rather sought to gather all the intelligentsia in its territorial borders.⁴²

The nationality policies of the Bolshevik leaders in the case of Soviet Union’s *empire*, though, differed from the other empires. Terry Martin, the author of “The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939,” explains:

Lenin and Stalin understood very well the danger of being labeled as empire in the age of nationalism. In fact, here lies the real connection between the Soviet Union’s national constitution and the collapse of the Habsburg and Ottoman empires. (...) As a result, the Soviet Union became the first multiethnic state in world history to define itself as an anti-imperial state. They were not indifferent to the word “empire.” They rejected it explicitly.⁴³

⁴⁰ Mark R. Beissinger, “Rethinking Empire in the Wake of Soviet Collapse,” *Ethnic Politics After Communism*, ed. Zoltan D. Barany, Robert G. Moser (Cornell University Press, 2005), 22, E-book.

⁴¹ Beissinger, “Rethinking Empire in the Wake of Soviet Collapse,” 23-24.

⁴² *Ibid*, 26-27.

⁴³ Terry Dean Martin, “The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939,” (Cornell University Press, 2001), 19, quoted in Beissinger, “Rethinking Empire in the Wake of Soviet Collapse,” 28.

Referring to Geertz, Uri Ram, a sociologist at Ben Gurion University, claims that “nationality is a narrative, a *story* which people tell about themselves in order to lend meaning to their social world,”⁴⁴ which is not isolated from other influencing social or institutional actors within its’ particular contexts. Laitin in his book “Identity in Formation” examines the nationality issue of the Russophones in several post-Soviet republics, including Latvia amongst them, as well as the relationship which they have with the new state. Laitin argues that the “Soviet nationality policies were deeply contradictory,” besides “all Union republics were treated as if they were the same,”⁴⁵ they were supposed to be alike in *everything*. In spite of this, Stalin held very strong opinions on national identity, “[f]or him, nations were the result of a common culture, a common language, a common economic life, and a common territory.”⁴⁶ Nowadays, those ideas of his “continue to have a profound influence on the national identity question throughout the former Soviet Union.”⁴⁷

Nationalism gained certain strength over the vast empire, but it was silenced by the Red Army. In order to make this nationalism ineffective, the minority groups were supported in a way that minor forms of nationhood were still accepted. Such tolerated forms of self-determination included secured national territory, cultural independence, and local administration, thus, the Soviet republics imitated “legally sovereign entities” in a form of a nation-state.⁴⁸ The line between the dominance and the self-determination was made unclear.

Laitin, who has had experience living among the Russophones in the Baltics, raises up a discussion of the nationalist politics that were present in the region of the 1990s when Russians represented an actual threat for a successful development of the newly rebuilt nations, especially in Estonia and Latvia, thus “these nationalists were seeking to undermine a Soviet-inspired identity project that emphasized the merging of nations.”⁴⁹ After the fall of Soviet Union, restoration of the independence in the Baltics

⁴⁴ De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak, 155.

⁴⁵ Laitin, 67.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 10.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Beissinger, 28.

⁴⁹ Laitin, 25.

was led by highly nationalistically minded leaders. The non-titulars were eventually accepted and granted with several rights, but not allowed to participate in the rebuilding of the new state, nor its social or political processes.⁵⁰ Thus, the contemporary scholars have begun to investigate also the role and influence of certain state organs in transforming the identity, by either stressing it or ignoring it,⁵¹ about which we will talk later in the section on ethnic democracy and integration.

Neither in Latvia, nor Estonia the new legislation regarding citizenship was appealing to the local Russophones.⁵² “Although the laws themselves are ethnically-neutral and they create purely legal categories, their net effect would be to dramatically alter the two countries’ ethno-political balance, (...) Estonia and Latvia found an alternative way of continuing an ethnic nationalization process through citizenship laws.”⁵³ The former-Soviet citizens were not granted the citizenship automatically, thus they were not allowed to participate in the newly proclaimed elections.

There has been little consistency in how the Russian Federation has reacted to the perceived discrimination of the former-Soviet citizens.⁵⁴ The protection of Russophones in Latvia was considered to be not strong enough, only appealing to international organisations informing about human rights violations, but not dedicating any special resources for a more concrete support.⁵⁵ Obviously, here we can talk about trauma experienced by the non-titular nation, mistreated by the titular state and not supported by the *external fatherland*.⁵⁶ Thus, many Russophones regarding the latter have felt disappointed, excluded, even insulted. Similarly, Laitin has recorded that

⁵⁰ Laitin, 93.

⁵¹ Ibid, 13.

⁵² Ibid, 94.

⁵³ Vello Pettai, “Emerging Ethnic Democracy in Estonia and Latvia,” in *Managing Diversity in Plural Societies: Minorities, Migration and Nation-Building in Post-Communist Europe*, ed. Magda Opalski (Ottawa: Forum Eastern Europe, 1998), http://www.ut.ee/ABVKeskus/?leht=publikatsioonid&aasta=1998&dok=ETHNIC_DEMOCRACY.

⁵⁴ Laitin, 102.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 103.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 104.

small, yet some part of non-titulars feel sort of a “collective guilt, a sense of shame,”⁵⁷ to which none of the responsible political nations seems to have a remedy.

Beissinger dares to claim that “[t]oday, Russia remains subject to labelling as an empire, both by observers abroad and within its own borders,”⁵⁸ for which until today there are various examples, such as the case of Tatarstan, Chechnya or Crimea.

1.1.4. Collective memory and national narrative

Any society has a peculiar way of remembering past events, which is called a collective memory. If these memories are firm and steady then the perception of the present provides security and ensures stability, however, if the memories of the past are unclear, disturbing and controversial, then the national identity and positive feeling towards the state can be affected in a negative way. The latter is a reason why lately the studies of memory and remembrance policies take such an important role in the contemporary society.⁵⁹

In order to make a memory survive and continue to live on it must be represented, supported and communicated in a wider context.⁶⁰ Memory, so to say, is a way in which our past experiences are being represented to ourselves, with all its details, peculiarities and general dimensions, as Emily Keightley, a senior lecturer at Loughborough University, describes.⁶¹

On the other hand, “memory can be an act of resistance, actively rejecting the collective or cultural codes (..) repositioning the subject in new coordinates of time and space and meaning,”⁶² while the meaning of memories is constantly prone to changes and modifications.

⁵⁷ Laitin, 194.

⁵⁸ Beissinger, 38.

⁵⁹ Rozenvalds and Zobena, 371.

⁶⁰ Emily Keightley, “Engaging with Memory,” in *Research Methods for Cultural Studies*, ed. Michael Pickering (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 177.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

Memory has a social nature which then stresses “the collective role of remembering”, thus it is not merely a reproduction of what an individual has experienced, but rather a joint replica made by family’s, corporative, friends’, social norms, and all in all “collective influences”⁶³ as taught by French philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs. The memories are being maintained, framed and reconstructed but always within a certain social context, thus being an essential part of cultural studies.⁶⁴ Keightley reminds us how important it is to remember that the power structures and bodies “have formed particular memories and how they operate in their service.”⁶⁵ She even mentions that there is a “(..) potential for alternative memory to be forged and practiced. Conflicting and competing memories are formed and re-formed in the public and private domain, for affective pleasure and active resistance.”⁶⁶ Memories are so important to the research field in focus also because of the latest technological and other easily feasible possibilities of modification or alternating of memory.⁶⁷

Memory also forms a collective identity building a bridge between social memory, on the one hand, and social identity, on the other, says Zelče.⁶⁸ The strength and intensity of collective memory vary according to different groups of the society. Some groups will feel a very strong sense of ethnic/national belonging, while others will not experience this kind of emotions. The intensity of collective memory can be increased or decreased with means of communication. Normally, in the groups that have not experienced existential threat the intensity of collective emotions is quite low, while, in a situation of an external threat the intensity increases considerably as Estonian researcher Martin Ehala has argued writing about the ethnic and national identities in the Baltic States.⁶⁹

⁶³ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 44, quoted in Keightley, “Engaging with Memory,” 176.

⁶⁴ Keightley, “Engaging with Memory,” 176.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 179.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 178.

⁶⁸ Rozenvalds and Zobena, 371.

⁶⁹ Ehala, 36.

Zelče has divided the society of Latvia into different “communities of memory” all of which have varied values and beliefs and they have experienced varied cultural traumas.⁷⁰ These separate communities of memory, thus, have different interpretations of such events as the Second World War, or the political use of the events of the 16th March⁷¹ and 9th May,⁷² just to name some examples. There are few successful attempts to address the history of the 20th century in a balanced manner, without any biased views.⁷³

Halbwachs has developed a concept of “collective memory” which “maintains historical continuity by recalling specific elements from the archive of ‘historical memory’.”⁷⁴ Moreover, De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak in “The Discursive Construction of National Identities” argue that “Halbwachs’s concept is of particular interest for an analytical approach to the subjective discursive construction of national identity, especially regarding the question of which ‘national history’ is told by nation’s citizens, what and how they recollect, and between which ‘events’ they make a connection in their subjective ‘national narrative’.”⁷⁵

1.2. Citizenship and the role of language

1.2.1. Citizenship and ethnicity as mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion

There are various European nations that tend to understand *nationality* with the status of *citizenship* and others that correlate the understanding of *nationality* with *ethnicity*. In this latter manner, the ethnic perception of nation often has its reflections within the

⁷⁰ Rozenvalds and Zobena, 371.

⁷¹ 16th of March is a Remembrance day of the Latvian legionnaires. Latvian Legion was part of the German Waffen-SS.

⁷² 9th of May is a Victory Day, a commemoration of the Soviet Union’s victory over Nazi Germany.

⁷³ Ilva Skulte, introduction to *The New Heroes - The Old Victims: Politics of Memory in Russia and the Baltics*, ed. Igors Gubenko, Deniss Hanovs, Vladislavs Malahovskis (Rīga: Zinātne, 2016), 11.

⁷⁴ De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak, 155.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

judicial level of the state as well,⁷⁶ or as professor Stephen May from the University of Auckland recognises: “In many EU member-states, the denotation of citizenship status as ‘nationality’ refracts the ways in which perceptions of national group membership are intertwined with legal ties to the state.”⁷⁷

Contradictions of the universality of citizenship are to be faced when the ethnic *other* claims to be a citizen. “In this case, the nation ceases to resonate with a ‘civic’ notion and assumes an ‘ethnic’ or racial contour, which does not acknowledge citizenship as a sufficient condition of belonging, but requires also an ethnic or racial commonality.”⁷⁸

Now, the historical development of recording ethnicity in a passport is briefly explained. Soviet citizens possessed their own internal passports in which their ethnicity was recorded since 1932. As one can learn from studies of discrimination, the latter is an example of positive discrimination. Yet, it has also been a tool to discriminate against Jews and to diminish their political participation. Nor Khrushchev, nor Brezhnev had been planning to remove ethnicity from the Soviet passport, therefore since the 1950s any attempt to eliminate ethnicity from passports did not succeed.⁷⁹ Thus, continuing the rooted tradition, ethnicity was still being recorded in almost all post-Soviet countries, including Latvia. Despite the several claims voiced by various ethnic groups in Russia against removing ethnicity from the passport records,⁸⁰ as late as in 1997 the Russian Federation dismissed ethnicity from their internal passports.⁸¹

Meanwhile, the European Union has stated “that the existence of such identity markers in ID cards is discriminatory and therefore incompatible with a European

⁷⁶ Kristine Horner, “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship in Multilingual Luxembourg,” *Journal of Language and Politics* 14, no. 3 (2015): 363, doi: 10.1075/jlp.14.3.03hor.

