

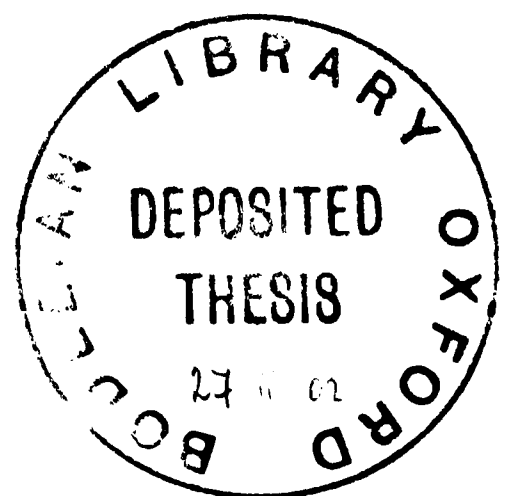
EXTERNAL ACTORS AND THE EVOLUTION OF LATVIAN
NATIONALITY POLICY
1991-1999

Helen May Morris, Saint Antony's College

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
D.Phil. in International Relations in the Division of Social Sciences
at the University of Oxford**

Trinity Term, 2001

95,157 Words



ABSTRACT

EXTERNAL ACTORS AND THE EVOLUTION OF LATVIAN NATIONALITY POLICY 1991-1999

**Helen May Morris, Saint Antony's College
University of Oxford**

D.Phil. in International Relations

Division of Social Sciences

Trinity Term 2001

Since regaining independence in 1991, Latvian nationality policy has developed from an exclusive, almost restitutionist, policy seeking to identify the Latvian state with the Latvian nation into a more inclusive civic definition of Latvian citizenship. This thesis aims to explain why this has occurred by examining the role of domestic, regional, and systemic level actors. Analysis of the external actors has been divided into states and institutions grouped into circles of Latvian interest. The inner circle includes Latvian domestic political actors, the next Latvia's principal bilateral relationship with the Russian Federation, followed by the Baltic States, then by Baltic Sea regional cooperation. The EU and OSCE, NATO, UN, and United States lie in the outer circles. Questions are asked about what the actors wanted in terms of Latvian nationality policy, which tools were at their disposal, and the results, if any, they were able to achieve.

Although not a theoretical study, the thesis touches on theoretical and methods issues, querying the extent to which external rather than internal factors determine policy outcomes in small states and arguing that Latvia's desire to join the EU was critical in the reform of Latvian citizenship legislation. It is the author's view that the evolution in nationality policy cannot be accounted for through a single level analysis. Domestic, regional, and international bilateral contexts are all necessary aspects of an explanation, although they might not fully account for the liberalisation of the citizenship legislation. After rejection from EU accession talks and a marked deterioration in relations with the Russian Federation, the Latvian *Saeima* and electorate amended the Citizenship Law to conform to OSCE HCNM recommendations. This suggests that the membership conditions of the EU are a powerful force in persuading applicant countries to alter their legislation to comply with a civic concept of citizenship.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank:

My supervisor Neil MacFarlane for the unstinting support and encouragement he has given to me during my studies at Oxford and previously at Queen's University at Kingston, Ontario.

For friendship and hospitality during my field work and writing up; Emma Campos-Redman and Nick Redman, Laura Kauppila, Alexandra Lai, Michael Miller, George Morris and Ann Le Good, Sarah Murrell, Su Yun Myong, and, Franklin and Enid Odo.

The late Graham Smith, Sidney Sussex College for sending me on my first trip to Latvia as his Research Associate.

Special thanks goes to Margaret Jane Hoverd Chanaa for exceptional friendship, support, and encouragement.

Very special thanks, for unending support, encouragement, and finance, to Bob and Barbara Morris.

Helen Morris, Oxford, 2001.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	i
MAPS	
Latvia	ii
The Baltic Sea Area	iii
CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION	
Central question	1
Relevance of topic and theoretical context	1
Theoretical issues	5
Research approaches and methods	7
Argument and Conclusion	20
CHAPTER TWO	
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE FORMATION OF LATVIAN NATIONALITY POLICY	
Introduction	21
The 18 th until the late 19 th century	21
World War I	25
1918–1920	27
Nazi occupation	35
Marxism-Leninism and Soviet nationality policy	36
Return of Soviet rule	39
Gorbachev era	46
Independence regained 1991	55
Troop withdrawal	59
Creation of a Citizenship Law	61
Language	75

Education	80
Border treaty 1997	81
Minorities vs. non-citizens	82
Conclusions	87

CHAPTER THREE

DOMESTIC POLITICS AND NATIONALITY POLICY IN LATVIA

Introduction	89
Presidential role	93
Political parties and government	102
Table 1 1990 election to the Latvian Supreme Council	103
Table 2 1993 Saeima Election	104
Table 3 1995 Saeima Election	105
Table 4 1998 Saeima Election	106
Table 5 Governments of Latvia	107
Bureaucracy	132
NGOs, Non-citizens and non-Latvian social movements	136
Conclusions	149

CHAPTER FOUR

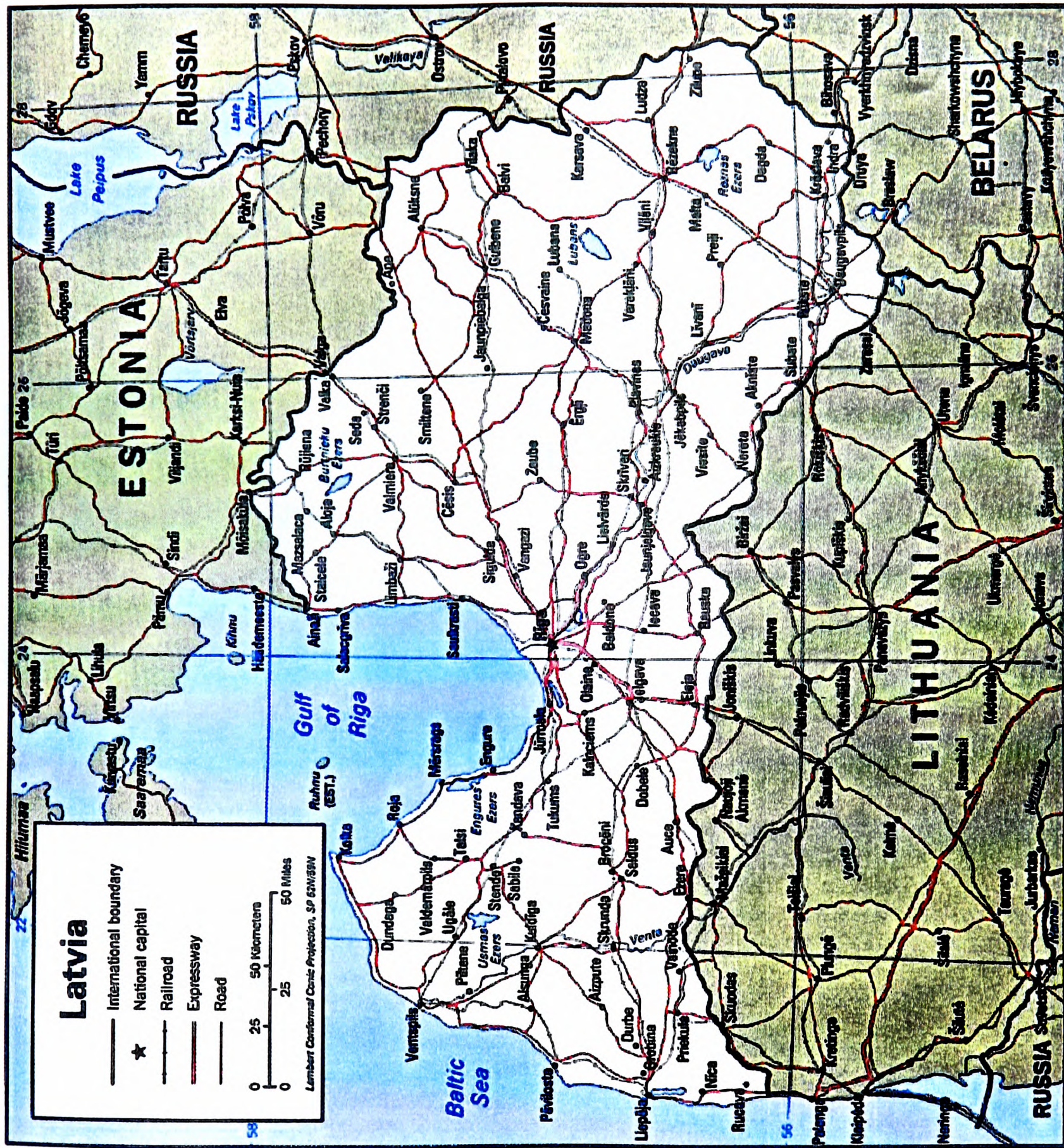
THE ROLE OF STATE ACTORS AND NATIONALITY POLICY IN LATVIA

Introduction	152
Section I: Estonia and Lithuania and nationality policy in Latvia	154
Section II: The Russian Federation and nationality policy in Latvia	166
Section III: The Nordic Countries and nationality policy in Latvia	187
Section IV: The United States and nationality policy in Latvia	195
Chapter Conclusion	212

CHAPTER FIVE

INSTITUTIONS AND NATIONALITY POLICY IN LATVIA

Introduction	213
Section I: Baltic regional organisations	213
Section II: Council of Europe	218
Section III: The OSCE	225
Section IV: EU	240
Section V: NATO	252
Section VI: United Nations	254
Chapter Conclusions	260
 CONCLUSION	 264
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 271



The Baltic Sea Area



Chapter One

Introduction

Central question

Since regaining independence in 1991, Latvian nationality policy has developed from an exclusive, almost restitutionist, policy seeking to identify the Latvian state with the Latvian nation into a more inclusive civic definition of Latvian citizenship. The objective of this thesis is to explain why this has occurred. The introduction includes a discussion on the relevance of the topic as well as the various approaches taken to tackling the central research question and a consideration of a number of methods issues.

Relevance of topic and theoretical context

The issue of nationality politics has particular salience for a number of areas including Latvian government policy, relations with the post-Soviet states, European security, and international relations theory.

First, Latvia is an ethnically heterogeneous society. The Latvian government wishes to create a stable independent state, which will be accepted into the structures of the international community. If building a Latvian state is equated with building a Latvian nation, then the debates and decision-making processes surrounding the relationships between the minority non-Latvian and the majority Latvian communities, and between citizens and non-citizens, could prove to be unsettling to the process of change in post-1991 Latvian politics and society. The Latvian case is unique because Latvia hosts the largest percentage of ethnic Russians living within its borders of any of the Baltic countries and, with the exception of Kazakhstan, of any former republic of the USSR.¹ When it gained its independence in 1991, only 52% of Latvia's population comprised ethnic Latvians, compared with a titular population of

¹ According to the Soviet Union Census, 1989, Kazakhstan had a population of Kazakhs 40% and Russians 37%.

62% in Estonia and 80% in Lithuania. The question of citizenship for the Russophone² minority, which constitutes 37.2% of the population of Latvia but only 17.8% of the citizenry,³ is the key issue in Latvia's struggle towards democratisation, and the crucial issue in that country's accession to international organisations.⁴ European Commissioner Hans van den Broek, with responsibility for co-operation between the EU and the East European countries and with Russia, stated that the question of human rights or the rights of minorities is not contingent on anything, and any country which aspires to join European organisations or is already a member of certain of them has an obligation to observe strictly this paramount principle.⁵ EU Ambassador to Riga Gunther Weiss stated that it was impossible to consider Latvian accession to the European Union without considering Latvian–Russian relations and the status of Latvian non-citizens.⁶ Confirming this view was a statement by the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities, Max van der Stoep, that an important condition for integration into European structures is the integration of other nationalities into Latvian society.⁷

The treatment of the long-term non-citizens in Latvia may have affected the growth of democracy in Latvia, as a third of the population are unable to participate in the electoral process. The status of non-citizens has also become a key issue in attempts to join international organisations, as the situation can be readily used to challenge Latvia's legitimacy as a democratic state. For example, in its desire to join NATO, Latvia must settle its relations with Russia. Under political and economic

² Russophones include ethnic Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian Russian speaking migrants.

³ *Latvian Human Development Report 1997* (Riga, Latvia: UNDP, 1997), p. 49. The 1998 and 1999 reports did not give extensive coverage to nationality issues. In seven out of eight of Latvia's largest cities Latvians are in a minority: Riga 36.5%, Daugavpils 13%, Jelgava 49.7%, Jurmala 44.2%, Rezekne 37.3%, Ventspils 43%, Liepāja 38.8%; *The Latvian Elections: Democracy and Human Rights*, A report by the British Helsinki Human Rights Group, 1993, p. 16. In Latvia, minorities, including non-citizens, account for nearly 44% of the population, including 30% Russians, 4% Belarusians and 3% Ukrainians. Of the Latvian Russophone residents, 314,731 are Latvian citizens and 599,635 (66%) do not hold Latvian citizenship. Citizenship and Immigration Department data in *Latvia Human Development Report 1997* (Riga, Latvia, UNDP, 1997), p. 49. European Union figures estimate the Latvian population at 59% and Russophones at 32.6%.

⁴ *The Latvian Elections: Democracy and Human Rights* (A report by the British Helsinki Human Rights Group, 1993), p. 30.

⁵ 'Ryzhkov Raised Latvia Events with European Colleagues', Moscow *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* in Russian, 12 March 1998, p. 6. *FBIS-SOV-98-075, Daily Report*, Central Eurasia, 16 March 1998.

⁶ Baltic States, 'Latvia: Ulmanis: Riga Ready for Talks on EU Membership', Moscow *INTERFAX* in English, 1735 GMT 20 March 1996. *FBIS-SOV-96-057, Daily Report*, 20 March 1996.

⁷ Baltic States, Latvia: 'OSCE Official Sees EU Membership in 'Near Future'', Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian, 1500 GMT, 8 October 1996. *FBIS-SOV-96-197, Daily Report*, 8 October 1996.

issues, the Membership Action Plan released after the NATO April 1999 Washington D.C. Summit states clearly that all aspirant members would be expected to demonstrate commitment to the rule of law and human rights and to settle ethnic disputes or external territorial disputes, including irredentist claims or internal jurisdictional disputes, by peaceful means in accordance with OSCE principles and to pursue good neighbourly relations.⁸ A major stumbling block to settled Russian–Latvian relations is the situation of the Russophone non-citizens in Latvia. Following a visit by then NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, President Guntis Ulmanis declared that ‘Latvia's admission to NATO depends on its ties with Europe and Russia’, noting that ‘a solution of the ethnic minorities' problems will be a precondition on admission to NATO’. Solana stated that NATO wanted to strengthen and expand relations with Russia rather than isolate it.⁹

President Ulmanis claimed that:

Undoubtedly the 700,000 non-citizens are the biggest and hardest problem for Latvia today. But nothing else is more urgent for us than to try slowly and gradually to solve it, so as not to create threats to the future of the Latvian nation itself, and at the same time not to humiliate other nationalities.¹⁰

Second, this is an important issue in the broader context of the countries of the post-Soviet space where there is a struggle to build new political institutions, reform educational systems, and combat the effects of half a century of Russification. The Soviet legacy has resulted in political, social, and economic divisions forming along ethnic lines in post-communist societies in the countries of the former Soviet Union, with consequences for the emerging structure of the post-Soviet area. These might include Russophone minorities becoming an instrument for a hegemonic role for the Russian Federation in the post-Soviet region. The policy of states towards their Russophone minorities also has a direct impact upon their relations with the Russian

⁸ *NATO Membership Action Plan, Press Release, NAC-S (99) 66, 24 Apr. 1999.*

⁹ Baltic States, ‘Latvia: President: NATO Membership Alone Cannot Ensure Security’, Moscow *INTERFAX* in English, 0958 GMT, 18 April 96. *FBIS-SOV-96-077, Daily Report*, 18 April 1996.

¹⁰ Latvia, ‘Ulmanis, Gorbunovs Deliver Independence Day Speeches’, Riga *Radio Riga Network* in Latvian 0500 GMT, 19 November 1994. *FBIS-SOV-94-225, Daily Report*, 19 November 1994.

Federation. On a number of occasions, the situation of the Russophone minorities and their perceived treatment by the Latvian authorities has damaged Russian–Latvian relations. For example, during the withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia, President Yeltsin temporarily stopped the process of withdrawal because of alleged mistreatment of the Russian minority. Similarly, the Latvian–Russian border treaty, although finally settled in 1997, has not been ratified. The talks were frequently delayed as the Russian Federation complained that the Russian minority in Latvia were denied their human rights. Finally, in March 1998, when relations between the two countries deteriorated following a skirmish at a rally of Russian pensioners in Riga, the Russian Federation Duma put forward proposals for economic sanctions against Riga.

Third, the issue of nationality politics is relevant to European security concerns. It is not in the interests of the European Union to have an unstable or volatile region on its periphery, especially as the EU may expand into this region. It is important that its prospective member states have secure borders and good relations with their neighbours. The new relationship of the EU to the Baltic States also influences other regional links. The desire of the Baltic States to reorient themselves towards the European Union has necessitated a shift away from previous economic and political ties with Russia. The Latvian government seeks to adopt the norms of the EU and, being part of the European sphere, seeks to benefit through enhanced political and economic security.¹¹

Fourth, this thesis, although not a theoretical study, touches upon a number of theoretical and methods issues, looking at the utility of using the unit, regional, and systemic levels of analysis to address the problem of why Latvian nationality policy has become more inclusive. The extent to which policy outcomes in small states are determined by external rather than internal factors is also questioned.

¹¹ Aidan Cox and Jenny Chapman, 'EC Cooperation with the New Independent States', *The European Community External Cooperation Programme: Policies, Management and Distribution* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 1999).

Theoretical issues

At the unit level of analysis, it may be useful to look at nationalism theory, comparative politics, and political institutions to see how far a unit level analysis succeeds in answering the research question of why Latvian nationality policy has become more liberal and inclusive. At the regional level of analysis, in terms of theory, there is the question of whether the Russian Federation is a regional hegemon, and the issues surrounding homeland states, including Russian Federation-imposed change through power politics, and/or broader identity formation with kin ethnics. Still at the regional level, there are issues of collaborative relations with neighbours including the other Baltic States and the Nordic Countries. An examination of this cooperation may reveal Nordic or Baltic assistance to Latvia in the field of nationality policy.

Moving out to the systemic level of analysis, the role of the US can be examined as that of a hegemon of the international system as a whole. In terms of theory this brings up questions of the US as a soft hegemon, perhaps incorporating the use of soft power persuasion. In conjunction with this might be the use of conditionality or coercion.

At each stage of analysis, it is asked how far the research question is answered of why Latvian nationality policy has changed from an exclusive to a broadly inclusive policy. If an assessment of the role of the above unit level and state actors cannot provide a compelling or full answer as to why there has been a change perhaps it would be useful to examine the role of institutions, including, at the European level, the EU. It may be useful to address conditionality with an examination of the membership requirements of the EU and the assets available to EU members. The use of conditionality by the European Union to persuade Latvia to modify its laws in order to gain membership of the European Union is assessed. This approach includes discussion of access to resources or membership of international bodies. The desire to join NATO and the stringent conditions attached to membership are also assessed in this category.

In asking how external actors affect the internal workings of a state, this thesis essentially reviews the relationships between domestic politics and international relations. This moves away from the international relations focus on how states behave towards one another in the international system, yet it also cuts across the comparative politics interest in the internal workings of a state. Gourevitch asks whether domestic structure is a consequence of international politics rather than a cause of it, questioning to what extent the domestic structure derives from the demands of the international system.¹² In relation to human rights, and perhaps also the treatment of nationalities, the work of the UN and regional standard-setting bodies, e.g. the OSCE, have led to a more common international rhetoric of human rights. This should not be taken as a signal that there has been convergence within domestic jurisdictions although perhaps it has afforded human rights activists a stronger basis for resistance against their state's policies.¹³ Following this line of thinking, it may be the environment that a country finds itself in that determines its domestic political behaviour. Faced with the anarchy of the international environment a state is forced to structure itself in order to meet outside challenges. All states are not equal and some occupy a more exposed position than others.¹⁴ Gourevitch suggests that students of comparative politics treat domestic structure too much as an independent variable, underplaying the extent to which it and the international system are part of an interactive system. The international system is not only a consequence of domestic politics and structures but also a cause of them. Economic relations and military pressures constrain an entire range of domestic behaviours, from policy decisions to political forms. International relations and domestic politics are therefore so interrelated that they should be analysed simultaneously as entities. However

¹² Peter Gourevitch 'The Second Image Reversed: the International Sources of Domestic Politics', in *International Organization*, Vol. 32, No. 4, Autumn 1978, p. 882.

¹³ Adam Roberts and Benedict Kingsbury, 'The UN's Roles in International Society', in eds. Roberts and Kingsbury, *United Nations, Divided World: The UN's Roles in International Relations*, 2nd edition, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993), p.51.

¹⁴ Gourevitch, 'The Second Image Reversed', p. 896.

compelling external pressures may be, they are unlikely to be fully determining save in the case of outright occupation.¹⁵

This re-examination of international relations and domestic politics also looks at the role of external organisations. Traditionally much of the work of the UN, NATO, and the IMF, for example, has concentrated on how to maintain stable inter-state relations and how to regulate the external behaviour of states. Examining the internationalisation of domestic politics¹⁶ reveals that external organisations have become increasingly interested in the internal policies of states in, for example, the realm of human rights. The external organisation can encourage observer missions, support private unofficial mediators, or formal third party efforts. The role of external organisations does not mean that interstate actions no longer matter for a state can participate in indirect mediatory or direct action to try and affect the internal behaviour of another state and the division between direct and indirect mediation can be imprecise.¹⁷

Research approaches and methods

The thesis question is addressed by examining the role of various domestic, regional, and systemic level actors. In assessing the change in nationality policy in Latvia, the process of the establishment of citizenship, naturalisation, and language legislation in Latvia since 1991 is traced and the role examined of the domestic sphere of influence, international state actors, and external organisations in influencing the changes to Latvian nationality policy. At each stage questions are asked about what the actors wanted in terms of Latvian nationality policy, what tools were at their disposal to achieve their goals, and the results, if any, they were able to achieve.

Analysis of the external actors has been divided into states and institutions.

Within these two broad categories the states or institutions have been grouped

¹⁵ Gourevitch, 'The Second Image Reversed', p. 911.

¹⁶ Robert Keohane and Helen Milner, 'Internationalization and Domestic Politics: An Introduction' in eds. Keohane and Milner *Internationalization and Domestic Politics*, (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 24.

¹⁷ Deng, Francis M., Sadikiel Kimaro, Terrence Lyons, Donald Rothchild, and I. William Zartman, *Sovereignty as Responsibility: Conflict Management in Africa*, (Washington D.C.: Publications of the Brookings Institution's Conflict Resolution in Africa Project), 1996, p. 175.

together according to the circle of Latvian interest into which they fall.¹⁸ The inner circle includes Latvian domestic political actors. The next circle is Latvia's principal bilateral relationship with the Russian Federation, followed by the Baltic States, then by the Baltic Sea regional cooperation. In the outer circles lie the EU and OSCE, NATO, the UN, and the United States.

Internal factors

At the unit level of analysis, the role of domestic actors in affecting the changes to Latvian nationality policy is examined. Here the theoretical assumption is reductionist in that the internal politics of the state are deemed to be important rather than the system.

Certain aspects of nationalism theory may be useful in examining the thesis question. These include anti-colonialism, secession, and national self-determination.¹⁹ The broad themes of these nationalism theories would possibly suggest a nationalising state, ethnically heterogeneous, yet attempting to build a nation state in which the ruling elite promotes the language, culture, demographic position, and economic flourishing or political hegemony of the nominally state-bearing nation. A national identity grounded in ethnic origin has a common culture defined in terms of race, language tradition, or religion rather than a state's constitution based on state territory, citizenship, and political principles. Such an approach to defining national identity might suggest the promotion of an exclusive nationality policy by the predominantly ethnic Latvian authorities aimed at preserving the core nation where the minority would be expected to oppose this and argue for an inclusive civic definition of Latvian citizenship.²⁰ From an extreme nationalist perspective, ethnic homogeneity is desired but not feasible in the real world of

¹⁸ The idea of circles of political interest is discussed in relation to Egypt in; Mohammed El-Sayed Selim, *A New Dimension in Egypt's Foreign Policy*, Strategic Papers, No. 27, 1995, Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Al-Ahram Foundation, Cairo. A similar idea of circles of interest seems appropriate to this analysis of Latvia.

¹⁹ James Mayall, *Nationalism and International Society*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations 10, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1990, pp. 55-69.

²⁰ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 57, 63.

modern Latvia. Heterogeneity is inevitable but generally rejected by nationalists. In the case of Latvia, the desire for an ethnically Latvian dominated regime and the actual government actions do not wholly coincide. There has been a degree of flexibility in the Latvian approach to nationality policy. Latvia is moving towards a more civic definition of nationalism in its citizenship policy. However, with priority for ethnic Latvians and Livs, in addition to language requirements, the legislation still contains a strong Latvian ethnic bias. Pure civic nationalism envisages a nation composed of all persons who subscribe to the nation's political creed regardless of race, colour, creed, gender, language, or ethnicity. This nation is a community of equal rights-bearing citizens, united in patriotic allegiance to a shared set of political practices and values. The society is, therefore, held together by law rather than ethnic bonds and citizens implicitly make a rational decision to belong to the nation.²¹

The internal workings of the government are examined to determine if the need to gain popular support for its policies may have influenced its attitudes towards the nationality issue and if the political, social, and economic costs of alienating the non-citizen portion of the population were too high. The advantages of establishing a state with the ethnic majority population as the primary political figures may be outweighed by the need for an integrated, stable society required to ease the political and economic reform process.

The part played by political institutions in changing Latvian nationality policy is examined by investigating the role of the domestic political structure in Latvian policy making and of formal and informal mechanisms in the domestic political system in Latvia. This includes an assessment of political movements, government and majority groupings, and of political parties. On the minority side, there are political parties, social movements, and the minority business community. The domestic arena is also host to non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Finally, at the unit level of analysis, it may be helpful to recognise the role of leadership in the

²¹ Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (Chatto and Windus, 1993), p. 3-4. Martin Griffiths and Michael Sullivan, 'Nationalism and International Relations Theory', in *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 43, No. 1, 1997, p. 60.

formation of citizenship legislation and nationality policy in Latvia, suggesting an examination of the part played by the President.

Materials

At this unit level of analysis, interviews with members of the Latvian government and parliament, NGO representatives, and members of social movements are used to ascertain their roles in the development of nationality policy in Latvia. The analysis addresses questions about their role in the policy change and what factors influenced this role. An assessment of the press, policy, and manifesto statements, and coalition agreements of the Latvian political parties and parliamentary factions maps the changes in nationality policy. An examination of the support for legislation relating to nationality policy, and also for its implementation, deepens the understanding of the development of Latvian nationality policy. To further investigate the part played by domestic actors, secondary analysis is conducted on opinion polls carried out by Richard Rose,²² David Laitin,²³ the Baltic Data House,²⁴ and the EU's Eurobarometer²⁵ in order to relate Latvian nationality policy to the wider issues of Latvian politics and society.

In 1998–9, a *National Programme for the Integration of Society* was established. The proposal included chapters on the integration of citizenship and naturalisation, education, and language. The arguments behind the formation of this strategy provide an example of government, NGO, society, and the co-operation of international organisations, including the initiatives, funding, and implementation of the project. An examination of the debates surrounding the development of the programme reveals the role of parliament and indicates who supported the move to

²² Richard Rose, *New Baltic Barometer III: A Survey Study* (Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1997).

²³ David Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations of the Near Abroad* (London: Cornell University Press, 1998) contains extensive survey data on the Russians in the post-Soviet states; one of the major areas of concern is Latvia.

²⁴ Baltic Data House, *The Programme for Studies and Activities 'Towards a Civic Society': Focus Group Discussions, Survey of Latvian Inhabitants, November 1997 – January 1998*, (on attitudes of citizens and non-citizens towards matters of citizenship and integration), *expert interviews, content analysis of mass media texts* (Riga, 1998).

²⁵ *Central and Eastern Eurobarometer (1992–98)*. These surveys are conducted annually.

improved inter-ethnic relations. This analysis includes an assessment of the types of arguments used by lawmakers.

If this unit level of analysis proves insufficient to explain the changes in Latvian nationality policy, then it may be necessary to examine the role of external state actors. Traditional nationalism theory is restricted to the sphere of domestic politics. Focussing on the relationship between the national majority and the national minority within the country study of these actors alone may not fully explain the shift in Latvian citizenship policy. Such an approach treats these variables as independent of the international system and fails to acknowledge that international politics and domestic political actors are part of an interactive system.

External factors: states

This section broadens the analysis to include an examination of the influence of the Russian Federation, the Nordic Countries and the Baltic States on Latvian nationality policy and also considers additional theory questions. At the regional or second level of analysis, in terms of theory, there is the question of whether the Russian Federation is a regional hegemon. A regional hegemon would generate the main power and ideas in the region. Lesser powers within the region would either voluntarily build or be coerced into building productive acquiescent relationships with the hegemonic power in order to maximise their own position in the regional system. This thesis is problematic as the multiple actors and centres of power within the Russian Federation meant that Russia was unable to produce a coherent set of ideas or instructions. The increasingly complex bilateral and multilateral relationships developing in the region also suggest that the regional hegemon theory may not be appropriate when discussing Russian–Latvian relations within the post-Soviet space. The poor resource base of the Russian Federation and the problems of Russia’s own political and economic transition further limit the prospects of hegemony. However, as the leading force in the CIS, Russia remains a key player in the region whose presence cannot be

ignored.²⁶ A further theoretical area is that of homeland states, which suggests an expansion of the national majority focus of much nationalism literature. For Brubaker²⁷, the most influential actors in a triadic relationship within a field of influence are an elite pursuing nation-state-building policies, national minority communities within the state, and the homeland state of the minority. In the case of Latvia, these actors are the Latvian Government, the Russophone community in Latvia, and the Government of the Russian Federation. The possible development of Russia as an influential although perhaps not hegemonic power in the area means Latvian policy makers cannot afford to dismiss the Russian presence. The role of the Russian Federation in influencing the changes in Latvian nationality policy can also be examined in terms of Russia acting as a 'Homeland' state²⁸ and defending the interests of its compatriots in Latvia.

Additional theoretical questions include Russian Federation-imposed change through power politics, and/or broader identity formation with kin ethnics. Still at the regional level, collaborative relations with neighbours, including the other Baltic States and the Nordic Countries are assessed for their effect on the development of nationality policy in Latvia.

The Russian Federation as well as the international system both penetrate the domestic arena in Latvia and have an impact upon their nation-building strategies.²⁹ Assessment of Russian Federation demands would suggest that, had Latvia been heavily influenced by Russian wishes, they would have allowed all its permanent residents to gain Latvian citizenship immediately after independence.

An examination of the imposition of change by a powerful state on a smaller state may be useful. A much larger neighbour, especially a regional nuclear power, can be perceived to be a significant threat to a small state's sovereignty. The larger state may try to exert influence over the smaller state by utilising the fate of their co-

²⁶ Stephen Foye, 'Russia and the Near Abroad', *Post-Soviet Prospects*, Vol. III, No. 12, December 1995, CSIS, <http://www.csis.org/ruseura/psp/pspiii12.html>

²⁷ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*.

²⁸ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*.

²⁹ Griffiths and Sullivan, 'Nationalism and International Relations Theory', pp. 62–3.

ethnics as a defence or motive for intervention in the internal affairs of the newly sovereign small nation.

While the Russian Federation is a powerful force in the region, it does not act in isolation. An assessment of the Russian Federation may add a further dimension to the explanation of the causes of Latvian nationality policy, but focussing on a single external actor may provide an inadequate explanation if there were other external actors influencing Latvian nationality policy. Latvia is a member of two distinct regional blocs: the post-Soviet states, and the Baltic States/Nordic area. It is therefore also important to examine the Nordic regional dynamic. It is necessary to discover to what degree the fact that Latvia is a member of the Nordic region, and shares common security concerns with that area, impacts on the decisions of the government on nationality.³⁰ The Baltic States and the Nordic countries have interests in the power dynamics of the region with the Nordic countries having been involved from the beginning of Latvia's second period of independence in the formulation of citizenship policy, in advising on the integration of Latvian society, and as donors to NGOs. The Nordic countries have also promoted regional co-operation between themselves and the Baltic States. This has been received cautiously by Latvia, as the government wishes to emphasise the need to join NATO and the EU for its own security. They do not wish to be seen to be creating alternative security arrangements at the regional level, which would preclude the need to join western alliances.

A regional security dynamic, competing with the former Soviet space, is that of the Baltic States themselves. A Baltic peacekeeping force, customs union, and economic and political co-operation have been established. The sub-regional identity of the Baltic States pulls away from the old ties with the Russian regional hegemonic power. The EU encourages closer regional ties in the hope that such ties will be stabilising and extend, encourage and build upon networks of co-operative ties. This co-operative regionalism is as opposed to a de-stabilising regionalism characterised

³⁰ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd edn (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), pp. 190–1.

by relationships built upon the traditional national territorial or cultural divisions and conflicts. Were Latvian nationality to acquire a secure base in the region, in Gellner's terms, nationalism would decline. In his theory of 'federal affluence' Gellner argues that nationalism declines in regions in which nationalism has acquired a secure home base, and economic inequalities are reduced, as opposed to being exacerbated in places where people are still insecure in their cultural identity, are threatened, or are still nation-building and state-building through war, genocide, and ethnic cleansing.³¹

This thesis then moves up to the third, or systemic, level of analysis with an assessment of great power influence on the international system, inter-state relations within the region, and domestic politics. The focus on all three levels highlights their interdependence. The possibility is examined that external pressure has actually increased local problems, increasing divisions, and increasing resistance against external interference and in turn limiting external influence on domestic politics.³² Finally, in the section on the role of external state actors, an examination of the role of the US suggests a number of theories. These are the role of a hegemon in the system as a whole, a soft hegemon, at least in relation to Latvia, and soft power persuasion. Hegemony refers to whether the US has primacy or leadership in the international system and hence other states must define their relationship with the hegemon. This can be done through acquiescence, opposition, or indifference to the hegemon. For an effective hegemon the majority of states must choose acquiescence. Soft power includes the dissemination of culture and dominance of institutions as opposed to the hard power of military or economic strength.³³ These are looked at in terms of the use of normative persuasion or the use of conditions which may have been closer to coercion than persuasion.

The inclusion of the hegemonic power, the United States, is justified by its place in the international power structure. The US is the principal locus of power in

³¹ Ernest Gellner, 'A Year in the Soviet Union', *Contention*, Winter 1992, pp. 115-16, cited in Pierre Hassner, 'Beyond Nationalism and Internationalism: Ethnicity and World Order', in ed. M. E. Brown *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, p. 134.

³² Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, p. 222.

³³ Rosemary Foot, *The Practice of Power: US Relations with China since 1949*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

the system and a key advocate of hegemonic ideas such as democracy, liberal economics, and interdependence. At the level of the international system, the US acts to impose norms of international behaviour, or to present conditional assistance to other countries in the system. Hegemonic power structures may, therefore, have an impact on the conduct of minority policy within weak states.

Materials

The section addressing the role played by the Russian Federation in effecting change in Latvian nationality policy evaluates the opinions emerging from the Russian Federation. There is a need to examine both official government pronouncements and other statements from the Russian Federation. Both deserve analysis since non-governmental as well as the official Russian Federation government policy evoke a response from the Latvian authorities. Latvians feel obliged for example, to defend their human rights record even in response to unofficial statements from the Russian Federation which criticise Latvian policy. The thesis includes analysis of Latvian–Russian economic relations to assess their use as a political tool by both sides to encourage improved relations or as a tool for the Russian Federation to pressure Latvia into adopting the nationality policies supported by Russia.

Consultation of the inter-governmental agreements, between the Russian Federation and Latvia as well as the Nordic Countries and Latvia, relating to nationality policy may reveal the presence or lack of regional co-operation. Readily available letters between Heads of State regarding nationality policy were used to examine, for example, whether financial aid has been given on certain political conditions connected with nationality issues or if the Nordic countries have preferred to utilise normative persuasion to encourage change in Latvian policy. The level of assistance the Nordic countries have offered Latvia in connection with Latvian nationality policy and Latvia's desire to join the EU has been given particular attention.