⁷⁷ Stephen May, *Language and Minority Rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Politics of Language* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 75, doi: 10.1023/b:lpol.0000017820.13035.0c, quoted in Horner, “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship,” 212.

⁷⁸ Antonsich, 293.

⁷⁹ Aktürk, “Regimes of Ethnicity,” 33-34; Aktürk writes that in the Soviet Union “[t]here were no ethnic ‘minorities,’ because all ethnicities together constituted the Soviet people.” USSR in this sense was very inclusive towards different ethnicities, building a common Soviet identity, so Khrushchev only offered to introduce a record of “Soviet” ethnicity, replacing the one of their former state.

⁸⁰ Aktürk, 21.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

conception of human and civil rights.”⁸² It is clear this sort of identity construction is rather a modern phenomenon, yet there is little compliance in how this practice is seen across Europe and in different nation-states.

The contemporary researchers, Keightley amongst them, write about “constructions of individual and collective temporal identities,”⁸³ making us understand the unstable nature of identity. When discussing the social identity of an individual that requires its identification with various communities and cultural groups,⁸⁴ we must bear in mind that it is “always subject to re-construction.”⁸⁵ Therefore, social identity is a construction that allows an individual to claim a membership (due to the belief that they are qualified to belong), this membership then constraints us to certain behaviour system, acceptance of common history, and overall emotional closeness and group attachment. All these categories are creating a space for exclusion and inclusion, and one such mechanism is citizenship.

Citizenship has developed starting from the Ancient Greece, when Aristotle in “Politics” referred to citizenship as equal participation, nevertheless, people were defined by gender and race.⁸⁶ Until today various schemes of exclusion remain, “mak[ing] citizens part of a selected group, who enjoy privileges denied to non-members.”⁸⁷ All in all, citizenship, “an institution that emerged with European modernity,”⁸⁸ is understood as a certain status that provides both duties and rights,⁸⁹ such as the right to influence political decisions, while it does not necessarily guarantee social equality or welfare.⁹⁰ Political participation, Bellamy argues, is what unites and

⁸² Dominique Arel, “Fixing Ethnicity in Identity Documents: The Rise and Fall of Passport Nationality in Russia,” *NCEEER Working Papers*, December 12, 2001, 2, quoted in Aktürk, “Regimes of Ethnicity,” 20.

⁸³ Keightley, 175.

⁸⁴ Nenad Miscevic, “Nationalism”, *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/nationalism/>.

⁸⁵ Laitin, 14.

⁸⁶ Richard Bellamy, *Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 37.

⁸⁷ Bellamy, *Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction*, 53.

⁸⁸ Tambini, “Post-national Citizenship,” 195-196.

⁸⁹ Horner, “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship,” 361; Engin Fahri Isin, *Recasting the Social in Citizenship* (Toronto [Ont.]: University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 2008), E-Book.

⁹⁰ Inese Šūpule, Iveta Bebrīša, Evija Kļave, *Latvijas nepilsoņu integrācijas procesa analīze* (Riga: Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, 2014), 10, http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/resources/nepilsoni/BISS_Nepilsoni_2014.pdf.

penetrates three main realities of citizenship, namely, membership, rights, and participation,⁹¹ while professor at Manchester Metropolitan University Keith Faulks explains citizenship also “in relation to legal, philosophical and socio-political criteria,”⁹² all of which are key premises for this paper.

There has certainly been a rise in within the research field of national citizenship. Such concepts as nation, culture, and ethnies have taken a particular notion and suffered several transformations regarding their meaning within European languages. These and other similar concepts have “a legitimizing function in distribution of resources, collective action and the exercise of power.”⁹³ For long, [m]embership of a nation [has been] the key consideration in the allocation of rights, and class conflict [has been] institutionalized.”⁹⁴ Will Kymlicka, a theorist who calls for a new form of nationalism in order to save the national citizenship,⁹⁵ and political theorist David Miller both hold an idea that some cultures within a nation-state have a *lower* priority than that of the national cultures. Miller claims that nation is the spine of citizenship, and that “nationality and citizenship complement one-another. Without a common national identity, there is nothing to hold citizens together, no reason for extending the role just to these people and not to others.”⁹⁶

In several European states citizenship status can be granted solely by the means of one’s ethnicity⁹⁷ or national identity. In many cases, it is not considered to be *enough* to hold a passport that states one’s citizenship, in order to *belong* to this nation. The

⁹¹ Bellamy, 33.

⁹² Keith Faulks, *Citizenship in Modern Britain* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), quoted in Horner, “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship,” 360.

⁹³ Tambini, 197.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), doi:10.1093/0198290918.001.0001, in Tambini, “Post-national Citizenship,” 212.

⁹⁶ David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1997), quoted in Tambini, 204-205.

⁹⁷ One of the most precise definitions describing ethnicity was created by Max Weber when he explained ethnicity as “subjective belief in common descent” distinguishing it “from religious, linguistic, economic, ideological, and other social categories.”

citizen's status requires an individual to be linked to certain "cultural, ethnic and linguistic characteristics, common myths and shared historical memories."⁹⁸

Miller's ideas describe the ethnic perception of nation, or how ethnic-minded Latvians understand the status of citizenship. While in all this narrative there is a notable lack of post-national dimension of citizenship, or in other words, lack of global-contemporary word view.

The question about the understanding of ethnicity and citizenship is inevitably related also to the politics of society integration, which is invariably shifting between ethnic and civic elements.⁹⁹ Unfortunately, there is only a slight possibility that a common ground for social integration, a topic we are going to examine below, can be reached with a completely ethnocultural definition of a nation where ethnically-orientated practices are applied within the state legislation and citizenship acquisition.

1.2.2. Language as a tool for identity formation

Language is the most recognisable matter that distinguishes many ethnic groups, and it has also the central role in many ethnic identities. Language, as an expression of ethnic identity, has a fundamental part in the evolution of the national identity, even if it is merely about the matters of dialects. It is not only an issue with symbolical meaning, but one dealing with communication in the first place. Language is the main instrument in providing a common space of information and media for the entire group of denizens, which further provides a chance to develop common values, and common understanding about the every-day reality and common collective emotions. Thus, again, the battle about the official state language is fundamental in the creation of both ethnic and national identities of the society.

After Latvia's incorporation within the USSR in 1940 social bilingualism was introduced together with the Russian language, which was the main Soviets' language of communication, and the importance of Latvian language was considerably diminished.

⁹⁸ Tambini, 196.

⁹⁹ Ījabs, "Between the Ethnic and Civic," 31.

During the Third Awakening¹⁰⁰ within the Latvian society grew an idea of regaining the status of the Latvian language, which eventually led to amendments made in the constitution of the Latvian Socialist Soviet Republic on granting the official language status to the Latvian language.¹⁰¹ Finally, in 1999 the Official Language law was adopted, stating the following:

(1) It is the duty of State and local government institutions to ensure the provision of material resources for research, cultivation and development of the Latvian language.

(2) The State shall ensure the development of an official language policy, incorporating in it scientific research, protection and teaching of the Latvian language, promoting enlargement of the role of the Latvian language in the national economy, and cultivating individual and public understanding of the language as a national value.¹⁰²

In the context of Latvia, together with Ukraine and other former Soviet Union countries, Aneta Pavlenko, a professor at the College of Education at Temple University, Philadelphia, US, has sought for an explanation of the language management and justification of monolingualism policies in the post-Soviet countries.¹⁰³ She writes that the strict manner of the previous Soviet language laws have had an influence on the manner the present Latvian and Ukrainian language laws were created after the fall of the USSR. Moreover, what has to be highlighted, various other authors claim that the Western European standards cannot be directly transferred into the context of the post-Soviet ground not taking into account the regional historic and sociopolitical peculiarities,¹⁰⁴ and, consequently, that the “accommodation of Russian

¹⁰⁰ The Third Awakening was part of the National revival movement, related to the Singing Revolution of 1987-1991.

¹⁰¹ Latvian Language Agency, “History,” <http://www.valoda.lv/valsts-valoda/vesture/#5>; Klāvs Sedlenieks, “State to Love, State to Hate: Vernacular Concepts of State in Latvia,” 8, in *Pluralism Anxiety. Acting Socially in Latvia*, ed. Sergejs Kruks (Riga: Riga Stradiņš University, 2018).

¹⁰² Official Language Law of the Republic of Latvia, Section 24, 1999, <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/id/14740-official-language-law>.

¹⁰³ Pavlenko, 37-58.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 45.

speakers' rights would endanger the rights of the titular languages,"¹⁰⁵ and shape their identity.

Erik H. Erikson was one of the first ones to academically talk about the crisis of identity and the development of the psychoanalytic notion of identity.¹⁰⁶ An individual is being judged by other individuals of the same group with the categories important to the group; the group decides the evaluation specifics and the criteria of belonging. It is possible to evoke a shift in one's identity when it comes to discussion about language. Laitin tells a curious case about Russians moving to Kazakhstan and expecting to conserve the same language use as of their homeland, while in any other occasion the situation would be expected to be quite the opposite.¹⁰⁷ Russophones considering their language as a central point of their identity insist in conserving it disregarding their actual geopolitical surroundings. When Latvia regained its independence, the previously widely present Russian language and identity came under threat of assimilation. The long-standing equilibrium of Russian as the dominant language in many spheres in Latvia (at least by formal means and in legal terms) was challenged.¹⁰⁸ However, Laitin admits that "adopting a new language does not automatically mean one has adopted a new identity."¹⁰⁹

Yet, the use of one or another language determines an individual's closeness to the respective identity. But there are certain contexts in which the choice of language being spoken, or the way it is spoken, communicates membership in an ethnonational community.¹¹⁰ Jon E. Fox and Cynthia Miller-Idriss have quoted a research from Quebec which "has revealed how spoken French is both deployed and perceived as constitutive of Frenchness,"¹¹¹ – an example which could be directly related to the case with the use of Latvian language.

¹⁰⁵ Pavlenko, 38.

¹⁰⁶ Laitin, 19.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 22.

¹⁰⁸ Also when *Satversme* regained its force it was stated within it that the Latvian language is the only official language.

¹⁰⁹ Laitin, 23.

¹¹⁰ Jon E. Fox and Cynthia Miller-Idriss, "Everyday Nationhood," *Ethnicities* 8, no. 4 (2008): 542, doi: 10.1177/1468796808088892.

¹¹¹ Fox and Miller-Idriss, "Everyday Nationhood," 542.

We can deduce that to some point Latvians still hold this idea that dates back to the German Romanticism, particularly the ideas of Johann Gottfried Herder who was convinced about the close connection between language and the nationhood. The language one speaks predominates their thoughts, thus the nation thinks alike, and if one does not speak the language they do not belong to that nation. This primordial philosophical thought holds that there are common characteristics and nature to a nation or community that persist over time.

1.2.3. Questioning language as a tool for integration

Often language can be seen not only as a symbol of cultural or national identity but also as an element that prevents integration. In many EU member-states, the policymakers have made the process towards obtaining a citizenship harder with several formalised tests described in the following subchapter.¹¹² Regarding the widely popular practice of citizenship policies to test the language skills of the applicant in order to acquire citizenship, Horner calls it as “an acultural instrument of social integration.”¹¹³

On the other hand, it is essential to consider historical development and facts before studying or judging the language-related policies, as Horner puts it: “It is essential to bear in mind the historical context and reconfigurations of language ideologies and European integration to understand present-day discourses on language and citizenship in Europe.”¹¹⁴ In all three Baltic States language has been one of the central elements within political strategies both before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when in the early 1990s being introduced into citizenship legislation, though “linguistic minority-majority relationships can potentially shift over the course of history under certain conditions,”¹¹⁵ as Horner warns.

¹¹² Horner, “Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe,” *Language and Linguistics Compass* 9, no. 5 (2015): 212, doi: 10.1111/lnc3.12133; Holly Hansen-Thomas, “Language Ideology, Citizenship, and Identity: The Case of Modern Germany,” *Journal of Language and Politics* 6, no. 2 (2007): 251, doi: 10.1075/jlp.6.2.07han.

¹¹³ Horner, “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship,” 363.

¹¹⁴ Horner, “Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe,” 213.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 214.

It is a very common belief throughout the whole Europe “that the official or national language of a country is the most valuable, and thus the preferred language of use by all denizens,” so to say the “‘one nation-one language’ belief,” “equat[ing] language with identity.”¹¹⁶ All these perceptions “(..) play an important role in the development of official public policy in matters of citizenship requirements, education, immigration, and minority relations — specifically ethno-cultural and religious rights.”¹¹⁷

Eiženija Aldermane, the chairman of the Education, Culture and Sports Committee of Riga City Council, who in an interview to “*Diena*”, the national daily newspaper of Latvia, has admitted that the focus of the integration must be changed, turning away from the premises of language and ethnicity.¹¹⁸ Also within the academia, various scholars agree that the social integration policies executed in Latvia are “ethnocentric and [are] plac[ing] a disproportionate focus on Latvian language and culture,”¹¹⁹ which is further described in the second part of the paper, showing that there is a tendency towards an ethnic democracy within Latvia and its political framework. Additionally, a language neither should be the leading element of the integration as there are many other approaches for the attempt, Aldermane continues.

1.2.4. Citizenship legislation and language testing

The language testing for citizenship acquisition has increasingly become a common practice since the beginnings of the 21st-century. Scholars have been looking on the associative narratives regarding diversity, cohesion and integration within the EU countries, in which the linguistic authority has become a top-down requirement, having

¹¹⁶ Hansen-Thomas, “Language Ideology, Citizenship, and Identity,” 249.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Guntars Gūte, “Valoda ir būtisks, bet ne vienīgais integrācijas elements,” *Diena*, last modified October 26, 2017, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/viedokli/latvija/valoda-ir-butisks-bet-ne-vienigais-integracijas-elements-14183543>.

¹¹⁹ Juris Rozenvalds, “The Soviet Heritage and Integration Policy Development since the Restoration of Independence,” in *How Integrated is Latvian Society?* ed. Nils Muiznieks, 33–60; Deniss Hanovs, “Neiespējamā integrācija,” last modified November 24, 2010, <http://politika.lv/article/neiespejama-integracija>; Ivars Ijabs, “Neirotiskā integrācija,” last modified April 13, 2011, <http://providus.lv/article/neirotiska-integracija>; all quoted in Ieva Birka, “Expressed Attachment to Russia and Social Integration: The Case of Young Russian Speakers in Latvia, 2004–2010,” *Journal of Baltic Studies*, (2015): 6, doi: 10.1080/01629778.2015.1094743.

a vast influence in the related social, political and economic scenes.¹²⁰ Several European states in the latest decades have decided on new procedures that must be followed in order to obtain a citizenship, which may include basic questions on the history of the state, constitution, language test, etc. Horner tells us that “[i]n multiple EU member-states, it is the national and/or official language of the state that tends to be positioned centrally in relation to discourses on social cohesion and integration,”¹²¹ which most certainly is the case in Latvia. Thus, both historical and language ideological approach is closely related to the citizenship and integration policies thereof we will talk about in the second part of the paper.

One of the main concerns at the time when the language and citizenship legislation was made was about the low Latvian language competence within the Russophones, thus, a sort of latvianisation approach or positive discrimination, as others call it, begun to take place.¹²² In various researches investigating citizenship policies regarding language issues Horner has found out an evidence, that can also be linked to the case of Latvia, namely, that the perception of nationhood is being directly linked to the use of national and/or official language “as the presupposed ‘mother tongue’ of the national core.”¹²³

Research in citizenship has revealed the correlation between civic integration and matters related to language, including language ideologies and testing regimes as Horner puts it.¹²⁴ Political scientist Sara Wallace Goodman’s civic integration index (CIVIX) “constitutes a highly significant contribution to our understanding of shifts in citizenship policy and the relationship to testing regimes.”¹²⁵ Horner argues that the attempts to explain citizenship by Goodman’s CIVIX schema can be related with

¹²⁰ Horner, “Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe,” 209.

¹²¹ Ibid, 214.

¹²² Pavlenko, 51-52.

¹²³ Horner, “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship,” 365.

¹²⁴ Horner, “Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe,” 363.

¹²⁵ Sara Wallace Goodman, “Integration Requirements for Integration’s Sake: Identifying, Categorising and Comparing Civic Integration Policies,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36, no.5 (2010), doi: 10.1080/13691831003764300 quoted in Horner, “Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe,” 363.

“imposed or ascribed identity.”¹²⁶ Horner and Goodman together with many other scholars are actually criticising the way language has been imposed upon certain groups of people and doubting the objectivity of such language tests when it comes to evaluation of one’s linguistic capabilities, which further may or may not lead to a change in their legal status.

By investigating the correlation between necessary language requirements and the granting of citizenship in modern-day Europe we can question whether the language testing is being imposed, how it influences the rights of the minority groups,¹²⁷ and if it can be seen as a “state-endorsed social inequality.”¹²⁸ Such decisions and citizenship mechanisms can be highly influential, and Estonian researcher Vello Pettai warns that it can lead to a phenomenon called “ethnic control.”¹²⁹

The core question that Horner has tackled is if language should be integrated as a part of citizenship test – how it can be legitimised, justified, explained. People from such small nations as Latvia or Luxembourg¹³⁰ is might as well believe that without the language their national identity would lose all its meaning. An opinion drawn from Horner’s research claims that: “It makes sense because if one wants to acquire a nationality, then one must be able to identify with it and that is only possible if one can understand and speak the language of the country.”¹³¹ On the other hand, however, as Holly Hansen-Thomas from Texas Woman's University well understands the threats of such approach saying that: “Conservative and liberal discourse has contributed to restrictions with regard to the language and education that may further jeopardize the rights of potential citizens.”¹³²

Therefore, we see that Hansen-Thomas, together with several other academics, is against the existing order regarding the language testing for the naturalisation,

¹²⁶ Horner, “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship,” 372.

¹²⁷ Hansen-Thomas, 250.

¹²⁸ Horner, “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship,” 365.

¹²⁹ Pettai, “Emerging Ethnic Democracy in Estonia and Latvia”; Horner, “Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe,” 215.

¹³⁰ For more information of the Luxembourgish example see Kristine Horner’s “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship in Multilingual Luxembourg.”

¹³¹ Ibid, 370.

¹³² Hansen-Thomas, 262.

believing that it ought to be changed or improved in order to enable better integration of the future citizens, and not to use it as a mechanism to justify “one’s loyalty and commitment to the Latvian state,”¹³³ or any other state in focus. In such case “the rights and interests of all—and not just some—citizens”¹³⁴ would be taken into account.

¹³³ Pavlenko, 52.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 53.

2. POLITICAL AND SOCIETAL ANALYSIS

The previous chapter where the discussion of belonging was commenced evolves into the second one which is rather analytical and focuses more on the practical issues of integration and political participation. It demonstrates the number of barriers, either real or imagined, towards an integrated society, and seeks the explanations for such barriers. Apart from that, the reader will have a chance to understand what role the national Latvian and foreign Russian media has towards successful integration of Russophones in Latvia. Further, the author of the paper investigates how the parliamentary debates are being conducted and if those, together with the subsequent political decisions, are to be blamed for the society integration struggles in Latvia.

2.1. Barriers to integration and political participation

2.1.1. Ethnic democracy, ethnic integration

When talking about the institutionalisation of ethnic democracy and its consequences Pettai calls all the policies and actions taken by Latvian and Estonian governments as “a long-term normalization and re-equilibration process”¹³⁵ to integrate or assimilate the Russophones, yet restricting the political participation during the certain period of time in Estonia and till nowadays in Latvia. Now, looking at the conceptual background of the term “ethnic democracy”, Pettai explains: “Ethnic democracy seeks to meld elements of participatory democracy with that domination, frequently as a reflection of the superordinate group’s own democratic values or history.”¹³⁶

In discourses of the Estonian and Latvian elites where they are considering Russophones as a sociocultural threat, Graham Smith has noticed a practice to withdraw legitimate status from their minority populations (considering that they are illegal (non-

¹³⁵ Pettai, “Emerging Ethnic Democracy in Estonia and Latvia.”

¹³⁶ Ibid.

citizens) in the titular states, as the Soviet occupation was admitted illegal).¹³⁷ The latter could be considered as a reason for a disproportional ethno-political control and ethnic stereotyping, as Pettai has recognised.¹³⁸ The ethnic stereotyping is present in the example of Russophones being considered as politically disloyal, and not supporting the restoration of independence. The majority of the first elected parliamentarians both in Estonia and Latvia were predominantly titular nationalities,¹³⁹ thus from the very beginning of the young nation-states, this disproportional ethno-political rule has been present.

At the same time, however, many of non-Latvians did support the restoration of independence and even participated in the highly patriotic and heroic event of barricades in the capital city Riga in January of 1991 when the special police forces OMON¹⁴⁰ loyal to the Soviet Union aimed to overtake the power in the city. Now, however, the naturalisation rates are low and are only decreasing. Pettai advocates that “[a] lack of progress on naturalization, meanwhile, will mean both countries will remain under a cloud of instability which will slow their progress toward further European integration.”¹⁴¹

The Latvian civil society is built on either predominantly Latvian or Russian organisations, communities, etc., that are expressing one or the other ethnic groups’ interests. Not only researchers but also lay people have come to realise and understand that the political division in Latvia is based on ethnic principle. The division in political parties by members’ ethnicity has almost become a common, self-understanding tradition, which is also expressed by Inese Šūpule,¹⁴² sociologist and researcher in the Institute of philosophy and sociology at the University of Latvia and the Baltic Institute of Social Sciences. She also suggests that the traditional society integration with its focus on ethnicity shall be redirected towards integration based on interest groups.

¹³⁷ Graham Smith, “The Ethnic Democracy Thesis and the Citizenship Question in Estonia and Latvia,” *Nationalities Papers* 24, no. 2 (1996), doi:10.1080/00905999608408438, quoted in Pettai.

¹³⁸ Pettai.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ OMON (*Отряд мобильный особого назначения*) – Special Purpose Mobility Unit.

¹⁴¹ Pettai.

¹⁴² Guntars Gūte, “Demokrātiskā sabiedrībā pilnīgas saliedētības nav.”

Pettai wrote in an article of 1998 about the fear of titular nations' government that the non-titulars could "slowly come into the political process, they may be encouraged to organize into their own parties and seek to elect their own representatives to parliament."¹⁴³ This, however, is still a very present fear in Latvian society. Prejudices of a left-wing "Russian" party as being extremely left, pro-Putin, and Kremlin, "(..) would then be viewed as a threat to Estonian and Latvian ethnic interests."¹⁴⁴ Thus, an idea of necessity "to maintain pre-existing levels of ethnopolitical control"¹⁴⁵ remains. Though, after-election evidence shows that there is a part of non-titulars that are willing to support the so-called "Latvian" parties and vice versa.

A research of Mieriņa and Koroļeva shows that one of the reasons for xenophobic and exclusionist sentiments is a deeply rooted ethnic nationalism, which have especially emerged during the last forty years among the youth and the older generation.¹⁴⁶

Socio-psychological explanations, as Mieriņa and Koroļeva have categorised them, are based on emotions and related to looking for a scapegoat, together with a competition for the limited resources, and even experiencing a threat to one's own national identity. Thus, the citizens, that are the dominating the majority group of society, might not be willing to share their privileged citizenship status with any other of the outsider groups.