An examination of the regional dynamic of the Baltic States utilises the records of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), statements from the governments in the region, and the arguments behind the citizenship legislation changes in Estonia in order to reveal any linkage between the establishment of Estonian and Latvian nationality policies. In the wider Nordic area, an analysis of the workings of the CBSS and other forms of regional co-operation has clarified the significance of the regional level of analysis for Latvian nationality policy.

At the level of the international system, the US acts to impose norms of international behaviour, or to present conditional assistance to Latvia. In the field of United States bilateral relations with Latvia, both Latvian and US documentation are analysed. The US played a particular role in discussions on NATO expansion with the US mission to NATO producing extensive records of US policy towards the Baltic region. There are a number of US government agencies in Riga which also produce publications and policy documents including speeches, treaties, press releases, and documentation of specific US projects in Latvia. An analysis of Senate and Congressional hearings allows an examination of US policy towards the Baltic States. There are a number of US agencies in Latvia seeking to influence policy. Some, including USAID, have initiated specific projects to promote, democratisation, equality, and good parliamentary practice.

External factors: institutions

Despite strong diplomatic and other efforts from the above states to influence Latvian policy, the Latvian government has resisted implementing significant changes to its preferred policy. This reluctance manifested itself most strongly prior to the rejection of their application for EU membership. Following this, and in conjunction with advice received from international organisations such as the OSCE, Council of Europe, and the European Union, there have been several major changes to Latvian nationality policy. An argument can be made for examining the role of external organisations, particularly in cases such as Latvia's, where external organisations are

having a specific and identifiable influence on nationality policy. When moving from the examination of external states to institutions it is useful to ask whether institutions are independent of member states or simply actors carrying out the wishes of their most powerful state members. Realism contends that, in general, whenever states assert their views, they are able to prevail over international organisations.

Interdependence derives from state policy, that is, it exists because states allow it to exist.³⁴ Alternatively interdependence also impacts upon state policy thus creating a reciprocal relationship. Liberal institutionalists argue institutions can change a state's calculations about how to maximise gain. Rules can persuade states to make short term sacrifices and reduce cheating, with the prospect of benefiting from future co-operation. Institutions provide issue-linkage to create greater interdependence between states, making them reluctant to cheat in one area in case another state cheats in a different field. Rules increase the amount of information available and reduce transaction costs for individuals. Institutions can discourage states from calculating self-interest based upon how every move affects their relative power positions. They are also independent variables and have the capability to move states away from war.³⁵ At an institutional level, organisations such as the OSCE exert normative persuasion upon the opposing parties in an inter-ethnic dispute. The OSCE views nationality issues as not necessarily leading to conflict and seeks to establish mutually acceptable political compromises. Organisations such as the OSCE provide a very specific agenda for Latvian policy reform. This is a liberalising agenda which has not always been followed. The OSCE can only provide assistance and encourage states to conform to international norms, and to meet their international treaty obligations. They cannot impose sanctions.

Conditionality can be used to assess the role of the European Union in relation to the research question. The European Union has laid down specific standards which must be met by aspirant members. These included the OSCE defined norms for

³⁴ Gourevitch, 'The Second Image Reversed', p. 894.

³⁵ Mearsheimer, 'The False Promise of International Institutions', pp. 6–7, 18–19.

nationality policy. The introduction of increasingly inclusive nationality policy in Latvia coincides with that country's unsuccessful attempts to join negotiations for membership of the EU until December 1999. In a similar way NATO has set conditions with which new members must comply. Here, the very obvious sanction for non-compliance with EU wishes is the denial of membership.

Outside influences could work both for and against liberalisation of Latvian nationality policy. The more radical nationalist Latvian political parties in parliament declare that Latvia should resist outside pressure to liberalise its citizenship law. Instead they suggest that, by not changing the law, Latvia demonstrates that it is a strong, independent, and sovereign nation. Alternatively, a desire to join international organisations such as the EU and NATO may in future persuade politicians to support liberalisation of the law in line with international norms. As it was suspected that these institutions had a role in influencing the development of nationality policy in Latvia, it was important to look at the timing of the actions of the above state and institutional level players and the changes in Latvian nationality policy to try and determine why these changes had taken place.

The role of these external organisations in offering guidance to and influencing Latvian domestic policy can be examined within an institutionalist framework. Neo-liberals perceive institutions as having the role of mediating between raw preferences and government behaviour.³⁶ This is in contrast to the realist view which believes that neo-liberals overestimate the ability of institutions to mitigate anarchy and underestimate the strength of nationalism and the durability of nation states. In this instance, the desire for a Latvian dominated state is opposed to the need to adopt international norms of behaviour and gain acceptance in the international system. The desire to be accepted includes peer pressure for states to adapt to international norms, rules, and practices as a prerequisite for sustaining valued relationships. In the case of regime theory, repeated transgression of regime rules can

³⁶ Geoffrey Garrett and Peter Lange, 'Internationalization, Institutions and Political Change', in eds. Keohane and Milner *Internationalization and Domestic Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 52.

lead to a state being singled out for exclusion from a regime, and consequently losing the benefits of continued membership. Wight makes a similar point, arguing that membership of international society is dependent on playing by the rules, the ultimate sanction for deviance being delegitimation.³⁷

Materials

The United Nations was the first international organisation to be involved in Latvian nationality issues. The recommendations of the UN fact-finding mission have been examined by using the correspondence between the Latvian Foreign Minister and the head of the UN fact-finding mission. This lays out UN recommendations and Latvian government responses. As well as the UN, specific recommendations or comments were made relating to their time in Latvia by the OSCE HCNM, Council of Europe, and the CBSS to which the Latvian government published its response. These documents were reviewed in order to establish whether they had had an impact on the direction of change of Latvian nationality policy. The EU recommendations for Latvian membership are analysed and compared with the Latvian government's response to these standards.

A number of methodological issues inevitably arose during research. Although there is a large volume of EU official material released to the public, the actual mechanisms remain confidential with only limited access to discussion materials. In order to overcome this problem, informal interviews were conducted with members of the Commission staff.³⁸ Potential interviewee–institutional bias, as well as reliability of printed and oral reports, motivational bias of authors and interviewees, and the issues of data reliability, were addressed through verifying of results with other sources. Triangulation was especially important for results acquired through interviewing participants in, or those affecting, the process of change in

³⁷ Tony Evans and Peter Wilson, 'Regime Theory and the English School of International Relations: A Comparison', in *Millennium*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 1992, p. 335. Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, ed., Hedley Bull (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977).

³⁸ Interviews with the Latvian desk officer at the European Commission and persons responsible for social policy towards Poland and the Baltic States, 12 March 1998. Transcripts and tapes of all interviews in the thesis are held by the author.

Latvia. When analysing documents, it was also necessary to take into account the circumstances and conditions under which policies were adopted.³⁹

Argument and Conclusion

To analyse the evolution of Latvian nationality policy, it is essential to examine the unit, sub-regional and systemic levels of analysis since the evolution in nationality policy cannot be accounted for through a parsimonious or single level analysis. An examination of the changes within a restrictive nationalism theory suggests the opposite outcome from the one which has actually occurred. An expansion of the investigation to realist power politics only includes other state actors and fails to explain the research question completely. The main weakness here is that state pressure applied before December 1997 appeared to have minimal impact on Latvian nationality policy. Given that these levels of analysis are inadequate, it is necessary to examine the role of non-state actors, including external organisations. This analysis argues that external organisations played a crucial role in the formation of Latvian citizenship, naturalisation, and language legislation. Domestic, regional, and international bilateral contexts are all necessary aspects of an explanation; however, they do not fully answer the research question. The following empirical chapters are utilised to outline the role of domestic, regional, and international actors in the development of nationality policy in Latvia. Their role within the theoretical framework described in this chapter is outlined in order to ascertain each actor's role in the process of change.

³⁹ Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, 'Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework,' in eds. Goldstein and Keohane, *Ideas in Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* (London: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 11, 27–8.

Chapter Two

Historical background and the formation of Latvian nationality policy

Introduction

In order to understand why nationality policy has become such a contentious issue in Latvia today, it is necessary to review the historical legacy of the policies relating to nationality issues of the Russian tsarist regime, the first period of Latvian independence (1918–40), the Nazi occupation and, finally, the period of Soviet rule from 1941 to 1991. Differing interpretations of these events have been used to justify or condemn nationality policies in Latvia. This chapter outlines the simultaneous emergence of Latvian national awareness and the tsarist Russification programme at the close of the 19th century. The nationality policies of the Latvian governments from 1918 to 1940 are then assessed, followed by a discussion of the method of Soviet annexation and the nationality policies of the Soviet era, including the resulting shifts in population size and ethnic composition during the Nazi and Soviet periods. Finally, the chapter outlines the development of nationality policy in Latvia from 1991 to 1999 in order to provide a background to the analysis in the following chapters.

The 18th until the late 19th century

The formation of Latvian national identity took place under the shadow of the German nobility and the Russian tsars. Latvian identity and citizenship has, therefore, from its very inception, developed against a background of fear of the threat of obliteration of the nation by foreign forces. It is this perception of threat to the very survival of the Latvian nation that has been a consistent feature of Latvian politics during that country's periods of independence and has, perhaps, led to the problematic relationship of the Latvian authorities with minorities. From 1772, when Russia

annexed the territories which now make up Latvia, the Baltic territory of Livland (a part of present-day Latvia) possessed a degree of autonomy. The province's parliament, or *Landtag*, had some powers and was able to petition the Tsar. However, this political autonomy of the geographical area was not translated into nationhood for the Latvian peoples, who, at this time, were predominately peasants. At the start of the 1880s, the tsarist Russian government began a programme of Russification in the Baltic provinces. Under Alexander III and Nicholas II,¹ their aim was to strengthen the hold of Russians over all other nationalities in the Empire and to replace autonomous institutions with Russian ones.² When Latvian schools came under the jurisdiction of the St. Petersburg Ministry of Education in 1885 it was agreed that the Latvian language could be used in the first two years of elementary school but that Russian must be the sole language of instruction beyond that level.³ Teachers were given 2 years in which to learn Russian. At the same time censorship of the press aimed at decreasing the use of other languages.⁴

The timing of the Russification programme clashed with a growing national awareness among a proportion of the Latvian population. Greater urbanisation increased the opportunity for interaction. Following the development of the railways, the Latvian proportion of the population of Riga rose from 23 per cent to 42 per cent between 1871 and 1897.⁵ By the mid-19th century the Latvian nation had begun forming its own society and culture with a developing intelligentsia, literature, and property ownership. A number of Latvian journals and papers were launched including, *Mājas Viesis* (Family Friend) in 1856 and *Baltijas Vēstnesis* (The Baltic Express) in 1868. The Latvian Union was founded in 1868, and the first Latvian song

¹ Alexander III born 1845, Tsar 1881–94, Nicholas II 1868–1918, Tsar 1894–1917.

² Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the Path to Independence*, 2nd edn (Yale University Press, 1994), p. 50.

³ Andrejs Plakans 'The Latvians', in Edward Thaden ed., *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 240.

⁴ The orientation of the work written by Latvian historians at the beginning of the 20th Century was very nationalist. This needs to be borne in mind when consulting Latvian sources. The short period of Latvian independence afforded historians little time to escape from the politics of nation building. In 1937 the journal of the Latvian Historical Institute encouraged Latvian historians to interpret the past 'in the light of nationalism and truth' *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls* I (1937), p. 3. in Plakans 'The Latvians', p. 207. The work has been characterised by either pro-or anti-Russian sentiments. Alfreds Bihlmanis, *A History of Latvia* (Princeton University Press, 1951), pp. 248–50.

⁵ Romuald Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940–1990*, expanded and updated edition (London: Hurst, 1993), p. 6.

festival took place in 1873. An ethnographical exhibition in Riga in 1896 promoted public interest in Latvian history. A Latvian theatre was founded and literature teaching in schools increased to include the works of Allunans, Kronvalds, Valdemars, and Grosvalds. Previously, to be an educated Latvian had meant embracing the German language and culture and being in danger of losing your distinctive Latvian national identity⁶, but towards the end of the 19th century Latvians began to want both education and nationhood. Latvian society and culture was thriving⁷ and illiteracy was almost eliminated. Along with the Estonians, the urbanising Latvians gained the highest level of literacy in the Russian Empire.⁸

The Baltic national intellectuals involved in this national awakening opposed the Russification of education; many of them were teachers and deemed instruction in Latvian to be crucial for the development of the Latvian nation.⁹ The Latvians, in common with the Georgians, addressed tension between nationality and class through socialist-oriented national movements.¹⁰

At the close of the 19th century, the newly founded Land Bank was able to assist Latvians in the purchase of several thousand farms. In rural areas German nobles dominated a land populated mainly by Latvian peasants while in Riga the same group dominated local government. The high levels of urbanisation and literacy, and increasing dissatisfaction among workers helped to fuel the nationalist movement. In Latvia nationalism was closely associated with Social Democracy.¹¹ Just before the end of the 19th Century young Latvians began to join the Russian revolutionary movement and early Marxist movements. The rise of Latvian nationalism at the end of the 19th Century can be viewed in the context of land reform, increased

⁶ James D. White, 'Nationalism and Socialism in Historical Perspective', in Graham Smith, ed., *The Baltic States: the National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1996), pp. 13-14.

⁷ Alfreds Bihlmanis, *Latvia in the Making 1918–1928 (Ten Years of Independence)* (Riga: The Riga Times, 1928), p. 24.

⁸ Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 54.

⁹ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 51.

¹⁰ Suny, *The Revenge of the Past*, p. 30.

¹¹ An expatriate group, founded by Mikelis Valters in Zurich in 1903, adopted a Social democratic platform and advocated secession from the Russian Empire. The new Baltic leaders also forged links with Social democrats abroad notably in Germany. John Hiden and Patrick Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Longman 1994), pp. 19–20.

urbanisation, and a growing intelligentsia in Central and Eastern Europe which were also accompanied by a rise in nationalism. The fall of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires and the carnage of WWI accompanied the unsteady and, at times, violent emergence of nationalist movements in this region. Such movements were at odds with the existing political order of imperial rule¹² since they believed that the only legitimate government for an ethnic group was one run by that ethnic group.¹³

The 1905 revolution in Latvia occurred at a time when three quarters of all Latvians did not own land. On 12 January 1905 around 10,000 strikers, organised by the Central Committee and Riga Committee of the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, protested following the shooting of demonstrators in St. Petersburg. The strikes continued in the form of economic protests demanding increased wages and reduced working hours.¹⁴ The revolution was accompanied by a full-scale peasant revolt coinciding with the uprising in Russia. This Latvian national insurgency was directed mainly against Russian police and German landowners.¹⁵

National protest was also focused on schools at this time. Prior to the uprising, the Russian authorities had been inundated with petitions regarding schooling and language. In response to this, in Spring 1905, the Russian government announced that the Baltic Schools would in no way be made an instrument of the Russification policy.¹⁶ However, when the uprisings occurred, the Russian government crushed the protesters with the assistance of the German landowners. Around 70 people were shot and 200 wounded. Over 8000 persons from Estonia and Latvia were imprisoned or exiled to Siberia. Despite this setback, leaders inside Latvia continued to promote the Latvian nation through publications and by founding societies and schools. An increasing number of Latvians attended tertiary education and, as WWI approached, these persons were recruited to work towards an

¹² Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change* (London: Routledge), 1998, p. 384.

¹³ C. A. MacCartney, 'National States and National Minorities', 1934, in Stuart Woolf, ed., *Nationalism in Europe, 1815 to the Present: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 104–5.

¹⁴ White, 'Nationalism and Socialism in Historical Perspective', pp. 30–31.

¹⁵ Bruno Kalnins, 'The Social Democratic Movement in Latvia', in Alexander and Janet Rabinowitch, eds., with Ladis K.D. Kristof, *Revolution and Politics in Russia: Essays in Memory of B.I. Nicolaevsky* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), p. 137.

¹⁶ Plakans 'The Latvians', p. 260.

independent Latvian state.¹⁷ The legacy of this struggle for the consolidation of Latvian national identity, in opposition to the Russian rulers, continues to have an impact on how Latvian nationality politics has developed in the post-1991 period. Latvian nationalists still view the former occupying power as a threat to their national identity and, although the combination of Western and Latvian sources can only give an impression of the rise of Latvian nationalism, it is important to consider these views as they form part of the memory of nationhood, which is utilised by the current Latvian administration to promote the contemporary nation building project in Latvia.

World War I

The First World War had an especially harsh impact on Latvia. For much of the war the front line ran through what was to become the Latvian state.¹⁸ Western Latvia was occupied by the German army, one fifth of Latvia's 2.5 million inhabitants became refugees, with a population of 2.55 million in 1913 falling to 1.84 million in 1925. The majority of Latvia's industry was moved to the Russian interior with 30,000 wagons of industrial plant evacuated to Russia.¹⁹

After the Bolshevik coup of 1917, and while Germany occupied Riga, battalions, and later regiments, of Latvian riflemen were set up to defend Latvia. In March 1917, Latvian political parties formed the Latvian People's Council. This was recognised by the provisional government in Petrograd but not by rival left wing forces in Latvia. Unlike Lithuania or Estonia, Latvia had been ruled as three separate areas under the Tsars; Southern Livonia, Courland, and Letgale. Latvia's political forces were also more fragmented than those of Lithuania or Estonia. Latvia had a larger Russian minority than the other two Baltic States, a more industrialised economy,²⁰ and a larger working class. Latvia also had a more powerful socialist lobby. The Latvian Riflemen, an elite section of Bolshevik forces, were credited with

¹⁷ N. Mihailovs, *The Amber Republic* (Riga: Liesma, 1976), p. 25. Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 51. Bihlmanis, *Latvia in the Making*, p. 25.

¹⁸ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 61.

¹⁹ *History, Language, Identity, and Culture of Latvia— a Brief Synopsis* (Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), pp. 1–2.

²⁰ R. J. Crampton, *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 96.

playing a key role in the victory in the Russian revolution.²¹ In the August 1917 elections to the local council in Riga, Bolsheviks won 41 per cent of the total vote and 60 per cent of the ethnic Latvian vote. In November, the Bolsheviks gained 71.85 per cent of the vote in the Constituent Assembly elections to areas not yet occupied by the Germans.²² At this particular time opposition to German landlords was perhaps the priority rather than assertion of national identity; Latvians tended to think in terms of 'home rule' rather than outright independence. Latvian nationalists faced the difficulty of trying to unite a divided people among two provinces of which Courland was under German control, and Latgale was part of the Russian province of Vitebsk. They also faced the challenge from workers' and soldiers' councils which came increasingly under Bolshevik influence.²³ Latvians were very hostile to their German landlords but less antagonistic towards the Russians so the large number of landless peasants (one million in 1897) provided a secure support base for Bolshevism.²⁴

Kārlis Ulmanis founded the Latvian Democratic Block at the end of 1917.²⁵ From this block, and following the end of the German occupation, the National Assembly was formed. The assembly announced Latvian independence on 18 November 1918. Bolsheviks began to advance in December 1918.²⁶ This Soviet invasion was spearheaded by Latvian communist troops who, initially, received a warm welcome from the local population.²⁷ However, the Bolshevik coup brought the terror of that administration to Latvia and, in the resulting famine, thousands starved to death. The Latvian national government of Kārlis Ulmanis²⁸ fled to the western port of Liepāja and survived under German and British protection. On 14 December 1918, Moscow proclaimed a Soviet Republic of Latvia.²⁹ The Communists

²¹ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 14.

²² Andrew Ezergailis, *The 1917 Revolution in Latvia*, East European Quarterly (New York: Distributed by Columbia University Press, 1974), p. 145; Andrew Ezergailis, *The Latvian Impact on the Bolshevik Revolution the First Phase: September 1917 to April 1918*, East European Quarterly (New York: Distributed by Columbia University Press, 1983), pp. 79, 87, 89.

²³ John Hiden and Patrick Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Longman 1994), pp. 18, 30.

²⁴ Suny, *The Revenge of the Past*, p. 57.

²⁵ S Kuznetsov, *Russian Language History of Independent Latvia*, (Riga 1996), p. 5.

²⁶ Bihlmanis, *Latvia in the Making*, p. 27.

²⁷ John Hiden and Patrick Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Longman 1994), p. 33.

²⁸ Kārlis Ulmanis, Great Uncle of 1990s President Guntis Ulmanis.

²⁹ Kristian Gerner and Stefan Hedlund, *The Baltic States and the end of the Soviet Empire* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 57.

controlled Riga until, on 22 May 1919, a combined Latvian, German, and White Russian offensive re-took Riga.³⁰ After World War I the Treaty of Versailles recognised Latvia as an independent republic.

On 11 August 1920, the Soviet Union signed a peace treaty with Latvia recognising the sovereignty of Latvia in perpetuity and relinquishing all presumptions to Latvian territory.³¹ The international community recognised Latvia's independence on 26 January 1921 and, in September, Latvia gained entry to the League of Nations.³² During this period the Latvian nation had suffered great losses and the Latvian state had been formed in opposition to Russian, then Soviet, rule. Both the idea of threat to the survival of the nation and opposition to the neighbouring power, rooted in this period, were utilised by the Popular Front Movement³³ which was demanding independence in the late 1980s, early 1990s, and are used in contemporary Latvian nationality policy. In 1988 the Popular Front leader Jānis Peters stated that if the revival of the Latvian nation failed then they would not rise again. Playwright Māra Zālite, addressing a Plenum of the Latvian SSR Writers' Union, claimed that the Latvian nation was on the threshold of extinction.³⁴ During the 1990s, President Guntis Ulmanis and Prime Minister Guntars Krasts, as well as nationalist parties such as the Latvian National Independence Movement (LNNK), stipulated that the very survival of the Latvian nation was threatened. For these actors the survival of the nation had to be a priority and for them the nationality laws should be written with this in mind.³⁵

1918–20

³⁰ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p.57–9.

³¹ *18 November 1998–The 80th Anniversary of the Republic of Latvia* (Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), p. 2.

³² *History, Language, Identity, and Culture of Latvia—a Brief Synopsis* (Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), pp. 1–2.

³³ The Popular Front was formed to act as an umbrella organisation for the Environmental Protection Club, the Green Movement, Helsinki 86 and the newly formed Latvian National Independence Movement. The Front soon campaigned for Latvian independence.

³⁴ *Literatūra un Māksla*, 18 March 1988, in Juris Dreifelds, 'Latvian National Rebirth', *Problems of Communism*, vol. 38, no. 4, July–August 1988, p. 79.

³⁵ Sergei Zaletayev, 'I shall never say: 'Go away from here!'' interview with President Guntis Ulmanis, *Panorama Latvii*, Latvia, 6 October 1993, p. 1; Viesturs Pauls Karnups, Saeima deputy, LNNK, *Nacionāla Neatkarība*, 29 December 1993 in FBIS-USR-94-018, 28 February 1994. *Moscow Times*, 25 April 1998.

Despite their losses, the Latvian peoples constituted a sizeable majority of the population of the state of Latvia when they first gained independence in 1918. In 1920, Latvians constituted 72.6 per cent and Russophones only 9.9 per cent of the population.³⁶ The Russian national minority within the country in 1918 was not seen as a numerical threat to the survival of the Latvian nation.³⁷ Initially, therefore, nationality was not such a key issue as it became in 1991. From 1918 Latvia accepted many Russian and Jewish refugees escaping from Bolshevism in the Soviet Union. The Russian population grew from 118, 023 in 1920 to 237, 809 in 1930 while the Jewish population rose to 94, 388 in 1930 from a 1920 level of 60, 892.³⁸

In the early days of independence, attempts were made to enshrine the rights of minorities in the Latvian constitution³⁹ but an internal dispute meant this did not happen. The fragile government coalitions could not support such a move. The German minority, although small in number, was already playing an increasingly divisive role in Latvian politics without having their rights formally enshrined in the constitution. The constitution focussed instead on individual and national self-expression rather than on group rights for minorities.⁴⁰ The School Autonomy Law of 1919 enabled some minorities, notably the Germans, to establish autonomous school boards and influence the policy through representation in the Latvian Ministry of Education.⁴¹ Councils to affect education policy were also established by Russian, White Russian, Jewish, and Polish groups.⁴² The Latvian Constituent Assembly on 5 September 1919 and 7 October 1921 passed laws determining Latvian nationality. Latvian nationality was restricted to those who, up to 1 August 1914, had been living on Latvian territory, to those who, up to 1881, had their domicile in Latvia, and to the descendants of those under the above categories, provided that all those under these

³⁶ *Latvijas Statistika Gada Gramata 1930*, Riga 1931, p. 3 cited in Nicholas Hope, 'Inter-War Statehood: Symbol and Reality' in G. Smith, ed., *The Baltic States*.

³⁷ John Hiden and Patrick Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Longman 1994), Chapter 3.

³⁸ Dreifelds, Juris, *Latvia in Transition*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 29.

³⁹ The final version of the constitution refers only to the equality of all citizens before the law and does not mention nationality.

⁴⁰ Nicholas Hope, 'Interwar Statehood: Symbol and Reality', in G. Smith, ed., *The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, (London: Macmillan, 1996).

⁴¹ Hiden and Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe*, p. 47.

⁴² The Information Department of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 34.

categories were Russian subjects at the moment of Latvia's separation from Russia and, at that time, had their domicile on Latvian territory.⁴³

On 8 October 1919, the Latvian national council passed an amnesty for those guilty of political disloyalty, and restored citizenship to Latvians who wished to leave the Bolshevik ranks, and also to German-Balts who had supported the Niedra⁴⁴ government. On 18 December 1919, the Statutory Law of Cultural Autonomy, based on the 18 November 1918 declaration of policy issued by the Latvian State Council, granted equal cultural, political, and economic rights to the national minorities. Minority schools were established and operated independently, with the proviso that they taught Latvian language, history, and geography.⁴⁵ As a clear majority in Latvia, the ethnic Latvians had many economic and political problems to face without creating unnecessary antagonism and conflict with its own minorities. It was, therefore, politically expedient to conduct a liberal nationalities policy.

Latvia and the League of Nations

Even in this early period of independence, the issue of nationality affected Latvia's ability to accede to external organisations with minorities problems complicating Latvia's admission to the League of Nations. An early draft of the Covenant had included a demand that

all new states...bind themselves as a condition precedent to their recognition...to accord to all racial or national minorities...exactly the same treatment and security, both in law and in fact that is accorded to the racial or national majority of their people.

Despite the fact that this condition was dropped, the Allied and Associated Powers tried to make states wishing to join the League comply with the minorities clause. Five states had signed the minorities treaties when Latvia first tried to join the League.

⁴³ Baron A. Heyking, 'Chapter VI Nationality a Plea for Reform', paper presented to committee on Nationality appointed by the International Law Association at 2 King's Bench Walk, Temple, London, 24 February 1922, *The Main Issues Confronting the Minorities of Latvia and Eesti* (London: King, Westminster, 1922), p. 41.

⁴⁴ Andrievs Niedra, a Germanophile Latvian pastor appointed as Latvian Prime Minister by the Germans in 1919 in opposition to the Latvian government of Kārlis Ulmanis.

⁴⁵ Bihlmanis, *A History of Latvia*, pp. 332–3.

Special chapters on the treatment of minorities were contained in the general treaties of peace with four of the former enemy states. On 15 December 1920, the day before it voted to reject Latvia's initial request, the Assembly adopted a resolution which stated that, in the event Albania, the Baltic, and Caucasian States were to be admitted into the League, the Assembly asked 'that they should take the necessary measures to enforce the principles of the minorities treaties, and that they should arrange with the council the details required to carry out this object into effect'. The following year, Latvia re-applied, emphasising the broad protections included in Part II of the draft constitution of Latvia. In addition, the Constitutional Assembly of Latvia had passed laws to ensure that minorities would have the broadest educational and religious autonomy, and that these laws were in keeping with the principles incorporated in the minorities' treaties of the League of Nations. On the eve of the vote, Latvia's delegate, Voldemārs Salnais, informed the Secretary General of the League that Latvia would abide by the terms of the Assembly resolution of 15 December 1920.⁴⁶ On 22 September 1921, Latvia was recognised by the League of Nations.⁴⁷ During this period of independence, the Latvian government was being forced to choose between political autonomy on matters relating to minorities and the desire to join external organisations, which brought with it obligations to comply with standards set by those outside their domestic political arena of jurisdiction.

Once a member of the League of Nations, Latvia's stance hardened, the government arguing that there were no such international obligations to begin with and, therefore, minorities' rights remained within the state's jurisdiction, and that the assembly resolution did not authorise the Council to draw up international or supranational laws on the subject. Latvia then launched a campaign for the generalisation of minorities' rights at the third assembly in 1922. This was met with strong opposition by the established powers. On 21 September 1922, the League of Nations assembly passed a declaration, which announced a hope that the states not

⁴⁶ Zile, 'A Baltic Presence at the League of Nations', *The Baltic States at Historical Crossroads*, (Riga, Academy of Sciences of Latvia, 1998), pp. 406–7.

⁴⁷ Bihlmanis, *Latvia in the Making*, p. 30.

legally bound by the League would afford at least the same degree of justice and tolerance as the minorities' treaties demanded.⁴⁸

This period also saw a minority within Latvia look to a third party to resolve a nationality dispute. Following radical agrarian reform in Latvia, the German-speaking landed gentry complained to the League of discriminatory removal of property, ethnically-based exclusion from the benefits of reform, and refusal of fair compensation for the property, which was being confiscated from them. Latvia's permanent representative told the investigative commission that reversal of the reform would spark unrest in the country, which an unnamed neighbouring power would be quick to exploit. Within weeks, the commission determined that Latvia had not infringed the guarantees for the protection of its minorities.⁴⁹ The issue of minorities was a complex one for a country having relatively recently gained insecure statehood, and trying to assert its political identity and independence, when it had so lately been part of its neighbour's empire, and when the nationals of that empire were a minority in the newly independent Latvia. These historical events are echoed in the 1990s. They reveal possible reasons behind the change in Latvian nationality policy and the continued desire of Latvian politicians to assert their independence in the face of perceived interference from outside powers. Latvian politicians in the 1990s had again to balance the desire to promote Latvia as an independent sovereign nation against the desire to join external organisations, which necessitated playing by the rules of those organisations. The League of Nations experience was echoed in Latvian dealings with the Council of Europe. Prior to membership of the Council, the Latvian government followed the Council of Europe's demand that Latvia drop the quota from its Citizenship Law. After membership was secured Latvia was less inclined to make concessions and the Council of Europe had a minimal effect.

⁴⁸ Zile, 'A Baltic Presence at the League of Nations', pp. 408–9.

⁴⁹ Zile, 'A Baltic Presence at the League of Nations', pp. 408–9.

End of democratic government

Latvia had 16 governments between 1918 and 1934, the year the democratic government was ousted, following a number of years of economic recession and the rise in right wing parties.⁵⁰ The political right in Latvia had risen up in the increased climate of fear of the threat to Latvian sovereignty from Soviet Russia. These forces were opposed to liberal policies towards the minorities. The Socialist opposition had put forward a successful initiative in 1930 to exclude minorities from the distribution of confiscated lands to ex-servicemen, on the grounds that the minorities had not shared the Latvian struggle for independence. The aim of this move was to stir up nationalist sentiment and oust the government. The German minority representative resigned from the Cabinet in protest.⁵¹ However, by 1934, the left wing parties joined representatives of national minorities and opposed the Farmers' Union proposals for constitutional reform, which would have considerably strengthened the powers of the President.⁵² A number of groups emerged in Latvia hostile to the Russian, German, and Jewish minorities. In the environment of the world economic crisis and believing Latvia faced civil war on 15 March 1934, Ulmanis declared a State of Emergency, suspended Parliament, and ruled by decree until 1940, when Stalin's Soviet Union, through a secret additional protocol to the Molotov–Ribbentrop secret Pact, annexed Latvia.⁵³ The Ulmanis government adopted the slogan 'Latvia for the Latvians'. Minorities were completely excluded from the government and their educational autonomy reduced. Thus, Latvian nationality policy during the First Republic changed from an inclusive to an exclusive one before Soviet Russia took over the running of the country. The unstable governments were unable to gather sufficient support for liberal nationality policies. Similar to the post-1991 governments, those of the first period of independence had to give in to nationalist demands in order to conduct the daily business of government, or simply to stay in power. This historical

⁵⁰ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, pp. 65, 70.

⁵¹ The Information Department of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Baltic States*, p. 35.

⁵² The Information Department of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Baltic States*, p. 55; Bihlmanis, *A History of Latvia*, p. 357.

⁵³ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, pp. 57–9, 65, 70.

change in policy informs the review in the following chapters of the changes in nationality policy in Latvia in the 1990s.

1940

As WWII approached, Latvia tried to maintain political independence whilst taking care of its own security. In the Spring of 1940, German troops continued to advance, and both the German Reich and Soviet Russia questioned the validity of Baltic neutrality.⁵⁴ On 29 March 1939, the USSR made a unilateral declaration of assistance to the governments of Latvia and Estonia, which was rejected on 8 April. On 3 May, Vyacheslav Molotov replaced Russian Foreign Commissar, Maxim Litvinov and on 7 June, Latvia signed a non-aggression treaty with Germany. This was followed by the secret protocols of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact.⁵⁵ The Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August and associated secret protocols, outlined Hitler and Stalin’s division of Eastern Europe into spheres of influence. Finally, on 5 October, a mutual assistance pact was signed with Latvia, promising non-interference from the USSR.

On 16 June 1940, Latvia received an ultimatum, under threat of aerial bombardment, to allow free access for an unlimited number of Soviet Russian troops and to form a pro-Soviet government. The Latvian government refused but, by 14–15 June, Lithuania had already been occupied by Red Army troops and Latvia was forced to accept the Soviet demand. On 15 June, the Red army had entered Lithuania and then encircled Latvia and Estonia and, by 17 June, the Soviet Russian army had occupied Latvia.⁵⁶

A Moscow emissary, Andrei Vishinsky, formed the Latvian government. Elections were arranged, with one pro-Communist ticket being permitted to stand. The parliament voted, in contravention of Latvia’s constitution⁵⁷, to ask the Soviet Union for admittance. On 25 November 1940, the national currency was abolished

⁵⁴ David Kirby, ‘Incorporation: the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact’ in G. Smith ed., *The Baltic States*, pp. 69, 71.

⁵⁵ Edward Frederick Lindley Wood, 1st Earl of Halifax, *Speeches on Foreign Policy*, Royal Institute of International Affairs (London: Oxford University Press, 1940).

⁵⁶ Alfreds Bihlmanis, *What Latvia Wishes from this War?* (Washington: The Latvian Legation, 1944), p. 17.

⁵⁷ The constitution did not allow the parliament to relinquish sovereignty to a foreign power.

and the Russian rouble introduced as legal tender.⁵⁸ The Soviet government instigated radical reforms to schools, higher education institutions, and cultural establishments.⁵⁹ At the time of the Soviet take-over, Latvia had around 1000 Communist Party members. Nevertheless, the Soviet authorities were able to utilise the support of other members of Latvian society. Following the rise of Hitler in 1933, a cohort of progressive intellectuals had joined the Communist Party in an effort to oppose Fascism in Latvia. In addition, when Ulmanis imposed authoritarian rule in 1934, a number of intellectuals also suffered exclusion from public life. This authoritarian rule had taken on an ethnic Latvian nationalist guise and, thus, some minorities were also driven to support the communists.⁶⁰

However, the Soviets had plans for Latvia, even before the take-over. Immediately following the signing of the pacts of mutual assistance between the three individual Baltic States and the Soviet Union on 11 October 1939, the NKVD (Peoples Commissariat of Internal Affairs) issued Order Number 001223, 'On operative accounting of the anti-Soviet and socially alien elements'. The subsequent deportations ordered on 19 May 1941 by Vsevolod Merkulov, USSR's People's Commissar of State Security, stemmed from this order and began soon after during the week of 13–22 June, when 15,081 persons were exiled from Latvia. The deportations concluded the 1940–41 repression of Latvian political, public, and religious figures leading to the loss of around 35,000 persons.⁶¹

A number of activities were declared illegal, including participation in the government of independent Latvia during the 20 years of independence, resulting in a death sentence or exile. Of the leaders of the Social Democratic Party, 14 were

⁵⁸ Latvian Legation Washington D.C., *Latvian USSR Relations*, Memorandum, September 1944, pp. 4-9.

⁵⁹ Ē. Žagars, *Socialist Transformations in Latvia 1940–1941* (Riga: Academy of Sciences of the Latvian SSR Institute of History, 1978), p. 154..

⁶⁰ Alexander Shtromas 'The Baltic States', in ed., Robert Conquest *The Last Empire: Nationality and the Soviet Future* (California: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1986), pp. 184–5.