On the socio-structural level, the growing numbers of immigration, asylum seekers and other non-European residents could be linked to the growing support for the nationalist forces as well. Mieriņa and Koroļeva are convinced that in many post-Soviet countries there are still traits of fear of immigrant influx as it was during the USSR, therefore, adding to the persistence of xenophobic and ethno-nationalistic sentiments. Moreover, it is said that in these regions the prejudice and violence against ethnic minorities is higher than in Western European countries, yet the socialist past cannot serve as the only explanation for the nationalistic views.

¹⁴³ Pettai.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Inta Mieriņa and Ilze Koroļeva, "Support for Far Right Ideology and Anti-Migrant Attitudes Among Youth in Europe: A Comparative Analysis," *The Sociological Review* 63, no. S2 (2015): 183, doi: 10.1111/1467-954X.12268.

All in all, the support for the far-right ideology is mostly shown by those who are less successful in socio-economic positions regarding education, employment, wealth and social class, therefore expressing their “ignorance and irrational fear.”¹⁴⁷ Having a poor understanding of politics and little interest in the current news and the media also contribute to the negligence towards the minorities.

2.1.2. Politics of ethnicity and passive political participation

One of the fundamental values of the social integration is the political involvement. State authorities and their implemented policies alone cannot ensure a successful integration of society, for which an active political participation is an essential necessity. Active civic participation in public and political life contributes to the irreversible processes of integration and its concordance with the interests of the majority, it unites the inhabitants of a state and strengthens democracy.

Šūpule admits that the citizenship and language policies made in the 1990s, together with the decision to deny the voting rights to non-citizens of Latvia, have been made on the basis of oppression sentiment lagging behind from the former Soviet times. Therefore, there is a good reason to wonder how much more time will be needed for the politicians, as the main legislators, to implement such political reforms and governmental changes in order to move forward with the decades-long inequity, and not restricting rights of political participation to a separated part of society.

In the paper of Mieriņa, we can find an attempt to understand “political apathy and civic passivity” described with a phraseological unit of a vicious circle.¹⁴⁸ Mieriņa has gathered interesting data from the European Values Study in 2008 revealing that the vast majority of young people would not show any active support, protest, or participate in a lawful demonstration, strike or sign a petition, due to weak political decisions, which provokes lack of trust in politicians and the state as such.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Mieriņa and Koroļeva, 188.

¹⁴⁸ Inta Mieriņa, “The Vicious Circle: Does Disappointment with Political Authorities Contribute to Political Passivity in Latvia?” *European Societies* 16, no. 4 (2014): 628, doi: 10.1080/14616696.2012.749414.

¹⁴⁹ Mieriņa, “The Vicious Circle,” 615-617.

Sedlenieks has found out interesting characteristics of the Latvian society and what is being meant when Latvians refer to the *state*. With a support of in-depth interviews and discourse analysis Sedlenieks is able to claim that “the state is strongly treated as a Latvian national/ethnic project. Thus the state is mostly a representation of the Latvian ethnic community.”¹⁵⁰ The modern Latvians are facing the difficulty to think within different category than one of a state as an ethnic project, even though “only about 60% of inhabitants of Latvia are ethnic Latvians.”¹⁵¹ The general assumption is that the state apparatus is completely separated from the society, with the former seeking to oppress the latter, while the society is trying to resist the (potential) oppression of the state. Moreover, for a longer period of time already, Latvia has had one of the highest corruption rates in Europe, which creates low trust levels, hence also low citizen participation in political life.¹⁵²

In another research Mieriņa together with Edmunds Cers are looking for a proof of a connection between a poor political engagement of post-Soviet society to the traits of their former political culture.¹⁵³ Various local researchers have expressed concerns about the Latvians’ political passivity, low participation in social affairs, or, for instance, how it has become a common practice not to attend the elections.¹⁵⁴

Even if since the fall of the Soviet Union and the restoration of the State’s independence almost four decades have passed, the trust in governmental bodies remains low among many post-Soviet countries. In the highly authoritative Soviet regime, young people from their childhood were taught not to openly share their thoughts and opinion, not even mentioning political views. Hence, as Mieriņa and Cers tell, it has created a sort of a heritage of communism when “people grew cynical and sceptical towards the idea of political participation.”¹⁵⁵ The childhood habits

¹⁵⁰ Sedlenieks, “State to Love, State to Hate,” 2.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 21.

¹⁵² Mieriņa, “The Vicious Circle,” 616-618.

¹⁵³ Inta Mieriņa, and Edmunds Cers, “Is Communism to Blame for Political Disenchantment in Post-Communist Countries? Cohort Analysis of Adults’ Political Attitudes,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 66, no. 7 (2014): 1031, doi: 10.1080/09668136.2014.927641.

¹⁵⁴ Ivars Ījabs, “After the Referendum: Militant Democracy and Nation Building in Latvia,” *East European Politics & Societies* 30, no. 2 (2016): 288–314, doi: 10.1177/0888325415593630.

¹⁵⁵ Mieriņa and Cers, “Is Communism to Blame for Political Disenchantment,” 1032.

consequently have influenced the attitudes and responses when reaching adult age, resulting in “generations of disengaged citizenry.”¹⁵⁶

Further, let us examine the politically disengaged society and the lack of its representation within a political sphere.

2.1.3. Minority participation and representation

There are three premises that must be fulfilled in order to achieve effective minority participation, as Kymlicka has pointed out. Understandably, national minorities ought not to be discriminated regarding the main political rights – voting or stand as a candidate. The following stage is when minorities are represented in the parliament by their members, and finally when the power between the majority rule and minority rights is fairly balanced.¹⁵⁷

When a political decision is made, it is crucial to take into account the opinion of the directly affected society group, thus, two parties are involved – the decision-makers (legislators) and the affected ones (interest groups). Not only an abstract incentive of democracy is what drives the above-mentioned relationship but also many significant international documents and authorities.¹⁵⁸

A political analyst of Latvian Centre for Human Rights Sigita Zankovska-Odiņa has analysed how effective and possible is the minority participation in cultural, socio-economical and political life.¹⁵⁹ A division of public sphere and private sector distinguishes the formal participation options of the minorities in Latvia. The former supports more the premise of majority rule, while within the latter minority rights and diversity are more welcome. While one must remember that at the time of globalisation and growing migration the question of effective minority participation, as an essential part of democracy, is more relevant than ever.

¹⁵⁶ Mieriņa and Cers, “Is Communism to Blame for Political Disenchantment,” 1055.

¹⁵⁷ Sigita Zankovska-Odiņa, “Nacionālo minoritāšu līdzdalība - vai un cik efektīva?” in *Dialogs Latvijā: kultūru dažādība, robežas un saiknes*, ed. Deniss Hanovs (Rīga: VA "Akadēmisko programmu aģentūra", 2008), 58.

¹⁵⁸ For instance, “Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities” of the UN, The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe, or OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

¹⁵⁹ Zankovska-Odiņa, “Nacionālo minoritāšu līdzdalība - vai un cik efektīva?” 58.

Non-citizens of Latvia have not been granted the voting rights at the municipal level like it has been done in neighbouring Estonia. In 2009 a lawyer Aleksejs Dimitrovs together with historian and politician Vladimirs Makarovs conducted a research looking for compromises and solutions regarding the non-citizens of Latvia and their non-existing voting rights, acknowledging the tense situation within the society.¹⁶⁰ Both researchers created a strategic plan and a proposal for legitimising non-citizens with a right to vote at least in municipal level. The question, however, so far has not been resolved.

Not many representatives of national minorities tend to be elected as MPs in the Republic of Latvia. If in the 9th *Saeima* elections (2006-2010) there were still two political parties as representatives of minorities – “Harmony Centre” and “Latvian Russian Union”¹⁶¹, then today in the 12th *Saeima* only “Harmony Centre” has remained to receive the most Russophones’ (those holding the citizenship of Latvia) votes.¹⁶²

A different situation can be seen at the municipal level in the capital city. In 2009 for the very first time Nils Ušakovs, a member of a party “Harmony Centre”, was elected as a Mayor of Riga City Council. Since then, both the society and the academics have raised concerns about the strengthening of the role of the Russian language within the municipality’s level and beyond.¹⁶³ According to the data of Central Election Commission of Latvia, “Harmony Centre” has become widely popular, mostly among Russophones, but not exclusively, receiving more than one-fourth of the popular vote in the *Saeima* elections.¹⁶⁴ Despite this, the party was not included in the government coalition, which “has lead academics to suggest that ethnic cleavages continue to have

¹⁶⁰ Aleksejs Dimitrovs and Vladimirs Makarovs, “Latvijas nepilsoņi un balsstiesības: Kompromisi un risinājumi,” (Riga: Sorosa fonds, 2009), http://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/site/record/docs/2012/07/13/Nepilsoni_petijums_makarovs2009.pdf.

¹⁶¹ “Latvian Russian Union” at the time and till 2014 known as the electoral alliance “For Human Rights in a United Latvia” with its most recognised member Tatjana Ždanoka.

¹⁶² Knowing that the biggest part of the minorities in Latvia are Russophones, in vernacular certain parties are being referred to as “Russian-parties”; Deniss Hanovs, “Nacionālā valsts un globalizācija: Latvijas mediju un parlamentārais diskurss par globalizācijas fenomenu,” in *Šeit, visur un tagad... : Globalizācija Latvijā: konteksti, diskursi un dalībnieki* (Riga: Drukātava, 2008), 170.

¹⁶³ Pavlenko, 37.

¹⁶⁴ Central Election Commission of Latvia, “12th Saeima Elections,” http://sv2014.cvk.lv/index_rez.html.

salience in politics.”¹⁶⁵ Consequently, also within the politics of Latvia, the division of ethnicities can be witnessed as a normality.

2.1.4. Parallel information spaces

It is rather difficult to find a definition of the phrase “information space” despite its vast presence in political and academic discourse. Kruks and Šulmane used it for the first time when talking about how the issue of citizenship and naturalisation is being represented in Latvian and Russian media.¹⁶⁶ While in a later publication Kruks adds that the information space is closed to the sources of outside, the information is being consumed by passive individuals that are not interacting nor interpreting the meaning of the received information within their empirical knowledge.¹⁶⁷

As people decide which media to consume, further, acquiring the same media creates an invisible link among the rest of the nation. However, if a different source of media is being consumed, there is a lack of a mutual self-understanding of each other, creating an absence of common ideas, thoughts, understandings, even of the daily public happenings. “Viewers tuned into the same broadcasts or readers flipping through the same papers acquire shared ‘cultural competencies’,”¹⁶⁸ thus, reading the same newspaper turns into one of those “ritual practices which enable us to imagine ourselves as part of a social collectivity that shares in the same anonymous, simultaneous activity.”¹⁶⁹

Analysis of the media content made by various researchers shows that the representation of news in the press of the Latvian language or the Russian language varies, it is to say, even if the published news is of the same topic the form in which

¹⁶⁵ Birka, “Expressed Attachment to Russia and Social Integration,” 13.

¹⁶⁶ Sergejs Kruks, “Divas informācijas telpas, paralēlās informatīvi lingvistiskās telpas, sašķelta informācijas telpa,” in *Mūsdienu kultūras stāvokļi / Conditions for Contemporary Culture*, ed. O. Redbergs (Riga: Megaphone Publishers, 2013), 187.

¹⁶⁷ Kruks, “Divas informācijas telpas,” 190.

¹⁶⁸ Fox and Miller-Idriss, 553.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

they are being delivered differ.¹⁷⁰ Also, several Latvian linguists have expressed concerns about the categorisation of reality in Russian media and the possible harm to society.¹⁷¹

The differences between the ethnic Latvian and Russian-speaking groups, including their political beliefs, or if they belong to citizens' or non-citizens' group, are the ones that media is presenting more often than, for example, sexual orientation minorities, disabled people or other ethnic minorities. Many times an individual's belonging to a specific ethnic group is being expressed excessively, making one believe that it is actually unnecessary. Attention has been put on topics concerning problems of socio-economic and political nature encountered by minority groups, and how they find themselves in the socio-cultural space. Most of all, negative attitude and intolerance is present in the articles about history, language policies, education reforms, where often unnecessary questions containing prejudiced assumptions are being made.¹⁷²

Muižnieks has expressed concerns about how the Russian propaganda media influences the image of Latvia by generating a picture of an enemy.¹⁷³ This has been possible due to the fact that "Russians in Latvia managed to create a diverse information space of the Latvian Russian-speaking mass media, as well as the one orientated to the information resources of the Russian Federation."¹⁷⁴

There are loads of theoretical assumptions on a nation, identity, nationalism and globalisation, which talk about how the opinions expressed by politicians, or the material taught in schools transform specific political concepts and identity narratives. All of those can be intensified by the presence of mass-media, bringing the narrative further into the general every day's discourse.¹⁷⁵ Media has an important role in shaping

¹⁷⁰ Muižnieks, *How Integrated is Latvian Society?* 242; Zepa, Šūpule, et al, *Etnopolitiskā spriedze Latvijā: konflikta risinājuma meklējumi* (Riga: BISS, 2005), 58; Ilze Šulmane, "The Russian Language Media in Latvia," in *Latvian Russian Relations: Domestic and International Relations*, ed. Nils Muižnieks (Riga: University of Latvia Press, 2006), 66.

¹⁷¹ Kruks, "Divas informācijas telpas," 188.

¹⁷² Šulmane and Kruks, 2-3.

¹⁷³ Birka, 11.

¹⁷⁴ Volkov, 38.

¹⁷⁵ De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak, 152.

the identity, setting the temperature within the society, and sometimes widening the gap, or a barrier, if you like, of its two counterparts.

2.2. Parliamentary debates and decisions on integration in practice

2.2.1. The political actions and actors of social integration

One will learn that there are various types of integration; it is possible to distinguish the civic or political, regional, social, as well as the ethnic integration. Often these categories of integration cannot be separated from one another, thus are looked upon together with other categories.

The United Nations definition of social integration explains the following: “Social Integration can be seen as a dynamic and principled process where all members participate in dialogue to achieve and maintain peaceful social relations. Social integration does not mean coerced assimilation or forced integration.”¹⁷⁶ One can argue then what nuance bears any specific word or concept, for instance, if “forced” is the same as the obligatory requirement to learn a language and pass the examination in order to discard one’s non-citizen status and obtain a citizenship.

There are various actors that participate in the processes of society integration. Let us look at the example of the Republic of Latvia. In the document issued by the Cabinet of Ministers about the strategies, principles, and guidelines on national identity, civil society and integration in Latvia for the period 2012 to 2018, it has been stated that one of the main principles of the social integration policy is “the openness of being Latvian” which has been explained by saying that the Latvian nation is inclusive; it is its duty to strengthen its identity and at the same time to be open towards others that wish to be included, meaning that one can not only be born as Latvian but also to become one consciously.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ “Social Integration” UN definition, http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/sib/peacedialogue/soc_integration.htm.

¹⁷⁷ Cabinet of Ministers, “Nacionālās identitātes, pilsoniskās sabiedrības un integrācijas politikas pamatnostādnes 2012.–2018.gadam,” 11, https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/KM_130515_Prec_Nac_ident_pilson_sab_un_itegr_polit_pamatnost_2012-2018.pdf.

It is also written in the same document that the minorities and their culture, including language, ethnic and cultural peculiarities, form an essential and important part of the Latvian society and culture, therefore ought to be saved, supported and developed.¹⁷⁸ Similarly, every individual ought to be free to choose how to form their own identity; every choice is voluntary and is being respected, and the duty of the State of Latvia is to interact and cooperate with every denizen whatever their choice has been.¹⁷⁹

In 2014 it was decided to adopt a preamble to the Constitution of Latvia which explains why the state of Latvia exists and the characteristics of ethnic Latvian people. Social-anthropologist Klāvs Sedlenieks states that “the original preamble which was only 13 words long used the term “The people of Latvia” (*Latvijas tauta*), not differentiating ethnic belonging of the “people”, the new preamble clearly set “ethnic Latvian people” (*latviešu tauta*) as more central to the state.”¹⁸⁰

Returning to the political issues, Šūpule indicates that several politicians are actually splitting the society,¹⁸¹ intentionally or unintentionally being unfavourable to the social integration. Similarly, Vladislav Volkov, another researcher of the Institute of philosophy and sociology, writes about one party in particular – The National Alliance.¹⁸² This political alliance is known for their radical nationalism and the party’s nationalistic-political discourse, which delivers exactly the opposite message of society integration described by the Cabinet of Ministers.¹⁸³ All in all, Volkov has pessimistic concerns about Latvian political elite because of its “extremely negative attitude (..) towards the ideas and values of multiculturalism.”¹⁸⁴ Similar is the discourse of some of

¹⁷⁸ Cabinet of Ministers, 12.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Sedlenieks, 11; Cabinet of Ministers, “Nacionālās identitātes, pilsoniskās sabiedrības un integrācijas politikas pamatnostādnes 2012.–2018.gadam,” 11.

¹⁸¹ Guntars Gūte, “Demokrātiskā sabiedrībā pilnīgas saliedētības nav,” *Diena*, last modified November 2, 2017, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/zinas/demokratiska-sabiedriba-pilnigas-saliedetibas-nav-14184033>.

¹⁸² The National Alliance "All For Latvia!" – "For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK"

¹⁸³ Vladislav Volkov, “The Institution of Society Integration in Latvia: Peculiarities of the Modern Scientific Discourse,” *Ethnicity: Ethnic Identities and Integration of the Society*, no 4. (2011): 34, http://www.fsi.lu.lv/userfiles/Et_11new.pdf.

¹⁸⁴ Volkov, “The Institution of Society Integration in Latvia,” 37.

the largest Russian-language newspapers printed in Latvia,¹⁸⁵ creating a situation where many of the social actors are playing against, or at least not supporting such integration attempts presented by the Cabinet of Ministers.

Nils Muižnieks, the former Commissioner for Human Rights in the Council of Europe, has published an extensive research “How Integrated is Latvian Society?” containing articles by various authors. Muižnieks himself concludes that one can easily notice a lack of consistency in the whole picture of the integration policy and the State published guidelines.¹⁸⁶ The actions, attitudes and documents seem to result contradictory, therefore due to a lack of political consensus, there is barely any progress in the development of integration policies in Latvia.¹⁸⁷

2.2.2. *Saeima* discourse in theory and transcripts

If democracy includes an exchange of opinions and reasons available to the public, then it also must be necessary to investigate how this reasoning is delivered. In a parliamentary system, the debates are normally constructed based on a conflict between the leading power, i.e., the government, and the opposition. The discourses hold a form of various monologues based on the same issue, in a sequence having the nature of dialogue – the core idea of politics or representation and correlation of individuals’ and social groups’ interests, as well as the conflict resolution. The way in which these ideas, interests and opinions are delivered and received is an essential part of political life.

In the respectful work examining discourses on ethnicity in six European governments, Van Dijk claims that parliamentary debates do not necessarily have any specific linguistic features,¹⁸⁸ but they rather follow a certain ritual or a tradition, that the new members ought to follow. Van Dijk helps us to define what critical discourse analysis is in the political arena:

¹⁸⁵ Volkov, 37.

¹⁸⁶ Nils Muižnieks, *How Integrated is Latvian Society? An Audit of Achievements, Failures and Challenges* (Riga: University of Latvia Press, 2010), 282.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 283.

¹⁸⁸ Ruth Wodak and Teun A. Van Dijk, *Racism at the Top: Parliamentary Discourse on Ethnic Issues in Six European States* (Klagenfurt: Drava Verlag, 2000), 47.

[C]ritical-political discourse analysis deals especially with the reproduction of political power, power abuse or domination through political discourse, including the various forms of resistance or counter-power against such forms of discursive dominance.¹⁸⁹

Many countries have digitalised and even made copy-right free the transcripts of their parliamentary debates in order to let the people inspect them. One can argue that these debates are part of countries' cultural heritage.

Transcripts of the parliamentary debates provide an interesting material that can be used for linguistic, sociolinguistic and political research. They consist of the topics discussed together with all speeches held, recording every word said, the affiliation and position of the speaker and all are found in a digitalised corpus made by specialists from the laboratory of the artificial intellect of the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics of the University of Latvia.¹⁹⁰ With the support of this digitalised corpus, one can analyse the parliamentary debates of the Republic of Latvia and gather quantitative data on the description of them. Once having the quantitative analysis, conclusions on the qualitative character of the language can be made. What is engaging is that the transcripts also demonstrate reactions of the rest of the parliament to a particular MPs' speech.¹⁹¹

When Sergejs Kruks, media and communication researcher and professor in Riga Stradins University, writes about the disappearance of politics within the discourse of Saeima he draws readers' attention towards the tendency of the parliamentarian debates where the political element is slipping away from them.¹⁹²

From the above described we understand that the roots of depoliticisation must be sought within the political discourse in which MPs name the targets, tasks and

¹⁸⁹ Teun A. van Dijk, "What is Political Discourse Analysis?" *Belgian Journal of Linguistics* 11 (1997): 11, doi: 10.1075/bjl.11.03dij.

¹⁹⁰ Database of political discourse transcripts available at <http://bonito.korpuss.lv>; <http://titania.saeima.lv>.

¹⁹¹ Ilze Auziņa, "LR Saeimas sēžu stenogrammu datorizēta apstrāde un analīze," 10, http://saeima.korpuss.lv/documents/Auzina-Stenogrammu_apstrade.pdf.

¹⁹² Sergejs Kruks and Ilva Skulte, "Politikas izžušana Saeimas diskursā," *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis A.daļa* 70, no. 3 (2016): 49, http://www.lza.lv/LZA_VestisA/70_3/7_Sergejs%20Kruks,%20Ilva%20Skulte.pdf.

priorities of the leading political forces.¹⁹³ It is very common that the parliamentary debates of the Republic of Latvia consist of the discussion about the interpretations of the law rather than a selection of the best possible option. Moreover, one can notice a tendency to push the responsibility away from the Latvian political sphere by referring to the strategies and normative acts of the European Union's level. A reason for such turn of narrative lays into the tactics of politicians with an aim to make an impression that the decisions and solutions are not dependant on their personal position. In this manner, the decision-making actors have an explanation for the ineffectiveness of their political actions, their passivity, and unwillingness to take up initiative and responsibility. Kruks has noticed all these tendencies in the debates of *Saeima* as well when MPs pass the responsibility away from them by referring to the competences of the executive power and judicial institutions.¹⁹⁴

By analysing the political discourse one can reveal the strategies and tactics of depolitisation due to the fact that very often the discourse is taken out of the political context. MPs tend to either decorate their speech with phraseological units in order to humiliate or praise an attitude or a person or to rephrase the texts made by other institutions, laws, regulations, etc. As a result, words lose their political meaning, discussion of alternatives is restricted and the perspective of political action is lost.¹⁹⁵

Within the field of political discourse, various criteria for speakers exist that they shall follow. Those include an ability to consider, argument, convince, but most of all being able to deliver one's idea clearly, logically, and be able to come back or refer to what has been said previously.¹⁹⁶ In reality, however, the majority of the parliament officials do not follow this politically democratic procedure as Kruks and Skulte claim, therefore increasing the negative semantic correlation in understanding the term "political" as such.¹⁹⁷ Moreover, the political elite many times stresses that the society of Latvia is a group of conflicting individuals that cannot find a consensus on common

¹⁹³ Kruks and Skulte, "Politikas izžušana Saeimas diskursā," 49.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 50.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990); Doug Walton, *Dialogue Theory for Critical Argumentation* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2007), both quoted in Kruks and Skulte, 53.