⁶¹ Aleksandras Shtromas, 'The Baltic States as Soviet Republics: Tensions and Contradictions', in G. Smith, ed., *The Baltic States*, p. 86; William J. H. Hough, 'The Annexation of the Baltic States', *New York Law School Journal of International and Comparative Law*, vol. 6, No. 2, Winter 1985. The figures for disappearances and executions are approximations. The International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva was unable to carry out its humanitarian mandate in 1940–45. They relied on the exchange of correspondence between diplomatic representatives of the Baltic States in the West, as well as information from other Governments and Red Crosses to estimate the numbers killed, *Personal Correspondence with Comité International de la Croix-Rouge*, Genève, 9 December 1999, RES/ARCH 99/245-FBS.

exiled, six arrested and condemned, and one executed.⁶² In 1940–41 the Politburo categorised two classes of the population as ‘counter-revolutionary’. The first category included members of the army: professional soldiers, soldiers on active service, officers, and NCOs on the reserve list, associations of ex-servicemen, and paramilitary organisations. The second category consisted of the politically active: ruling groups, government, high-ranking civil servants, police, leaders of political parties, intelligentsia, men engaged in learned professions, and journalists. The scheme, outlined in NKVD Order Number 001223, to remove these people from the Baltic Republics was interrupted by the German invasion.⁶³ The loss of population and the brutality of the regime is still a source of tension in Latvian–Russian relations as the Latvian government’s demand that the Russian Federation acknowledge the suffering of Latvia under the Soviet regime has been refused. This period is crucial to the analysis that follows as Latvian nationalist politicians constantly refer to it and demand that the West understand that, due to the suffering of the Latvian people, they must be allowed to construct Citizenship legislation which will preserve the Latvian nation.⁶⁴

Nazi occupation

On 26 June 1941, around 60,000 Latvians took part in a national uprising in Riga and an official Soviet broadcast admitted that Latvia was in open revolt. Two days later a Latvian government was proclaimed. The following day, however, the Red Army re-took Riga and armed confrontation continued until the invasion of Nazi German forces conquered Riga on 1 July 1941⁶⁵ effectively halting Soviet rule in Latvia. The German regime lasted until 1944, when the Soviet troops returned.⁶⁶ During this 3-year period, attempts to regain independence led to a number of Latvians collaborating with the Germans although many others opposed them. By 1943, a

⁶² Latvian Legation Washington D.C., *Latvian USSR Relations*, Memorandum, September 1944, p. 7.

⁶³ Rupejko Pranas, *Progress of the Extermination of the Baltic Nations (1940–1950)*, reprinted from *The Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. V. No. 1/2, January–April 1952, 32 Bolton Gardens, London, SW5, p. 1.

⁶⁴ See Juris Sinka and Juris Vidins comments in Chapter 3.

⁶⁵ Shtromas, ‘The Baltic States as Soviet Republics: Tensions and Contradictions’, pp. 88–90.

⁶⁶ Kirby ‘Incorporation: the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact’, pp. 72–3; *History, Language, Identity, and Culture of Latvia- a Brief Synopsis* (Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), pp. 1–2.

growing number of young Latvians were drafted into voluntary *Waffen SS* divisions. Losses suffered through fighting contributed to the decline in the Latvian population under the German occupation.⁶⁷ Since an estimated 120,000 people were deported or killed during the German occupation, this led to substantial changes in the make-up of Latvia's population.

In addition to the Reich administration ruling from above, the Nazis installed Latvian General Directors in Riga who held very narrow and advisory powers. However, as the Reich's decisions were channelled through the local Directors, these individuals were necessarily identified with the occupying regime. Bids to restore Latvian independence were thwarted as the Gestapo destroyed an underground Latvian Central Council.⁶⁸

Marxism-Leninism and Soviet nationality policy

To understand the impact of the Soviet regime on Latvian nationality policy it is important to examine the roots and nature of Soviet nationality policy. Marxism did not devote much discussion time to issues of nationality. Marx and Engels determined that, for the working classes, an individual's nationality would gradually decrease in significance.⁶⁹ The major division in society was class, not ethnicity. Nationality divisions were a capitalist construct used to divide the working class and set them against each other, rather than uniting them to fight against the capitalist oppressors. Lenin took advantage of nationalist grievances to promise that, in a socialist context, specifically defined national groups could be granted a degree of autonomy. After the revolution, the Bolsheviks attempted to pacify the demands of the nationalities by organising the USSR along federal lines.⁷⁰ The Bolshevik support

⁶⁷ The Latvian Legion was formed in 1943. Around 5600 were recruited to labour battalions and 140,000 into the Latvian SS Legion. (Recruits volunteered or were coerced into fighting for the Nazis against the Soviets, some members fought against their will while others are accused of committing atrocities during their service). Of a total of 150,000 recruited to fight for the Germans, 50,000 were killed or wounded, 80,000 were captured by the Soviets, and 20,000 fled to the west. In addition, a Jewish population of 93,000 was reduced to 4000 by the end of the German occupation. Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, pp. 56–9, 64, 86–7.

⁶⁸ Hiden and Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe*, pp. 120–1.

⁶⁹ G. Smith, 'The Soviet State and Nationalities Policy', in G. Smith, ed., *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 3.

⁷⁰ Zvi Gitelman, 'Nations, Republics and Commonwealth', in eds., Stephen White, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman, *Developments in Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics*, 2nd edn. (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 132–3.

for national movements was to be an interim measure. The loyalty of the oppressed nations during this transitional phase could then be utilised by the communists to carry out the more important class struggle.⁷¹ In 1924, Stalin stated that support must be given to national movements that tended to weaken and overthrow imperialism. For Stalin, at this time, the national question was not isolated but part of the general problem of the proletarian revolution.⁷²

The Russian Communist Party conference in April 1917 passed a resolution which reiterated the right of all nations in Russia to ‘free separation and the creation of an independent state’. Lenin viewed national oppression as a tool of landlords, capitalists, and the petite bourgeoisie to divide the workers.⁷³

Lenin recognised the right of nations to secede freely from Russia. He felt that recognition of this right of national workers by the proletariat could bring complete solidarity among the workers of the various nations, and bring the nations closer. However, he argued that national cultural autonomy divided nations.⁷⁴ Lenin cautioned against the danger of Russian chauvinism, if Russians were given too major a role. Stalin, on the other hand, was concerned about the indigenisation which had been allowed in a number of republics.⁷⁵ In 1917, Stalin referred to national oppression as ‘the system of exploitation and plunder of subject peoples measures of forcible restriction of the sovereign rights of subject peoples, which are resorted to by imperialist circles’.⁷⁶ He claimed that the more democratic a country, and the further away from power were the landed aristocracy and the petite bourgeoisie, the less severe was the level of national oppression. To move towards democracy, according to Stalin, these oppressors had to be removed from the political stage. He qualified his statement that the oppressed nations forming Russia had to be allowed the right to decide for themselves whether they wished to remain part of the Russian state or

⁷¹ Robert Conquest, *The Soviet Deportation of Nationalities* (London: Macmillan, 1960), pp. 102–3.

⁷² Joseph Stalin, *Problems of Leninism* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1947), p. 74.

⁷³ V. I. Lenin, ‘Resolution on the National Question’, *Soldatskaia Pravda*, 16 May 1917, in Lenin and J. Stalin, *The Russian Revolution: Writings and Speeches from the February Revolution to the October Revolution, 1917* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1938), p. 52.

⁷⁴ V. I. Lenin, ‘Resolution on the National Question’, p. 53.

⁷⁵ G. Smith, ‘The Soviet State and Nationalities Policy’, p. 7.

⁷⁶ J. Stalin, ‘Report on the National Question’, 29 April 1917, in J. Stalin *The Road to October, Articles and Speeches, March – October 1917*, Leningrad, 1925, in V. I. Lenin and J. Stalin, *The Russian Revolution Writings from the February Revolution to the October Revolution 1917* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1938), pp. 46–7.

secede and form an independent state, with the proviso that a nation should not necessarily secede. Lenin sought to differentiate between those who represented the small oppressed nation versus those who represented the large oppressor nation.⁷⁷ Supporters of the revolution were free to support or oppose secession, according to the interests of the proletariat. Stalin sought to raise the struggle against national oppression to the struggle against imperialism, the common foe.⁷⁸ He estimated that nine out of ten would choose not to secede. There was, therefore, a need for the Communist Party to set up regional autonomy for regions distinguished by peculiarities of social life and language. The freedom of nations to secede was not to be permitted until the country was fully democratic. If the parties were allowed to develop along national lines, they would lose their class solidarity.⁷⁹ The Communist Party theory was that separate national cultures were to flourish alongside their drawing together, until their final merger (*sliyane*) was realised.⁸⁰ There was also the idea of *korenizatsia*, meaning ‘taking root’, or ‘indigenisation’. This policy was formally adopted in 1923 at the 12th Party Congress. It was intended to offer Soviet Latvia a veneer of national legitimacy by actively recruiting Latvians into the party and state apparatus, switching official business to the Latvian language, and supporting Latvian cultural activities. Their theory was that once nationalities had developed flourishing cultures and national freedom, they would willingly assimilate with other nationalities.⁸¹ This policy was followed until the goals of collectivisation took over and the country’s resources were put into rapid industrial development. There was an attempt to balance the needs of the centre and the periphery but, by the 1930s, the centre had taken precedence.

To try and counter the differing interests of individual nationalities, the uniting ideology of Marxism-Leninism was disseminated throughout the country. All Union interests would then take precedence over narrow national goals. The commands

⁷⁷ Vladimir Lenin, ‘The Question of Nationalities or “Autonomisation”’, 31 December 1922.

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1922/dec/testamnt/autonomy.htm>

⁷⁸ J. Stalin, ‘Report on the National Question,’ pp. 46–7.

⁷⁹ J. Stalin, ‘Report on the National Question,’ pp. 48, 50.

⁸⁰ *XXII s'ezd kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza, Stenograficheskii otchet*, Moscow 1961. Robert Conquest, *The Soviet Deportation of Nationalities*.

⁸¹ Gitelman, ‘Nations, Republics and Commonwealth’, p. 133.

came from the top and representatives of each nationality were co-opted into the ruling elite and instilled with an internationalist world view.⁸² While the First Secretary of a republican party was usually a representative of the titular nationality, the Second Secretary was often sent directly from Moscow. Economic power, exercised by the centre, was another way of maintaining control over the nationalities. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the KGB also played a role in repressing nationalist dissent.⁸³

Stalin termed the cultures ‘national in form and socialist in content’. ‘Petit bourgeois nationalist deviations’ were to be discouraged and ideological uniformity imposed on all, with only linguistic differences remaining. Russians were given credit for a variety of inventions and were also singled out for special praise at the end of World War II. The aim was to unite the Soviet peoples in an anti-Western campaign.⁸⁴

Return of Soviet rule

The reintroduction of Soviet rule in Latvia in 1944 was characterised by an immense Russification scheme, deportations, imprisonment, and forced migration. More generally, Russification was seen as a crucial means of solving the problem of building communism amongst diverse nationalities. Following the Soviet triumphs in 1940 and 1944, Latvians from Russia supplied a number of the Soviet cadres for the government in Latvia. This meant that Latvians who had not lived in independent Latvia, but had migrated from the USSR after 1940, were disproportionately represented in the *nomenklatura*.⁸⁵ A large number of non-Latvians were sent to Latvia as part of collectivisation and industrialisation.⁸⁶ The immigration of non-Latvians is a very sensitive issue within contemporary Latvian nationality politics.

⁸² Gitelman, ‘Nations, Republics and Commonwealth’, p. 137.

⁸³ Donald D. Barry and Carol Barner-Barry, *Contemporary Soviet Politics: An Introduction*, 4th edn. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991), p. 248; Zvi Gitelman, ‘Nations, Republics and Commonwealth’, pp. 138–9.

⁸⁴ Gitelman, ‘Nations, Republics and Commonwealth’, pp. 133–4.

⁸⁵ Romuald J. Misiunas ‘Baltic Nationalism and Soviet Language Policy: from Russification to Constitutional Amendment’, in ed. Henry R. Huttenbach, *Soviet Nationality Policies: Ruling Ethnic Groups in the USSR* (New York, Mansell, 1990), p. 207.

⁸⁶ Adolfs Silde, ‘The Role of Russian–Latvians in the Sovietisation of Latvia’, in *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1987.

The status of these people, and how they should be treated under Latvian law, has divided post-1991 Latvian politics. The huge influx of non-Latvians during the Soviet era put the local population under intense scrutiny with many Latvians responding by becoming strong adherents to internationalism rather than to Latvian nationalism. While Estonia maintained links with Finland through access to Finnish television and a steady stream of Finnish visitors to Estonia,⁸⁷ and Lithuania had the auspices of the Catholic Church to maintain communications with the West during the Soviet era,⁸⁸ Latvia was far more isolated, had less dissident activity, and suffered more far reaching Sovietisation and Russification than the other two republics. The Latvian population lacked a cohesive base for action and suffered increasing rates of alcoholism, divorce, premature death, and the loosening of social bonds in society.⁸⁹ However, partisan fighting in Latvia against the Soviet system continued through to 1953. During the German occupation, guerrilla resistance armies formed in the Baltic States. By 1945, around 15,000 fighters were active in Latvia. In 1949, peasants fleeing from collectivisation formed the largest influx of civilians into the guerrilla forces. Direct armed combat by the Soviets had had limited success in ending the guerrilla fighting. Instead, the Soviet authorities attacked the civilian support mechanisms. Any civilian contact with the guerrillas merited 25 years in a labour camp. Deportations were carried out annually from 1945 to 1951. Any suspected guerrillas were shot on sight and their property razed to the ground. Although this further inflamed the rebels' anti-Soviet passions, this combination of approaches took the NKVD eight years to eliminate rebel opposition in Latvia.⁹⁰

By the end of the war, Latvia had lost one third of its population. Between 110,000 and 120,000 individuals were persecuted and faced imprisonment, deportation to Soviet Gulag camps, or were killed outright, while some 130,000 individuals migrated to the West. In 1950, following WWII and the Stalinist

⁸⁷ Speaking in Helsinki, Estonian MP Mart Nutt, member and former Chairman of the Constitutional Law Commission, Estonia, stated that you could not underestimate the impact of Finnish television in encouraging all Estonians, not just dissidents, to campaign for Estonian independence, Lecture, Organised by the Union of Finnish-Estonian Associations, Suomalainen Klubi (The Finnish Club) in Helsinki, Finland, 20 November 1998.

⁸⁸ Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition*, p. 47–8.

⁸⁹ Dreifelds, 'Latvian National Rebirth', pp. 78–9.

⁹⁰ Shtromas, 'The Baltic States as Soviet Republics: Tensions and Contradictions', pp. 93-94.

deportations, Latvia was the only state in Europe to suffer a decline in population in absolute terms since 1900.⁹¹ Before the Soviet occupation in 1940, Latvians made up approximately 75 per cent of the population, but by 1989 this figure was less than 51 per cent.⁹² A sense of real threat to the numerical survival of the Latvian nation was coupled with fears for the continuation of Latvian culture, language, and history threatened by the process of Russification.

During the Stalin era, expressions of national consciousness were dangerous as both personal and public activities fell under intense scrutiny. There was little opportunity to be involved in opposition activity as essential everyday activities such as work, sleep, eating, and queuing took up so much time. State-promoted activities were provided to occupy any remaining time.⁹³ After Stalin's death in 1953, there was a period of decentralisation and a limited revival of Latvian national consciousness. Economic policy and nationality policies were linked through the regional economic councils in an effort to equalise the economic standing of individual republics. Communist Party discussion of the economic councils moved on to a discussion of the growing unity of Soviet nations, which would eventually, voluntarily abandon their own identities and become Soviets.⁹⁴ In the late 1950s, the newly granted economic autonomy for the republics had led to an increase in the power bases of local nationalities. The 'thaw' altered the demographic base of Latvia. The immigration of non-Latvians had practically stopped by 1953 and, during 1956-9, many Latvian deportees returned to Latvia, raising the Latvian portion of the population to around 62 per cent.⁹⁵

The 1957-9 de-Stalinisation, led by Khrushchev, provided a brief period when national communists were in the ascendancy within the leadership of the Latvian Communist Party. Under the leadership of the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Edvards Berklavs, they attempted to stem the influx of migrants to Latvia

⁹¹ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 61.

⁹² *History, Language, Identity, and Culture of Latvia—a Brief Synopsis* (Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), pp. 1-2.

⁹³ Alexander J. Motyl, *Will the Non-Russians Rebel? State, Ethnicity, and Stability in the USSR* (London: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 108.

⁹⁴ Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, pp. 134, 138.

⁹⁵ *Soviet Census*, 1959.

and to support Latvian cadres. There was a move to promote the use of the Latvian language in education and also in party circles. The party leaders also bid for greater economic independence for Latvia.⁹⁶ However, the centre perceived that Republican leaders had exceeded their powers in promoting regional interests.⁹⁷ The late 1950s saw a return of repression, including the purge of 2000 members of the 'nationalist group' from key government and party posts. Berkļavs, dismissed by Khrushchev, was accused of bourgeois nationalism, exiled from Latvia, and expelled from the party.⁹⁸ In a plenary session of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party in July 1959, the ethnic Latvian elite was completely ousted. The 1958–9 purge of the Latvian Communist Party charged the local cadre with 'Latvian bourgeois-nationalist deviation'. Arvids Pelše, a Russian communist socialised in Russia, but of ethnic Latvian origin, was made first secretary of the Latvian Communist Party in November 1959. Pelše, and another Russian Latvian,⁹⁹ Augusts Voss, First Secretary 1966–84, effectively implemented the Soviet policies. He worked through until the early 1960s to remove all indigenous Latvians from senior positions.¹⁰⁰ This ending of senior Latvian participation in republican party affairs closed any official outlet for nationalist expression. Under Khrushchev the non-Russian republics were concerned that the 1958–9 educational reforms would further promote the Russian language. The reforms favoured Russian as a medium of instruction in native schools, while exempting Russians from learning local languages.¹⁰¹

Brezhnev's regime advocated a more cautious and conservative approach. The centre required stability in the republics and, in return, allowed more realistic production targets. The republics would then be permitted limited administrative freedom and a degree of autonomy over local appointments. This was not, however,

⁹⁶ Nils Muižnieks, 'Latvia: Origins, Evolution, and Triumph', in Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras eds., *Nations and Politics in the Soviet Successor States* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 185.

⁹⁷ Tsentral'noe Statisticheskoe Upravlenie pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR, *Itogi Vsesoyuznoi Perepisi Naseleniya 1970 goda* (Moscow Statistika, 1973), Vol. 4, p. 144, G. Smith, 'The Soviet State and Nationalities Policy', pp. 9, 501.

⁹⁸ Jan Trapans, 'The Sources of Latvia's Popular Movement', in Jan Trapans, ed., *Toward Independence the Baltic Popular Movements* (Oxford: Westview, 1991), p. 29, footnote 12. Berkļavs reappeared in Riga in 1988 as the leader of radical forces seeking economic and political autonomy for Latvia.

⁹⁹ In Latvia a person who is ethnically Latvian, but was brought up and socialised in Russia, is referred to as a Russian Latvian.

¹⁰⁰ Shtromas, 'The Baltic States as Soviet Republics: Tensions and Contradictions', p. 100.

¹⁰¹ B. D. Silver, 'The Status of National Minority Language in Soviet Education: An Assessment of Recent Changes' *Soviet Studies* vol. 26, No. 1, January 1974.

an attempt to promote nationalism in the republics. Those protesting for the rights of nationalities were treated as criminals. In the 1961 Party congress, Khrushchev had expressed the term Soviet people (*Sovetskii narod*). In 1971, Brezhnev went further to describe this phenomenon as a 'new human community sharing a common territory, state, economic system, culture, the goal of building communism, and a common language'.¹⁰²

The Brezhnev administration favoured a measured and reasoned nationality policy, reducing the commitment to ending national differences (*sliyane*), but retaining the aim of the coming together of nations (*sblizhenie*). At the close of the Brezhnev years, nationalist dissent in Latvia focussed primarily on environmental issues. Latvia had suffered from Soviet style industrialisation, a significant amount of migration, and Russification. The Soviet industrialisation policy took no account of the lack of raw materials in Latvia and of the environmental damage inflicted on the countryside by the expansion of heavy industry. The nationality issue was raised when the migration of Russian workers brought them into direct competition with Latvians for jobs. The central authorities did not consider the problems of insufficient housing for this influx of workers.¹⁰³ Official Soviet announcements suggest a picture of ethnic harmony and progressive convergence of the individual nations into a single international whole. The 1970s had also seen the peak of Latvians' higher living standards. The subsequent decline coincided with an increased insistence on the use of Russian by the Soviet authorities in schools, universities, and workplaces.¹⁰⁴

In 1975, in defiant opposition to the Soviet regime, the Latvian Independence Movement, Latvia's Democratic Youth Committee, and Latvia's Christian Democratic Organisation were formed. Co-ordinating their activities, they sent joint communiqués to the leadership of the Latvian Supreme Soviet. A fourth group, the Organisation for Latvia's Independence worked through the 1970s and 1980s organising protest actions and petitions. On 23 August 1979, the 40th anniversary of

¹⁰² Smith, 'The Soviet State and Nationalities Policy', p. 10; Gitelman, 'Nations, Republics and Commonwealth', p. 134.

¹⁰³ Smith, 'The Resurgence of Nationalism', in Smith, ed., *The Baltic States*, p. 126.

¹⁰⁴ Smith, 'The Resurgence of Nationalism', in Smith, ed., *The Baltic States*, p. 126.

the signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, a 45-signature petition signed by members of all three Baltic States was sent to Moscow, demanding that the two Germanys and the USSR declare the pact null and void. Independence was clearly defined as a goal of the movements.¹⁰⁵ At this time a number of dissidents received lengthy gaol terms.¹⁰⁶ Whether Latvia was occupied or joined the Soviet Union voluntarily was key to deciding the status of the population who moved to the territory of Latvia during the Soviet era.

Latvian language under the Soviet regime

In this multi-ethnic society, language became an increasingly political issue. Lenin had originally supported multi-lingualism. He saw this as the best method of disseminating the socialist message to the multi-ethnic Soviet peoples. During the Soviet era, Latvian language and culture were kept alive. Communist Party documents state that Latvian was used as the means of instruction and, where this was not the case, Russian schools also taught Latvian.¹⁰⁷ At the end of WWII, intensive instruction in Russian became compulsory in Latvian primary and secondary schools. A programme of Russian teaching in nursery schools was also introduced. In universities, Russian became the second language of instruction while in the work-place, if one member of a group, no matter how large, was non-Latvian, then the whole group had to converse in Russian.¹⁰⁸ Latvian Language and Russian Language Schools operated in a parallel system. Around 90 per cent of Latvians attended Latvian language nurseries and schools and Latvian language sections of universities. The rest of the population, including children of mixed marriages, generally attended Russian language institutions.¹⁰⁹ Although this parallel system existed, it did not result in the same quantity of language teaching for all pupils. Latvian schools had 4–

¹⁰⁵ Shtromas, 'The Baltic States as Soviet Republics: Tensions and Contradictions', pp. 104–6.

¹⁰⁶ Romuald Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940–1990*, expanded and updated edition (London: Hurst, 1993), p. 264.

¹⁰⁷ Ļ. Zīle and S. Ziemeļis, *Stages of the Great Course, 75 years of the Latvian Communist Party* (Riga: Liesma Publishers, 1979), pp. 60–1.

¹⁰⁸ George J. Neimanis, *The Collapse of the Soviet Empire: a View from Riga* (Westport, Connecticut,: Praeger, 1997), pp. 36–7.

¹⁰⁹ Nearly one third of marriages in general and around one fifth involving an ethnic Latvian are mixed, UNDP 1995.

6 hours of Russian per week, pupils in Russian schools only had to complete 2 hours of Latvian per week. Latvians had to take a final examination in Russian whereas Russians were not obliged to take a similar Latvian examination.¹¹⁰

From 1958 onwards, there followed an increased emphasis on Russian language instruction. Latvian language learning was eroded and Latvian nationals felt the influx of Russian language, education, and political, ethnic, and cultural influence in the republic. Inter-ethnic harmony was threatened by a sense that the Russians were taking over the leading positions in society.¹¹¹ In 1962, almost 5000 students in Riga were obliged to repeat the school year as they had failed to reach a sufficiently high standard in Russian language. The Brezhnev era initially reversed the anti-nationalist sentiment that had developed after Khrushchev's purges. In 1965 the three Baltic Republics were the only Soviet areas to gain an additional year of study in schools using the titular language as the language of instruction. Rather than allowing pupils to learn more Latvian, the additional time available to native schools was devoted to furthering Russian language study.¹¹² In the 1960s and 1970s, there was substantial migration into Latvia, introducing persons from the rest of the Soviet Union. This had the effect of lowering the proportion of Latvians in the population from 62 per cent in 1959 to 53 per cent by 1979.¹¹³ A dual society emerged whereby most individuals lived side-by-side rather than together. The migrants' children did not necessarily learn Latvian and inter-ethnic contact was largely limited to the work-place.

In the education reforms of 1958–9, parents were given a choice of sending their child to a Latvian or Russian language school. The learning of Russian in non-Russian schools and Latvian in Russian language schools became optional. Latvian leaders voiced their opposition to this. The reality of Soviet life was that in order to advance in life Latvians were obliged to learn Russian whereas there was no such

¹¹⁰ Nils Muižnieks, 'Latvia: Origins, Evolution, and Triumph', in Bremmer and Taras eds., *Nations and Politics in the Soviet Successor States*, p. 185.

¹¹¹ Karklins, *Ethnic Relations in the USSR*, p. 218.

¹¹² Romuald J. Misiunas, 'Baltic Nationalism and Soviet Language Policy: from Russification to Constitutional Amendment', in ed. Henry R. Huttenbach, *Soviet Nationality Policies: Ruling Ethnic Groups in the USSR* (New York: Mansell, 1990), p. 208.

¹¹³ Smith, ed., *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 501.

pressure put on the Russians to learn Latvian.¹¹⁴ Vilis Lācis, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR, declared at a party meeting that the reduction in language education would ‘hardly promote the strengthening of the friendship of peoples’. The Second Secretary of the Latvian Communist Party, Pelše, speaking at the 24 December 1958 session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, claimed that workers of the republic supported the continuation of teaching in both Latvian and Russian.¹¹⁵ Despite this protest, the laws came into force. The Latvian local party and republic leadership continued to press for increased use of Latvian and demanded that all persons holding official positions speak Latvian. The centre criticised the tendency to promote local languages as causing harm to the linguistic convergence of the socialist nations. The contentious issues of nationality and language became increasingly politicised during this period.

Gorbachev era

The arrival of Gorbachev led to more public debate and mass demonstrations took place, for example, on 23 August 1987, on the anniversary of the signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact.¹¹⁶ A group of three activists formed the Helsinki-86 in 1986 and expressed many of the demands later made by the Popular Front. The group demanded the securing of the rights outlined in the 1975 Helsinki Agreement and organised a protest at the Riga Freedom Monument on 14 June 1987 to mark the mass deportations of 1941.¹¹⁷ While the initial demonstration was a success, subsequent meetings to mark the signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact and 18 November 1918 independence were met with a harsh crackdown by the police. A group of US senators protested to Gorbachev about the treatment received by demonstrators¹¹⁸ and, on 6 November, the US Congress passed a motion urging the Soviet authorities to

¹¹⁴ Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940–1990*, p. 195.

¹¹⁵ Karklins, *Ethnic Relations in the USSR*, pp. 60–1.

¹¹⁶ Economist Intelligence Unit, *Baltic Republics: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Country profile, Annual Survey of Political and Economic Background, 1992–3*, pp. 19–20.

¹¹⁷ Dzintra Bungs, ‘Baltic Area Situation Report/2’, *Radio Free Europe Research Report*, 16 February 1988, pp. 11–15.

¹¹⁸ Jan Trapans, ‘The Sources of Latvia’s Popular Movement’.

allow commemoration of Latvia's independence day without official obstruction.¹¹⁹ On 23 August 1989, 2,000,000 protestors created a 600 km 'human chain', which stretched from Tallinn through Riga to Vilnius, to campaign for independence. The link between ecological and national concerns developed at this time as there had been too many years of indiscriminate industrialisation.

Despite the Gorbachev reform programme, initially nationalities' issues were treated as peripheral with early reforms focussing on economic and political concerns. Gorbachev stated that 'The nationalities question, inherited from the past, has been successfully resolved in the Soviet Union'.¹²⁰ There was a tendency to respond to each crisis on an individual basis, rather than produce a coherent policy. In early June 1988, the Congress of People's Deputies announced a commission of enquiry into the Soviet annexation of the Baltic Republics. This enquiry led to the 24 December 1989 declaration that the Molotov–Ribbentrop Secret Protocols had been 'in conflict with the sovereignty and independence of a number of third countries' and had violated the Soviet Union's treaty obligations towards Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia.¹²¹ While the Lithuanian Communist Party Secretary, Algirdas Brazauskas, appealed for the establishment of the Commission to prevent further Republican Party disunity, there was opposition from ethnic Russian deputies from the Republics.¹²² At the June 1988 special 19th Communist Party conference, an extraordinary party plenum was established to re-examine nationalities policy. The proposals, which were endorsed in September 1989, included devolution of more economic and political independence to the republics, and the right to establish relations with other countries and to adopt the titular language as the state language.¹²³ By October 1988, the Latvian Supreme Soviet had given official status to the Latvian language and legalised the pre-War national flag, finally declaring Latvia sovereign on 27 July 1989.

¹¹⁹ *Keesing's Record of World Events*, Vol. 23, No. 7, July 1988, p. 36037.

¹²⁰ *Izvestiya*, 7 March 1986, p. 5.

¹²¹ *Keesing's Record of World Events*, Vol. 36, No. 2, February, 1990, p. 37258.

¹²² *Keesing's Record of World Events*, vol. 35., No. 6, June 1989, p. 36743.

¹²³ Smith, 'The Soviet State and Nationalities Policy', pp. 15–17.

Resistance began forming at this time as single-issue opposition groups. For example, a demonstration against a major hydro-electric power project on the Daugava river led to the formation of the VAK (*Videz Aizsardzibas Klubs*, Environmental Defence Club).¹²⁴ The VAK opposed the construction of a Riga Subway. As well as outlining the environmental damage the construction would cause, the VAK also opposed the massive influx of migrant workers, who would be required to complete the work. This would further exacerbate Latvia's already critical demographic situation.¹²⁵ The organisation rapidly became the focus of all demonstrations, not just those connected with the environment. The dam project was linked to national concerns. If the project had gone ahead, a number of cultural edifices would have been inundated.¹²⁶ At this time, there was only limited inter-group co-operation.¹²⁷ The Popular Front was formed in June 1988 to act as an umbrella organisation for the Environmental Protection Club, the Green Movement, Helsinki-86, and the newly formed Latvian National Independence Movement.¹²⁸

These organisations supported the promotion of *perestroika* and the decentralisation of control from Moscow and rapidly developed their goals into the search for democracy and the restoration of Latvian independence. The previous period of independence was remembered by some. There was an urbanised, educated intelligentsia, writers, journalists, poets, and teachers who were united by their concerns over the erosion and extinction of the Latvian language and peoples. Writers' groups from around 1987 onwards concentrated on issues of Latvian language use, for example trying to promote the publication of more Latvian works.¹²⁹ Previous manifestations of nationalism had all been brutally suppressed by the Soviet authorities. The increased openness of the Gorbachev period allowed these desires for independence to be promoted.¹³⁰ Towards the end of Soviet rule, the focus of Latvian

¹²⁴ Nils Muižnieks, 'The Daugavpils Hydro Station and 'Glasnost' in Latvia', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 18, Spring 1987.

¹²⁵ G. Rakis, 'Metro is not a Friend', *Staburags* 88 (Riga), No. 2, 1988, p. 20–3, in Dreifelds, 'Latvian National Rebirth', p. 85.

¹²⁶ Gerner and Hedlund, *The Baltic States and the End of the Soviet Empire*, p. 85.

¹²⁷ Smith, 'The Resurgence of Nationalism', in Smith, ed., *The Baltic States*, p. 129.

¹²⁸ Dreifelds, 'Latvian National Rebirth', p. 84.

¹²⁹ Misiunas, 'Baltic Nationalism and Soviet Language Policy: from Russification to Constitutional Amendment', p. 208.

¹³⁰ Smith, 'The Resurgence of Nationalism' in Smith, ed., *The Baltic States*, p. 131.

cultural organisations was on Russian immigration. They insisted on republican citizenship, strict immigration controls, and the right of Latvian conscripts to serve locally. In addition, they demanded that Latvian should become the state language and contacts with Latvian émigrés be improved.¹³¹

Boris Pugo, the First Secretary to the Latvian Communist Party, opposed Gorbachev's reforms which had been supported by the Latvian National Liberation Movement. In September 1988, Pugo left Latvia for Moscow and was replaced by the more liberal Janis Vagris and, shortly afterwards, by Anatolijs Gorbunovs.¹³² On 1–2 June 1988, during an extended plenum of the Latvian Writers' Union, the secret protocols of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact were publicly revealed and denounced. The Writers' Union published a declaration proposing Latvia be granted internationally recognised sovereignty, membership of the United Nations, complete autonomy of economic and cultural matters, an end to censorship and human rights violations, restrictions on the immigration of non-Latvians, and the freedom for all Latvians to travel or live abroad.¹³³ Demonstrators marking the 1988 anniversary of the signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact held up placards declaring 'Close the Borders to New Comers'.¹³⁴ In October 1988, the Latvian Popular Front (LTP) had its inaugural congress when they called for a stop to non-Latvian immigration into the Republic. This pro-independence movement, declared a membership of 250 000 at the end of 1988, of whom one third were also members of the Latvian Communist Party. United in their opposition to Moscow and desire for greater economic and political autonomy, the LTP brought together disparate groups and interests that did not necessarily agree on how to approach nationality issues. In December 1989, the LTP won 75 per cent of the seats in the local elections, as well as a majority of Latvian representation at the All Union Congress of People's Deputies. Prior to independence, many of today's non-citizen Russian speakers supported the activities

¹³¹ Dominic Lieven *Gorbachev and the Nationalities*, (London: Centre for Security and Conflict Studies, 1988), p. 26.

¹³² Smith, 'The Resurgence of Nationalism' in Smith, ed., *The Baltic States*, p. 131.

¹³³ *Keesing's Record of World Events*, Vol. 23, No. 7, July 1988, p. 36038.

¹³⁴ Dreifelds, 'Latvian National Rebirth', p. 95.

of the LTP. Members envisaged democracy, freedom, and equal rights for all. When independence was regained, the equal rights platform was replaced by an ethnically-centred political rhetoric.¹³⁵ The goal of independence had held the disparate groups together but as this goal was near to being achieved, policy differences came to the surface and the LTP began to split into factions.

The Popular Front movements of the early period of national reawakening had taken on the guise of a liberal, inclusive attitude towards nationality. Non-Latvians campaigned alongside Latvians, wanting greater economic and political autonomy from the central authorities in Moscow and a move towards democratic rule.

Glasnost had exposed the incompetence of the Soviet economic system. Following the declaration of sovereignty, the Supreme Soviet allowed the Baltic Republics greater economic autonomy, commencing in January 1990, a year ahead of the rest of the Soviet Union.¹³⁶ The republics were given control of financial systems, banking, and factories while Moscow continued to control the armed forces and the strategically important oil and gas pipe lines.¹³⁷ It became increasingly obvious that the inadequate concessions from the centre were 'too little, too late' and that the economic problems ran very deep. However, as independence became a real possibility, the united front of the movement began to disintegrate. The radical nationalist members became more assertive and attitudes towards the issues of nationality and the presence of non-Latvians and Soviet troops hardened.

In response to the rise of Latvian national awareness, the Russian workers' collectives formed the Internationalist Front of Working People in the Republic of Latvia (Interfront)¹³⁸ in January 1989. This organisation was pro-communist and anti-independence, and had a Latvian membership of 1.4 per cent. Non-Latvians wishing to support independence had to join the Popular Front, even if they did not

¹³⁵ *RFE/RL*, 28 November 1996.

¹³⁶ *Keesing's Record of World Events*, Vol. 35, No. 7, July 1989, p. 36825.

¹³⁷ Barry and Barner-Barry, *Contemporary Soviet Politics*, p. 249; Gail W. Lapidus, 'New Thinking and the National Question', in ed. Archie Brown, *New Thinking in Soviet Politics* (Oxford: St. Antony's College, Macmillan, Oxford, 1992), pp.39-65.

¹³⁸ Michael Haxton, 'The Russians of Latvia', in *MINELRES (Minority Election Resources)*, www.bsos.umd.edu/cidum/mar/latruss.htm, 28 July 1994.

support all the nationalist aims of the organisation.¹³⁹ A poll conducted in 1988 indicated that 48 per cent of Russians and 6 per cent of Latvians felt there was a need for an Interfront and 74 per cent of Latvians and 10 per cent of Russians supported the Popular Front.¹⁴⁰ At the other extreme, the Latvian nationalists, unhappy with what they saw as Popular Front co-operation with Moscow, established the Congress Movements in 1989. These movements formed citizens' committees consisting of the descendants of pre-War independent Latvia. They argued that, as a base for a legitimate state, only descendants of the first Latvian republic should have the right to determine Latvia's future.¹⁴¹ While members of the Front talked of democratic ideals, to the radical nationalist elements this meant Latvians being allowed to govern their own country rather than any inclusive notion of political participation of all residents in Latvia.

In the second period of national awakening in the late 1980s, less than a quarter of non-Latvians living in Latvia spoke Latvian¹⁴² so the fight for the survival of the Latvian language was a rallying point for many in the country. In a petition, 354,000 residents (Latvians and non-Latvians) demanded that Latvian be once again officially named the state language.¹⁴³ While Latvia was still under Soviet rule, Latvian was declared the state language with effect from 1992 and, on 5 May 1989, the Language Law was passed.¹⁴⁴ This period highlighted the divide between support for an inclusive versus an exclusive policy. Concerned about the subordination of the Russian language to Latvian, the predominately Russian speaking city of Daugavpils sought regional autonomy from Latvia.

On 13-14 May 1989, the first Baltic Assembly meeting of the three Republics' Popular Fronts took place in Tallinn. The movements cautiously petitioned Moscow not to obstruct the restoration of Baltic sovereignty but were still unsure of how far

¹³⁹ Interview with Boris Tsilevich member of the party and the parliamentary faction, For Human Rights in a United Latvia, Riga, 13 May 1999.

¹⁴⁰ *Atmoda* (Riga), 16 January 1989, in Dreifelds, 'Latvian National Rebirth', p. 86.

¹⁴¹ Smith, 'The Resurgence of Nationalism', in Smith, ed., *The Baltic States*, pp. 138-9.

¹⁴² In the 1989 Soviet Census 21.1 per cent of Russians in Latvia claimed knowledge of Latvian while 65.7 per cent of Latvians claimed knowledge of Russian.

¹⁴³ *History, Language, Identity, and Culture of Latvia*, (Latvian Embassy in Sweden, 1998).

¹⁴⁴ *Language Law 1989, Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic*, 5 May 1989.

they could resist the Soviet authorities since Latvia had not challenged Soviet power to this extent since the 1950s when that last upsurge of nationalist activity was followed by a purge and crackdown. By October 1989, the Latvian Popular Front gave almost unanimous support for a programme demanding total independence from the Soviet Union.¹⁴⁵

1990–1

In January 1990, the Latvian Supreme Soviet ended the leading role of the Latvian Communist Party and, in the following March, the Latvian Popular Front won the elections to the Supreme Soviet, now renamed the Supreme Council. Anatolijs Gorbunovs¹⁴⁶ was elected Chairman of the Council and a Latvian Popular Front leader, Ivars Godmanis, appointed Prime Minister.¹⁴⁷ Following the election, the majority of Deputies were loyal to the Popular Front. The toughening stance on nationality and the increasingly nationalistic nature of the Popular Front were reflected in the type of legislation passed. On 4 May 1990, the Supreme Council declared the 1940 annexation of Latvia by the Soviet Union to be illegal¹⁴⁸ and passed a declaration of sovereignty, voting to re-establish the official name of the Republic of Latvia, passing new Language Laws, and asserting control over national resources and industry.¹⁴⁹ The Supreme Council also reinstated and then suspended most of the 1922 Latvian Constitution. This manoeuvre allowed for the continued recognition of the Soviet Constitution and laws as long as they did not contravene Latvian laws or sovereignty and enabled them to avoid many of the issues which had led to confrontation between the Lithuanian and Moscow authorities. The declaration of sovereignty also included a guarantee of the rights and liberties of all residents of

¹⁴⁵ *Keesing's Record of World Events*, Vol. 35, No. 10, October 1989, p. 36979.

¹⁴⁶ Anatolijs Gorbunovs became Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1988. His title changed to Chairman of the Supreme Council when Latvia achieved independence in 1991.

¹⁴⁷ Economist Intelligence Unit, *Baltic Republics: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Country Profile, Annual Survey of Political and Economic Background, 1993–4*, p. 23.

¹⁴⁸ *Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR on the Renewal of Independence of the Republic of Latvia Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR, 4 May 1990.*

¹⁴⁹ *Language Law 1989, Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic, 5 May 1989. Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR on the Renewal of Independence of the Republic of Latvia Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR, 4 May 1990.*

Latvia in accordance with international norms. It stated that, after independence, residents could choose to remain in Latvia either as Latvian or as USSR citizens.¹⁵⁰

The meeting of the Supreme Soviet was preceded by a meeting of the radical nationalist National Independence Movement. The nationalist desire to return to the situation of the 1940s was closely linked to the wish to exclude, expel, or impose a lengthy and complex naturalisation process upon the majority of the Russian-speaking population, which had been moved into Latvia under Soviet rule. By 1989, the ethnic Latvian share of the population had fallen to below 51 per cent from its 1939 figure of 75 per cent. War losses, deportations, and migration had devastated the titular population. The low birth rate amongst Latvians, the loss of 2 per cent of their territory,¹⁵¹ and the population of that territory, during World War II, and the estimated 136,000 deported under Stalin, also significantly reduced the ethnic Latvian share of the population.¹⁵² The demography of Latvia, as well as that country's wartime and Soviet experiences, influenced political decision-makers' views on citizenship policy. In Latvia, nationalist politicians expressed their ideas in legalistic terms. Focussing on sentiments of the extinction of the Latvian nation, nationalists aimed to restore the legitimate state, and restore the citizenry and descendants of the first independent Latvian republic. In 1994 the absolute number of Latvians was 1,391,800, still not recovered to the 1935 level of 1,467,000.¹⁵³

The independence declaration was outlawed by Gorbachev's decree of 14 May 1990. However, regardless of this intervention from Moscow, Latvia was acting like an independent country by Summer 1990, introducing new laws, sending delegations to meet foreign governments, and promoting Latvian national symbols.¹⁵⁴ However, the third congress of the Popular Front in October 1990 determined that only an elected parliament of independent Latvia could resolve the citizenship issue.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁰ *Keesing's Record of World Events*, Vol. 36, No. 5, May 1990, pp. 37460–1.

¹⁵¹ Hiden and Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe*, p. 130.

¹⁵² I.J. Vizulis, *Nations under Duress: The Baltic States* (Port Washington, 1985), p. 107.

¹⁵³ Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition*, p. 7.

¹⁵⁴ George J. Neimanis, *The Collapse of the Soviet Empire: a View from Riga* (Praeger, Westport, Connecticut, 1997), p. 58.

¹⁵⁵ *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)*, 4 October 1991.

In January 1991, the Soviet Union attempted to quash these independence moves in Latvia. The Black Berets, OMON¹⁵⁶ troops of the Soviet Interior Ministry, occupied the Press Centre building in Riga on 2 January¹⁵⁷ and on 20 January, four people died and nine were wounded in their 90-minute take-over of the Ministry of the Interior. However, Gorbachev failed to follow up his anti-independence declarations with a further show of force. In January 1991, Yeltsin visited the Soviet troops in Estonia and urged them not to fire on demonstrators. He also signed agreements between the Russian Federation and the Baltic States. It is possible that Gorbachev did not believe the military would obey his orders if he commanded them to suppress the demonstrators in the Baltic States violently. Alternatively, it is possible that Gorbachev did not command the first show of force and was not in control of the military actions in the Baltic States. International outrage at these events was significantly tempered by the Western need to maintain Soviet support over the Gulf War and by the fact that Gorbachev did not authorise further violent suppression. Towards the end of January, the self-declared alternative government, the Committee for Public Salvation, was formed, led by the hard-line First Secretary of the Latvian Communist Party, Alfred Rubiks. On 3 March, a non-binding advisory referendum on independence took place. From a turnout of 84.4 per cent of eligible voters, 73.7 per cent voted 'yes' for independence with around one third of Russian-speakers supporting independence. There was clearly less support amongst ethnic Russians than ethnic Latvians for independence, yet it was this non-Latvian support for an independent state, looking towards Western Europe, rather than continued membership of the Soviet Union, that ensured there were majorities for independence in cities such as Riga and Daugavpils, both with significant Russophone majorities.¹⁵⁸ Following the Moscow coup on 21 August 1991, the Latvian Parliament declared full

¹⁵⁶ In November 1990 Gorbachev appointed as Minister of the Interior, hardliner Boris Pugo, a former KGB boss in Latvia and most recently the communist party's chief disciplinarian. Pugo's new deputy, Major General Boris Gromov, the former commander of the Soviet 40th Army in Afghanistan, who was put in charge of the greatly strengthened internal security forces of the MOI, with their main objective the suppression of nationalist outbursts in the non-Russian republics. Gromov's forces were the OMON troops. *The USSR in 1991: The Implosion of a Superpower*, Dr Robert F. Miller, Senior Fellow in Political Science, Division of Economics and Politics, RSSH, ANU, Australia, last updated 17 February 1992, <http://www.eserver.org/history/ussr-in-1991.txt>.

¹⁵⁷ Autumn 1990 OMON, a special police force, defected from the Latvian Interior Ministry to side with Moscow.

¹⁵⁸ Smith, 'The Resurgence of Nationalism', p. 136., Riga had 36.5 per cent Latvian and 47.3 per cent Russian population, Daugavpils had 13 per cent Latvian and 58.3 per cent Russian (1989 Soviet census).

restoration of independence, which was recognised by Russia and the Soviet Union. Latvia quickly re-established diplomatic relations with Western countries.¹⁵⁹ The Soviet central government recognised Latvian independence on 6 September 1991 and the Republic of Latvia was admitted to the United Nations on 12 September 1991.¹⁶⁰

Independence regained 1991

Given this turbulent history, it is perhaps not surprising that the main objective of Republic of Latvia foreign policy was to strengthen the country's independence and ensure that independence was irreversible. The aim was to achieve this by integrating with European security, political, and economic structures, participating in the formulation of European policy, promoting stability and security on the continent, as well as by taking an active part in global political processes.¹⁶¹ The Latvian Government outlined the obligatory preconditions for meeting this task as the development of a parliamentary democracy, internal political stability, and continuing economic reform in Latvia. The statement highlighted the two contradictory wishes of the Latvian policy makers, the rebuilding of the ethnic Latvian nation-state, and the democratisation of a multi-national society. The fact that non-Latvians were distributed across urban settlements meant that there had been more mixing of nationalities than, for example, in Estonia where settlements were more isolated. From 1989 through to 1998, the level of mixed marriages for ethnic Latvians remained constant at between 17 and 19 per cent of total marriages.¹⁶² However, despite this mixing, the attitudes of Latvians and non-Latvians to citizenship differed. When the Citizenship Law was being drafted in 1993, 17 per cent of Latvians thought all residents should have equal rights, whilst 70 per cent of non-Latvians thought so.

¹⁵⁹ 18 November 1998—*The 80th Anniversary of the Republic of Latvia* (Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), p. 2.

¹⁶⁰ A/RES/46/5 1st plenary meeting 17 September 1991, General Assembly of the United Nations.

¹⁶¹ *Basic Directions of Latvia's Foreign Policy to the Year 2005, I* (Riga: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Latvia, 1998).

¹⁶² *Latvijas Statistikas Gadagrāmata* (Riga: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 1999), p. 61.

In addition, 52 per cent of Latvians would be displeased if their son or daughter married a Russian.¹⁶³

Following the re-establishment of Latvian independence in 1991, Latvian politics was divided along the lines of attitudes to history, nationality, and culture rather than the, perhaps, traditional western economic policy grounds of promoting the free market versus greater state intervention in economic matters. The Congress Movement in Latvia (the unofficial parliament elected only by pre-1940 residents and their descendants)¹⁶⁴ was founded on the explicit premise that the form and content of the First Republic of the previous period of Latvian independence (1918–40) needed to be restored in its entirety, especially in relation to citizenship. For the Congress, Latvia's real existence had been unbroken by the rule of the Soviet regime. The right wing emerged from the nationalist dissident cause and a number of politicians explained that the ethnic tensions in Latvia were due to the Russians being unwilling to surrender their privileged position in society. Nationality politics was viewed as a zero-sum game. Initially, the Popular Front¹⁶⁵ movement campaigned for the restoration of the Republic in the context of existing realities. The Front united a broad spectrum of individuals: communists and non-communists, indigenous peoples, and immigrants on a platform of radical democratic *perestroika*, against intervention from Moscow.¹⁶⁶

On 19 March 1991, the Supreme Council adopted a Law on the Unrestricted Development and Right to Cultural Autonomy of Latvia's Nationalities and Ethnic Groups. This act protected the rights of minorities and declared that any activity directed toward national discrimination or the propagation of national superiority or national hatred was punishable using existing laws.¹⁶⁷ The liberal nature of this document regarding nationality was not echoed by the more conservative attitudes

¹⁶³ Jørgen J. Poulsen, 'Nationalism, Democracy, and Ethnocracy in the Baltic Countries', in *The Politics of Transition in the Baltic States: Democratisation and Economic Reform Policies*, eds., Jan Åke Dellenbrant and Ole Nørgaard (Umeå University printing office, 1994), pp. 22-3.

¹⁶⁴ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 72.

¹⁶⁵ The Latvian Popular Front was founded in June 1988. The National Independence Movement bridged the gap between the dissident forces and the Popular Front (and later between the Latvian Congress, their alternative parliament, and the Supreme Council).

¹⁶⁶ Richard Sakwa, *Gorbachev and his Reforms 1985–1990*, Prentice (London: Hall, 1990), p. 234.

¹⁶⁷ *Law on the Unrestricted Development and Right to Cultural Autonomy of Latvia's Nationalities and Ethnic Groups*, Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, 19 March 1991.

regarding citizenship where Latvian nationalists called for increasingly restrictive legislation. On 15 October 1991 the first legislation relating to the citizenship issue was adopted by the Supreme Council. This resolution declared null and void from the moment of its adoption the USSR Supreme Soviet's 7 September 1940 Decree on the Order in which the citizens of the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian SSR receive USSR citizenship. It set the requirements for those wishing to become Latvian citizens as knowledge of the language, laws and legal structure, 16 years of residence, and an oath of allegiance and renunciation of any other citizenship.¹⁶⁸

The debate at this time focussed on who was actually eligible to decide what kind of Citizenship Law should be established. On 2 November 1991, the Latvian Citizens' Congress denounced the Supreme Council's proposals for citizenship and naturalisation of 15 October. The congress believed that they legalised the status of Soviet colonists in Latvia. In addition, the Congress also claimed to be the only body legally entitled to draw up a register of Latvian citizens.¹⁶⁹ On 27 November, the Latvian Supreme Council passed a law restoring citizenship to all those who held it before 1940, and their descendants. This debate revealed deep divisions over citizenship issues. The effect of these divisions on the role of domestic political actors in bringing about the change in Latvian nationality policy is discussed in Chapter 3.

After independence

As the aims of the participants in the independence movement soon diverged, nationality divided this united front. From 1990 to 1992, large sections of the Front shifted from their initially inclusive attitude towards a more exclusive citizenship policy supported by the Congress.¹⁷⁰ Independence had been achieved and there was now no longer the need to maintain a strong united opposition, inclusive of all nationalities. After independence, as Latvia suffered economic recession, the Popular

¹⁶⁸ RFE/RL, 16 October 1991.

¹⁶⁹ RFE/RL, 5 November 1991.

¹⁷⁰ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 216.

Front began to lose support and a number of ministers left the government. On 9 July 1992, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia annulled the mandates of 15 deputies mostly from the Equal Rights Faction.¹⁷¹ The decision was based on 30 June amendments to the Saeima Election Law. They were accused, from May 1990 to August 1991, of trying to replace the Latvian government unlawfully and hinder the path towards independence.¹⁷² During the fourth Front Congress in November 1992, the Latvian Popular Front took a sharp swing to a radical nationalist position. What remained of the Popular Front divided into two factions *Satversme* (Constitution) and *Teversme* (Homeland). *Satversme* opposed any expansion of the citizenry beyond descendants of pre-1940 Latvia. Both groups held an increasingly anti-Russian stance on the question of Latvian citizenship. The split meant that the Popular Front now held 53 out of the 132 seats from the 1990 March election. Over half of the deputies at that time had no official party affiliation.¹⁷³

The post-independence governments of Latvia faced a challenging economic and political environment in which to develop their nationality policy. The country faced chronic economic problems and the difficulties associated with taking over the existing Soviet administration and transforming this bureaucracy into a functioning Western style apparatus of government. Latvia's economic decline included the collapse of heavy industry, increased fuel prices, shortages, and a severe decrease in demand from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Industrial production fell by 32 per cent in 1992, the main areas of decline being machine-building, steel works, food, and light industry.¹⁷⁴ As the economy was still closely interconnected with that of the former Soviet Union, the nationality issues had, therefore, to be dealt with

¹⁷¹ In the 1990 Supreme Soviet elections the Equal Rights Faction candidates were mostly backed by Interfront and or the Soviet Communist Party. The decision was based on 30 June 1992 amendments to the *Saeima* Election Law, Article 5, sections 5 and 6 state that persons are not eligible to be elected to the Saeima if they; 5. belong or have belonged to the salaried staff of the USSR, the Latvian SSR or a foreign state security, intelligence or counterintelligence services; or after 13 January 1991 have been active in the CPSU (the CP of Latvia), the Working People's International Front of the Latvian SSR, the United Board of Working Bodies; the Organization of War and Labour Veterans; the All-Latvia Salvation Committee or its regional committees.

¹⁷² *Keesing's Record of World Events*, July 1992, Vol. 38, No. 7-8, p. 39016.

¹⁷³ *The Latvian Elections: Democracy and Human Rights*, A report by the British Helsinki Human Rights Group, 1993, p. 3.

¹⁷⁴ Economist Intelligence Unit, *Baltic Republics: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Country profile, Annual Survey of Political and Economic Background, 1993-4*, pp. 25, 27.

cautiously. The top layer of government had changed but they faced the challenge of cooperating with the existing former Soviet ethnic Russian dominated administration.

These post-independence governments in Latvia had to confront a number of critical decisions over key policy areas directly affecting nationality policy. The key issues were citizenship, language, education, Soviet/Russian troop withdrawal, naturalisation and the status of non-citizens, a border treaty with Russia, and the outcomes of these policies. These politically emotive issues had to be faced by a government which only months before had attracted widespread Western support for its own struggle to assert its identity and to rise up against Soviet oppression. The government had to effect the change from united campaigning Popular Front to a multi-party democracy bereft of the uniting goal of independence from the Soviet Union. Now no longer the minority in the Soviet Union, but the majority ethnic group in Latvia, the Latvian leaders were forced to switch roles and attempt to become a 'good majority'. An immediate problem for the newly independent Latvia was what to do with the Soviet/Russian troops stationed in their country.

Troop withdrawal

The continued presence of 40,000 Russian troops in Latvia became a key stumbling block to improved Latvian–Russian relations. The development of citizenship legislation had become closely linked to the withdrawal of former Soviet troops from Latvian soil. The issue of a lengthy residency requirement for citizenship was what initially concerned Russia during the troop withdrawal period. In October 1992, Boris Yeltsin officially suspended troop withdrawals which had begun informally several months earlier. This had involved a gradual reduction of troops across a number of bases and was achieved mainly by not replacing conscripts who had completed their service. Despite Yeltsin's formal suspension the withdrawal actually continued, but the political signal from Yeltsin was important. Lithuania has recently concluded technical agreements with the Russian Federation and Yeltsin was being criticised for not looking after army and state interests during the troop withdrawal negotiations.

Yeltsin took issue with the Latvian demands for compensation for the damage caused by the Soviet army, and also the Latvian authority's treatment of Russian minorities.¹⁷⁵ In 1993, Latvia continued to press for the remaining 22,000–24,000 Russian troops to leave Latvia. Meanwhile, the Russian government gained support from the international community to monitor the situation of Russian minorities and to ensure their human rights. While in Vancouver in January, Yeltsin declared that the issue of troop withdrawal and the status of Russians in Latvia were linked. In addition, the Russian authorities repeatedly claimed that lack of suitable housing meant that the Russian troops could not return home as they had nowhere to go.¹⁷⁶ At a March meeting of the Council for the Baltic Sea States, Russia won the support of fellow foreign ministers to monitor minorities and human rights in the region.¹⁷⁷ In April, on the eve of what was the latest round of Russian–Latvian negotiations, the *Satversme* Party submitted a draft decree to parliament, which aimed to deprive all those who entered the territory after 1945 of the right of residence in Latvia. This led to the Russian delegation cancelling the proposed talks. The parliamentary decree was then radically revised,¹⁷⁸ the provision granting Russian service personnel only one year residency was dropped from the proposal, allowing the troop withdrawal negotiations to continue.¹⁷⁹

President Ulmanis presented Latvia's case for the withdrawal of 16,000–18,000 Russian troops at the UN General Assembly in September 1993 and gained the support of the United States and Sweden in speeding up the process of withdrawal. The agreement signed on 15 March 1994 led to the complete withdrawal of all Russian troops in Latvia, excluding the Skrunda radar base, which received a mandate extended until August 1998.

¹⁷⁵ Economist Intelligence Unit, *Baltic Republics: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Country profile, Annual Survey of Political and Economic Background, 1993–4*, pp. 24–5. Michael Haxton, 'The Russians of Latvia', in *MINELRES*, www.bsos.umd.edu/cidcum/mar/latruss.htm, 28 July 1994.

¹⁷⁶ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 2nd Quarter 1993, p. 26.

¹⁷⁷ The Council of the Baltic Sea States includes Germany, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. The organisation promotes regional co-operation between the states bordering the Baltic Sea.

¹⁷⁸ 'Zotov Views Russian–Latvian Relations', *Moscow Nezavisimaya Gazeta* in Russian, 30 August 1996 p. 4. *FBIS-SOV-96-209-S*, Daily Report, 30 August 1996.

¹⁷⁹ *ITAR TASS*, Moscow, 29 April 1993, BBC SWB SU/1677 A2/2 (9), 1 May 1993.

On 30 April 1994, Latvia and Russia signed four agreements: one on the full withdrawal of the armed forces of the Russian Federation from the territory of the Republic of Latvia, with associated conditions and terms; a second on the legal status of the armed forces during their withdrawal; a third on the Skrunda radar station; a fourth on the social protection of Russian military personnel and their families until the moment of withdrawal; and on the social protection of military personnel and their families who remained in Latvia.¹⁸⁰ The Russian authorities requested that their military personnel be permitted to remain in Latvia beyond the August 1994 withdrawal date. This was to allow suitable housing to be found for them on their return to the Russian Federation.¹⁸¹ Former USSR troops resident outside Latvia before they commenced their service were only allowed Latvian citizenship for special services to the state.¹⁸² The issue of troop withdrawal was closely linked to nationality policy as, until the Russian troops left, the occupation could not be considered over and, therefore, Latvia could not act totally independently in legislation making. The issue which took up the most political time and effort and attracted close interest from the international community was this crucial Citizenship Law.

Creation of a Citizenship Law

On 15 September 1992, the Supreme Council approved guidelines for the continued troop withdrawal negotiations with Russia demanding the unconditional withdrawal of all troops by the end of 1993 and no naturalisation of non-citizens as long as foreign troops remained on Latvian soil. In November, Gorbunovs, Chairman of the Supreme Council, declared that Latvia must work harder to integrate minorities and avoid becoming a bipolar society. He suggested that the Supreme Council adopt a Citizenship and Naturalisation Law which would include a ten-year residency

¹⁸⁰ *Diplomaticheskii Vestnik*, No. 11–12, June 1994, p. 13 ff.

¹⁸¹ *Latvia Commission on Russian Withdrawal Ratification*, Moscow INTERFAX, 28 September 1994, FBIS-SOV-94-189, Daily Report, 28 September 1994.

¹⁸² *Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, Chapter 2, Section ii, Clause 5, Section 13, Paragraph 1, Amendment*, 16 March 1995.

requirement and a command of the Latvian language. This was a more moderate residency requirement than previously suggested by the council.¹⁸³ With a residence requirement of 16 years, 93 per cent of the minority population would have qualified; a 10 year requirement covered 97 per cent. There was further tension on 9 June 1992 when the Latvian Supreme Council passed a law setting strict conditions for new residents in Latvia. The radical nationalist deputies declared that these conditions also applied to existing non-citizen residents. In July 1992, the Supreme Council fully reinstated the suspended 1922 constitution with a 1991 Constitutional Law as a supplement.¹⁸⁴

Saeima elections 1993

In June 1993, Latvia held its first post-independence elections to the reconstituted *Saeima* (parliament). During the approach to the 1993 elections, the common issues were dislike of the Godmanis government and the Russian presence in Latvia. Parties were divided over their attitudes towards citizenship and, to a degree, the economy. During the approach to the 1993 *Saeima* elections, Janis Jurkans, forced to resign as Foreign Minister, formed Harmony for Latvia, Rebirth for the Economy. This party supported a far more conciliatory attitude towards the Russian population, but was more right wing in terms of attitudes to the economy in that they favoured the free market and no state intervention. The right-of-centre Latvia's Way supported a quota system for Latvian citizenship and free enterprise in the economy. The right-wing rival Latvian National Independence Movement (LNNK) (*Latvijas Nacionalas Neatkaribas Kustibas*) campaigned with the slogan 'Latvia for Latvians'. The For Fatherland and Freedom Party (*Tevzemei un Brivibai*) campaigned for the 'decolonisation' of Latvia, including the forcible repatriation of all Russians from the country. Fatherland and Freedom, Latvian National Independence Movement, and the Farmers' Union, gave priority to policies that ensured the continued existence of the

¹⁸³ RFE/RL, 3 November 1992.

¹⁸⁴ Haxton, 'The Russians of Latvia', 28 July 1994.

Latvian nation. However, in terms of the economy, they subscribed to strong state intervention and a comprehensive welfare state.¹⁸⁵

The majority of candidates were ethnic Latvians, with the few Russians tending to represent the two left-wing lists devoted to the protection of Russian minority rights. According to international election observers, there were no Russian-language voting instructions even in the most densely Russian populated areas. Election posters for the Harmony for Latvia Party, which gained much of the non-Latvian vote, were the only ones printed in Russian. This party campaigned for reconciliation amongst Latvia's nationalities.¹⁸⁶ Unlike the March 1990 Supreme Soviet elections, open to all, the 1993 election was held under the 1922 constitution and restricted to those persons resident before Soviet rule in 1940, and to their descendants. This policy led to 1,245,530 people, or 51 per cent of Latvian residents, being able to vote. The system excluded 602,300 of the 902,300 Russian residents from the vote.¹⁸⁷ The Elections Bill stipulated that candidates could only run for election if they passed Latvian language exams.¹⁸⁸ The composition of the electorate is key to the research question of why nationality policy has changed from being inclusive to a more exclusive policy. The policy makers are elected by a predominantly Latvian electorate but must decide the status of a multi-ethnic society. They, therefore, need to ascertain whether the adverse reaction of the international community to an exclusive nationality policy outweighs the perceived benefits of an inclusive policy for the Latvian peoples.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁵ Apine, 'Nationality Policy in the Baltic States', p. 366; Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition*, p. 87.

¹⁸⁶ *The Latvian Elections: Democracy and Human Rights*, A report by the British Helsinki Human Rights Group, 1993, pp. 7-8.

¹⁸⁷ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 2nd Quarter 1993, p. 22; Citizenship and Immigration Department, May 1993.

¹⁸⁸ *Russia International Affairs*, UN Attention Drawn to Latvia's 'Discriminatory Policy', Moscow ITAR-TASS, 5 January 1994. *FBIS-SOV-94-004*, Document Daily Report, 6 January 1994.

¹⁸⁹ This problem of balancing domestic and international interests is discussed in Robert D. Putnam, 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of Two-Level games', reprinted in eds. Peter B. Evans, Harold K. Jacobson, Robert Putnam, *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), Appendix.

Development of citizenship legislation

There have been significant changes in citizenship legislation in Latvia. Initially, the proposed legislation reflected an exclusive, restrictive policy aimed at encouraging those persons to return to Russia who had previously been sent by the Soviet authorities to Latvia. The law has become less restrictive, and there has been a growing realisation that the Russophone minority is not going to leave, and that the initially polarised policy stance and hostile policy towards Russia has been counterproductive in terms both of the development of an integrated Latvian society and Latvia's desire to integrate into the international political and economic sphere. The section traces the evolution of this policy in order to highlight these changes.

In late 1993, the proposed citizenship legislation remained fairly restrictive. Demographics and a falling birth rate were a major fear driving those who proposed restrictive citizenship legislation. The Latvia's Way–Farmers' Union Citizenship Bill utilised an annual quota system. Using this method, the government of the day would establish the quotas according to the current economic and demographic situation, in order to promote the development of Latvia as a national state. The parliament passed the first reading of the Bill on 25 November 1993.¹⁹⁰ In 1994, an actual Citizenship Law was drafted¹⁹¹ and subsequently examined and commented upon by a number of organisations.¹⁹²

On 9 June 1994 the *Saeima* passed the second reading of the Citizenship Law. This Law gave preferential treatment to applicants who, in addition to knowing the Latvian language, had at least one ethnic Latvian parent, people who arrived in Latvia before 17 June 1940, ethnic Lithuanians and Estonians, and persons married to Latvian citizens for more than 10 years. Preferential treatment would also be given to residents completing their education in Latvian. Those whom a court had deemed

¹⁹⁰ *Baltic News Service (BNS)*, 10 January 1994.

¹⁹¹ At this time there were 1,745,367 citizens, 724,874 non-citizens of whom 160,000 allegedly, had connections with the KGB and other former Soviet intelligence forces, Economist Intelligence Unit 3rd quarter 1994, p. 23.

¹⁹² People's Accord Party Political Platform, Riga *Neatkarīga Cīņa* in Latvian, 1 June 1995 p. 5, *FBIS-SOV-95-135-S*, Daily Report, 1 June 1995.

were promoting the ideas of chauvinism, nationalism, and fascism, or those working against Latvian independence, as well as Soviet military retirees, if they were not ethnic Latvians or spouses of Latvian citizens, would be ineligible to apply for citizenship. Those outside these categories, who were born in Latvia, could apply for naturalisation after 1 January 1996.¹⁹³ The remainder of residents, providing they had been resident for at least 10 years, could apply through a quota system. The quota system was to have taken effect on 30 January 1999, allowing 0.1 per cent of the previous year's total number of citizens, around 2000 people out of the remaining 500,000 to be naturalised per year. The CSCE, Council of Europe, and the European Union all protested the quota system.

On 21 June 1994, the draft of the Citizenship Law passed its third reading with 66 votes for and 11 against. This prompted an international outcry, as the Law as it stood would stop most ethnic Russians from becoming Latvian citizens. The issue of quotas threatened to prevent the successful conclusion of a troop withdrawal treaty with the Russian Federation.¹⁹⁴ A number of Latvian politicians, notably from For Fatherland and Freedom and the LNNK Party, claimed that Latvia could afford to stay out of organisations such as the Council of Europe and, therefore, did not need to give in to international pressure and interference in their internal politics. However, membership of the Council of Europe was also seen as a prerequisite to membership of the European Union. President Ulmanis refused to sign the Bill because it would isolate Latvia in the international community. He asked the *Saeima* to reconsider the Bill as he objected to the fact that there was no provision for the status of non-citizens. In addition, Article 14 of the Law allowing for a naturalisation quota of 0.1 per cent of the existing population starting in the Year 2000 totally opposed the international organisations' recommendations.¹⁹⁵

Following the recommendations of the Council of Europe and also the CSCE, the revised draft stipulated that naturalisation would commence on 1 January 1996.

¹⁹³ *RFE/RL*, 10 June 1994.

¹⁹⁴ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 4th Quarter 1994, p. 22.

¹⁹⁵ Latvia Ulmanis Explains Decision on Citizenship Law, Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1700 GMT 28 June 1994, *FBIS-SOV-94-125*, Daily Report, 28 June 1994.

Those non-citizens born in Latvia and aged 16–23 would be eligible to apply in 1996. In 1997, older persons born in Latvia would be allowed to apply, while those who arrived as infants could apply in 1998. All others could apply from the year 2000.¹⁹⁶ Under the draft Law, the following persons, if not already naturalised, were granted priority; ethnic Latvians or Livonians,¹⁹⁷ former USSR residents and their descendants who qualified under the 1919 Citizenship Law, non-ethnic Latvians legally residing in Latvia on 17 June 1940,¹⁹⁸ and those forcibly deported to Latvia in WWII.¹⁹⁹ The following categories of people could apply providing they remained resident at least 5 years after their application for residency: those who completed a Latvian language course, and ethnic Estonians and Lithuanians, those married to ethnic Latvians for 10 years and, finally, residents who performed outstanding service to the Republic of Latvia.²⁰⁰

The centrist political forces, including Latvia's Way, which led the governing coalition in parliament after the 1993 election, supported the gradual and individual naturalisation of non-citizens. However, at this time, the political climate in Latvia was becoming increasingly nationalist. The May 1994 local elections resulted in a strong showing by the nationalist Latvian National Independence Party. The party stood against any concessions on the issue of citizenship and called for the expulsion of ethnic Russians from Latvia. An important condition for Latvian accession to the Council of Europe was that the final version of the Law should exclude quotas.²⁰¹

Citizenship Law 1994

On 22 July 1994, the Law on Citizenship was finally adopted establishing that Latvia's citizens are all persons, regardless of ethnic origin, who were citizens of the Republic of Latvia on 17 June 1940 and their direct descendants, as defined in the

¹⁹⁶ Latvia Revised Draft of Citizenship Law Prepared Riga *Diena* in Latvian 25 April 1994 p. 1, *FBIS-SOV-94-090*, Daily Report, 25 April 1994.

¹⁹⁷ Livs, a Finno-Ugric people are the oldest nationality to have settled the territory which is now Latvia.

¹⁹⁸ Around 45,000 mostly Poles and Lithuanians.

¹⁹⁹ 13,000 Jews, Poles, Lithuanians, Belarusians, and Greeks.

²⁰⁰ These categories include 231,900 people, The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 3rd Quarter 1994, p. 24.

²⁰¹ Apine, 'Nationality policy in the Baltic States', p. 367.

1919 Law on Citizenship, in accordance with the principle of *jus sanguinis*. This Law established the principle of the *de jure* continuity of the Republic of Latvia and its body of citizens.²⁰²

Under the Law, all legal permanent residents of Latvia, regardless of their ethnic, religious, or social background, could apply for citizenship. The only restrictions pertained to those who had acted anti-constitutionally against the State (if established by a court decision), were, or had been, members of foreign security or armed forces, had undertaken anti-constitutional activities as members of specific named organisations hostile to the Republic of Latvia, or who had served criminal sentences for crimes with prison terms exceeding 1 year.²⁰³

The basic requirements for a person to become a citizen through naturalisation procedures were: 5 years' residence in Latvia (after May 1990); basic knowledge of the Latvian language, constitution and history; pledging an oath of loyalty; a legal source of income, and renunciation of former citizenship. The Law granted priority to those residents who were born in Latvia (about one third of the resident non-citizens) or entered Latvia as minors. Individuals in those categories would be eligible to apply for citizenship prior to those in other categories.²⁰⁴ At this stage, non-citizens in Latvia had no status of any kind. This was criticised by Human Rights/Helsinki (formerly Helsinki Watch). In addition, the Citizenship and Immigration Board retained wide discretionary powers about who was eligible for residency and citizenship.²⁰⁵

Naturalisation

Having dropped the quota system proposed initially, the Act of July 1994²⁰⁶ laid down various conditions for the acquisition of Latvian citizenship. The right to apply for naturalisation was governed by a criterion of age. More precisely, the population was

²⁰² Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 22 July 1994, Article 2.

²⁰³ Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 22 July 1994, Article 11.

²⁰⁴ Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 22 July 1994.

²⁰⁵ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 4th Quarter 1994, p. 24.

²⁰⁶ Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 22 July 1994.

divided up into various age brackets, each of which was entitled to apply during a specific year. The acquisition of citizenship depended on passing an examination, where the applicant had to demonstrate his/her knowledge of the Latvian language and a certain knowledge of the country's history, its national anthem, and its institutions. This system did not serve to grant Latvian nationality to very many people.