¹⁹⁷ Kruks and Skulte, 53.

interests, instead of working with the instruments of conflict resolution. Basically, Kruks and Skulte have learnt that omitting discussions and work on conflict resolution has increased worries about the society integration, unity and tolerance within the public discourse.¹⁹⁸ Interesting that *Tauta* (folk) or the political dimension of the society as by Kruks within the parliamentary discourse is never used in a negative sense or disdainfully,¹⁹⁹ yet in some cases, it holds an ethnic denomination. While, Iveta Kažoka, the director of the Centre for public policy Providus, has noticed that: “[I]n the public space (debates in parliament) there is often the rhetoric which delegitimizes the Russian minority of the country.”²⁰⁰

Overall, one can easily deduce that anti-globalisation sentiment in its conservative conception is present in the public space of the political discourse.²⁰¹ Hanovs explains that the political discourse keeps stressing the paradigm of ethnic nation and the restoration of independence, which is related to the fact that the ruling parties of the position are supportive of right-wing politics with nationalist tendencies, besides, being considered as “Latvian parties”.

Eventually, one must realise the role of the parliamentary debates looking outside of the box – it is not only the debates themselves that determine the tangible outcome in a form of passed or denied draft law, but it is also the other influencers outside of the parliaments doors, i.e., the media discussions, lobbying groups, or the public opinion. All in all, this makes the process of seeking for reason behind the decisions made in the parliament highly difficult to be analysed in a direct manner.

The majority of people living in Latvia have come to believe that the diversity of opinions can be dangerous to the existence of a united group. In the media and political discourse, such belief is normally described as “split society”, even if it is considered as

¹⁹⁸ Kruks and Skulte, 52.

¹⁹⁹ Sergejs Kruks, “Concept of the Nation in Latvian Parliamentary Discourse,” 43, http://saeima.korpuss.lv/documents/Kruks-Concept_of_Discourse.pdf.

²⁰⁰ Maria Golubeva, Iveta Kažoka, et al, *Inclusion Unaffordable? The Uncertain Fate of Integration Policies in Europe*, (Riga: Providus, 2010), 60, http://providus.lv/article_files/1045/original/makets_papild_labots_22.04.10.pdf?1326899659, quoted in Volkov, 39.

²⁰¹ Deniss Hanovs, “Nacionālā valsts un globalizācija: Latvijas mediju un parlamentārais diskurss par globalizācijas fenomenu,” in *Šeit, visur un tagad... : Globalizācija Latvijā: konteksti, diskursi un dalībnieki* (Riga: Drukātava, 2008), 175.

a common stage of modern world's society.²⁰² Yet, Max Weber has said that society actually *is* a split group made of various loosely tight groups that are constantly competing or conflicting with each other.²⁰³

2.2.3. Decisions influencing the state of affairs within the Latvian society

The following example of political decision has had an essential influence in the development of the social integration in the Republic of Latvia.

I am referring to a proposal put forward by the current President of the Republic of Latvia Raimonds Vējonis in 11th September of 2017 which intended to automatically grant the citizenship to the newborns of the non-citizens of Latvia.²⁰⁴ The proposal was prepared by Jānis Pleps, the Head of the Department of Law Theory and History of the University of Latvia. The draft law envisioned to end an assignment of the non-citizen's status of Latvia to the newborns born after the 1st June of 2018 of the present-day non-citizens and grant them with the citizenship of Latvia, only if children's parents have not decided differently and the child is not a citizen of any other state.²⁰⁵ According to the demographical statistics, this would mean that yearly only approximately fifty to eighty non-citizens' children would gain Latvian citizenship.²⁰⁶ Moreover, the data gathered from a public survey carried out in May of 2017 shows that 76 per cent of denizens of Latvia would support that children born to non-citizens are automatically granted with Latvian citizenship.²⁰⁷ The research led by Pleps assures that the draft law would not cause any negative nor positive influence to the budget of the state nor municipalities and that it is in accordance to the existing legal system and the Latvian Constitution, nor

²⁰² Kruks and Skulte, 52.

²⁰³ Max Weber, *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* (New York: The Free Press, 1949); Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (New York: Bedminster, 1968), both quoted in Kruks and Skulte, "Politikas izzišana Saeimas diskursā," 52.

²⁰⁴ The draft law "Par nepilsoņa statusa piešķiršanas izbeigšanu bērniem" (1023/Lp12). Sep 11, 2017, <https://www.president.lv/storage/items/PDF/2017/V%C4%93stule%20Saeimas%20prezidijam%2012092017.pdf>.

²⁰⁵ "Valsts prezidenta likumdošanas iniciatīvas," The President of Latvia, accessed February 19, 2018, <https://www.president.lv/lv/darbibas-jomas/likumdosanas-un-tiesibu-akti/likumdosanas-iniciativas>.

²⁰⁶ The draft law "Par nepilsoņa statusa piešķiršanas izbeigšanu bērniem," 2.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 3.

any other threats, as similar examples from Lithuania and Estonia demonstrate.²⁰⁸ Additionally, the draft bill is in accordance with the international ties Latvia accepted in 1992 when signing and ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child of the UN together with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The President put forward the proposal despite the fact that the right-wing coalition party The National Alliance had already decided to use their right of veto provided by the coalition agreement being against this preliminary plan of Vējonis. At the end of September 2017, the President's proposal was denied by *Saeima*. The only parties that supported the proposal were all the members of the opposition parties and four MPs of the leading coalition of the 12th *Saeima*.²⁰⁹

There were three main points of critic brought up regarding the draft bill. The first one was of rather political nature, as a member of the conservative party "For Latvia from the Heart" Gunārs Kūtris has argued.²¹⁰ MPs that denied this draft bill have claimed that it would be a threat to the future of Latvia if the citizenship would be granted to people that are not loyal to the state of Latvia by not choosing the Latvian citizenship to their children already. The second argument against was substantiated in an assumption that the citizenship would be imposed on people as a compulsory matter. And lastly, during the discussions of *Saeima*, a third argument against the draft bill was voiced, claiming that the draft bill itself is not completely understandable, flawed, and there are many other laws that still have to be reformed.²¹¹

However, the ex-president of Latvia Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga believes that there is no explicit necessity, neither judicial nor moral, not to grant citizenship to all the children born in Latvia. The formerly presented risks of the migration and demography policies of the USSR are not relevant anymore, as Latvia is a democratic state of the EU, reassures Vīķe-Freiberga in an interview to the Latvian Television, therefore the

²⁰⁸ The draft law "Par nepilsoņa statusa piešķiršanas izbeigšanu bērniem," 3-4.

²⁰⁹ Transcript of Sep 21, 2017, *Saeima* meeting. Available: <http://titania.saeima.lv/LIVS12/saeimalivs12.nsf/0/35CBA3F72F4D8963C22581AE003A4DDA?OpenDocument>.

²¹⁰ No sirds Latvijai, <http://nosirdslatvijai.lv/lv/darbs-saeima/frakcijas-viedoklis/berna-jaaudzina-milestiba.html>.

²¹¹ *Ibid*.

allocation of the non-citizens status of Latvia shall be put to an end.²¹² Also, the current President Vējonis has expressed his regret about the decision of Saeima, saying that even if the parliament is not ready for these changes, the society is, and soon the question shall be revised repeatedly. Now, the denial of the draft bill is an obstacle to the development of Latvian society integration. If citizenship is “a justification for protecting cultural communities from migration and globalization” as Tambini questions,²¹³ then one can only wonder why shall legislators deny the access to citizenship to potential patriots and contributors of Latvian economy when the current demographic data is worrying not only the experts of the field but also everyone who notices the emptiness of the villages and regions outside of Riga.²¹⁴

2.2.4. Conclusions on the impact of parliamentary debates on the society integration

Political discourse cultivates intolerance as a model of relationship with any of the opponent that has a different opinion. When politicians are talking about the overall relationship between Latvians and Russophones, the attitude is rather negative. It seems very hard to create a fruitful dialogue among the various players within the parliament. The opponents are creating a dispute, not being able to consider the other’s arguments trying to prove that the other side is incapable of creating a rational critical dialogue. Šūpule and Kruks have called this kind of communication as pathological, one that keeps the dispute ongoing. They explain that in this pathological communication the opponents are addressing controversial judgments to each other making impossible concordance of their interpretation. This kind of communication makes it hard to distinguish between what or who commenced the conflict. As a result, there are no

²¹² Zane Grodiņa, “Eksprezidente: Nav tiesību nepiešķirt automātiski pilsonību Latvijā dzimušiem bērniem,” *Labdien*, last modified November 17, 2017, <http://www.labdien.lv/eksprezidente-nav-tiesibu-nepieskirt-automatiski-pilsonibu-latvija-dzimusiem-berniem/>.

²¹³ Tambini, 202.

²¹⁴ The population of Riga is enjoying a slight increase, in contrary to the regions, especially Latgale, from where people are constantly moving away. Since 2000, when the population of Latvia was 2,38 million, the number has decreased to 1,95 million this year, with a total loss of 18,2% from the population. According to the data of the UN, this is the severest fall in the world.

constructive arguments, and both sides are incapable of comprehending each other.²¹⁵ Only a shift in the manner of dialoguing could make the political discourse more reasonable and prosperous.

What one can find alarming is that from the judicial point of view the political decisions are not bound to the control of the court, hence those can lack quality if reached after such flawed dialogue with the opponents. The decision-makers are free in their actions, lacking the obligation to consider the adequacy, necessity and concordance of their decision, Kruks and Skulte warn after consulting the Senate of the Higher Court of the Republic of Latvia.²¹⁶ Thus, politicians' decisions practically can be based on their subjective criteria and inner convictions, that questionably cannot be delivered to the rest of the opponents to evaluate it in a dialogue.²¹⁷

The law-making power is sceptical in conducting conflict resolution by dialoguing, the offered solution is delivered in a form of "objective necessity" rather than politicians or parties ideological position. In this way, the parliament is unable to consider opposing opinions and to make compromises acceptable to both conflicting sides that could serve as a relief to the actual problems in focus.²¹⁸ All in all, such use of discourse and Othering of a big part of society has an "ideological nature" and "strategic usefulness," as several political scientists claim.²¹⁹

²¹⁵ Ilze Šulmane and Sergejs Kruks, "Neieciētības izpaušmes un iecietības veicināšana Latvijas presē 2004. gadā. Laikrakstu publikāciju analīze," (Riga: University of Latvia Press, 2006), 2-3.

²¹⁶ Kruks and Skulte, 53.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid, 54.

²¹⁹ Pavlenko, 46; Smith, *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism*; Laitin, 194.

3. GLOBALISATION: TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED EUROPEAN SOCIETY

A full circle has been drawn bringing us back to the fundamental concepts of nation and citizenship which opened this research. Today, no nation, no identity, sometimes also no citizenship is a homogeneous one. We are not only cooperating with other countries internationally, we are also going further creating global branches, becoming more cosmopolitan, expanding. Yet, as one will learn, in the process of globalisation, simultaneously the national attachment increases as well.