Although not all non-citizens were eligible for Latvian citizenship, over 90 per cent of those who were did not apply. The Law on Citizenship was adopted in 1994; the Naturalisation Board began to operate on 1 February 1995 with the first citizens naturalised by August of the same year. In 1997, some 64,000 persons born in Latvia and aged 16–25 were eligible for naturalisation, in addition to approximately 60,000 persons outside this age group, who could apply for citizenship. In 1998, the core group of applicants included those up to age 30. This process of naturalisation by age group for those born in Latvia was to continue to the Year 2000. The largest group of persons, more than 214,000 in number, born outside Latvia, would be eligible in the Year 2002.²⁰⁷ Applications from persons in the last of these brackets only being accepted in 2003. The actual number of applicants, however, reflected only a small percentage of the total of potential applicants.²⁰⁸ As of December 1998, 11,432 persons had been naturalised out of a total of more than 125,000 eligible to apply. In addition, as being born to non-citizen parents did not lead to automatic citizenship for the child, around 2000–3000 new non-citizens were born each year.²⁰⁹ Persons with one Latvian or one Liv parent, and those eligible for citizenship under Article One of the 23 August 1919 Latvian Law on Citizenship, were exempt from these regulations and could simply be granted citizenship.²¹⁰ The controlled 'windows' system was established to stem the expected flood of applicants, to protect the Latvian nation, and to control the naturalisation process.

²⁰⁷ *Basic Directions of Latvia's Foreign Policy to the Year 2005, I*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Riga, Latvia, 1998.

²⁰⁸ The possible reasons behind the lack of applications were highlighted in a number of surveys. These were a wish to avoid military service, younger family members not applying until the whole family was eligible, fear of not passing the exams, and the inability to speak Latvian. These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

²⁰⁹ *United Nations Development Report*, Riga, Latvia, 1997.

²¹⁰ *Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*, 22 July 1994, Article 13, Paragraph 1 and 2.

Saeima elections 1995

The 1995 General election resulted in a left–right split in the vote and a move away from the centre ground. The high level of support for the For Fatherland and Freedom and the more anti-Russian People’s Movement for Latvia revealed a support amongst the electorate for a tougher stance on the Citizenship Law and disquiet over the Law introduced in 1994.²¹¹ These nationalist parties declared their support for membership of the European Union, yet their radical nationalist stance on citizenship policy ran counter to the European Union’s advice to integrate the non-citizen population.²¹²

1996 Evolution of citizenship policy

Following his April 1996 re-election as President, Guntis Ulmanis declared he must focus on improving relations with Russia. The Latvian President claimed he had abandoned populism and wanted to ‘carefully study and examine the range of issues relating to the presence of people of different ethnic groups in Latvia’. He appointed a Presidential advisor on nationalities issues.²¹³ However, despite these intentions, a large population of non-citizens remained.

1996 Citizenship Law not amended

In 1996, non-Latvians made up around 44 per cent of the total population, 22 per cent of the citizenry, and 10 per cent of the *Saeima* Deputies. By the summer of 1997, 124,000 persons were eligible to apply for naturalisation, but only 5000 did so. In 1997, the proportion of Latvian citizens increased to 72 per cent from 70.6 per cent in 1995. The natural rate of increase among citizens and the emigration of non-citizens were the main factors in this increase. Naturalisation by law accounted for 5 per cent of the rise.²¹⁴ In spite of the slow pace of naturalisation, substantial opposition to

²¹¹ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 1st Quarter 1996, pp. 24–5.

²¹² Baltic States, Latvia, *ITAR–TASS* on Latvian General Elections 1–2 October 1995, Moscow *ITAR–TASS*, 30 September 1995, *FBIS-SOV-95-190*, Daily Report, 30 September 1995.

²¹³ Interview with Olgeris Tipans, advisor to the President of Latvia on nationalities, 25 October 1999.

²¹⁴ United Nations Development Programme, ‘National Integration and Social Cohesion’, Chapter 3 in *Latvia Human Development Report 1997*, Riga, Latvia, 1997, pp. 54–5.

Latvian nationality policy remained. In January 1996, the radical nationalist For Fatherland and Freedom Party proposed an amendment to the citizenship legislation. The party wished to implement more restrictive legislation, which would, in effect, have denied citizenship to those arriving in Latvia after 1940. The campaign gained 126,954 signatures, 4539 short of the 131,104 required to force a referendum. The proposal was strongly criticised by the Latvia's Way and Green Parties. Their statement emphasised that, under the current Law, only 1,199 persons had been naturalised and that such a small increase in non-ethnic Latvian citizens could not be considered a threat to the Latvian nation. The proposed Law, the centre parties stated, would isolate Latvia in the international community and compromise hopes of integration into Europe.²¹⁵ The failure to provoke a referendum meant that the Law did not return to the *Saeima*.

Another proposal, this time liberalising the Law, was also rejected on 18 April 1996. The *Saeima* failed to introduce a proposal to allow non-citizens to vote in local elections. Only twenty members of the National Harmony Party, Socialist Party, Unity Party, Democratic Party Saimnieks, Latvia's Way, and For Latvia backed the move.²¹⁶

Amendment to Citizenship Law 1997

Although policy makers were keen to emphasise that the Citizenship Law was not based upon nationality, on 6 February 1997 the *Saeima* amended the Citizenship Law to allow ethnic Latvians who arrived in their historic homeland after 31 March 1996 to claim citizenship simply through registration.²¹⁷ The amendment was opposed by the Fatherland and Freedom Faction, which decided that it would allow many Russian-Latvians who did not speak the Latvian language to become citizens.²¹⁸ An estimated 210,000 Latvians live in Russia.²¹⁹

²¹⁵ RFE/RL, 17 January 1996.

²¹⁶ BNS, 18 April 1996.

²¹⁷ Baltic States, 'Latvia: Parliament Amends Citizenship Law to Expand Opportunity', *Riga Radio Riga Network*, 6 February 1997, FBIS-SOV-97-026, Daily Report, 6 February 1997.

²¹⁸ BNS, 6 February 1997.

²¹⁹ RFE/RL, 18 February 1993.

1997 rejection of Citizenship Law amendment

The presidency of Guntis Ulmanis continued to sound a note of caution to the radical nationalists. Yet, attempts to liberalise the Law were not successful. On 20 March the Socialist Party/ Equality of Rights faction's proposed amendment to the Citizenship Law was rejected by 40 votes to nine with six abstentions. The proposal was to grant citizenship to the children of permanent residents and the spouses of Latvian citizens after 5 years of marriage.²²⁰ Ulmanis had urged parliament and the government to amend the Citizenship Law to make it easier for minorities to obtain Latvian citizenship. He had repeatedly stressed that the current Law was divisive, ran counter to the spirit of EU legislation, and hindered the likelihood of an early border agreement with Russia. The citizenship issue divided the multi-party coalition government and was specifically mentioned in the coalition agreement to ensure that no changes were made to the Law without the full consent of all government parties. Ulmanis asked the government to amend the coalition agreement. This was opposed by the For Fatherland and Freedom /LNNK grouping. This party passed a resolution stating that, if the President continued to press for change in the Citizenship Law, they would instigate parliamentary procedure to have the President dismissed.²²¹

With the coalition agreement still in place in October 1997, the Latvian parliament rejected amendments proposed by the People's Harmony Party. This would have granted citizenship to children born in Latvia after 1991 and would have ended the age limit for submitting applications for naturalisation which, at the time, was restricted to those under 25.²²² Only 21 deputies in the parliament of 100 supported the move. The Co-operation Council of the factions which made up the government coalition rejected the amendments on the grounds that they contradicted the terms of the coalition agreement, which demanded that no changes be made to the Citizenship Law without a consensus.²²³

²²⁰ *OMRI Daily Digest*, 21 March 1997.

²²¹ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 1st Quarter 1998, p. 25.

²²² *RFE/RL*, 17 October 1997.

²²³ *BNS*, 16 October 1997.

In 1997, Ulmanis continued to support liberalisation and wrote to Prime Minister Skele asking him to ease some of the Citizenship Law requirements, including reducing the fee from LVL30 to a symbolic LVL3. He also wanted students to be exempt from paying the fee and requested the scrapping of the 6 month deadline for re-sits applied to all those who failed the language exam. He emphasised the damage the citizenship issue had done to Latvian–Russian relations and highlighted the need to encourage more people to apply.²²⁴ Following a reduction in the naturalisation fee for certain categories and persons up to the age of 25 becoming eligible to apply in 1997, 2994 people were naturalised, a substantial rise since the total for 1995 and 1996 combined was 3999. However, around 121,000 people eligible to apply at this time did not do so.²²⁵

1998 failed amendments to citizenship legislation

On 12 February 1998, the *Saeima* rejected an amendment to the Citizenship Law, proposed by the People's Harmony Party, which would have granted automatic citizenship to children born in Latvia after 1991.²²⁶ However, in February 1998, President Ulmanis vetoed the amendment to the labour code suggested by the For Fatherland and Freedom and Latvia's Way. The amendment would have allowed for the dismissal of an employee with an insufficient command of Latvian.²²⁷

In March 1998 the For Fatherland and Freedom /LNNK faction proposed an amendment which would have introduced a quota for Latvian citizenship of 0.1 per cent of Latvia's citizens the previous year. This would allow 2000 people to naturalise per year. The faction also wished to discontinue the practice of awarding citizenship for special service benefiting Latvia.²²⁸

1998 parliament votes to amend Citizenship Laws

²²⁴ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 3rd Quarter 1997, p. 25.

²²⁵ RFE/RL, 9 January 1998.

²²⁶ Latvian Radio, Riga, BBC SWB, E/2, 12 February 1998.

²²⁷ RFE/RL Newslines, 16 February 1998.

²²⁸ Latvian Radio, BBC SWB, SU/3172, E/2, 9 March 1998.

During the second reading, on 4 June 1998, the *Saeima* supported consideration of amendments to the Citizenship Law to grant citizenship automatically to non-citizens' children born in Latvia after restoration of independence. The proposal was supported by 44 MPs of Latvia's Way Party, Democratic Party Saimnieks, Peoples' Harmony Party and several MPs of the Latvian Farmers' Union, and the Union of Christian Democrats, National Reform Party, and Green Party. Twenty-nine MPs voted against the proposal and seven abstained.²²⁹

In an emergency parliamentary session called by the opposition Democratic Party *Saimnieks*, lawmakers voted by 54 to 14 to adopt the Citizenship Law amendment. The *Saeima* approved an amendment to the Citizenship Law on 22 June in the third and final reading whereby citizenship would be granted to all children born to non-citizens after 21 August 1991, if their parents requested it. The parliament also voted to abolish the 'naturalisation windows', which placed quotas on granting citizenship, and to simplify language tests for people aged over 65.

1998 referendum

The immediate implementation of these changes was delayed, however, as the For Fatherland and Freedom Party collected the required number of deputies' signatures to prevent the amendments from going into force for 2 months. During that period, it had to collect the signatures of 10 per cent of voters to hold a referendum on the amended law.²³⁰

A campaign in Latvia collected 223,999 signatures in support of the referendum on amendments to the country's Citizenship Law. The proposed amendments included allowing children born in Latvia of two non-citizen parents to gain citizenship when their parents did.²³¹ Significantly, children born in Latvia after 21 August 1991 of two non-citizen parents could be registered for citizenship whilst

²²⁹ *BNS*, 4 June 1998.

²³⁰ *RFE/RL*, 23 June 1998.

²³¹ *Amendment to Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*, 22 June 1998, Chapter one, Section 2, 1 and 3.

still minors.²³² Latvia had been heavily criticised for continuing to allow children to be born stateless. Around 2000–3000 non-citizen children have been born in Latvia every year since 1991. The amendments also demanded the renunciation of an existing citizenship only when Latvian citizenship was secured rather than at the beginning of the application process.²³³ Another major proposed amendment was the abolition of the ‘windows system’ where only people in a certain age group became eligible for naturalisation each year.²³⁴ The procedures for testing language were also altered; a person was considered fluent in the Latvian language if they could: completely understand information of a social and official nature; freely talk about, converse and answer questions regarding topics of a social nature; fluently read and understand any instructions, directions and other text of a social nature; and write an essay on a topic of a social nature given by the Commission.²³⁵

According to data sent to the Central Electoral Committee by electoral committees of towns and districts around 17 per cent of eligible voters signed the proposal for a referendum on the amendments. The citizens were most active in districts of Valmiera and Ogre, as well as in towns of Jurmala, Liepāja and in Tukums district. The activity was lowest in Kraslava, Rezekne, and in Daugavpils and the surrounding district.²³⁶

Prior to the October 1998 referendum, in which 53 per cent of those who voted were in favour of retaining the amendments to the Citizenship Law, 10,500 out of 148,000 people who were entitled to apply, gained citizenship through naturalisation. Of these, 4000 did not have to pass the language examination. In the previous law, disabled people, retired Lithuanians and Estonians, and permanent residents in Latvia before 1940 and their descendants all gained exemption from Latvian history and language tests. This list included a number of disabled WWII veterans, who did not speak any Latvian. The revised law allowed exemption for only a limited number of

²³² *Amendment to Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*, 22 June 1998, effective 1 January 1999, Chapter one, Section 3.1.

²³³ *Amendment to Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*, 22 June 1998, Chapter 2, Section 12, Paragraph 3.

²³⁴ *Amendment to Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*, 22 June 1998, Chapter 2, Section 14.

²³⁵ *Amendment to Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*, 22 June 1998, Chapter 3, Section 19, 20.

²³⁶ *BNS*, 24 August 1998.

disabled persons, including those who have speaking problems.²³⁷ The radical nationalists of For Fatherland and Freedom / LNNK were opposed to the liberalisation of the Citizenship Law. However, with the exception of For Human Rights in a United Latvia, the parties which promoted the changes to the Citizenship Law urged their supporters to back the amendments so that Latvia could gain entry to the European Union rather than to support an integrated Latvian society. There followed an unwritten agreement that the citizenship legislation would be liberalised, on the understanding that the Language and Education Laws could be formulated to favour the Latvian nation.²³⁸ The issue of Latvian language has always been closely connected to citizenship policy by law makers who sought to ensure that all new citizens would speak Latvian.

Language

Language Law 1992

A hardening of Latvian attitudes towards Russia was coupled with the introduction of all articles of the Language Law. The Russification of the Soviet era made the growth of the Latvian language an integral part of Latvian nation building. In March 1992, the 1989 Language Bill was revised which had the effect of relegating Russian to the same status as other foreign languages when previously it had, effectively, been on a par with Latvian.²³⁹ The law was implemented gradually; all articles only came into force after 5 May 1992. The Language Centre of the Cabinet of Ministers of Latvia was founded in 1992, and included the Principal Certification Commission and State Language Inspection Service.²⁴⁰ The Supreme Council passed a code on administrative violations concerning the official state language of which Articles C201/32 stipulated that ‘State governments or administrative institution officials,

²³⁷ BNS, 1 October 1998.

²³⁸ Interview with Boris Tsilevich member of the party and the parliamentary faction, For Human Rights in a United Latvia, Riga, 13 May 1999.

²³⁹ RFE/RL, 15 April 1992.

²⁴⁰ *History, Language, Identity, and Culture of Latvia—a Brief Synopsis* (Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), p. 2.

offices, enterprises, organisations must provide documents for residents in the official state language or they will be fined 1000–5000 roubles’.²⁴¹

Language training programme 1996

The issue of language had been linked to the naturalisation process by those drafting the citizenship legislation in an effort to ensure the survival of the language, to counteract the Russification of the Soviet period, and to achieve, according to the Latvian nationalists, integration of Latvian society. Parties supporting non-citizen views termed this policy assimilation. As discussed above, the rate of naturalisation was extremely slow. In 1996, less than 1000 persons were naturalised, although 33,000 were eligible to apply.²⁴²

Language use

Latvian state authorities and administrative bodies were obliged to use Latvian so, in addition to the need to learn Latvian in order to gain citizenship, non-Latvians were increasingly required to use the language in everyday dealings with public bodies, although an interpreter could be provided.²⁴³ However, non-Latvians reported to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) that they did not always find bureaucrats willing to deal with them in Russian. Some obstacles existed for those who had no command of Latvian, such as the need to know Latvian to receive unemployment benefit, and an obligation to pass a high-level language test to be able to stand for election. The effort to promote the Latvian language continued in September 1997 when Education Minister, Juris Celmis, issued a decree limiting the use of textbooks published abroad. This had an especial impact on Russian language schools which could not source all their supplies from within Latvia.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ *Republic of Latvia Language Law*, 5 May 1989, Chapter 3.

²⁴² *RFE/RL*, 9 October 1996.

²⁴³ *Law on Amendments to the Latvian Language Law of Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic*, Republic of Latvia, 1992, Article, 6.

²⁴⁴ *RFE/RL*, 8 September 1997.

1997/1998 Language Law debate

In October 1997, the draft of a new Language Bill passed its first reading. It provided for the regulation of the Latvian language in the private sphere.²⁴⁵ On 5 June the *Saeima* passed the first reading of the draft Language Law which envisaged Latvian as the only language of instruction in professional educational institutions. In addition, half of all courses in other schools would be taught in Latvian.²⁴⁶ The debate continued just prior to the October 1998 *Saeima* elections and the referendum on the changes to the citizenship legislation. The 1998 amending of the Citizenship Law gained a positive reaction from the West and from international organisations. However, these changes had to be followed by the, perhaps, more controversial issues of altering the existing Language and Education Laws. Politically, the parties could excuse their support for the Citizenship Law amendments as being demanded by the European Union to ensure entry to membership talks. Nationalist and more moderate parties saw the language and education issues as being much more closely connected to the survival of the Latvian nation and not to be the subject of outside interference. Members of the outgoing parliament voted in October 1998 by 64 to four in favour of a law calling for Latvian to become the sole language of instruction in public schools. The measures were to be phased in over a decade, with some class levels switching to Latvian-only instruction as early as 2004. Russian would be allowed as the language of instruction in private schools and some special-education institutions.²⁴⁷ The country's media law was also amended to ensure that all films broadcast on television were dubbed in Latvian or given Latvian sub-titles. The moves followed a change to the constitution in October 1998 declaring Latvian the country's only state language.²⁴⁸

In September 1998, a draft Language Law was adopted in the second reading but negotiations with representatives of the OSCE and the Council of Europe were

²⁴⁵ *RFE/RL*, 31 October 1997.

²⁴⁶ *BNS*, 5 June 1998.

²⁴⁷ *RFE/RL*, 30 October 1998.

²⁴⁸ *Latvian Parliament Passes Schools Language Law*, BBC World News Service on the internet, Friday, 30 October 1998 Published at 00:05 GMT World: Europe.

protracted and some parliamentarians were persuaded that this law needed amending. As a consequence, the *Saeima* failed to adopt the law before the October 1998 *Saeima* elections and citizenship referendum.

1999 Language Law debate

The Language Law continued to be highly controversial and caused heated debate as it made its way through the legislative process. After the *Saeima* election, the Language Law appeared again at the second reading stage in almost the same form that had attracted OSCE and Council of Europe criticism. The major difference now was that radical nationalists felt much more confident in pushing for a strict Language Law following the *Saeima* elections. The more moderate political parties felt bound by their promises that liberalisation of the Citizenship Law would be compensated by tightening the Language Law.

The *Saeima* Human Rights and Public Affairs Committee, assessing the draft state Language Law, rejected any proposals that would not permit regulation of the Latvian language in the private sphere. The Bill was also criticised by the OSCE and EU for its regulation of the private sector and of public gatherings.²⁴⁹ Within Latvia, the faction For Human Rights in a United Latvia tried to gain support for leaving the private sphere free from regulation. The Parliamentary Committee for Education, Science, and Culture prepared the draft law for a second reading, conceding that there must be consideration in the service sector as not all people employed there spoke the state language²⁵⁰ but that employees in private companies must speak and be able to use the state language to a sufficient level to discharge their professional duties.²⁵¹ Following the second reading, the Bill was also examined by the OSCE for compliance with Latvia's international obligations. The *Saeima* finally voted in favour of the Language Law by 73 votes to 16 on 8 July 1999.

²⁴⁹ *RFE/RL*, 9 July 1999.

²⁵⁰ *BNS*, 4 January 1999.

²⁵¹ *BNS*, 2 March 1999.

The Latvian Government, now led by Kristopans, resigned on 5 July as For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party and Kristopans' arch rival, the People's Party, signed a cooperation agreement. This change of government overshadowed the Language Law debate and the final law was adopted on 8 July 1999. The law demanded that public sector and the majority of private sector establishments carry out their business in Latvian, and supply, on request, employees with interpretation into Latvian at meetings or public events held in another language. Communication with the state had also to be in Latvian, as well as informative materials regarding health, safety, and consumer issues. Those in the service industry must have a sufficient command of Latvian to carry out their duties.²⁵² The newly elected President of Latvia, Vaira Vike-Freiberga, refused to sign the Language Law, and on 14 July sent it back to the *Saeima* for re-consideration. She claimed that seven points of the Bill were not legally precise and contravened Latvia's constitution and international obligations. The rejection of the Law followed negative appraisals from the OSCE, the Council of Europe, and the European Commission of the stipulations on language use in the private sector and public gatherings.²⁵³ The ruling government factions agreed, at the end of August, to implement the revised Language Law on 9 December, just before the European Union summit meeting in Helsinki, which could permit Latvia to join the first level of candidate countries.²⁵⁴ The revisions to the law could only be made to sections opposed by the President.²⁵⁵ On 9 December 1999, immediately prior to the European Union summit in Helsinki, the *Saeima* adopted the Language Law by 52 votes to 26. Foreign Minister Indulis Berzins stated that the new Law would protect and enhance the position of the Latvian language but also meet international standards. Members of the People's Party, Latvia's Way and the New Party factions voted for the Bill, Social Democrats and For Human Rights in Integrated Latvia voted against the Bill, while the For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party abstained. The Law sought to regulate

²⁵² *Jamestown Monitor*, 13 July 1999.

²⁵³ *RFE/RL*, 15 July 1999.

²⁵⁴ *BNS*, 24 August 1999.

²⁵⁵ *BNS*, 26 August 1999.

use in the private sector but not in informal communication between the residents of Latvia, internal communication of national and ethnic groups, or services, ceremonies, rituals and other religious activities of religious organisations.²⁵⁶

Education

Education Act 1995

As well as encompassing Citizenship and Language Laws, Latvian nationality policy has also been involved in the field of education. Latvia has two parallel education systems, one in Latvian and one in Russian, both financed by the State. According to the Central Statistical Bureau on 1 September 1996, 68.9 per cent of children in pre-school education attended Latvian groups and 30.6 per cent attended Russian groups and, in state-financed education in 1995–6, 85 per cent of students were taught in Latvian and 15 per cent in Russian²⁵⁷ with eight other minorities having state-aided schools in their national language. The 1995 amendment of the Education Act introduced the obligation for schools to increase the number of lessons taught in Latvian. However, its implementation was hampered by the lack of teaching staff with the qualifications necessary to give such courses in schools serving the minorities. In higher education, students had to pass a test in Latvian before being admitted. From the second year, state-financed higher education institutions had to use Latvian as the basic language of instruction.²⁵⁸ However, a number of private establishments provided high-quality teaching in Russian. Latvia had not yet introduced legislation on education for the minorities at this time, which provoked some fears amongst the minorities concerning the permanence of the measures currently taken by the public authorities to promote their educational establishments. The language of instruction was important to non-citizens as an education in Latvian

²⁵⁶ BNS, 9 December 1999.

²⁵⁷ United Nations Development Programme, 'National Integration and Social Cohesion', Chapter 3 in, *Latvia Human Development Report 1997*, Riga, Latvia, 1997, p. 58.

²⁵⁸ *Education Law*, June 1991, Chapter 1, Article 5.

led to exemption from the language and history elements of the naturalisation exam.²⁵⁹

In July 1998, the *Saeima* agreed that the Education Bill should be classed as urgent and, thus, take only two readings.²⁶⁰ Following the adoption of the new Education Law in October 1998, all education, from June 1999, had to be in Latvian unless the institution was private, or they implemented an agreed minority education programme. There were four models from which to choose. Alternatively, the school could also develop their own subject to the approval of the Ministry of Education and Science. All pupils, regardless of the type of school they attended, were obliged to learn Latvian and to take an exam in the language. In addition, examinations for professional qualifications were to be taken in Latvian.²⁶¹

Table 1 Number of students by language of instruction

	1995–6	1996–7	1997–8	1998–9
Latvian	203607	212017	219794	225629
Russian	132540	129120	125643	120534
Other	1513	1664	1817	2042
Total	337660	342801	347254	348205
Learning in Latvian (%)	60.3	61.8	63.3	64.8

In the last 10 years, there has been a steady decline in demand for non-Latvian education²⁶² with 72 per cent of First graders starting their education in Latvian, by 1998–9.

Border treaty 1997

Attempts to change the Citizenship, Language, and Education Laws were conducted against a background of tense relations with Russia. The continuing border dispute with Latvia allowed the Russian Federation to focus attention on the problems of the

²⁵⁹ *Amendment to Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*, Act 79 of 1995, 16 March 1995, 7 and 3, *Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*, 22 July 1994, Article 21.2.

²⁶⁰ *BNS*, 29 July 1998.

²⁶¹ *Education Law of the Republic of Latvia*, 29 October 1998.

²⁶² *Non-paper distributed by Latvian Embassies 18 October 1999; Latvijas Statistikas Gadagrāmata*, p. 127.

Russophone non-citizen minority. Aivars Vovers, head of the Latvian delegation, discussing the Latvian–Russian border, said that Latvia agreed to recognise the existing border at talks in Moscow on 24–25 February 1997. The concession meant that Latvia was no longer demanding that the border agreement should include a reference to the 1920 Riga Peace Treaty, which stated that the Abrene district (annexed by Soviet Russia in 1944 and renamed Pytalovskii) belonged to Latvia.²⁶³ Following the Latvian and Russia bilateral talks of 22–23 March 1997 the parties announced that they had agreed the definition of their border and reached agreement in principle on the text of a draft border treaty. Latvia continued to press for compensation from Russia for property confiscated when the territory was annexed.²⁶⁴ This treaty agreement has still to be ratified.

Minorities vs. non-citizens

In any assessment of the situation of the minorities in Latvia, a distinction has to be made between rights and safeguards connected with membership of an ethnic and cultural community, regardless of the nationality held and of differences in personal status arising from non-possession of Latvian nationality. Minorities in Latvia, including non-citizens, account for nearly 44 per cent of the population, including 30 per cent Russians, 4 per cent Belarussians, and 3 per cent Ukrainians. This had the result that Latvians are a minority in seven of the country's eight largest towns. Within that 44 per cent, some 685,000 people (28 per cent of the total population) do not have Latvian citizenship and a large proportion of that group, consisting of former citizens of the USSR, have no citizenship at all. The present demographic situation is largely attributable to the Soviet Union's post-1945 policy of encouraging the settlement of Russian-speakers (1935 census: 75.5 per cent Latvians and 12 per cent Russians; 1959: 62 per cent Latvians and 26.6 per cent Russians; 1979: 53.7 per cent Latvians and 32.8 per cent Russians).

²⁶³ *OMRI Daily Digest*, 27 February 1997. Latvia, Latvia makes Concession on Border Treaty with Russia, Moscow *Izvestiya* in Russian 5 March 1997 p. 3, *FBIS-SOV-97-064*, Daily Report, 5 March 1997.

²⁶⁴ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 2nd Quarter 1997, p. 20.

The minorities had no special parliamentary representation. However, on 16 July 1996 President Ulmanis established a consultative council on nationality affairs, which provided him with information on ethnic problems, assisted in elaborating legislation, and worked to promote integration of non-Latvians.²⁶⁵ This Consultative Council of the Nationalities brought together representatives of 11 ethnic minorities and was responsible for monitoring the situation and proposing necessary reforms. On the cultural level, the Association of National Cultural Societies, which spanned some 20 organisations, strove to promote tolerance and good relations between the various communities.

Not all developments were positive, however, for the minority population. On 6 August 1996, the law on foreigners and stateless persons was amended to require former Soviet citizens, who had acquired the citizenship of another country, to apply for permanent stay permits²⁶⁶ and, in September, the Latvian Council for Television and Radio Broadcasting closed down the operations of the Russian language Mayak radio station, and the all-Russian state television and radio company. The television council claimed that there were no political motives for ending these operations, rather that Radio Russia had failed to pay Latvia for the retransmission of programmes and added that all their attempts to get in contact with the bosses at the radio station had failed.²⁶⁷

1995 non-citizens' rights and obligations

The slow progress of naturalisation meant that the Latvian authorities had to provide a status for non-citizens. The development of a Bill in 1993 on former USSR citizens who do not have Republic of Latvia citizenship status, was submitted for review by the *Saeima*, and adopted in 1995.²⁶⁸ Non-citizens did not enjoy the same rights as citizens. For example, they were excluded from the scope of the 1995 Amnesty Law.

²⁶⁵ Apine, 'Nationality Policy in the Baltic States', p. 369.

²⁶⁶ BNS, 6 August 1996.

²⁶⁷ , Baltic States, Government Stops Moscow Radio Rossii Broadcasts, *Moscow Radio Rossii Network*, 3 September 1996, *FBIS-SOV-96-175*, Daily Report, 3 September 1996.

²⁶⁸ People's Accord Party Political Platform, Riga *Neatkarīga Cīņa* in Latvian, 1 June 1995 p. 5, *FBIS-SOI-95-135-S*, Daily Report, 1 June 1995.

The 1995 Act²⁶⁹ conferred a clearer status on stateless people and promised the introduction of non-citizens' passports. Samples and messages were sent to over 100 countries indicating that the Latvian State assumed protection of holders of these passports. Printing of the non-citizen passports began in April 1997.²⁷⁰ The issue of special passports, which should have been completed by the end of 1997,²⁷¹ led to greater freedom of movement, as Soviet passports became invalid for travel abroad and non-citizens had no other identification.

Non-citizens continued to be affected by various types of discrimination because of differences in status. For example, they were barred from certain occupations and, while some of these bars were not unusual (in the case of civil service posts, where duties had a bearing on national sovereignty), others were more problematic (private detectives, lawyers, airline crews, fire fighters, pharmacists).

The development of a Bill on the status of former citizens of the USSR in Latvia was greeted positively by the Russian Federation authorities. The Russian foreign ministry stated that the Bill would partially stabilise the situation of non-citizens in Latvia. The debate did, however, reveal that the zero-option citizenship legislation, where all those resident in Latvia at the time of independence in 1991 automatically received citizenship, was not going to be considered by the Latvian authorities. This was the policy that Lithuania had adopted on becoming independent, where all persons resident in Lithuania on the day of independence were eligible to become citizens. In addition, around 1000 persons not able to register on the Latvian register of inhabitants were not covered by the Bill and faced deportation.²⁷² A number of people simply did not have papers when Latvia became independent. There were also persons who were active members of the Soviet military or security services, and should have left when the Russian troops withdrew, who were ineligible to stay in Latvia.

²⁶⁹ *Law on the Status of Former USSR Citizens who are not Citizens of Latvia or any other Country*, Saeima, Republic of Latvia, 12 April 1995.

²⁷⁰ *BNS*, 25 February 1997.

²⁷¹ With the abolition of the old Soviet Passports, non-citizens were having increasing difficulty in travelling abroad and, having no other form of identification, could not collect social security benefits.

²⁷² *Russia Reacts Positively to Law on Status of Non-citizens Riga*, *Radio Riga Network* in Latvian 1800 GMT 10 January 1995, *FBIS-SOV-95-007*, Daily Report 10 January 1995.

In a December 1996 study, the National Human Rights Office observed that ten of the differences in status between citizens and foreigners were contrary to the Latvian Constitution and the United Nations Convention on Civil and Political Rights. The Latvian Government has undertaken to abolish these instances of discrimination and a first legislative step in this direction was taken at the beginning of 1997. Differences occurred in employment opportunities, property rights, private, enterprise, pension entitlement, rights and freedoms, and travel and working abroad.²⁷³ In addition, non-citizens could not directly acquire ownership of land and had no right to vote, even in local elections. In Estonia, non-citizen permanent residents could vote in local elections. The EU stated that these differences would have to be reduced, particularly while the foreign portion of the population of Latvia remained so large.

Laws impacting on non-citizens 1997

The hardened stance on non-citizens eased as the practicalities of implementing strict laws came to the fore. Nevertheless, a number of other laws impacted upon the lives of non-citizens. There have been a number of amendments to these to lessen the severity of their effect. For example, the 1996 amendments to the Law on Religious Organisations allowed non-citizens to form religious congregations, but they remained excluded from being elected to the institutions of these congregations, i.e. they could be members of religious congregations but could not be elected to the bodies which controlled the religious organisations.²⁷⁴

There had been restrictions on jobs for non-citizens. However, in 1997 the Civil Service Law permitted non-citizens already employed as state officials to remain in their post, but no further non-citizens were to be recruited. Several other laws, government regulations, and local government resolutions were passed, which differentiated between the rights of citizens and non-citizen permanent residents.²⁷⁵

²⁷³ Boris Tsilevich and Alexander Ruchkovsky *Differences in Rights between Citizens and Permanent Residents (non-citizens) of Latvia*, Insight Ltd., 15 January 1994.

²⁷⁴ *Law on Religious Organisations*, Republic of Latvia, adopted by the *Saeima*, 7 September 1997, Article 7.

²⁷⁵ *United Nations development report*, UNDP, Riga, Latvia, 1997, p. 57.

At the political level, non-citizens were unable to contribute. During the March 1997 local elections, non-citizens were again unable to vote or stand for election. Latvians made up 94 per cent of the candidates and 55 per cent of the population, whereas Russians were 3.2 per cent of the candidates and 33 per cent of the population.²⁷⁶

An easing of restrictions on non-citizens

On 5 January 1998, the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers had to extend the validity of foreign passports of the Soviet Union for travel and identification purposes. Only around 10.3 per cent of Latvian non-citizens held the new non-citizen's passport. Citizenship and Immigration Department figures suggested around 200,000 non-citizens in Latvia held valid foreign passports of the Soviet Union.²⁷⁷

Non-citizen legislation

Additional legislative proposals affecting non-citizens were introduced when, on 18 January 1999, the Latvian Public Organisation Union of Citizens and Non-citizens prepared an amendment to the municipal election law which would grant non-citizens the right to vote²⁷⁸ in local elections.²⁷⁹ The amendment failed to pass. A proposal to allow non-citizens to buy and hold firearms²⁸⁰ also affected non-citizens when it was rejected on 19 January 1999 by the *Saeima* Defence and Interior Affairs Committee.

Citizenship and naturalisation

Since the implementation of the 1998 amendments to the Latvian Citizenship Law, the number of new citizens has increased. A total of 4439 people were naturalised in 1998, an increase from the 1997 figure of 2993. Following the change in citizenship legislation in 1999, 12,427 people were naturalised, bringing the total since 1991 to

²⁷⁶ Baltic States, Latvia, Foreign Residents Barred From Local Elections in Latvia, Moscow ITAR-TASS, 9 March 1997, *FBIS-SOV-97-068*, Daily Report, 9 March 1997.

²⁷⁷ *BNS*, 5 January 1998.

²⁷⁸ *BNS*, 18 January 1999.

²⁷⁹ *BNS*, 29 January 1999.

²⁸⁰ *BNS*, 19 January 1999.

23,859.²⁸¹ The fear of radical nationalists that a flood of non-citizen children would request naturalisation proved groundless as the parents of only 22 children submitted a request for their naturalisation; 19,000 are entitled to register under the new law.²⁸²

Conclusions

The reasons behind the changes in Citizenship, Education, and Language Legislation outlined here will be analysed in forthcoming chapters. To reiterate the changes to Latvian nationality policy from 1991 to 1999, after independence Latvia excluded all but pre-1940 Latvian citizens and their descendants from the citizenry, by 1998 the Citizenship Law was in full compliance with OSCE HCNM recommendations. The Language Law of 1989 declared Latvian the state language and, by 1992, Russian had been relegated to the same status as any other foreign language. By 1999 the new amended Law was broadly in line with OSCE recommendations. Finally, the Education Law was amended in 1995 to oblige schools to hold more lessons in Latvian. After minimal debate, the 1998 Education Law was passed making all schooling in Latvian unless the schools received state approval for a minority language programme.

This account of the history and nationality policy of Latvia provides a background for the analysis of the actors involved in the changes to Latvia's nationality policy. Several factors are crucial in determining why citizenship policy in Latvia has changed from an exclusive, restitutionist policy to a more liberal, inclusive one. It is important to note the disagreement between Russia and Latvia, and also within Latvia, about whether Latvia was occupied or joined the Soviet Union voluntarily. Because it is used to justify the treatment of the non-citizen immigrant population in Latvia. The idea of Latvia as a nation versus Latvia as a multi-ethnic state is useful to bear in mind when assessing the arguments behind the changes to nationality policy outlined in the forthcoming explanatory chapters. The issues of

²⁸¹ *RFE/RL*, 29 December 1998. These figures compare with Estonia, where 9196 people were naturalised in the first 11 months of 1998, up from 6720 in the same period during 1997. Of the new citizens, 5904 were children. A total of 105,032 people have been naturalised since 1992. Naturalisation Board Riga, 2000.

²⁸² *BNS*, 15 January 1999.

national sovereignty and international intervention are also utilised by the actors discussed in the following chapters. At the time of the referendum, nationalists used outside pressure to justify voting against the amendments to prove that Latvia was independent and sovereign. Those opposed to the nationalists urged Latvian voters who wished to join the EU to follow the OSCE recommendations on nationality policy. The identification of Russia as the successor to the Soviet Union is important for Latvian domestic actors, who want Russia to pay for the damage caused by the Soviet Union. This chapter has attempted to deal with the background to the citizenship debate in Latvia and ascertain what changes in citizenship, language, and education policy have taken place since independence. In the context of the background detailed above, the forthcoming chapters will discuss who the key players were in this transformation of policy and how influential these actors were. Chapter 3 looks at the domestic sphere of influence to try and establish the impact of domestic actors on the changes in nationality policy in Latvia followed by an examination of the role of external factors in the changes to nationality policy. Chapter 4 assesses the influence of outside states and, finally, Chapter 5 the role of institutions in determining Latvian nationality policy.

Chapter Three

Domestic politics and nationality policy in Latvia

This chapter seeks to establish the contribution made by domestic political actors in changing Latvian nationality policy. The roles of the political party and government leaders, NGOs, and the non-citizens' organisations are examined, questioning how far the actions of each of these groups can explain the changes. What did they want in terms of Latvian nationality policy, which instruments were at their disposal, and how successful were they in influencing the changes? For each of these categories of actor it is useful to look at their activities during three distinct phases of nationality policy. The early period of development of policy from 1991 to 1993, the consolidation from 1993 to 1997 and, finally, following the rejection of Latvia from the first echelon of EU admission talks, 1997–9, the period of change and liberalisation.

At this unit level of analysis it is necessary to examine internal determinants and establish whether there are components of the domestic political process which could explain contemporary Latvian nationality policy. Utilising the theories of nationalism, state building, and democratisation, an appraisal is made of how far this analysis can progress in answering the key question of how citizenship legislation has developed in the manner that it did. This level of analysis requires an examination of the activities of the majority Latvians and of the Russophone minority. This includes an assessment of the role of Latvian independence movements, government and majority groupings, and of political parties. On the Russophone side, there are political parties, social movements, and the Russophone business community. Finally, at the unit level of analysis, it is essential to recognise the role of leadership in the formation of citizenship legislation and nationality policy in Latvia. To analyse the role of these domestic actors, the role of the President, government, political parties, NGOs, and non-citizen community is examined to try and establish their role in changing Latvian nationality policy into a more liberal inclusive set of laws.

There are a number of political theories which provide useful frameworks for examining the role of domestic actors in the development of Latvian nationality policy. Bureaucratic politics suggests that bureaucratic agencies exert an independent influence on policy, which cannot be adequately explained simply by looking at changes in government policy or societal demands.¹ In Latvia it is relevant to examine the role of the bureaucracy in affecting policy outcomes and whether that bureaucracy fights to enhance its role in affecting policy and its power base. One of the difficulties faced by the newly independent country was that it had to work with the old Soviet bureaucracy, which was not amenable to change.

It is also useful to examine the role of interest groups in society and their role in influencing policy. Are interest groups influential in Latvian policymaking and do they successfully access those responsible for shaping government policy? Is the environment more pluralist? It may also prove enlightening to look at political party competition and determine whether the need for parties to gain cooperation in other areas of Latvian politics may have influenced their actions regarding nationality policy. Is the domestic political field autonomous or must it also include an examination of external pressures? If, in fact, the international factors are driving the domestic arena, then it is not autonomous.

This chapter also looks at the conflicting interests faced by a nation-building state. The need for the government to gain popular support for their policies may influence their attitudes towards the nationality issue. In conjunction with this, the political, social and economic costs of alienating the non-citizen portion of the population may be high. The desire to establish a state, with the ethnic Latvian population as the primary political figures, may be outweighed by the need for an integrated, stable society required to ease political and economic reform. This highlights Putnam's concerns in the two-level games, where international and

¹ Peter Evans, Dieter Reuschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press), 1985.

domestic constituents must both be satisfied.² Commencing with nationalism theory, Latvia is the nationalising state, ethnically heterogeneous, yet attempting to build a nation state in which the ruling elite promotes the language, culture, demographic position, and economic flourishing or political hegemony of the nominally state-bearing nation. A national identity grounded in ethnic origin has a common culture defined in terms of race, language tradition, or religion, rather than a constitution based on state territory, citizenship, and political principles. The all-consuming nature of the communist ideology and the external pressure of the Soviet authorities led to an arrested, political evolution and the repression of Latvian ethnic identity.³ At independence the Latvian government wished to build a Latvian state predicated on the dominance of the Latvian nation. The ethnic base of the state is recognised by the Russophone community; their vision of the state as nationalising is as important as the actual policies of the Latvian Government, as it provides a framework for their nationality-based opposition.⁴ The equation of the Latvian nation with the Latvian State is perceived as a threat to the Russian minority population, who consider Latvia to be their home. Until 1991, they had lived in Latvia, but held Soviet citizenship and Russian nationality.⁵ Part of the nation-building process employs the idea of the Russian Federation, personified in the Russophone minority, as a threat to the Latvian nation.⁶ In this instance the perceived threat is used in the nation-building process as the Latvian nation is formed in opposition to the Russians. The nature of this nation-building project, whether inclusive or exclusive of others, has a direct bearing on future relations between the nationalising Latvian majority and the Russian national minority.

² Robert D. Putnam, 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of Two-Level Games', Appendix reprinted in eds. Peter B. Evans, Harold K. Jacobson, Robert Putnam, *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*, (University of California Press, Berkley CA, 1993).

³ Pierre Hassner, 'Beyond Nationalism and Internationalism: Ethnicity and World Order', in ed. M. E. Brown *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, p. 126.

⁴ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge, University Press, 1996), pp. 57, 63.

⁵ The 5th item on the Soviet passport required the holder to state their nationality. This had to be the nationality of one or other parent regardless of their own place of birth or residence.

⁶ 68% of Latvians in Latvia see the Russian Federation as a possible threat, Richard Rose, Vilmarus, Baltic Data House and Saar Poll, *New Baltic Barometer III*, Centre for the Study of Public Policy (University of Strathclyde, 1997), p. 35.

From an extreme nationalist perspective, ethnic homogeneity is desired but not feasible in the real world of modern Latvia. Heterogeneity is inevitable, but generally rejected by nationalists. In the case of Latvia, the desire for an ethnically Latvian dominated regime and the actual government actions do not wholly coincide. There has been a degree of flexibility in the Latvian approach to nationality policy. Latvia is moving towards a more civic definition of nationalism in its citizenship policy. However, with priority for ethnic Latvians and Livs, in addition to language requirements, the legislation still contains a strong Latvian ethnic bias. Pure civic nationalism envisages a nation composed of all persons who subscribe to the nation's political creed, regardless of race, colour, creed, gender, language, or ethnicity. This nation is a community of equal rights-bearing citizens, united in patriotic allegiance to a shared set of political practices and values.⁷ The society is, therefore, held together by law rather than ethnic bonds. In other words, citizens implicitly make a rational decision to belong to the nation.⁸

Before examining the actors in the Latvian domestic arena, it is useful to summarise the division of powers outlined in the Latvian constitution. The constitution specifies that the President will represent Latvia in an international capacity. S/he carries out decisions of the *Saeima* concerning the ratification of international treaties. The President is, therefore, an instrument of the *Saeima* and transmits the ideas of the international community to the Latvian legislature but does not bear political responsibility for the legislature's actions, as all decrees of the President are counter signed by the Prime Minister who, with Ministers of the Cabinet, must have the confidence of the *Saeima*.⁹ The President may request that the *Saeima* review a law but, if that *Saeima* does not change the legislation, the President then has no further recourse.¹⁰ The *Saeima* will initiate and pass legislation but this process can be temporarily delayed or amended by the President or the conduct of a

⁷ Note that French nationality legislation does put strong emphasis on the French language.

⁸ Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, Chatto and Windus, 1993, pp. 3–4; Martin Griffiths and Michael Sullivan, 'Nationalism and International Relations Theory', in *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 43, No. 1, 1997, p. 60.

⁹ *Constitution (Satversme) of the Republic of Latvia*, Section 4, 15 February 1992.

¹⁰ *Constitution (Satversme) of the Republic of Latvia*, Section 3, 15 February 1992.

referendum in which more than 50 per cent of the electorate participate and, of those, more than 50 per cent vote to amend legislation.¹¹

Presidential role

The President of Latvia has functioned in two distinct arenas. Elected by the *Saeima* for a four-year term, s/he principally represents Latvia in international relations but, with fairly limited powers, essentially implements the will of the *Saeima*. When operating in the international community, the President has been pressured to liberalise nationality policy while, in the domestic sphere, political parties, especially For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party, have kept up intense pressure to try and secure support for a more restrictive approach to the nationality question from the President. On a less formal basis, the President has acted as a liaison between the Latvian domestic political arena and the international community. The first post-1991 President elected by the *Saeima* was Guntis Ulmanis, who served the maximum two terms, followed by Vaira Vike-Freiberga, elected in June 1999.

1991–3

In the early period of independence, presidential rhetoric had a strongly nationalist tone. Ulmanis supported a government scheme to help those to leave who were unable to stay in Latvia. The survival of the Latvian nation was the most important thing for him but he would not accept the accusation by minority groups that he discriminated against non-Latvians. He felt that, as the demographic situation in the country was very serious, the preservation of the Latvian nation had to be a priority. He wished that people of other nationalities would live side by side but that Latvians would be left to govern their country and could not understand why non-Latvians insisted on having political rights in governing Latvia when they already had human rights. He suggested that Latvians should govern their own country and let people of

¹¹ *Constitution (Satversme) of the Republic of Latvia*, Section 5, 15 February 1992.

other nationalities live in the republic and enjoy all human rights and the hospitality of the Latvian people.¹² In 1993, in a concession to minority interests, he expressed the wish to establish a discussion forum for other nationalities. During this period the President's attitudes towards nationality policy remained fairly restrictive. He spent much of this period campaigning for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvian soil. The great nephew of Kārlis Ulmanis, President of the inter-war Republic of Latvia, who died in exile, Guntis Ulmanis himself spent 1941–6 in exile in Siberia. He saw Latvia as very much the victim of the Soviet regime and claimed that Latvia needed the Citizenship Law, which Russia called discriminatory, in order for the Latvian nation to survive. In an address to the United Nations, he said that the Law was needed because, due to mass deportations and immigration of foreign workers under Communism, the share of the ethnic Latvian population had fallen from 75 per cent in 1940 to the current 52 per cent.¹³ In view of this situation, Ulmanis did not see why the Latvians should give concessions to the Soviet occupiers.

1993–7

The President supported the idea that pre-1940 citizens and their descendants should determine the nature of the new Latvian Citizenship Law. However, he noted that there were too many non-citizens and that any law must balance the survival of the Latvian nation with civic harmony. Aware of opposition from external organisations, Ulmanis refused to sign the June 1994 Citizenship Law, which set a naturalisation quota of 2000 persons per year after which, in July, the *Saeima* passed a law excluding the quotas.¹⁴ The President declared that Latvia would not grant citizenship to all non-citizens and he pointed out there was no precedent for this in the world. He argued that there would be gradual integration and that the remainder of people would leave.¹⁵ In the international arena President Ulmanis continued to urge the Russian Federation to recognise Latvia's occupation by the Soviet Union so that the issue

¹² Sergei Zaletayev, 'I Shall Never Say: 'Go Away from Here!'', Interview with President Guntis Ulmanis, *Panorama Latvii*, Latvia, 6 October 1993, p. 1.

¹³ *RFE/RL*, 30 September 1993.

¹⁴ Pavel Shinkarenko, 'Russians in Latvia', *Rossiiskie Vesti*, 1 September 1994, p. 4.

¹⁵ *ITAR TASS*, 22 July 1994, *BBC SWB*, SU/2057, E/2, 26 July 1994.

could be laid to rest and new relations established between Moscow and Riga. He did not request monetary compensation but simply an account of what happened.¹⁶

Latvian–Russian relations had been strained since independence as the countries struggled with the issues of troop withdrawal and the treatment of the Russian minority population in Latvia. In response to Yeltsin’s harsh reaction to the new Latvian Citizenship Law, Ulmanis suggested that such views came from a careless reading of the law. Ulmanis criticised Russia for paying insufficient attention to the Russian people, victims of 50 years of the reigning Soviet policy and ideology. Once again linking the occupation to the issue of citizenship and returning to an earlier theme of repatriation, Ulmanis advised the Russian government to instigate a programme to enable Russians to return to their ethnic homeland. At the same time, Ulmanis did emphasise that there would be no compulsory deportations.¹⁷ Ulmanis’s intensive lobbying was rewarded when the Russian troops were withdrawn from Latvia in August 1994. He had constantly condemned the Russian linkage of the citizenship issue to troop withdrawal.

The President also acted to increase dialogue with minorities. The idea of a Consultative Council for Nationalities Affairs had been approved by the Supreme Council in 1991¹⁸ but had never functioned until it came to fruition under Ulmanis in 1995. The purpose of the council was to provide information for the President regarding the range of issues relating to the presence of people of different ethnic groups in Latvia and to highlight necessary actions.¹⁹

By 1996, the President was maintaining a nationalist rhetoric but conceding that there were problems with the way in which the bureaucracy enacted the nationality legislation. In early 1996, he received a letter from 14 writers and artists alleging non-observance of minority rights in Latvia, which he described as a rude

¹⁶ *RFE/RL*, 4 October 1994.

¹⁷ *RFE/RL*, 22 August 1994.

¹⁸ In January 1991 the Supreme Council established a body to unite minority representatives and allow their participation in drafting legislation and forming proposals to protect minority rights. There was no mechanism for electing members. After considerable delay, Council members were nominated, only to be rejected by the *Saeima*. The Council never began work.

¹⁹ *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, 21 August 1996, p. 7.

and indecent political game. His response was to state that international organisations had found no such violations of rights. He also maintained that he was President of Latvia and not the Latvians. He later met with the authors of the letter to discuss its contents and agreed that ethnic tensions could be blamed on the bureaucracy.²⁰

The President, on re-election in 1996, initiated discussions on legislative changes in the humanitarian sphere, changes to the citizenship, language, and education policies. He could now afford to be more outspoken because, in final last term of office, he no longer required support from the *Saeima* for re-election.

By July 1997, Ulmanis expressed concern over the split between the Latvian and Russian communities, which he saw could lead to increased strain rather than integration of Latvia. He called for citizenship to be granted to all those born in Latvia, regardless of their ethnicity and also urged the government to consider substantial, and possibly rapid, changes to provisions that prevented people without Latvian citizenship from holding public office. Ulmanis termed the 'windows' system of granting citizenship 'outdated' saying that it precluded many older people from obtaining citizenship.²¹ He also told the *Saeima* that Latvia could not remain a country where 30 per cent of residents were non-citizens for an extended period of time²² and pressed for changes to the laws that prohibited non-citizens from holding public office. However, despite campaigning for these changes, he still maintained that the laws met European standards and that Latvia was not being forced to change its policies.²³ By this time, Ulmanis had travelled extensively and been exposed to much Western pressure regarding Latvian nationality policy. As the holder of the political post in Latvia, which directly deals with other States and international institutions and is the most vulnerable to international pressure, he was more aware of the consequences of radicalism in nationality policy than radical nationalist political parties operating predominately within Latvia and having little contact with the

²⁰ *Radio Riga*, 27 February 1996, *FBIS-SOV-96-040*, 27 February 1996; *Interfax*, 4 March 1996, *FBIS-SOV-96-045*, 4 March 1996.

²¹ *Diena*, 10 July 1997.

²² *RFE/RL*, 21 May 1997.

²³ *RFE/RL*, 11 July 1997.

international sphere. President Ulmanis was, therefore, not operating as an independent actor but was subjected to pressure from the international community which he, in turn, attempted to exert on domestic political actors.

1997–9

By 1997 the President's Consultative Council on Nationality Affairs had become increasingly politicised and divided. It had been planned as an expert council but the nature of experts in Latvia was that most were connected to politics. As ethnic issues were contentious in the *Saeima*, the President simply heard representations from a number of political parties rather than impartial experts.²⁴ The President's Council for Nationalities met with decreasing regularity, becoming practically moribund by the end of 1997.²⁵ Ulmanis also failed in the extremely difficult task of persuading his government to amend its coalition agreement, which prohibited any change to the Citizenship Law without the consent of all coalition partners. Coalition member For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party remained firmly opposed to any changes to the law.²⁶ At the close of 1997, shortly after Latvia failed to gain entry to EU admission talks, Ulmanis declared he would continue to promote improved relations between Russia and Latvia and dialogue to improve the situation of non-citizens in Latvia.²⁷

During the drafting of the Language Law, Ulmanis again liaised with the international community. In October 1997, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe High Commissioner for National Minorities (OSCE HCNM), Max van der Stoep, suggested the existing Language Law was sufficient and that Latvia should concentrate on improving teaching of the language. Ulmanis rejected this, saying that the Latvian language had been discriminated against in a number of

²⁴ Interview with Olgerts Tipans, Advisor to the President on Nationality Affairs, Riga 25 October 1999.

²⁵ *Protection of Ethnic Minorities*, Report by the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights fifty-fourth Session, Geneva, 16 March – 24 April 1998.

²⁶ *RFE.RL*, 20 November 1997.

²⁷ *RFE.RL*, 30 December 1997.

spheres in Latvia in recent years. He added that the pressure of the Russian language reduced the incentive for non-Latvians to learn Latvian, so a stricter law needed to be implemented. On receiving criticism of the draft Language Law from van der Stoep, Ulmanis stated that the OSCE should concentrate on naturalisation and the integration of non-citizens rather than criticising Latvia for not meeting European standards in its language legislation. He sought understanding that, after all the years of discrimination against the Latvian language, it was unacceptable to keep the existing Language Law and simply increase the level of Latvian language training.²⁸

By the time of the December 1997 failure of Latvia to gain entry to the first level of EU accession talks, the President had become more vocal in his support for the liberalisation of nationality laws. He also expressed regret for Latvia's involvement in the Holocaust. This ability to deal with Latvia's past was demanded as part of a test of Latvia's ability to adopt 'European values'. To gain entry to the EU, Latvia not only had to meet the Copenhagen criteria²⁹ but had to prove to the Western community that they were 'one of us'.³⁰ Ulmanis's increasingly liberal attitudes suggested that he realised the importance of Latvia's image abroad and the impact this image had on Latvia's aspirations to join the EU and NATO. There were also domestic factors influencing his decisions. This divergence of opinion was accompanied by a dispute over the power distribution between the President, the *Saeima*, and the political parties. The *Saeima* decided that Ulmanis was exceeding his authority.³¹ In February 1998, he refused to sign amendments to the Labour Code which could have led to the dismissal of personnel who did not pass a Latvian language test. The language inspectorate could also have taken an employer to court for refusing to dismiss a person failing the language test.³² Ulmanis stressed that Latvia's actions must comply fully with the tasks set by the European Union. He favoured a public debate about amending the Citizenship Law.³³

²⁸ BNS, 29 October 1997.

²⁹ Discussed in Chapter 5 EU and NATO Section.

³⁰ Interview with European Commission Official, October 1998.

³¹ *Jamestown Monitor*, 28 January 1998.

³² RFE/RL, 10 February 1998.

³³ *Interfax*, 13 February 1998, *BBC SWB*, SU/3153, E/1, 17 February 1998.

Following the events of March 1998, when Russian speaking protesters were broken up by police, the SS veterans marched through Riga, and the Synagogue was bombed for the third time, President Ulmanis continued to advocate improved relations with Russia, linking an improvement in relations with amendments to the Citizenship Law in order to increase the numbers naturalising. Using international criticism to support his demands, Ulmanis claimed that a liberalisation of Latvian nationality policy was in Latvia's strategic interests. He argued that a change to the law would improve relations with Russia and gain further support from the international community for Latvian membership to the EU and NATO. The March 1998 incidents attracted unprecedented criticism from the West and, emphasising the damage to Latvia's international reputation,³⁴ the President's Security Council dismissed the army Chief of Staff Juris Dalbinsh, who had attended the parade of SS veterans. He also ordered the resignation of the Chief of Police for failing to protect the synagogue.³⁵

In defence of this bold stance, the President explained that, during the early period of independence, Latvia was further from European values and was forgiven many things. Now he suggested that, as it moved closer to EU membership, there was a need to adhere strictly to European norms. He, thus, acknowledged the importance of international pressure in securing the changes in Latvian nationality policy. He defended earlier SS veterans' parades but stated that, in 1998, the political situation in the world and the country had changed and that leaders were forced to change their behaviour to what was beneficial for the country. He stated that the transitional period had ended and that Latvia had moved from its old values to new European values.³⁶

Ulmanis supported the June 1998 amendments to the Citizenship Law and urged the *Saeima* to support the altered law. He campaigned against the For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party sponsored referendum,

³⁴ RFE/RL, 6 April 1998.

³⁵ James Meeks, 'Latvia Tries to Clean up its Nationalist Act', in *The Guardian*, 4 April 1998.

³⁶ *Latvian Radio*, 7 April 1998, *BBC SWB*, SU/3197, E/3, 9 April 1998.

stating that it would further damage relations with Russia and would hinder Latvia's progress towards EU membership. He also cautioned against too much outside interference, adding that some European politicians had taken an 'exaggerated stance' in telling Latvia what it should do and warned that the harsh stance adopted by Russia could be counterproductive and make Latvians vote against the amendments.³⁷

As the referendum on the Citizenship Law approached, President Ulmanis came out strongly in favour of the amendments, citing both domestic and international issues. The primary reason he voiced was that it would benefit Latvian society and the future. He noted, however, the friendly warnings from the US, Italy, and Germany and claimed that Latvia lost independence in 1940 because it had no friends. He also suggested that Latvia risked doing so again.³⁸

The Consultative Council for Ethnic Minorities, established by the Latvian President, met in February 1999 to discuss the integration programme but the Council had been struggling for some time to maintain a meaningful role and failed to attract representatives from all parties. President Ulmanis took this as a sign of lack of interest in the integration process by politicians.³⁹ It has to be noted that many of the President's policies and pronouncements were heavily influenced by external international pressures. The President's weak constitutional position and role as a transmission belt for international opinion would suggest that, in this case, it is the international arena that is the more important.

New President Vaira Vike-Freiberga June 1999

At the beginning of her term, the newly elected President Vaira Vike-Freiberga faced the controversial Language Bill. This was a testing time as the forces which elected her were those which supported the Law. The President met with foreign experts, Latvian Russian representatives, and prominent members of Latvian society before

³⁷ *RFE/RL*, 25 August 1998.

³⁸ *BNS*, 2 October 1998.

³⁹ *BNS*, 10 February 1999.

reaching her decision on the Bill. The President faced pressure from both sides but, in the end, turned down the Law for technical reasons. Whilst deliberating on the Language Law, she stated that she had a duty to protect the Latvian language from attacks, whether they came from the OSCE or other international organisations.⁴⁰ Vike-Freiberga believed that nationalism was a healthy pride and commitment to one's country, and not the cause of conflict. She stated that what caused conflicts was authoritarianism, fanaticism, and imperialism in both its overt and covert forms.⁴¹

In refusing to promulgate the Language Law, and requesting a second review, President Vike-Freiberga criticised the Law for being legally imprecise and contradicting the Latvian constitution and Latvia's international obligations. She expressed her belief that the Law must restore the legitimate rights of the Latvian language, that is as the dominant language in Latvia. Vike-Freiberga attached particular importance to strengthening the role of the Latvian language.⁴² She also wanted the Law to allow non-Latvians to use their own languages and to promote the faster integration of Latvian society. She felt that the Law as it existed restricted non-Latvian education and integration into society, limited freedom of expression, and that the remit of public interference in the private sphere only when in the public interest had been overstepped. Article 100 of the Latvian constitution and Article 10 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms both support freedom of expression for individuals.⁴³ A revised law was passed on 9 December 1999 taking into account all of the President's objections.

The Presidency has had a limited impact on nationality policy acting as an interface between domestic and international concerns. Increasing exposure to Western liberal ideas throughout the Ulmanis Presidency was followed by an increasingly liberal attitude on the part of the President and an effort to encourage

⁴⁰ BNS, 6 July 1999.

⁴¹ Valsts prezidentes Vairas Vīķes-Freibergas uzruna Sarajevā, Rīgā, 1999.gada 29.jūlijā. [Speech by H.E. Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia, in Sarajevo, 29 July 1999].

⁴² Latvijas Valsts prezidentes uzruna ANO Ģenerālās asamblejas 54.sesijā Ņujorkā, 1999.gada 22.septembrī. [Speech by H.E. Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia, at the 54th General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, September 22, 1999].

⁴³ *Letter from President Vaira Vike-Freiberga to Saeima Committee Chairman Janis Straume*, 14 July 1999, published in *Diena*, 15 July 1999.

conciliation within Latvian society. The citizenship and language policies were both liberalised following Presidential intervention. In order to defend the Latvian nation and resist outside interference, both Presidents struggled to reconcile pressure from the international community to liberalise the nationality laws and also from the Latvian government, which, in Ulmanis's case, threatened his position.. They increasingly looked to European norms and encouraged the *Saeima* to liberalise Latvian nationality policy. In terms of answering the question, 'why has nationality policy in Latvia developed from an exclusive policy to a more liberal inclusive one?' the views of the Presidency have become more liberal and the Office holder has acted as a facilitator in trying to change Latvian nationality policy into a form that will enable Latvia to gain entry to the organisations of Europe and the North Atlantic. The President does not have executive power and can be overruled by the government or obstructed by political parties in the *Saeima*. It is, therefore, essential to examine the role of these actors, and of the bureaucracy, to further the investigation into the changes in Latvian nationality policy.

Political parties and government

Political parties in Latvia have not yet stabilised. In every parliament there have been numerous defections, deputies sitting as independents and splinter groups are formed. This fragmentation of parties and of the *Saeima* has made it very difficult for governments to form and remain in power. In a parliament where parties tended to form around personalities or specific topics, a party could not always rely on its members votes. For example, the For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party on one extreme and Jurkans at the other were defined by their polarised views on the citizenship issue, whereas perhaps the centrist Latvia's Way had a somewhat broader programme.⁴⁴ Since independence in 1991 Latvia has had eight governments. To understand the role of political parties in nationality policy, it is useful to have an

⁴⁴ Interview with Undine Bollow, Deputy Head of OSCE Mission to Latvia, 13 October 1998.

idea of who the parties were, their relative electoral strength, and the composition of the Latvian Governments.

1990 election to the Latvian Supreme Council

Primary Party Affiliation	Position	%	Seats
Latvian Popular Front	Pro independence	68.2	131 (Acting as an umbrella organisation the Popular Front gained the support of 131 Deputies and, thus, control of the Supreme Council)
Latvian Communist Party and sympathisers	Anti-independence	21.5	59
Independents		10.3	8

Source: Neoficiāla Informācija par Oficiālem Rezultātiem (Vēlriez Par ap Vēlēšanām), Atmoda, 10 April 1990, p. 3, in Eric Rudenshiold, ‘Ethnic Dimensions in Contemporary Latvian Politics: Focusing Forces for Change’, *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 4, 1992, p. 621.

Post-Independence Elections to the *Saeima*. Only Latvian citizens permitted to vote

1993 Saeima Election

PARTY	Position	%	Seats
Latvia's Way (Latvijas Cels)	Liberal	32.4	36
Latvian National Independence Movement (Party)(Latvijas Nacionalas Neatkaribas Kustibas)	Radical nationalist	13.4	15
Harmony for Latvia (Tautas Sarkanās Partija)	Socialist supports integrated Latvia	12	13
Latvian Peasants Union (Latviesu Zemnieku Savienība)	Conservative	10.7	12
Latvian Socialist Party (Latvijas Socialistiskā Partija)	Socialist	5.8	7 (Equal Rights, Ravnopravie)
Fatherland and Freedom (Tevzemei un Brīvībai)	Radical nationalist	5.4	6
Latvian Christian Democratic Union (Latvijas Kristīgo Demokrātu Savienība)	Christian Democrat	5	6
Democratic Party Saimnieks (Demokrātiskā Partija Saimnieks)	Liberal	4.8	5 (Democratic Center Party)
Latvian Social Democratic Alliance (Latvijas Sociāldemokrātiskā Apvienība)	Social Democrat	0.5	
Latvian Unity Party (Latvijas Vienības Partija)	Nationalist	0.1	-
Others		9.9	

1995 Saeima Election

PARTY	Position	%	Seats
Democratic Party Saimnieks (Demokratiska Partija Saimnieks)	Liberal	15.2	18
Latvia's Way (Latvijas Cels)	Liberal	14.7	17
Popular Movement for Latvia (Tautias Kusibas Latvijai)	Radical nationalist	15	16
Fatherland and Freedom (Tevzemei un Brivibai)	Radical nationalist	12	14
Latvian Unity Party (Latvijas Vienibas Partija)	Nationalist	7.2	8
Latvian Peasants Union (Latviesu Zemnieku Savieniba)	Conservative	6.4	8
Latvian Christian Democratic Union (Latvijas Kristigo Demokrātu Savieniba)	Christian Democrat		
Latvian National Independence Movement (Party)(Latvijas Nacionalas Neatkaribas Kustibas)	Radical nationalist	6.3	8
Harmony for Latvia (Tautas Sarkanās Partija)	Socialist supports integrated Latvia	5.6	6
Latvian Socialist Party (Latvijas Socialistiska Partija)	Socialist	5.6	5
Latvian Social Democratic Alliance (Latvijas Socialdemokratiska Apvieniba)	Social Democrat	4.6	0
Others		7.4	

1998 Saeima Election

PARTY	Position	%	Seats
People's Party (Tautas Partija)	Conservative moderate nationalist	21.1	24
Latvia's Way (Latvijas Cels)	Liberal	18.4	21
Latvian National Independence Movement (Party)(Latvijas Nacionalas Neatkaribas Kustibas)	Radical nationalist	14.7	17
Fatherland and Freedom (Tevzemei un Brivibai)	Radical nationalist		
Harmony for Latvia (Tautas Sarkanās Partija)	Socialist supports integrated Latvia	14.2	16
Latvian Socialist Party (Latvijas Socialistiskā Partija)	Socialist		
Latvian Social Democratic Alliance (Latvijas Sociāldemokrātiskā Apvienība)	Social Democrat	12.8	14
New Party (Jaunā Partija)	Liberal	7.3	8
Latvian Peasants Union (Latviesu Zemnieku Savienība)	Conservative	2.5	-
Latvian Christian Democratic Union (Latvijas Kristīgo Demokrātu Savienība)	Christian Democrat	2.3	-
Popular Movement for Latvia (Tautas Kustība Latvijai)	Radical nationalist	1.7	-
Democratic Party Saimnieks (Demokrātiskā Partija Saimnieks)	Liberal	1.6	-
Latvian Unity Party (Latvijas Vienības Partija)	Nationalist	0.5	-
Others		3.8	

Governments of Latvia

1. 1990, Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis, Popular Front. Supreme Council chairman Anatolijs Gorbunovs.
2. July 1993, Prime Minister Valdis Birkavs, Latvia's Way, coalition with Latvian Farmers' Union.⁴⁵
3. September 1994, Prime Minister Maris Gailis Latvia's Way, most members of the government came from Latvia's Way, plus one member from Political Union of Economists (formed by a break away faction of Harmony for Latvia) outgoing Prime Minister Valdis Birkavs became Foreign Minister.⁴⁶
4. December 1995, Prime Minister Andris Skele, no party affiliation. Government: Latvian Unity Party, Democratic Party Saimnieks, Latvia's Way, For Fatherland and Freedom, Latvia's Farmers' Union.
5. February 1997, Prime Minister Andris Skele reforms government following resignation and re-appointment. Latvian Unity Party, Democratic Party Saimnieks, Latvia's Way, For Fatherland and Freedom, Latvia's Farmers' Union.
6. August 1997, Prime Minister Guntars Krasts, For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party. Ruling coalition is formed by Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK, Democratic Party Saimnieks, Latvia's Way, and the coalition faction of Farmers Union and Christian Democrats. The Cabinet also included Green Party member Indulis Emsis, although the coalition faction of the National Reform Party and the Green Party did not sign up to the government declaration.⁴⁷
7. November 1998, Prime Minister Vilis Kristopans, Latvia's Way, coalition with the New Party and For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party.
8. July 1999, Prime Minister Andris Skele, People's Party, coalition with For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party, and Latvia's Way.

⁴⁵ RFE/RL, 21 July 1993.

⁴⁶ RFE/RL, 16 September 1994.

⁴⁷ BNS, 7 August 1997.

1991–3

The ideas and policy objectives of the Latvian political leaders who participated in these parties and governments have changed over time but the underlying direction remained the same. In the early days of independence, nationality issues were high on the political agenda. As in the case of the country's foreign policy goals, the main objective of Republic of Latvia policy was to strengthen the country's independence and ensure that the independence is irreversible.⁴⁸ To this end, the Latvian government's declared first priority was to join the EU and NATO.⁴⁹ The Latvian Supreme Council Standing Commission on Human Rights and National Questions resolved that the main task of the Latvian state, following the end of what they termed the occupation, was to take affirmative action to eradicate the discrimination suffered by the Latvian people. The committee supported strict naturalisation regulations for those who settled in Latvia, strict enforcement of the Language Law, and restitution of pre-war property to the Latvians, who had been discriminated against.⁵⁰

At the time of independence, the political parties in Latvia divided roughly into those seeking exclusive restitutionist models of citizenship and those who wanted to adopt the zero option; that is to allow all persons resident in Latvia at the time of independence to gain Latvian citizenship. The Latvian Popular Front was divided on the question of citizenship. The former head of the Front's parliamentary faction, Janis Dinevics, believed in the rapid adoption of a Citizenship Law and the restoration of nationalised property.⁵¹ Opponents on the Popular Front board believed that this was too sensitive an issue and that it would inflame the Russian and Latvian communities. They suggested a referendum would be an appropriate way to decide the question.

⁴⁸ *Basic Directions of Latvia's Foreign Policy until the Year 2005* (Riga, Latvia: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998).

⁴⁹ Speech by Valdis Birkavs, Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 80th Anniversary of the Republic of Latvia, Riga, 17 November 1998.

⁵⁰ Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia Standing Commission on Human Rights and National Questions, *The Republic of Latvia: Human Rights Issues*, 1993.

⁵¹ *RFE/RL*, 7 April 1992.

The anti-independence Interfront denounced the new language policy, the restrictions on citizenship and suggestions of immigration quotas as discriminatory and infringing minority rights. The pro-Soviet stance of the Interfront alienated a number of Russian supporters, especially their support of parliamentary walkouts by the *Ravnopravie* (Equal Rights) deputies,⁵² and the reintroduction of Soviet forces to restore order in Latvia before and after the coup.