A change within the integration practices and politics influencing both the endangered majority and self-sufficient minority are not to be foreseen in the near future, yet, as we can learn from the post-colonial theories, another generation has to grow before the whole matter can be evaluated objectively. Thus, it is reasonable to bring the matter of the ethnic perception of citizenship, nationalism and identity into more global perspective and analyse if a shift towards a less ethnic orientated citizenship could emerge along with these changes.

Thus, this chapter examines the previously discussed concepts attaching a more comprehensive dimension. First, the seemingly weakened national identity and nationalism are looked upon through a different prism, and later, new forms of citizenship are in focus.

3.1. Nationalism in today's Europe

3.1.1. Everyday nationhood – in a global context

What we see in “Everyday Nationhood”, a research carried out by Jon E. Fox and Cynthia Miller-Idriss, is that nationalism can also be seen as an everyday practice by common people, one that is being promoted or hindered by our everyday choices, habits, conversations, participation or abstention. The latter matches Hobsbawm's call to study nationalism ‘from below’ or with “wait-and-listen”²²⁰ approach. Thus, even if

²²⁰ Fox and Miller-Idriss, 554-556.

by the general understanding nationalism is a top-down action, to understand it we must oversee it from a bottom-up perspective, e.i., “in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessarily national and still less nationalist.”²²¹

In the discussed article Fox and Miller-Idriss aim to analyse nationalism from the a bottom-up approach, by four ways – through discursive analysis (how do the general population “talk *about* and *with* the nation”), by the choices people make, through the performance of the national symbols and rituals, and lastly, by monitoring people’s consumption habits. The authors target to find “both the micro-processes and macro-dynamics of nationhood as it is invoked and evoked by its everyday practitioners.”²²²

Nationhood does not define who a person is, it “does not define people’s experiences of all interactions all the time.”²²³ Authors of “Everyday Nationhood” assume that “most of the time, language communicates information other than nationality.

People are linked with their nation through national symbols, such as the flag and the state emblem, national hymn, statues and monuments, etc. These symbols then have the function to manifest the nationhood in a visible manner, or even more in a tangible way with the presence of national holidays, commemoration days, rituals, festivities. “Rituals provide occasions for the visual and audible realization of these symbolic attachments. Through the choreographed exhibition and collective performance of national symbols, those in attendance are united in the transitory awareness of heightened national cohesion.”²²⁴ Major sporting events or competitions such as World Cups or the Olympics turn into an appropriate event during which to demonstrate one’s national belonging, loyalty to a nation and affection. In any of these events that tend to attract masses, however, a controversy, resistance or yearly protest demonstrations can be the opposite answer as well. Another bright example of “the

²²¹ Fox and Miller-Idriss, 537.

²²² Ibid, 538.

²²³ Ibid, 541.

²²⁴ Ibid, 545.

nationalism that attracts the masses”²²⁵ is one of the Eurovision song contest, which year after year demonstrates either the tolerance of neighbours’ brotherhood or quite contrary, brings up historical rivalries or controversies.

These last two parts of symbols and consumerism described just above could be linked to the late trend to produce any kind of products with Latvian folkloric signs – stationery, pottery, textiles, and other everyday used objects. “The consumption of these national artefacts defines, demonstrates, and affirms the consumer’s national affinities. It marks the products – and the people who consume them – nationally.”²²⁶

Another public space with a potential for a promotion of nationhood is a museum. “Museums present a more static display of the nation, assembling people, places and events of the nation into a coherent national narrative to be viewed, learned, remembered and venerated”²²⁷ but also state-run media, public schools – as we have seen nationalism is being produced in endless places and spaces. It is important to note, however, that all of these practices and examples we have seen so far “[i]t makes people national, but not necessarily nationalist.”²²⁸

3.1.2. The role of national identity in a globalised world

As we have already found out, nationalism is a more recent phenomenon than the nations are, thus, in the age of globalisation we can expect that similarly as the premise of nation has been replaced by nationalism, the next step is that nationalism is replaced by cosmopolitanism.²²⁹ Antonsich begins his article by asking if “[i]n an age of increasing globalisation and political fragmentation, does the nation have the relevance it once had?”²³⁰ What importance does the national identity have at the age of globalisation? The EU, together with its political, economic and institutional strings,

²²⁵ Fox and Miller-Idriss, 548.

²²⁶ Ibid, 551.

²²⁷ Anderson, 15.

²²⁸ Fox and Miller-Idriss, 553.

²²⁹ Antonsich, 283.

²³⁰ Ibid, 281.

demonstrates us that there are more powerful organs than the sole nation-state, and we can find loads of literature dedicated to the various forms of multi-level governance.

Antonsich assures that when looking on the example of Western Europe there is no “quantitative evidence” proving that at the current cosmopolitan age national identities (together with the premises of “belonging” and “attachment”) might be in crisis.²³¹ Interesting is also the fact that the Baltics’ Russians are identifying themselves more with Estonia and Latvia, their values, and European identity than with Russia, as a survey has found out.²³² Antonsich shows that “in the context of the restructuring of state’s powers and emergence of multiple forms of identity politics” there is a pattern of decline in national identities.²³³ On the other hand, “from the eyes of ordinary citizens, national identity continues to shape the predominant ways in which people make sense of themselves and others,”²³⁴ making us realise that it takes time for a major shift in paradigm in our thinking to come along. Still, research in the field of analysing the crisis of the nation together with the identity crisis in the age of globalisation ought to be deepened in every particular nation-state example.²³⁵

When studying nationalism, a nation-state or the future of a nation, consideration about multiculturalism cannot be avoided. Globalisation has reached such an effect that “multiplie[s] and intensifie[s] experiences of being several selves at once,”²³⁶ therefore people do not anymore feel merely Czech, or Dutch, or Estonian, but instead, they add up certain other forms of self-identification. In today’s world “nation-states are more and more populated by people whose cultural background is different from the one of the nations where they live,”²³⁷ as seen with the Turkish workers in Germany, Eastern Europeans or Pakistani in the United Kingdom, or Mexicans and other Latinos in the United States. Thus, the issue of multiculturalism is more and more

²³¹ Antonsich, 287.

²³² Pettai.

²³³ Antonsich, 284.

²³⁴ Ibid, 281.

²³⁵ Ibid, 285.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

present not only in the daily alarms of the media but also in the academical field of debates.

Globalisation and the mobility it brings (both national mobility, movement within the EU, or outside of its external borders) strengthens the feeling of being an independent self and highlights nations' confidence of its national uniqueness. Yet, people that support the far-right politics tend to see globalisation as the biggest threat and often feel like victims. Antonisch reminds that "national attachment does not decrease as the subject becomes more mobile."²³⁸ What we can see both in Europe and abroad is that actually "[g]lobalisation does not water down the sentiment of national belonging, but fortifies it."²³⁹ Ironically, the more globalised and open a society is, the stronger its national and local attachment within the society is.

To conclude, even if the growing presence of cosmopolitanism has been advocated, we have to realise that the "(..) inner EU borders have become softer whereas outer EU borders have become harder."²⁴⁰ When a nation is not afraid of the globalisation and its people are strong in their identity, it is open and welcoming to offer their state as a home also for the Other, thus not being afraid of diversity.²⁴¹

3.2. New forms of citizenship within globalised Europe

By very particular examples it has been shown that "discourses on citizenship in many EU member-states continue to be informed by the ideal of nation-state congruence and the dogma of social and linguistic homogeneity" as Blommaert and Verschueren write.²⁴² Though, today's globalised Europe has reached a point where one shall be worried about the eventual destiny of national citizenship, as it is prompt to decline in importance and relevance, due to various globalisation processes in economic, cultural,

²³⁸ Antonisch, 294.

²³⁹ Ibid, 292-293.

²⁴⁰ Horner, "Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe," 210.

²⁴¹ Antonisch, 292.

²⁴² Horner, "Language regimes and acts of citizenship," 359.

demographic and institutional-political fields, named by Tambini: welfare and the multinational character of nowadays economics; trans-European phenomenon of multi-linguistics (or English language as “transnational cultural canon”²⁴³) and multi-cultural environment as such, not forgetting the universal human rights dimension.²⁴⁴ Below the aforementioned detachment is reflected by Tambini:

I learn that my health and economic security are no longer guaranteed by a national state; and I learn that my economic welfare is linked to a global economy, or a European labour market more than to ‘national’ economic growth. I learn that my national government does not, perhaps cannot, act to improve my environment without trans-national pressure, or subnational nimbyism, and, as I learn all this, my sense of belonging to a nation is diminished.²⁴⁵

Continuing, Tambini predicts that “the model of national citizenship, and the meaning of ‘nation’ will be transformed,”²⁴⁶ yet nationalism shall not disappear.

On the grounds of political belonging, Jürgen Habermas insists on “a less ethnographically defined citizenship” in favour of “constitutional patriotism.”²⁴⁷ The long debates of Habermas on this non-national patriotism, conclude that the latter “could [eventually] integrate and legitimate polities.”²⁴⁸

Citizenship and nation as concepts drew closer and gained a wider range of its meanings when the understanding and importance of a modern nation-state increased. Bellamy explores further the “internal and external dimension of the exclusiveness of citizenship,” opening a broader discussion on global or cosmopolitan citizenship as an option for the future. In present there are various “new forms of participation, rights and belonging [that] are displacing national citizenship, particularly in Europe,” however,

²⁴³ Tambini, 199.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, 198.

²⁴⁵ Ibid, 206.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 207.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, 202-203.

²⁴⁸ Ibid, 211.

the theorists against it claim that “the nation is a precondition of participatory citizenship and should therefore be defended.”²⁴⁹ Tambini reminds that there are new forms of citizenship that stand beyond the nation: “(1) post-national membership, (2) European citizenship and (3) multicultural citizenship,”²⁵⁰ which are unfolded below.

Yasemin Nuhoğlu Soysal, the author of the influential “Limits of Citizenship”, claims that European citizenship is the closest form of post-national membership we have,²⁵¹ in other words, “citizenship in practice, without nominal national citizenship.”²⁵² As mentioned in the Maastricht Treaty, the European citizenship has its representation at the supranational level, beyond the nation-state, albeit, Tambini writes, “that [it] remains scarcely practised. (...) Clearly, European citizenship is a reality: a thin one, but none the less a legal set of rights attached to the nominal status of European citizen.”²⁵³ A senior researcher and political analyst at the European University Institute Rainer Bauböck, when exploring the levels of citizenship within the EU,²⁵⁴ is cautious regarding the EU citizenship with the label of ‘citizenship’ at all.²⁵⁵ The EU citizenship, claimed as “internally incoherent, externally not sufficiently inclusive, and also lacking in democratic legitimacy,”²⁵⁶ cannot stand alone, as it must follow the citizenship from any of the member-states,²⁵⁷ which further tend to exercise its’ self-determination rights concerning citizenship.²⁵⁸

The functionality of the EU citizenship has been questioned by an expert in citizenship, nationality and immigration law and a professor of EU Constitutional Law

²⁴⁹ Tambini, 195.

²⁵⁰ Ibid, 200.

²⁵¹ Yasemin Nuhoğlu Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1994), 148, quoted in Michael Listerand, and Emily Pia, “Postnational citizenship,” in *Citizenship in Contemporary Europe* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 61, E-book.

²⁵² Tambini, 200.

²⁵³ Ibid, 201.

²⁵⁴ Bauböck talks about three dimensions of citizenship we encounter within the EU, namely, local (residential-based), national (birthright-based), and supranational (residence-based rights).

²⁵⁵ Rainer Bauböck, “The Three Levels of European Citizenship in the European Union,” *Phenomenology and Mind*, no. 8 (2015): 67, doi: 10.13128/Phe_Mi-17735.