The former communists, who gave themselves a new identity as independent communists to try and gain credibility in Latvia, supported citizenship for all as long as the applicant showed loyalty to Latvia.⁵³ After the Moscow coup of 1991, the Soviet sympathisers in Latvia lost support. Communist parties were made illegal and Russians loyal to the Soviet authorities became fragmented and without coherent leadership. A number of Soviet loyalists reconstructed themselves as the Democratic Initiative loyal to the new Latvian regime.⁵⁴ The right-wing, Russian Society of Latvia, led by Colonel Romashov, sought to represent military veterans. Continuing to move to the right, the Cossack Circle supported the Cossacks fighting in Moldova. Various anti-Semitic and extremist groupings also existed, including the Monarchist Club and Russian Historical Society.⁵⁵

The Equal Rights group of deputies, who had supported Latvia remaining in the USSR, condemned the Supreme Council's legislation for bringing apartheid to Latvia and violating human rights. At the opposite end of the political spectrum, the Citizens' Committee of Latvia declared that the Supreme Council, elected by Soviet citizens when Latvia was not independent, did not have the legitimacy to pass citizenship legislation.⁵⁶ The Latvian Citizens Committee and its Congress claimed they were the only legitimate representatives of the Latvian people and that the Supreme Council had no right to determine the status of Latvian citizenship. The

⁵² The Equal Rights deputies walked out of the Supreme Soviet after the Soviet crackdown in Vilnius in January 1991. As a condition of their return, the faction demanded the abolition of all laws contravening Soviet legislation, formation of a new coalition government, and the removal of all barricades from Riga. After six weeks, an agreement was reached in which an inter-faction bureau was established to mediate future disputes.

⁵³ Rudenshiold, 'Ethnic Dimensions in Contemporary Latvian Politics: Focusing Forces for Change', p. 624.

⁵⁴ Interview with Dr Alexadr Gaponenko, Baltic Russian Institute, 23 October 1998, Riga.

⁵⁵ Anatol Lieven, 'The Baltic Russians', in *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence* (London: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 200–1.

⁵⁶ *RFE/RL*, 17 October 1991.

committee favoured repatriation of the Russian population and adopted the slogan 'Latvia for Latvians'.⁵⁷ Setting aside whether a law could be passed by the Supreme Council, the committee favoured a law where only those who were Latvian citizens before the Soviet invasion of 14 June 1940, and their descendants, would be eligible for citizenship. The committee claimed around 800,000 supporters in 1990 but by 1991 support was in decline.⁵⁸

The Latvian Supreme Council 15 October 1991 outline of citizenship policy drew opposition from both ends of the political spectrum. This resolution would have granted citizenship to pre-1940 citizens and legal residents and their descendants. Those residents not in the above category could register for citizenship before July 1992 if they showed a sufficient command of the Latvian language, had lived in Latvia for 16 years, were familiar with the constitution, and swore an oath of allegiance.⁵⁹ Although the naturalisation portion was never passed, the government passed legislation recognising pre-1940 citizens and their descendants. In December 1991, the Registration of Residents divided people into citizens, non-citizens, and those who did not legally reside in Latvia.⁶⁰

The Prime Minister tended to have a limited individual role in connection with nationality policy, usually taking the line of his political party. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, as Chairman of the Supreme Council, supported the zero option. This was backed by communists and former communists.⁶¹ Prime Minister Godmanis, immediately after independence, supported a restrictive nationality policy. When he became the first post-independence Latvian leader, he was unwilling to insist on rights for the non-Latvian minority. In common with a number of politicians who had had prominent positions within the Soviet Communist

⁵⁷ Rudenshiold, 'Ethnic Dimensions in Contemporary Latvian Politics: Focusing Forces for Change', p. 625.

⁵⁸ Jan Trapans, 'Latvian Supreme Council Faces Split over Citizenship Law', *Report on the USSR*, Vol.3, No. 39, 27 September 1991.

⁵⁹ *The Current Legislative Situation in Latvia*, The Republic of Latvia: Human Rights Issues, Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, Standing Commission on Human Rights and National Questions, 1993. *On the Renewal of Republic of Latvia Citizens' Rights and Fundamental Principles of Naturalisation*, Republic of Latvia Supreme Council Resolution, 15 October 1991.

⁶⁰ Helsinki Watch, 'Violations by the Latvian Department of Citizenship and Immigration', Helsinki Watch, October 1993.

⁶¹ Trapans, 'Latvian Supreme Council Faces Split over Citizenship Law'.

elite, he became a fervent supporter of restrictive citizenship legislation, attempting to disassociate himself from the old regime. In March 1992, he suggested that there should be a referendum with only pre-1940 residents and their descendants being allowed to vote on the criteria for citizenship.

Not all of the parties saw restrictive citizenship legislation as being in Latvia's national interest. The linkage of the leaders of the parties in favour of a liberal Citizenship Law with the old Soviet regime enabled the centre right to discredit parties such as Harmony and the Equal Rights faction. Nationalists argued that a Citizenship Law could not be enacted until the *Saeima* had been re-elected by the descendants of Latvian citizens from the first period of independence. The For Fatherland and Freedom Party wanted to revoke all laws passed by the Supreme Council and immediately review all pre-war laws.⁶²

Foreign Minister Janis Jurkans viewed the non-citizens as victims of the Soviet system in the same way as the Latvians had been and his suggestion of a more inclusive citizenship policy led to him being accused of lobbying in favour of Russia. He stated that relations with Russia depended on Latvia's domestic policies.⁶³ Instead of looking to the West for security guarantees, Jurkans believed Latvia should realise it was the struggle between Latvian nationalist extremists and Russian nationalists, such as Zhirinovsky, that caused instability, poor relations with Russia, and insecurity.

Jurkans felt that the increased tension with Russia ran counter to Latvia's national interests, worsening relations with Russia, and preventing Latvia's integration into Western European institutions. Following pressure from the legislature for him to leave, he resigned his post in October 1992⁶⁴ protesting over the new Citizenship Law, which had introduced strict quotas for the number of non-Latvians who could become citizens. Jurkans's statements led to him being viewed as a traitor rather than the national hero of the independence era. Jurkans highlighted the fact that in a divided Russian domestic political scene the issue of Russian minorities

⁶² *Rigas Latvijas Jaunatne*, 24 November 1993, *FBIS-USR-94-002*, 10 January 1994.

⁶³ *RFE/RL*, 11 August 1992.

⁶⁴ *Izvestiya* 13 October 1992, p.7.

abroad was one of the few uniting factors. He favoured neutrality rather than NATO membership⁶⁵ and believed that Latvian policy, as it stood, was fuelling Russian opposition forces.

The Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights and National Questions, in April 1992, declared citizenship and language issues to be the most difficult problem facing Latvia since those who wished to include all 1991 residents in the citizenry and those who wanted to restrict the citizenship to pre-1940 citizens and their descendants had diametrically opposing views, and those supporting a restrictive policy were attempting to remove the demographic after-effects of Soviet rule.⁶⁶

During this period the government and its bureaucracy created an impression that the restored Latvian nation was unwilling to accommodate the needs of the non-citizens and minorities.

1993–7

1993 Saeima election

For the purposes of the 1993 *Saeima* election, Latvian citizenship was defined by the Supreme Council resolution ‘On the Renewal of Republic of Latvia’s Citizens’ Rights and Fundamental Principles of Naturalisation’.

The advent of the 1993 *Saeima* elections meant that the previous excuses for not enacting legislation were removed. Once the 1993 elections had been held, the parties began the controversial process of drafting the Citizenship Law. All political parties put forward their own versions of the law. The nationalist parties favoured restrictive laws and encouraging Soviet immigrants to leave. A number of parties, including For Fatherland and Freedom, advocated repatriation of Russians. For Fatherland and Freedom Party member Juris Vidins stated that the non-citizens were not minorities as they had been used to Russify Latvia and eliminate the Latvian

⁶⁵ ‘Latvia Jurkans on Russian Ties, Baltic Security’, *Berlingske Tidende*, 7 July 1994 p. 8., *FBIS-SOV-94-134*, Daily Report, 7 Jul 1994.

⁶⁶ I. Liege, assistant to the Latvian parliamentary commission on human rights and national questions, in *The Current Legislative Situation in Latvia*, The Republic of Latvia: Human Rights Issues, Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, Standing Commission on Human Rights and National Questions, 1993.

nation. The solution, as he saw it, was to make them leave Latvia. He stated that the Russian government would not fund this so it was up to international governments to help these unhappy people to go home. Then there would be no more problems. Centre-right parties claimed that it was simply a problem with financing that prevented more people leaving. The suggestion was that the West could finance this as Russia was unable or unwilling to do so.⁶⁷ The nationalist factions, Latvian National Independence Movement and For Fatherland and Freedom Party, tried to have a draft Citizenship Law submitted for referendum but failed to gather sufficient support. The draft law stipulated that Latvian citizenship would only be awarded to ethnic Latvians returning to the republic; those legally residing in Latvia before 1940 but lacking citizenship; spouses of Latvian citizens living in Latvia for over 10 years and citizens of Lithuania and Estonia permanently residing in the republic. As well as these restrictions, the factions also suggested establishing a quota for application of 0.1 per cent of the Latvian population. In 1994 that would have given around 1900 people per year the chance of citizenship out of a total of 700,000 non-citizens. The naturalisation procedure outlined in the suggested law was also to be co-ordinated with the final withdrawal of between 12,000 and 17,000 remaining Russian troops.⁶⁸

This draft was distilled from a range of nationalist view-points. For Fatherland and Freedom Party wanted to go back to the pre-WWII legislation to include only citizens of that era and their descendants and not to allow the naturalisation of any immigrant while the Democratic Party proposed that Latvians and Livs be given preference in applying for citizenship. Parties linked to the Association of Patriotic Forces (NSA) (For Fatherland and Freedom and Latvian National Independence Movement) felt that the draft Citizenship Law was too generous towards resident Russians.⁶⁹ The faction urged external organisations such as the OSCE to separate the fate of the non-citizens from that of ethnic minorities.

⁶⁷ Interview with Juris Vidins, MP For Fatherland and Freedom, Human Rights and Public Affairs Committee, Riga, Latvia, 10 June 1996.

⁶⁸ Latvia Factions Jointly Prepare Citizenship Draft Law, Moscow *INTERFAX*, 24 January 1994, *FBIS-SOV-94-016*, Daily Report, 25 Jan 1994.

⁶⁹ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 2nd Quarter 1994, p. 24.

The ethnic minorities, the group claimed, were given full citizenship rights and allowed to develop their own cultural autonomy. In a letter to the OSCE, the For Fatherland and Freedom Party urged that, instead of legalising the situation of the colonisers, they be helped to repatriate.⁷⁰ This party's desire was closely connected to the fear that if all the non-citizens were suddenly given voting rights they would vote to destabilise Latvia's shaky political scene and even re-annex Latvia to Russia. Juris Sinka of For Fatherland and Freedom Party stated a desire to restrict the pool of new citizens to 2000 per year.⁷¹ He believed that all foreigners who entered Latvia between 17 June 1940 and 1 July 1992 did so illegally and that their presence violated Article 49 of the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in time of War. This prohibited the transfer of population by the Occupying Power into the occupied territory. He also believed that Latvia should engage in a process of decolonisation and depopulation.⁷²

The Latvian National Independence Movement, founded in July 1988 as a radical nationalist anti-Communist force, was divided over the issue of citizenship. A faction within Latvian National Independence Movement sought to limit citizenship to those who could prove direct lineage from pre-war Latvia, while others simply wished for a residency requirement and successful completion of language and loyalty tests. One faction insisted that the ethnic Latvian proportion of the citizenship body should never fall below 75 per cent. It was, therefore, necessary for the naturalisation process to take place over many years.⁷³ Their argument was that the Latvian people must have the political and economic power, as Latvia was the only country they could call their own. The Party pursued a theory of territorial nationalism, the aim being to reconfigure ethno-cultural, socio-economic, and political relationships to guarantee the dominance of the Latvian nation within the territory perceived to be

⁷⁰ Latvia *Saeima* Faction Sends Letter to CSCE Official, Riga *LETA*, 6 Jan 1994, *FBIS-SOV-94-005*, Daily Report, 7 Jan 1994.

⁷¹ William Schmidt, 'Latvia's Worry: What to do with all its Russians', *The New York Times*, 1 March 1994, p. 3.

⁷² *Secretariat Memorandum prepared by the Directorate of Legal Affairs*, Mission of Experts to Latvia on the Laws on Citizenship and on the Status of Foreigners, Riga, 13–15 September 1993.

⁷³ *Diena* 3 February 1996.

their historic homeland.⁷⁴ The party felt that the minorities who had been systematically relocated by a foreign power should not have a say in the running of the Latvian nation. The Citizenship Law was seen as a way of guaranteeing the survival of the Latvian people rather than as a mechanism for addressing the problems of minorities. The party promoted the repatriation of Latvians back to Latvia as well as the emigration of what it termed colonists to foreign countries. These were to include persuading the US, Australia, and Canada to accept a specific number of Latvian colonists into their immigration quotas. The naturalisation quotas were to be minimal and further naturalisation was not to be expected. The main arguments behind these proposed policies were the poor demographic situation of the Latvians, the need to de-Russify, and the need to persuade Latvians to return to Latvia and non-Latvians to leave.⁷⁵ They also specified dual citizenship for those who had migrated to the West but not to those from the East.⁷⁶

The ruling coalition of Latvia's Way suggested everyone could apply for citizenship and only those explicitly excluded by a court ruling be disqualified. Latvia's Way was a liberal alliance founded in February 1993 to fight the *Saeima* elections. The 18 November Society and The Republican Party supported de-occupation, de-Bolshevization, and de-colonisation.⁷⁷ Following the 1993 election, the National Reconciliation Bloc declared that people's social, employment, and property rights should not be linked to their citizenship.⁷⁸

Members of Jurkans's People's Accord Party came together in the electoral grouping The Accord for Latvia, Rebirth of the National Economy. However, they had been active participants in the Popular Front movement for Latvian independence. Jurkans criticised the workings of the Citizenship and Immigration Department and

⁷⁴ Jeff Chinn and Robert Kaiser, 'Introduction', in *Russians as the New Minority: Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Soviet Successor States* (Westview Press, 1996), p. 6.

⁷⁵ Viesturs Pauls Karnups, *Saeima* deputy, *Latvian National Independence Party, Nacionala Neatkarība*, 29 December 1993 in FBIS-USR-94-018, 28 February 1994.

⁷⁶ Outlines of laws are in *Diena Supplement to Publication in the Saeima and the Cabinet of Ministers*, 1993 20.10.2, p. 3.

⁷⁷ *Panorama Latvii* 20 January 1993.

⁷⁸ *Diena* 19 October 1995, cited in Nils Muižnieks, *The Legal and Social Situation of Non-citizens in Latvia: Topical Issues*, presented at a seminar on the legal and social situation, legislation and implementation, Riga, 3 November 1995.

suggested that Latvian foreign policy was contradictory, reaching towards Europe, yet not wishing to play by Europe's rules. In terms of successes regarding nationality policy, Jurkans's party backed the passing of the Citizenship Law without quotas, which would have allowed Russian Latvians to be included in the citizenship body⁷⁹ but the proposal was not registered for discussion by the *Saeima*.⁸⁰

Latvia's Way offered a compromise Citizenship Law to stave off the anti-Russian extreme nationalist viewpoint of the For Fatherland and Freedom and the Latvian National Independence Party. On 25 November 1993, the Latvian *Saeima* considered the five proposed draft laws on citizenship and naturalisation and, after lengthy debate, decided to base further discussion on the Latvia's Way/ Farmers' Union coalition draft legislation. Fifty three of the 85 deputies approved the course of action, 28 against, and six abstained. That draft was considered to be moderate, in comparison with the radical nationalist proposals.⁸¹

The second reading of the Citizenship Law was vetoed by the Latvian National Independence Movement, which thought it was too liberal, and also by the Interfront deputies, who thought it too restrictive.⁸² The May 1994 local election results suggested a hardening of attitudes towards the non-citizen population. The electorate voted for the radical nationalist parties, which opposed improved relations with Russia, the granting of the Skrunda radar station mandate until 1998, and the easing of citizenship requirements. Such actions were not interpreted as a compromise with international organisations but as giving in to pressure from Moscow.⁸³

In July 1994, following the 1993 *Saeima* election, the Citizenship Law was finally passed, having been adopted without amendment on 22 June 1994 by 66 votes to 11. The legislation was a domestic and international compromise. The 1995 elections produced a broad coalition aimed at excluding the extreme right Popular

⁷⁹ *Neatkarīga Cina*, 1 June 1995, p. 5, *FBIS-SOV-95-135-S*, 1 June 1995.

⁸⁰ CSCE Mission to Latvia, Activity Report #1, CSCE Mission to Latvia, Riga. 6 December 1993.

⁸¹ *RFE/RL*, 29 November 1993.

⁸² *Latvijas Jaunatne*, 24 November 1993.

⁸³ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 3rd Quarter 1994, p. 25.

National Movement for Latvia, formed in November 1994 by Latvian National Independence Movement members Joachim Siegerist⁸⁴ and Odisejs Kostanda, and the left-wing parties. At the end of 1995, the new Prime Minister, Maris Grinblats, represented the radical nationalist party Fatherland and Freedom and opposed any relaxation of the citizenship legislation. Grinblats had been a founder of the Popular Front but went on to chair the more nationalist Congress of Citizens. He termed unacceptable the suggestion of granting equal rights to citizens and non-citizens, or allowing non-citizens to vote in municipal elections.⁸⁵ The radical nationalists campaigned for more restrictive legislation, whilst the left wing parties wanted an all-inclusive law. The pro-European and liberal Latvia's Way lost control of the government in July but was still able to vote through amendments to the Law, by 58 votes to 21.

In late 1995 and early 1996, For Fatherland and Freedom Party was still trying to establish a quota system for citizenship. The party failed to gain enough signatures to force a referendum. During a joint congress in June 1997, the For Fatherland and Freedom Party and the Latvian National Independence Party voted to establish a new political formation called Fatherland and Freedom/ Latvian National Independence Party. For Fatherland and Freedom Party leader Grinblats stated that the new party's program would be based on national values, the inviolability of the fundamental principles of the constitution, passage of a tough Citizenship Law, the promotion of the repatriation of aliens, and the preservation of the 'purity of the Latvian language'.⁸⁶ The new party had 17 parliamentary seats and became the second-largest formation in the legislature.⁸⁷

In February 1996, the *Saeima* rejected a proposal to amend the Citizenship Law to allow an extended period for ethnic Latvians and Livs to register for citizenship without going through the naturalisation process. This move had been

⁸⁴ Siegerist, a German citizen of Latvian descent, has a conviction in Germany for inciting racial hatred.

⁸⁵ 'Ulmanis Invites Maris Grinblats to Form New Government', *ITAR-TASS*, 8 November 1995, *FBIS-SOV-95-216*, Daily Report, 8 November 1995.

⁸⁶ Apvienības "Tēvzemei un Brīvībai" / LNNK Programma Ievads [Fatherland and Freedom/ LNNK, Programme Introduction], Rīgā, 21 Jūnijā 1997, Apvienības "Tēvzemei un Brīvībai" / LNNK priekšsēdētājs, Māris Grīnblats.

⁸⁷ *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, 23 June 1997.

supported by the Harmony Party, which was concerned that Russian Latvians who had had problems with documentation would be unable to register. Russian Latvians were those ethnic Latvians who had been born or brought up and socialised in Russia. Latvian nationalists were concerned that they would not know the Latvian language, nor would they be a part of Latvian society. In addition, amendments to the Law on the Status of Former Soviet Citizens, which would have enabled them to obtain the same passports as citizens, were also rejected.⁸⁸

During 1996, radical nationalist members of the *Saeima* continued to damage Latvia's international image with their hard line on Latvian citizenship policy. Following the Latvian *Saeima*'s 22 August 1996 declaration that Latvia had been occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940 and claim that the Abrene district was unlawfully incorporated into Russia in 1944, the government sought to distance itself from more radical elements in the *Saeima*.⁸⁹ Latvian Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs was quick to confirm that the declaration did not reflect the position of the Latvian government or Foreign Ministry.⁹⁰

In October 1997, the *Saeima* rejected the People's Harmony Party amendments to the Citizenship Law. The proposals were to remove the age restrictions on naturalisation, grant citizenship automatically to children born in Latvia after 4 May 1990, and to simplify the language requirement for pensioners. The For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party blocked the move, citing the coalition agreement, which did not allow participants to change the Citizenship Law. This proposal also coincided with the passing of the state budget. This required united co-operation from the coalition, which would have been jeopardised had, for example, the more liberal and pro-European Union Latvia's Way supported the amendments promoted by the international community as essential for Latvia's membership in the European Union.⁹¹

⁸⁸ BNS, 29 February 1996.

⁸⁹ BNS, 28 September 1996.

⁹⁰ BNS, 20 September 1996.

⁹¹ *Latvian Radio*, 16 October 1997, *BBC SWB*, SU/3052, E/2-3, 17 October 1997.

By late 1996, there was growing concern from external organisations as to why there was such a low uptake for naturalisation. On a visit to Riga, OSCE HCNM van der Stoel expressed concern that 28 per cent of the Latvian population were still non-citizens.⁹² The government instructed the National Human Rights Office to conduct a survey into why the uptake for naturalisation was so low. The system of age brackets, initially devised as a way of preventing the administration from being overwhelmed by a flood of applications, had had an inhibiting effect. Law drafters had not foreseen that families would not wish to apply separately and that younger members entitled to apply would not do so as their elder family members were ineligible. Given the shortage of applications for naturalisation, such a system no longer appeared warranted. Survey respondents also claimed examination enrolment fees were too high and that the examinations were too difficult.⁹³ In some cases, non-possession of Latvian citizenship appeared to have advantages: no military service obligation, ease of travel to the countries of the former USSR thanks to the old Soviet passport etc. In response to international pressure, Latvia appointed Olafs Bruvaris of the Christian Democrats as its first Minister for Human Rights.⁹⁴ A Latvian Radio announcement described his duties as including ‘the protection of state’s interests against accusations by other countries of human rights violations’. This reflected the incomprehension still felt by many nationalists over the West’s unreasonable demands which were put upon Latvia, a country, which in their eyes had suffered so much and should have received understanding for their policies, not be condemned for trying to ensure the survival of the Latvian nation. The government was keen to point out that international pressure was not the only reason for changes to the Citizenship Law. They felt that the survey results of ‘towards a civic society’⁹⁵ played a key role in determining the necessary changes to the law.⁹⁶

⁹² OMRI Daily Digest, 9 October 1996.

⁹³ *The Programme for Studies and Activities ‘Towards a Civic Society’*, Survey of Latvian Inhabitants November 1997–January 1998, Baltic Data House, 1998.

⁹⁴ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 2 Quarter 1994, p. 24.

⁹⁵ Baltic Data House, *The Programme for Studies and Activities ‘Towards a Civic Society’*, Survey of Latvian Inhabitants November 1997–January 1998. The Naturalisation Board, Latvian Human Rights Office, Board for Citizenship and Migrations Affairs, and the Ministry of Education and Science were among those who participated in the working group for the *Programme for Studies and Activities ‘Towards a Civic Society’*. *The Programme of*

All attempts to change the Citizenship Law, particularly increasing the rate of naturalisation, were hampered by the problem of tenuous coalitions and had to be undertaken without changing the citizenship legislation. The ruling coalition agreement at the time stipulated that there should be no change to the Citizenship Law, but there was a recognition that the process needed to be speeded up. The government made several attempts to reduce the impact of local legislation on non-citizens but, at the national level, the restrictive coalition agreement prevented substantive changes. This period showed very little change in citizenship policy and a very slow rate of naturalisation. The parties in government were held together in an unstable coalition which, to stay intact, had to agree to leave the Citizenship Law unchanged. The unstable government coalitions charted a conservative course of little change, refusing either to liberalise the citizenship legislation or to make it more restrictive. Amendments to the law could have led to dissent from either quarter and affected the running of the rest of government because of the diametrically opposing views of the political parties.

1997–9

The For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party faction totally opposed equalising the status of non-citizens and citizens. In a meeting with Russian Ambassador to Latvia, Alexander Udaltsev, the faction expressed a wish for talks between Latvia, Russia, and other Yalta⁹⁷ conference members to discuss the repatriation of non-citizens.⁹⁸ This faction exhibited neither change over time in terms of their attitude to nationality policy nor did they contribute in any way to the liberalisation of the law.

Studies and Activities: On the Way to a Civil Society, Stage 4, Regional Conferences, November 1997–May 1998, Riga 1998.

⁹⁶ Kristiāna Lîbane, MP for Latvia's Way, Comments by the Latvian authorities on the preliminary draft report to the committee on the honouring of obligations and commitments by member states of the Council of Europe (monitoring committee), Doc. 8426, 24 May 1999, Appendix V.

⁹⁷ 4–11 February 1945, Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt met in the Crimean resort of Yalta to gain Stalin's agreement to enter the war against Japan and also address the division of occupied Germany and, more broadly, Europe into spheres of influence.

⁹⁸ *BNS*, 28 May 1997.

By the end of 1997, Latvia had failed to gain entry to EU accession talks. The EU report mentioned the slow progress of naturalisation. A subsequent survey by the Latvian daily *Diena* suggested that the majority of politicians supported liberalisation of the naturalisation regulations to speed up the process.⁹⁹ The exception to this was the For Fatherland and Freedom Party/ Latvian National Independence Party. In response to what it termed increased activity by organisations disloyal to Latvia, the For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party faction in the *Saeima*, demanded that the Language Law be speeded through parliament to counter demands for the recognition of Russian as a second state language.¹⁰⁰ At its party conference on 21 February 1998, For Fatherland and Freedom Party announced that they would exert 'all political efforts' to safeguard the Citizenship Law in its current form. Conference delegates reiterated their opposition to giving citizenship to children of non-Latvians born after 1991.¹⁰¹ By 1998 the For Fatherland and Freedom / Latvian National Independence Party, in talks with President Ulmanis, were still adamant that the Citizenship Law needed no amendment. They did, however, concede that a discussion of how to speed up naturalisation was required.¹⁰² In opposing any further concessions to the non-citizen population, the party was faced with a dilemma. The party line was to oppose expansion of the citizenry but, as the party of the then Prime Minister Guntars Krasts in 1998, it had to support the government line of arguing for Latvian integration into the European Union. Although the For Fatherland and Freedom Party was not united in its support for changes to the Citizenship Law, Krasts declared that the mounting pressure from Russia meant that it was increasingly important that Latvia join NATO and the EU to offset this pressure. He stated that easing the citizenship requirements would facilitate EU membership and was, therefore, in Latvia's strategic interests.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ *Diena*, 26/27 December 1997.

¹⁰⁰ *Radio Riga Network* 1500 GMT 26 Nov 1997.

¹⁰¹ *BNS*, 21 February 1998.

¹⁰² *BNS*, 8 January 1998.

¹⁰³ *Interfax*, 1 May 1998, *BBC SWB*, SU/3217, E/1, 4 May 1998.

The first hint of any desire to liberalise the laws came shortly after the December 1997 rejection by the EU. In January 1998, Krasts suggested that it might be possible for the government to call for naturalising children born in Latvia since independence.¹⁰⁴ After the EU suggested that Latvia speed up the naturalisation process in early 1998, Foreign Minister Birkavs arranged meetings to discuss an integration programme. Initially aimed at dealing with problems of inter-ethnic relations, the programme then became more wide reaching to deal with all issues of social integration.¹⁰⁵ The profile of the campaign was a reflection of the level of political commitment to it. During the public debate stage there was participation especially from Latvia's Way which ran a number of events, although these were not well publicised. Several international observers made the point that these were conducted in Latvian or, as a reaction, totally in Russian, unless an international organisation was co-running them. The education chapter of the programme, authored by the For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party-dominated Education Ministry, received most criticism from non-Latvian representatives.

The Russian speaking community was more involved in the discussion of the integration strategy than the Latvian community but both sides had a different perception of integration. The Cabinet of Ministers delayed approval of the integration programme. Although the For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party complained that the paper threatened the Latvian nation. The People's Party did not make strong representations on the matter. This left coalition member Latvia's Way deciding that, although they supported the integration programme, the cost of threatening the stability of the government coalition was too high. The official explanation was that editorial changes were to be made. For example, the word for other nationalities would be replaced with occupants.¹⁰⁶ The State language training programme organised round table discussions in Latvian.

¹⁰⁴ *BNS*, 30 January 1998.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Olgerts Tipans, Advisor to the President on Nationality Affairs, and Member of the Planning Committee for the Integration Concept, Riga 25 October 1999.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Heidi Bottolfs, OSCE Mission to Latvia, Riga, 25 October 1999.

which suggested an education model where Latvian schools would help Russian language schools but the Latvian schools refused to co-operate and so the approach had to be changed.¹⁰⁷

The deterioration of Russian–Latvian relations in Spring 1998, and the adverse reaction of the West and international organisations to the events of March 1998, prompted a rethink of Latvian government policy towards nationality issues. The police battalion, which had broken up the pensioners’ rally, was disbanded and action was promised against those who ordered the use of force.¹⁰⁸ Recognising that Latvia’s international image had been damaged, the Latvian government drew up a stabilisation plan to strengthen the security of the state and society, and further Latvia’s integration into the EU. The group included the Latvian Ambassador to Russia, perhaps suggesting Russian pressure was a key factor, members of the National Security Council, the *Saeima* Chairman, and the President of the Bank of Latvia. They declared that changes to the Citizenship Law and an improved Language Law that would protect the Latvian language had to be submitted to the *Saeima* for consideration.¹⁰⁹ While Prime Minister Krasts claimed there was no reason to fear a deterioration in Latvian–Russian economic relations, Foreign Minister Birkavs declared that the political radicalisation of Latvian society had soured bilateral relations.¹¹⁰ The democratic party *Saimnieks* left the governing coalition in April blaming Prime Minister Krasts and his party’s policies for the worsening in Russian–Latvian relations. The *Saimnieks* supported Latvia’s development as an independent and democratic society.¹¹¹

More directly in relation to nationality issues, a working group of representatives of the ruling factions agreed proposals for amendments to the Citizenship Law. They agreed to abolish the naturalisation ‘windows’, but the granting of citizenship to children born to non-citizens since 1991 proved more

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Aija Priedite, State Language Training Programme, Riga, 25 October 1999.

¹⁰⁸ ‘West Can No Longer Tolerate Rights Violations in Latvia’ *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 20 March 1998 p. 5, *FBIS-SOV-98-079* Daily Report, 20 March 1998.

¹⁰⁹ *Latvian Radio, Riga*, 15 April 1998, *BBC SWB* SU/3203 E/1, 17 April 1998.

¹¹⁰ *Interfax News Agency*, Moscow, 1 April 1998.

¹¹¹ *Interfax*, 8 April 1998, *BBC SWB*, SU/3198, E/1, 10 April 1998.

problematic. These approximately 18,000 children, with an average age of three and a half, were seen as a threat to the continued survival of the Latvian language unless their citizenship was coupled with a requirement to know Latvian.¹¹² They also decided that all non-citizens could apply to be naturalised by 2001 at the latest.¹¹³

In April 1998, the government supported draft amendments to the Citizenship Law, allowing all permanent residents to apply for citizenship when they turned 16. The naturalisation 'windows' would be partially removed, allowing those born in Latvia to be naturalised by 2001. Foreign Minister Birkavs promoted compromise with Russia by taking the unusual step of acknowledging that Latvia had been too slow in easing naturalisation requirements, which had prevented a large portion of non-citizens from applying. He said that Latvia had, for 2 years, failed to address an issue of critical concern to Russia. However, he criticised Russia's use of economic sanctions, highlighting the fact that the non-citizens whom Russia claimed to wish to protect were likely to be worst affected by the sanctions.¹¹⁴

The Justice Minister was quick to point out that this was not a concession to Russia.¹¹⁵ The amendments had been drawn up by the Latvian Co-operation Council, which consisted of members of the ruling factions. The group agreed that there had to be changes but were very divided as to what these should be.

Despite For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party attitudes, the EU rejection and the protests of March 1998 increased the international pressure on Latvia to liberalise its legislation. In April 1998, through the working group on amendments to the Citizenship Law, Latvia's Way proposed to grant citizenship to children under 16 if they submitted a request and showed adequate knowledge of Latvian. It was also agreed that naturalisation should be possible for all by 2001.¹¹⁶

¹¹² *BNS*, 21 April 1998.

¹¹³ *RFE/RL*, 14 April 1998.

¹¹⁴ *Russian TV channel*, 9 April 1998, *BBC SWB*, SU/3199, E/3, 13 April 1998.

¹¹⁵ *Interfax*, 21 April 1998, *BBC SWB*, SU/3208, E/1, 23 April 1998.

¹¹⁶ *RFE/RL*, 14 April 1998.

Amendments to the law were adopted in June 1998. The For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party actively campaigned for signatures to force a referendum, hoping that a vote against the changes would give them a mandate to demand other changes such as eliminating citizenship for special achievements and reintroducing a quota for naturalisation.¹¹⁷

The conservative and nationalist People's Party was formed by former Prime Minister Andris Skele in May 1998. Latvia's Way strongly supported the changes to the law. Skele's People's Party termed the passage of the amendments vital to Latvia's bid to join the EU and NATO.¹¹⁸

For Latvia's Way the European Union recommendations were an added incentive to support amendments to the Citizenship Law. They believed that integration would be much faster with the original Citizenship Law. Having understood that the naturalisation process was too slow, there was a need to address this. According to Berzins, the pressure from the west was an additional factor. Latvia's Way strongly supported the amendments, realising that joining the EU was primarily a security issue.¹¹⁹

The Russian Party of Latvia had 16 deputies in the Riga City Council out of a total of around 500 party members. Working with the Socialist Party, Harmony, and Equality of Rights in a joint list for the 1998 elections the main purpose of the party was to save the Russian identity, culture, orthodox religion, and literature in Latvia through promotion of Russian schools and language. The party sought to find a mode of co-operation with the Latvian population, their support coming mainly from middle ranking Russian businessmen. Members claimed they were discriminated against by the nationalist components of government who gave out contracts to Latvian businesses.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Juris Dobelis of For Fatherland and Freedom Party/ Latvian National Independence Party in *The Baltic Times* 27 August–2 September 1998.

¹¹⁸ *RFE/RL*, 2 October 1998.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Indulis Berzins, Latvian Foreign Minister, *Saeima* Deputy Latvia's Way, Riga, 21 October 1998.

¹²⁰ Interview with Alexandr Gaponenko, Baltic Russian Institute, Riga, 23 October 1998.

The National Harmony Party, the Socialist Party, and the Equal Rights Movement formed a political union called 'For Human Rights in a United Latvia' in May 1998.¹²¹ The National Harmony Party was the only grouping to have signed agreements with Russian political parties, in this case *Yabloko* and Our Home is Russia. The parliamentary faction, For Human Rights in a United Latvia, fully supported the increase in naturalisation and all OSCE recommendations. While the Equal Rights and Socialist members backed the zero option, the National Harmony Party advocated a less stringent Latvian language test, and recognition of minority languages with the renewal of minority schooling legislation from the first period of independence. Harmony believed that the economic ties to the Russian Federation were important and that it was the Russian market which would help to rebuild Latvian industry as there was little hope of getting into Western markets to any great extent in the near future. Parties backing a 'No',¹²² vote in the referendum tended to cite as a reason the pressure from the West and the desire to join the European Union. For Human Rights in United Latvia and a number of NGOs argued that it was important to have an inclusive society in Latvia and that those children covered by the amendments to the citizenship legislation were part of Latvian society. They played down the threat to the Latvian language by pointing out that, with an average age of three and a half, many of the non-citizen children spoke no language at all.¹²³

The referendum on amendments to the Citizenship Law was held on the same day as the parliamentary election. During campaigning, the For Fatherland and Freedom/ Latvian National Independence Party came out strongly against the amendments to the Citizenship Law.¹²⁴ Latvian politicians were subjected to intense pressure from the Russian Federation and the international community to liberalise

¹²¹ BNS, 15 May 1998.

¹²² The question on the referendum was 'Do you want the law of 22 June 1998, "The amendment to the law on citizenship," to be repealed?' Therefore, if you were in favour of the amendments you had to vote 'no'.

¹²³ Interview with Boris Tsilevich, *Saeima* Deputy National Harmony Party, For Human Rights in a United Latvia Faction, Riga, 20 October 1998.