²⁵⁶ Bauböck, “The Three Levels of European Citizenship in the European Union,” 67.

²⁵⁷ Ibid; Horner, “Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe,” 210.

²⁵⁸ Bauböck, 72.

at the University of Groningen Dimitry Kochenov together with Aleksejs Dimitrovs who is a lawyer at the European Parliament. In an original article, they have explicitly explained the situation of the non-citizens' status of Latvia and proposed an idea to grant them the EU citizenship, which would further allow them to take part in the European Parliament elections, for instance. Yet, so far it has remained idle only as a proposal.²⁵⁹

Returning to the above-listed citizenship categorisation presented by Tambini let us turn to the model of post-national citizenship. It provides right to be represented as a group at a broader level of the community, rather than a sole individual,²⁶⁰ put in the words of Tambini: "While the model of national assimilation was hegemonic until the 1970s, many liberals now hold that the state has a duty to protect individuals not simply as individuals, but as members of groups. These new ideas challenge the liberal nationalist ideal that the state should relate to a citizen only as an individual and that all citizens should be treated in the same way."²⁶¹ Here a disagreement between liberal nationalists and cosmopolitans appear, where "[c]osmopolitans seek to understand the scope for rights, participation and belonging beyond the nation-state, whereas liberal nationalists defend the national model."²⁶²

Lastly, regarding multicultural citizenship, Kymlicka "argue[s] that consociation and 'multicultural citizenship' are morally and philosophically superior forms of political organization and are better for the survival of democracy."²⁶³

Obviously, the current global processes are changing and reshaping the "institutions of citizenship, of rights, participation and belonging."²⁶⁴ In short, democracy is important for citizenship, but there will always be limitations to the extent of the collectivity, and the way people are willing to cooperate towards reaching a

²⁵⁹ Dimitry Kochenov, and Aleksejs Dimitrovs, "EU Citizenship for Latvian 'Non-Citizens': A Concrete Proposal," *Houston Journal of International Law* 38, no. 1 (2016): 55-97, <http://jeanmonnetprogram.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/KochenovDimitrovs.pdf>.

²⁶⁰ Tambini, 201.

²⁶¹ Ibid, 201-202.

²⁶² Ibid, 201.

²⁶³ Kymlicka, in Aktürk, "Regimes of Ethnicity," 13.

²⁶⁴ Tambini, 195.

common solution to the existent issues. Bauböck suggests that, whatever the model of citizenship, our society shall work towards a solution in which any of the long-term residents of the EU would “be enabled to integrate as equal citizens (..) at all levels.”²⁶⁵

To conclude, Horner is convinced that the modern-day citizenship can be understood only if “paradigms from multiple disciplines [are brought together],” because “they enable us to discover how real people define, redefine and contest the meaning of contemporary citizenship.”²⁶⁶ After all, this issue must be viewed from different perspectives in order to reach the most acceptable compromises and solutions for all sides.

²⁶⁵ Bauböck, 75.

²⁶⁶ Horner, “Language Regimes and Acts of Citizenship,” 378.

CONCLUSIONS

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the relations between the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation have had little progress remaining complicated. During the last two decades, Latvia has been threatened with several trade sanctions, discriminatory tariffs, and cutting off energy supplies. Due to this sort of strategies applied by the Russian foreign policy a tension is in the air, and Birka warns:

“As evident from the conflict in Ukraine, Russia has officially acknowledged the importance of the Russian language and culture for its definition of its compatriots abroad, has stated its intention of promoting Russian speaker identification with Russia, and has articulated its willingness to protect and ensure the rights of Russian speakers outside of Russian borders.”²⁶⁷

In spring 2018 President Putin has been re-elected, thus, few improvements in the Latvia-Russia relations are foreseen. All of this connects with the issues we have looked upon beforehand and justifies the “worry about the loyalty of the Russian-speaking population”²⁶⁸ towards Latvia.

We have also learnt that Russophones living in Latvia often might be supportive towards questionable interpretations of history referring to the Soviet occupation as Cheskin writes: “(..) the official discourse of Russia, vis-à-vis its historical interpretation of the Second World War is largely supported by Russian speakers in Latvia.”²⁶⁹ Moreover, the latter has influenced the way Latvian Russophones identify themselves and their feeling of belonging to Latvia. Thus, it is clear that if a minority group has had a negative experience in the host country, this might strengthen the ties with their external homeland. In spite of all aforementioned, the data shows that 72 per cent of Russophones “feel a ‘strong’ or ‘very strong’ sense of belonging to Latvia,

²⁶⁷ Birka, 3.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, 3-4.

²⁶⁹ Cheskin, “Exploring Russian-Speaking Identity from Below,” 298.

nevertheless, still nearly 33 per cent expressed a ‘strong’ or ‘very strong’ sense of belonging to Russia.”²⁷⁰

On the other hand, professor and anthropology researcher Takeyuki Tsuda believes that one can have “simultaneous affiliations and feelings of belonging to multiple nation-states,”²⁷¹ and those are not mutually exclusive. What is more, the “Baltic Russians” are not considered as “pure” Russians,²⁷² consequently, nationalism and identity researcher Ammon Cheskin suggests that “there exists a distinct Latvian-Russian identity encompassing these simultaneous attachments.”²⁷³ Meanwhile, Laitin is worried that due to the naturalisation or the whole integration process the Russophones of Latvia and other post-Soviet republics might have had to go through a kind of an “identity formation” and “radical crisis of identity.”²⁷⁴

As it has been shown in the previous chapters a common language is an essential element for the small nations in order to maintain their common identity and values in place. It is also highly connected with citizens’ collective memory and their identification with the state. Taking into perspective the freshness of common shared memory and the fact that Latvian society has been oppressed throughout centuries (after the last one, not even a centenary has passed) – the strict language and citizenship policies made during the 1990s can be explained. Hitherto there are numerous shortcomings that the aforementioned approaches have led to, such as heterogeneous information spaces, political imbalance and eventually, a clash between Western civic and post-Soviet ethnic perception of the cause as the first two parts of the paper have demonstrated.

Contemplating the nowadays’s Russian Federation through the lenses of an empire of the current time, one can seek a justification to its self-imposed role of a protector of all the ethnic Russians also beyond the state borders. However, having lived

²⁷⁰ Human Development Report, https://dspace.lu.lv/dspace/bitstream/handle/7/805/2012_Latvia.%20Human%20Development%20Report%202010-2011.%20National%20Identity%2c%20Mobility%2c%20Capability.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y; Birka, 6.

²⁷¹ Takeyuki Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland: Japanese Brazilian Return Migration in Transnational Perspective* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 245, quoted in Birka, 2.

²⁷² Laitin, 194.

²⁷³ Ammon Cheskin, “Exploring Russian-Speaking Identity from Below: The Case of Latvia,” *Journal of Baltic Studies* 44, no. 3 (2013): 309, doi: 10.1080/01629778.2012.712335, quoted in Birka, 14.

²⁷⁴ Laitin, ix.

decades abroad, the Russophones of Latvia have lost any strong ties with their external homeland apart from occasional visits of some relatives. Despite the latter, Russian-speaking citizens and non-citizens of Latvia have failed to acquire a basic knowledge of the official state language, or else, to use it ordinarily, which has created a situation of a *de facto* bilingual state. This has also provoked a situation when the Russian-speaking part of society is more prone to consume foreign media where the reality is often selectively categorised, leaving them in the sphere of influence of another country.

Further, as we have seen, society integration can be both prompted or delayed by the everyday choices people make. No doubts that language has the power to create invisible, symbolic ties between its speakers, letting the “us” and “they” division emerge. Similarly, a prejudiced view is present in the public narrative that speaking official state language is kind of a “declaration of loyalty” while speaking the other (minority) language might be a sign of disloyalty of the speaker,²⁷⁵ which was analysed theoretically in chapter one. Yet, it is also known that the Latvian language courses, offered by several regional education centres, is often the only activity financed by the Society Integration Foundation of Latvia²⁷⁶ that directly targets the Russophone community and its integration.

Language, especially in rhetoric meaning, has an extensive role. The first part of the paper has questioned the rationale of language testing when it comes to citizenship acquisition. Though, this practice can be seen throughout many European states as a part of their naturalisation process. Additionally, Horner has come to realise that “[t]here is a seemingly paradoxical state of affairs in that there exists the explicit promotion of multilingualism at the EU level but this is not directly aligned with language policies and practices at the level of individual EU member-states.”²⁷⁷ Thus, one cannot avoid being aware of “certain intersections and contradictions between (1) EU-level discourses on multilingualism, diversity and European integration and (2) national level discourses on national and/or official languages of the state, social

²⁷⁵ Sedlenieks, 11.

²⁷⁶ Society Integration Foundation is a public foundation established by the law on “Society Integration Fund” in 2001, <http://www.sif.gov.lv>.

²⁷⁷ Horner, “Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe,” 209.

cohesion and the duty of integration.”²⁷⁸ The nature of the today’s Europe is inevitably pro-multilingualism, while there is no evidence that the EU would have explicitly supported (or blocked) the promotion of the status of the Russian language in Latvia at the crucial time of the referendum in 2012 on the introduction of Russian as the second state language.²⁷⁹

The actors that would have an effective say in the matter are the actual decision-makers or the ruling politicians, yet the dialogue between the coalition and the opposition is flawed, which has been proved after investigating the transcripts of several parliamentary debates in Latvia.

As we have discovered in the previous chapters, the political rhetoric (both within the parliamentary debates and the policies and legislation) has changed its focus from *the people of the state of Latvia* towards *the ethnic Latvian people*. While, the Latvian people seem generally ready for a change towards a broader inclusion of Russophones, considering the proposal made by President Raimonds Vējonis to automatically grant citizenship to all newborns of the non-citizens’ of Latvia, there are other major obstacles towards a well-integrated and politically active society. In the chapter about the ethnic democracy, it has been outlined that throughout all generations the society is not highly engaged into politics or other civic processes, and a big part of the state’s denizens are lacking basic political rights.

After all, the wounds of the Soviet abuse within the post-Soviet states are still open, as we saw in the part about the collective memory, the different understandings of history and how it has split the different groups of Latvian society. Thus, an objective and impartial judgment could be made only after a few decades more with the support of post-colonial theory studies. Realising the right techniques of study is crucial towards an objective assessment or pursuit of solutions, including the challenging task of omitting partialities and bias, which is why the paper has looked upon such a quantity of examples describing the many facets of the matter by a range of dissimilar academics.

²⁷⁸ Horner, “Discourses on Language and Citizenship in Europe,” 209.

²⁷⁹ The incentive was supported by 17,69 per cent, while 53,19 per cent preferred only one state language (with the total voter turnout of 71,13 per cent), writes Jānis Pleps (“Vienā valodā,” *Providus*, last modified August 22, 2012, <http://providus.lv/article/viena-valoda>). On the other hand, research conducted between 2008 and 2010 shows that Latvians are actually more positively open towards a possibility to increase the status of the Russian language than Estonians who encounter themselves in a situation alike as Ehala assures.

Eventually, this paper aimed to analyse the level of the conflict among the heterogeneous society of Latvia and to identify the characteristics of the ethnic understanding of citizenship, which has been presented through various prisms. Martin Ehala claims that “[t]he situation in Latvia is largely unpredictable, since two different scenarios are possible: consolidation and competition of two separate ethnic identities or formation of a non-ethnic (civic) national identity.”²⁸⁰ The utopian (European) idea of an all-inclusive civic society lies somewhere in the future, while today we are still struggling with political, linguistic and ethnic conflicts, and fear of oppression, assimilation and extinction.

²⁸⁰ Ehala, 44.

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