¹²⁴ Election results *Tautas Partija* (People's Party) 24 seats. *Latvijas Ceļš* (Latvia's Way) 21, For Fatherland and Freedom Party/ Latvian National Independence Party 17, *Tautas Saskaņas Partija* (People's Harmony party) 16, *Latvijas Sociāldemokrātu Apvienība* (Social Democratic Party) 14, *Jaunā Partija* (New Party) 8. The referendum votes were 'Yes' 44.8 per cent and 'No' 53 per cent. Voters were asked if they were in favour of repealing the amendments.

their Citizenship Law. Prime Minister Krasts, again of For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party, was more overtly nationalist than President Ulmanis, refusing to accept the importance of international opinion for Latvia. Krasts believed that no nation had suffered as much as Latvia during WWII and the Soviet era having stated that Latvian identity was about their suffering in the 20th century. For him the essence of being Latvian did not include the non-citizens.¹²⁵

Following the June 1998 vote in the *Saeima* to liberalise citizenship, Prime Minister Krasts signed the petition in support of staging a referendum on amendments to the Citizenship Law. Krasts had earlier voiced an opinion that amendments to the Citizenship Law had been adopted without a broad public debate and the best way to judge public opinion would be through the referendum.¹²⁶ He declared that Latvian foreign policy would be unaffected by the result of the referendum. It was simply a matter of how well Latvia explained the result. ‘People’, he declared, ‘should vote according to their conscience’. Personally, he opposed the changes granting citizenship to 18,000 children born in Latvia since 1991. The opposition to the naturalisation of the children stemmed from a fear that the non-Latvian children given citizenship would have children of their own in a Russian language environment. This would increase the number of children who did not speak Latvian and, in the eyes of nationalists would not be loyal to Latvia. He did, however, support dropping the ‘windows’ system, where only those in a certain age group were able to naturalise each year. Krasts also condemned the ‘unconsidered and aggressive pressure from the European Union ambassadors, and simultaneous pressure with ever growing demands from Russia’. He claimed ‘it created a natural counter-reaction’.¹²⁷ The amendments were passed by 53 per cent voting in favour of retaining them during the referendum.

¹²⁵ *Moscow Times*, 25 April 1998.

¹²⁶ *BNS*, 14 August 1998.

¹²⁷ *BNS*, 2 October 1998.

Post Saeima Election and Referendum

Following the 1998 *Saeima* election, the Education Law overtook the language legislation in its progress through the legislative process. Under *Saeima* regulations in the first session of a new *Saeima* the parliament could decide to continue to consider draft legislation from the previous parliament. Regardless of the stage previously reached the Bill was taken to be in its first reading. The Bill had previously incorporated around 50 per cent of the OSCE HCNM recommendations and was adopted in October 1998 without further alteration. There was no public debate or discussion around the time of the adoption of the Law. Harmony was concerned that, in response to Council of Europe and OSCE criticism of the Education Law the clauses on minority education had simply been left out, leaving decisions over such issues to the For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party dominated Education Ministry. The For Human Rights in a United Latvia Faction submitted practically the same amendments to the second reading as the OSCE but they were still rejected.¹²⁸

Following the successful passage of the Citizenship Law amendments through the referendum, the For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party reiterated that they would simply ensure the Language and Education Laws were strict enough to protect the interests of the Latvian nation. However, their interpretation of the national interest was not fully supported as the bloc's representation in the *Saeima* fell from 20 to 17 seats in the October *Saeima* election. By campaigning against the amendments they had claimed to have put the good of the country before the good of the party.¹²⁹ However, the old *Saeima* failed to adopt the Language Law before the new government took office and a series of events external to the passage of the Bill took interest away. The *Saeima* Education Committee decided not to adopt the recommendations which included advice not to regulate the

¹²⁸ Interview with Boris Tsilevich, *Saeima* Deputy National Harmony Party, For Human Rights in a United Latvia Faction, Riga, 13 May 1999.

¹²⁹ 'Latvian Voters Say Yes to Amendments', *The Baltic Times*, 8–14 October 1998.

use of Latvian in the private sphere, and hurried through the third reading. The Language Law went through on 8 July and was vetoed by the President and the Kristopans Government fell. The three allies on national issues, For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party, People's Party, and the Social Democratic party were the three parties supporting the President coming to power. Since the *Saeima* elected the Latvian President there was an expectation that, having been supported by the proponents of the Bill, she would not veto the passage of the Bill. Juris Sinka of For Fatherland and Freedom Party felt that it was international pressure which caused the change in citizenship legislation. His party stated that anyone who spoke the state language would not suffer discrimination. The party's policy priority is to ensure the longevity of the Latvian nation, language, and culture within the context of a united Europe.¹³⁰

Following the successful passage of the Citizenship Law amendments, the Language Law became the main nationality issue for the new October 1998 *Saeima*. Prior to the Citizenship Law referendum, the Language Law debate had been more or less a domestic issue. The debates around the new Law took on the language of the citizenship debate, with increased outside interest as more restrictive versions of the law were proposed and more focus on what was best for Latvia and how to promote the Latvian language. The debate about Europe also included business arguments such as, 'what was best for a small business which could not afford translation but where public information had to be in Latvian?'¹³¹ After the referendum and the *Saeima* election, citing pressure from the Russian Federation and support from the West, the People's Party felt that the Citizenship Law should be left as it was. They wanted to concentrate instead on strengthening the Language and Education Laws.¹³² The People's Party argued with the OSCE HCNM that the Language Law could not be too liberal, considering the long years of occupation.¹³³ People's Party Deputy

¹³⁰ Personal correspondence from Juris Sinka, *Saeima* Deputy For Fatherland and Freedom/ Latvian National Independence Party, 30 November 1999.

¹³¹ Interview with Latvian Foreign Ministry official, 15 October 1999.

¹³² Interview with Vaira Paegle, *Saeima* Deputy People's Party, Riga, 21 October 1998.

¹³³ *BNS*, 12 January 1999.

Dzintars Abikis stated that, while the main reason behind the changes to the Citizenship Law was to afford all people equal opportunities, the changes to the Language Law were due to international requirements.¹³⁴

Following the President's decision to return the Language Law to the *Saeima*, the *Saeima* was able to submit amendments only to the clauses which the President specifically criticised. The People's Party faction wanted to set a deadline of submission for amendments so that the Bill could be adopted in the Autumn session. The For Fatherland and Freedom Party argued that consideration of the revised Language Bill by parliament, following judgement by parliamentary commissions, should be delayed until after the Helsinki EU summit.¹³⁵ Prime Minister Kristopans of Latvia's Way submitted amendments to liberalise the Law, but not only the nationalist For Fatherland and Freedom/ Latvian National Independence Party, but also the newly elected People's Party of former Premier Andris Skele refused to back the Prime Minister. The conservative People's Party sought to take over the nationalist mission from the For Fatherland and Freedom / Latvian National Independence Party and secure their own support base by blaming the Prime Minister for not defending the Latvian nation. There was also great personal animosity between Skele and Kristopans, and conflicting business interests. Since October 1998, the *Saeima* had faced problems of government formation closely connected with economic concerns and the heated debate over privatisation of public utilities. For several years, it had been alleged that rival groupings around Skele and the port of Ventspils (which handled the majority of the highly lucrative Russian transit trade, including oil exports) had attempted to influence privatisation to further their own interests.¹³⁶ The firm, Ventspils Nafta, was a major financial backer of Kristopans' Latvia's Way and, it was alleged, also backed the political parties opposing Skele on condition they did not enter into coalition with the People's Party. Skele's party received backing from the Ave Lat group and the food processing industry. The

¹³⁴ Personal correspondence with Dzintars Abikis, *Saeima* Deputy People's Party, Chairman Committee on Education, Culture, and Science, 29 November 1999.

¹³⁵ *BNS*, 24 August 1999.

¹³⁶ *Oxford Analytica Daily Brief*, 7 June 2000: LATVIA: Privatisation Problems.

relations between these powerful economic groups were antagonistic.¹³⁷ In order to oppose Skele, Kristopans had to go into coalition with the nationalist For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Party. The radical nationalist views of this party limited the scope for liberalisation of the Language Law if Kristopans wanted to keep all his coalition partners on board.

In April 1999, following criticism by Human Rights and United Latvia Faction that the Language Bill did not meet OSCE requirements, Prime Minister Kristopans referred the Bill to the Foreign Ministry. This drew heavy criticism from Abikis, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Education, Science, and Culture, who claimed that seeking advice from the Foreign Ministry would sour relations with the OSCE.¹³⁸

Foreign Minister Birkavs suggested that the *Saeima* should delay adoption of the Language Law to enable Latvia to meet all obligations to the EU and so as not to attract any criticism on the language issue, should a bill be passed which did not meet international standards. He wanted to ensure that there would be no reason not to ask Latvia to EU accession talks in December. However, there was also reference to the warnings from UK colleagues, the European Commission, and ambassadors of EU countries that Latvia should be very careful regarding the Language Law it decided to adopt.¹³⁹ In the end the Law was adopted in line with OSCE guidelines shortly before the December 1999 EU summit. The People's Party, Latvia's Way and the New Party voted in favour of the Law. Human Rights in a United Latvia voted against and For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party abstained. The Law was finally adopted on 9 December 1999. Peteris Tabuns of the same party simply stated that 'in the end we want to get rid of the Russification of Latvia'. Janis Jurkans, Head of For Human Rights in United Latvia Faction, stressed the need to promote internal integration of society without which Latvia would not be able to integrate into the European Union.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ *Oxford Analytica Daily Brief*, 1 December 1998: LATVIA: New Government.

¹³⁸ *BNS*, 9 April 1999.

¹³⁹ *BNS*, 6 July 1999.

¹⁴⁰ *BNS*, 9 December 1999.

In July 1999, the minority government fell and was replaced by a coalition of the conservative For Fatherland and Freedom/ Latvian National Independence Party, People's Party, and the liberal Latvia's Way.¹⁴¹ This new government opened a number of regional offices and contributed more funds to meet the increased demand for naturalisation, which followed the 1998 amendments to the Law.¹⁴²

At a time of significant change in nationality policy, the Prime Ministers did not show full or willing support for liberalisation and in the majority of cases, had their wishes been followed, Latvia would not have had a liberalised Citizenship Law. After the rejection from EU accession talks and the West's negative reaction to deteriorating relations with Russia, there was a significant change to the Citizenship and Language Laws in line with OSCE recommendations. The ending of the restrictive coalition agreement and support for joining the EU coincided with a move towards liberalising citizenship legislation. The For Fatherland and Freedom Party turned from opposition to abstention and the instability of government coalitions allowed parties opposed to liberalising nationality policy to gain the balance of power. The conservative radical nationalist parties were able to overrule the President's wishes for liberalised laws. The weak and unstable nature of the governments restricted their policy options. In addition, their reliance on radical nationalist elements to stay in power severely hampered any attempts to liberalise nationality policy. During the second term of Ulmanis's Presidency, he tried to persuade the *Saeima* to liberalise nationality policy but his weak constitutional position prevented him from taking a leading role. The unstable government and the lack of power afforded to the more liberal President stifled debate and progress on nationality policy.

Bureaucracy

1991–3

¹⁴¹ *Jamestown Monitor*, 13 July 1999.

¹⁴² *Non-paper handed over by Latvian Embassy in London*, 18 October 1999.

The government had two main bodies dealing with nationality issues during this period. The National Affairs Division of the Ministry of Justice established in 1990 had eight members of staff but this was reduced to three by 1996, and had little influence on policy. The division's functions included the co-ordination of cultural societies with ministries and the maintenance of dialogue between the government and minority, mostly cultural, organisations.¹⁴³

A far more controversial body was the Citizenship and Immigration Department (CID). The Republic of Latvia Immigration Service was created in April 1991 with an Immigration Department established within the Council of Ministers. In January 1992, the Department came under the remit of the Ministry of Justice, from August 1993 becoming an integral part of the Ministry of the Interior. In April 1991 it started controlling the migration process, developing the Population Register from 1992, and controlling the visa regime from 1993. In July 1994 the Board began issuing Latvian Passports, and in August 1995 became responsible for issuing identity certificates.¹⁴⁴ Prior to independence, activists started a register of pre-1940 citizens and their descendants. The CID and the Interior Ministry continued this task. In late 1992, when the government began re-registration, several thousand non-citizens had their residence permits revoked and some were issued with orders to leave the country.

Helsinki Watch uncovered substantive and serious systematic abuses by the CID in the registration process similar to those uncovered by a 1992 UN Report.¹⁴⁵ The CID claimed in 1993 that 93.8 per cent, or 2,444,720, of Latvian residents were registered, the remaining 6 per cent, or 161,456, were Russian military, or those directly connected to it. Those with round stamps in their passports, indicating they had no right to acquire Latvian citizenship at any time, could not register a marriage or birth, or change residence. They also had no right to labour or social benefits. As

¹⁴³ Interview with Ilmars Geige, National Affairs Division, Ministry of Justice, 14 June 1996.

¹⁴⁴ *About Citizenship and Migrations Issues Board*, <http://www.pid.gov.lv/aboutpid/eabout.htm>

¹⁴⁵ Helsinki Watch, 'Violations by the Latvian Department of Citizenship and Immigration,' 'Summary of the Report on a Fact-Finding Mission to Latvia,' The Secretary General of the UN, 27 November 1992. An executive summary of that report was issued on 2 December 1992 (A/47/748, annex).

well as persons directly connected with the former Soviet military and security services, civilian workers in military installations, and those living in hostels categorised as military housing were also unable to register. However, as only active military personnel and their families had no right to registration, even if the 11,000 officers had the improbably high figure of four dependents each, plus 16,000 enlisted men, that totals only 71,000, still leaving over 90,000 unregistered. Helsinki Watch assessed court proceedings to establish the pattern of illegal denial of registration of non-citizens by the CID.¹⁴⁶ The Supreme Council had to pass a resolution on the application of Article 2 on Registration of Residents 11 December 1991, to ensure that civilians working for the military and, or, living in military housing could be registered. The CID also refused to carry out the decree awarding citizenship to those who had resided in Latvia until 1 August 1914, and their descendants, but had fled during WWI. Many had been unable to return to Latvia before 1940 and, thus, did not qualify for citizenship. The CID, staffed with nationalist sympathisers, argued the decree was illegal and illogical and refused to carry it out.¹⁴⁷ Viesturs Pauls Karnups, its Head in 1992, was elected as a *Saeima* Deputy for Latvian National Independence Movement, a party dedicated to encouraging the repatriation of non-citizens who were not part of Latvia's historical minority.¹⁴⁸ At this time there was no formal recruitment process for posts in the Latvian bureaucracy. Karnups was an Australian–Latvian returnee who used to work in immigration in Australia. The other Chair of the CID ran unsuccessfully as a candidate for the far right nationalist *Latvijas Vienības Partija* (Latvia's Unity Party). The department interpreted laws according to its own ideas, or simply failed to carry out instructions and consistently failed to abide by court rulings against them.¹⁴⁹ The CID lost more than 90 per cent of over 1300 civil actions brought against it.¹⁵⁰ In this case the bureaucracy simply ignored the

¹⁴⁶ Helsinki Watch, 'Violations by the Latvian Department of Citizenship and Immigration,' p. 5.

¹⁴⁷ Helsinki Watch, 'Violations by the Latvian Department of Citizenship and Immigration,' p. 22.

¹⁴⁸ Helsinki Watch, 'Violations by the Latvian Department of Citizenship and Immigration,' p. 9. The historical minority are those non-Latvians who lived in Latvia prior to 1940.

¹⁴⁹ Helsinki Watch, 'Violations by the Latvian Department of Citizenship and Immigration,' p. 11.

¹⁵⁰ G. Kotov and V. Buzajev, *Main Characteristics of Latvian Human Rights and International Humanitarian Cooperation Committee Activities*, 1 July 1994, in Ole Nørgaard, Lars Johannsen, and Hello Willumsen, 'Divided Societies', in *The Baltic States after Independence* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1996), p. 192.

institutions of elected government and carried out their own policies. Theoretically, the CID reported to the Ministry of the Interior. However, the inaction of the Interior Ministry in attacking the CID may have been due to a fear of criticising nationalists and being accused of being unpatriotic so soon after Latvia had regained independence.

1993–9

In the increasingly nationalist policy environment, the bureaucracy also worked against liberalisation of nationality policy. The CID continued to have numerous court rulings against it, the majority of which were ignored.¹⁵¹ Around 80 per cent of complaints regarding civil rights violations in 1995 related to the activities of the department.¹⁵²

The Naturalisation Board set up in 1994 to administer the naturalisation process was viewed more positively, the OSCE having received no complaints about their activities. The tasks of the Naturalisation Board were, from February 1995, to accept and review applications for granting Latvian citizenship through naturalisation, to test applicants' Latvian language proficiency and knowledge as prescribed by the Law on Citizenship, and, from January 1999, to co-ordinate the integration process in Latvian society.

The Board considered applications for naturalisation, as well as drafting legal acts on the process of naturalisation for the Cabinet of Ministers¹⁵³ but received so few applications for naturalisation that it conducted surveys to find out why this was the case. It was accused of providing propaganda for the Russians.¹⁵⁴ In 1997, a total of 2994 people were naturalised compared with 3999 in 1995 and 1996 combined.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Interview with Mr. Lietuvnikes, Prosecutor Daugavpils Court, 12 June 1996.

¹⁵² 'People's Accord Party Political Platform', *Neatkarīga Cina*, 1 June 1995 p. 5, FBIS-SOV-95-135-S, Daily Report, 1 June 1995.

¹⁵³ *Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers*, No. 351, 21 November 1995. *Darbības mērķi un uzdevumi, Naturalizācijas Pārvalde*, 2000. [Objectives and Tasks of the Naturalisation Board].

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Janis Kahanovics, Deputy Head, Republic of Latvia Naturalisation Board, Riga, 14 June 1996.

¹⁵⁵ RFE/RL, 9 January 1998.

The Naturalisation Board complained that the CID kept applications longer than necessary. This point was also made by Daugavpils Council, which, in 1996, had records of 295 people who had sworn an oath of loyalty, of whom only 99 had received citizenship due to delays in Riga.¹⁵⁶ The Board put forward proposals to simplify the naturalisation procedure by allowing elderly applicants to be exempt from written exams. There were no government run courses but private ones cost around 40 Lats.¹⁵⁷ Applicants could purchase a history book and leaflets from the Naturalisation Board to help them through the process.¹⁵⁸

Had the wishes of the CID been dominant there would have been no liberalisation of Latvian nationality policy. The Naturalisation Board tended to operate more as a non-political bureaucracy and attempted to implement government policy regarding naturalisation.

NGOs, non-citizens and non-Latvian social movements

The non-citizen, predominantly Russian-speaking, community in Latvia could hardly have been called a community. There was no cohesive unit of people, no one leader, no one group, or media outlet which sought to, or succeeded in, representing the interests of the non-citizen population. It is possible that the factors which divided the Russian population; levels of poverty, occupation, whether they had Latvian citizenship, and if they wanted to leave Latvia, were stronger forces than the commonality of Russian ethnicity or language. Those who have returned or moved to Russia have been disproportionately drawn from the cultural intelligentsia, while those left behind have been ineffective in political terms.¹⁵⁹ The majority of Russians in Latvia would not demonstrate in the streets over who should become a citizen. Only slightly more people would demonstrate over rising prices, unemployment, and

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Vitalijs Aizbalts, Managing Director, Daugavpils Municipal Council, 11 June 1996.

¹⁵⁷ The Lat is around £0.9, the average monthly net wage in Latvia in 1998 was 97 Lats. *Latvijas Statistikas Gadagrāmata 1999*.

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Angelita Kamenska, Research Associate, Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, Riga, 10 June 1996. *Naturalizācijas pārvaldes projekti*, Naturalizācijas Pārvalde, 2000. [Projects of the Naturalisation Board].

¹⁵⁹ Pål Kolstø, 'The New Russian Diaspora – an Identity of its Own? Possible Identity Trajectories for Russians in the Former Soviet Republics,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 19 No. 3, July 1996, p. 623.

closing factories.¹⁶⁰ There have, however, been a number of active individuals and smaller organisations which have sought to influence the direction of nationality policy. The non-citizens did not seek to be excluded from the definition of citizenship. The referendum on independence and the parliamentary elections saw over half of Russians voting in favour of independence.¹⁶¹ In early 1991, around two thirds of the population in Russian-dominated Daugavpils favoured Latvia's peaceful and gradual withdrawal from the Soviet Union.¹⁶² The NGOs in Latvia have not had a large role in determining changes to nationality policy. The organisations that have been involved have tended to be fragmented and not to co-operate with each other. There have been a number of human rights organisations based on language, but no cohesive action as there has been no unifying force other than language, even the discrimination felt by non-citizens was not unifying as not all Russians were non-citizens. The active organisations have tended to be interested in social issues. Perhaps the lack of willingness to act on political matters has been a reflection of the high cost paid by dissidents in the Soviet era who faced imprisonment, deportation, or other restrictions for opposing the government. However, there have been a small number of notable exceptions to this in the realm of human and civic rights. With the exception of the Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, these groups have tended not to have access to government. A marked change in this occurred during the drafting of the Social Integration Programme in which members of NGOs were either chapter authors or were consulted on sections of the programme.¹⁶³ Regional conferences held in conjunction with the Soros-funded survey 'On the Way to a Civil Society' also attempted to include non-governmental groupings in the debate over nationality policy.¹⁶⁴ The consultation process involved around 26,000 people. The Programme was the initiative of the then Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs and aimed

¹⁶⁰ 33% of Latvians and 31% of Russians in Latvia said they would probably demonstrate over rising prices. The figures were 30% and 37% for unemployment and closing factories, and 23% and 27% for who should be a citizen. Richard Rose, *Nationalities in the Baltic States*, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1994.

¹⁶¹ Leon Gudkov, 'The Disintegration of the USSR and Russians in the Republics', *Journal of Communist Studies*, Vol.9, No.1, March 1993, p. 80.

¹⁶² Neatkarīga, 9 March 1991.

¹⁶³ Interview with Kaija Gertnere, Head of the NGO Centre Riga, 14 October 1999.

¹⁶⁴ *The Programme of Studies and Activities: On the Way to a Civil Society*, Riga 1998.

to address problems of social integration in Latvian society through discussions with experts and, more broadly, with members of the public to initiate strategies for addressing these problems.

Ethnic Latvian NGOs have had a limited role in the nationality debate. The Latvian SS Legion Veterans did not have their own political party affiliation, however, their annual march through the streets of Riga, some wearing old Nazi uniforms, inflamed the nationalist debate in Latvia and brought unwelcome negative attention from abroad. Organisations such as the Association of the Politically Repressed Persons made speeches and produced publications, however, they tended to focus on the relationship with the Russian Federation rather than internal ethnic relations and citizenship matters. The politically repressed persons supported the charging of Soviet officials, who participated in the deportation and murder of Latvians, with crimes against humanity and advised the Russian Federation authorities to do the same. They also called on the Balts to support the prosecution of Nazi war criminals. In addition they demanded that Russia apologise for the Soviet occupation.¹⁶⁵

1991–3

In the late Soviet and early independence periods, there was wide support amongst non-Latvians for independence, and a number of non-Latvians joined the drive towards Latvian independence.¹⁶⁶ A number of activists from this period speculate that the non-Latvians were not joining the Popular Front because it was inclusive and democratic rather than nationalist, but because the only credible alternative was the Interfront, a pro-Communist, pro-imperialist, and pro-Moscow organisation.¹⁶⁷ In late 1992, an all-Russian centre for public opinion research poll suggested that 69 per cent of Russian respondents questioned wanted to adopt Latvian citizenship. At the same

¹⁶⁵ 'Bear Behaving Badly', *Baltic Times*, 1999.

¹⁶⁶ Gudkov, 'The Disintegration of the USSR and Russians in the Republics', p. 80.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Boris Tsilevich, *Saeima* Deputy National Harmony Party, For Human Rights in a United Latvia Faction, Riga, 13 May 1999.

time, participants in the poll felt that their situation in Latvia had worsened and 32 per cent forecast a mass exodus in the next 5 years.¹⁶⁸ Latvian nationalists considered the Russians in Latvia to be more loyal to the Soviet Union, and then Russia, than those in other republics of the former Soviet Union. There was also a suspicion of the heavy concentration of military and security personnel. A local politician in Daugavpils speculated that the nationalities had been united by the desire for independence; once this was achieved, there was nothing to keep them together and the gaps would begin to show as economic and social concerns took over.¹⁶⁹

The Russian Community, founded in 1991 after Latvian independence, had 360 members, rising to over 800 by 1995. The uniting basis was the Russian language and not their ethnicity. The organisation appealed to the technical intelligentsia and also to blue collar workers. It was initially led by members of the pro-Soviet Interfront. The organisation established a Russian language paper, *Russkii Put*, and the Russian Technological University, the first independent Higher Educational Institution to teach in both Latvian and Russian. By 1991–2, the rank and file who supported Latvian independence opposed what they saw as an authoritarian leadership. The power struggle severely weakened the organisation, which disintegrated leaving a small Russian Cultural Organisation.¹⁷⁰

During this period, unjust treatment of non-citizens by the Latvian authorities made non-citizens wary of getting involved with bureaucracy again and may have contributed to the extremely low take up for naturalisation. The longer the authorities took to decide what to do with non-citizens, the more used they became to their status and saw less of a need to change it.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ RFE/RL, 3 December 1992.

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Vitalijs Aizbalts, Managing Director Daugavpils Municipal Council, 11 June 1996.

¹⁷⁰ *Nationality and Citizenship in the Baltic States*, Resource Paper no. 3 (Washington DC: University of Cambridge Department of Geography, 1994); Neil Melvin *Russians Beyond Russia*, (Royal Institute of International Affairs: Chatham House Papers, 1995); Vladislavs Volkovs, *Krievi Latvija*, Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Filozofijas un Socioloģijas Institūta Etnisko Pētījumu Centrs, Rīga 1996, p. 140.

¹⁷¹ Interview with Nils Muižnieks, Director Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, Riga, 19 October 1998.

1993–7

The difficulties for individual non-citizens mounted during the early 1990s. In 1994, as many as 46 per cent of Latvians felt that there was a threat of possible conflict between the Russian and Latvian populations in Latvia. The figure for Russians holding this view was slightly less at 25 per cent. Around 50 per cent of Latvians felt they had little, or nothing, in common with Russians, whilst 65 per cent of Russians felt they had a great deal in common with Latvians.¹⁷² In 1993 and 1994, 372 people were ordered to leave Latvia for possessing counterfeit or invalid visas and passports. Spouses were unable to obtain permanent residence permits unless their spouses had one already. The fact of being registered was insufficient.¹⁷³

On 6 June 1995, 11 Russian national cultural societies signed the constitution of the Council for the Russian societies of Latvia, aimed at preserving and popularising the Russian national traditions and intellectual heritage.¹⁷⁴

Although there was no strong, cohesive political force representing non-citizens and non-Latvians, specific issues could encourage action, but there is little evidence that these campaigns had an impact on policy. In early 1996, a 700-pupil Russian language school in Riga was converted to a 150-pupil Ukrainian school. Parents contacted the Russian Duma to protest what they saw as Russophobia. A group of deputies in the Duma wrote a letter of protest to the *Saeima* condemning the closure as a threat to Russian–Latvian relations. This action had no impact on policy making. The authorities claimed that they were simply accommodating a change in demand for schooling.¹⁷⁵

In a letter to the *Saeima*, around 54,000 Latvian residents, backed by the Equal Rights Movement, protested the proposal to end education in languages other than

¹⁷² Rose, *Nationalities in the Baltic States*.

¹⁷³ A. Berezovskaya and A. Elkin, 'An Interview with Ints Zitars, the New Director of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration', *SM Segodnya*, 20 May 1994, p. 2.

¹⁷⁴ Vladislavs Volkovs, *Krievi Latvijā*, Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmijas Filozofijas un Socioloģijas Institūta Etnisko Pētījumu Centrs, Riga 1996, p. 140.

¹⁷⁵ *BNS*, 27 April 1996.

Latvian. This was a component of the new bill on education.¹⁷⁶ The protesters demanded state support for all stages of Russian language education.¹⁷⁷ CID figures showed around 52 per cent, or 313,698, of Latvia's non-citizens received non-citizens passports by December 1998. The demand for passports increased rapidly after August 1997 when the Russian Federation agreed to recognise them as travel documents.¹⁷⁸

In the run-up to the 1997 municipal elections, non-citizens in Daugavpils organised a petition to try and provoke a referendum on the electoral law. The unsuccessful plea requested that all residents should have the right to vote regardless of citizenship, language ability, or membership of legal organisations. The latter condition was a reference to the ban on those who had been Communist Party members after 13 January 1991 standing for office.¹⁷⁹ In January 1997, five Russian-language newspapers in Latvia started a campaign to collect signatures to force a referendum to amend the election law allowing non-citizens to vote in local elections.¹⁸⁰ Daugavpils City Council officials estimated around 30 per cent of the population of Daugavpils, a predominantly Russian-speaking area, did not know Latvian. The Council concentrated their limited resources on funding children's education rather than funding adult classes. There was, therefore, little hope of many adults being able to meet the requirements for naturalisation.¹⁸¹ In certain towns, such as Daugavpils, Ventspils and Dobeles, where the percentage of non-citizens is above 25 per cent of the municipal population, consultative committees (Committees of Aliens) were set up to deal with the problems peculiar to non-citizen residents.

In attempting to represent non-citizens, groups faced legal constraints. The League of Apatrides was formed in 1993 to represent non-citizens permanently resident in Latvia who wished to gain citizenship and was intended to make

¹⁷⁶ BNS, 14 May 1996.

¹⁷⁷ BNS, 14 May 1996.

¹⁷⁸ BNS, 13 January 1999.

¹⁷⁹ Aleksandr Shinkin, 'Second-Class' Citizens in Latvia have Something in Common :They are all Russian', Issue of Baltic States' Treatment of Russians Revisited, *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, 18 January 1997 p. 3, . FBIS-SOV-97-015, Daily Report , 18 January 1997.

¹⁸⁰ BNS, 24 January 1997.

¹⁸¹ Interview with Aleksejs Vidasvskis, Chairman of Daugavpils City Council. 11 June 1996, Daugavpils, Latvia.

representations for members to the government and to NGOs and initiate dialogue between the authorities and the non-citizens.¹⁸² The League of Apatrides was unable to register because the majority of its members were non-citizens.¹⁸³ In 1998 this refusal to register the League was deemed illegal.¹⁸⁴ Residents who were not Latvian citizens could not carry out political activities in Latvia. The goal of the League was to promote the political activities of non-citizens, to integrate, and act as their representatives.¹⁸⁵ In June 1994, the League held a poll of 23,000 non-citizens to elect representatives for their interests.¹⁸⁶ In May 1994, around 40,000 non-citizens elected 22 people to the League of Apatrides leadership. Attempts to establish non-citizen and non-Latvian organisations were hampered by these groups' connections to the Soviet regime. Veterans organisations and those associated with the Russian military were amongst those refused registration by the Latvian Ministry of Justice. In January 1994, non-Latvian groupings intending to support non-citizens produced a list of laws restricting the rights of non-citizens. The list stated that non-citizens were unable to practice as lawyers or judges, own land, freely choose their place of residence in Latvia, travel to a number of European countries without a visa, stand in, or vote in any elections.¹⁸⁷

Whilst participation in NGOs was proving an ineffective method of affecting government policy, in July 1996 the Equal Rights Movement applied for legal registration as a political party. Their political platform opposed EU and NATO membership for Latvia. They also demanded a rapid naturalisation of non-citizens, unrestricted participation of non-citizens in privatisation and property ownership, and guaranteed state Russian language higher education. The movement emerged from the Interfront, which had opposed Latvian independence in the last years of the USSR.¹⁸⁸ In July 1996, a political party, Movement for Social Justice and Equality of

¹⁸² *SM Segodnya*, 9 December 1993.

¹⁸³ The Law on Public Organisations and Associations, 15 December 1992.

¹⁸⁴ Correspondence with Boris Tsilevich, 7 April 2001.

¹⁸⁵ Liga Laizane, 'Ten Organisations Were Refused Registration', *Riga Diena*, 18 May 1994 p. 7, *FBIS-SOV-94-102*, Daily Report, 18 May 1994.

¹⁸⁶ *RFE/RL*, 14 June 1994.

¹⁸⁷ Latvia CSCE Official Visits on Minority Issues Further on Human Rights, Moscow *ITAR-TASS* World Service in Russian, 7 Jan 1994, *FBIS-SOV-94-006*, Daily Report, 10 Jan 1994.

¹⁸⁸ *Jamestown Monitor* 29 July 1996.

Rights, was formed from the public organisation, Equal Rights. The party was founded with 221 Latvian citizens. It pledged to accept non-citizens into their ranks.¹⁸⁹ The party was able to register because it was founded by Latvian citizens and more than 50 per cent of its members were Latvian citizens.¹⁹⁰

Individual councils such as Liepāja made an effort to address the complaints of non-citizens and stateless persons. The conduct of the CID was a popular issue.¹⁹¹ The now defunct organisation, the Russian Community of Liepāja, tried to represent all Russian speakers and to preserve its ethnic identity with commercial activities but the actions of the organisation's accountant led to the loss of all its money. The failure was compounded by division within the committee. Former Chairman Vlasov cited ethnicity, citizenship, and the desire to leave or remain in Latvia as sources of division.¹⁹²

The Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies was founded in 1993 as a not-for-profit, non-partisan, NGO to educate for human rights tolerance, distribute information and analysis on human rights, and to promote inter-ethnic dialogue. The Centre gained funding from PHARE, in partnership with other Latvians, Estonians, and Russians, to conduct research and seminars on citizenship and integration.¹⁹³

When the Citizenship Law was amended in 1995 to allow all Latvians and Livs to register for citizenship, the non-citizen population became completely non-Latvian, leading to a greater coincidence of minorities and non-citizens' interests. In 1996, Nils Muižnieks of the Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies initiated an ethnic 'Minority rights and mechanisms facilitating government-minority dialogue'. The government was represented and the President and Max van der Stoep of the OSCE also attended. Issues of teaching Latvian in Russian schools were discussed

¹⁸⁹ *RFE/RL*, 30 July 1996.

¹⁹⁰ The Law on Public Organisations and Associations, 15 December 1992, Article 43, Article 45 amendments adopted 5 April 1995.

¹⁹¹ *Newsletter of Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies*, no. 4, March/April 1995, p. 12.

¹⁹² *Newsletter of Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies*, no. 4, March/April 1995, p. 9.

¹⁹³ *Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies*, October 1998.

but no substantive measures were taken at the time, although the meeting laid the groundwork for the President's Nationalities Advisory Council.

The Human Rights Office (HRO) is an independent monitoring body established following a 1994 UNDP Mission to Latvia.¹⁹⁴ It played a critical role in December 1996 by publishing a list of the differences between citizens and non-citizens from a human rights perspective. This changed the tone of the discussion by listing those differences which were a violation of rights as distinct from the differences which would have been normal in any Western European country, for example the exclusion of non-nationals from Civil Service posts which required some security clearance. Since that date the HRO has made little progress. Around 1700 complaints per year have been made to the Human Rights Office. The majority of complaints were made against the CID.¹⁹⁵

Given the lack of interest in political participation shown by many non-citizens, it is left to opinion polls to give an indicator of the wishes of non-citizens in Latvia. According to a survey conducted by the Naturalisation Board, 63 per cent of students in high schools offering Russian language instruction expressed an interest in becoming citizens of Latvia, 11 per cent did not want citizenship, and 24 per cent had not thought about it. The main reasons listed among those who did not want citizenship were: no reason to become citizens (48.7 per cent); more convenient to travel to CIS countries with a USSR passport (23.4 per cent); planned to leave Latvia (39.6 per cent); did not want to serve in the Latvian Army (29.9 per cent); planned to obtain the citizenship of another country (29.2 per cent).¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Tanya Neuman, 'Comparing Facts and Resolving Conflict in Western Europe,' *The Baltic Times*, 10–16 July 1997.

¹⁹⁵ *BNS*, 9 October 1997

¹⁹⁶ *Opinion Poll Carried out by the Naturalisation Board on Pupils at Schools using Russian as the Language of Instruction in 18 districts and Cities in Latvia between December 1995 and January 1996, 2761 Respondents*, Naturalisation Board, Riga, 1996.

1997-9

In April 1997, the Baltic Russians held a forum in Tallinn with the aim of establishing closer co-operation and founding an international body to campaign for change to the Language and Citizenship Laws of Latvia and Estonia. The conference organisers were the Russian parties in Estonia and the Assembly of the Russian population in the Baltic States. The Baltic Russians were highly critical of Boris Yeltsin's policy towards them and use of their cause abroad.¹⁹⁷

Latvia's Russian language press (*Biznes i Baltija*, *SM*, and *Panorama Latvii*) urged President Ulmanis to veto the amendments to the Labour Code.¹⁹⁸ In response, Ulmanis accused the press of being dramatic but promised to examine the legislation carefully¹⁹⁹ with the result that he did not sign the legislation, nor did it reappear in subsequent parliaments. The campaign for Russian as a second state language drew support from the Russian language press. Writing in *SM-Segodnya*, Russian language journalist Andrei Vorontsov called on Russian business people to dismiss Latvians from their jobs, asked Russians to make no effort to speak Latvian at public institutions, and urged Russian teachers to make their pupils run about the streets shouting on the day the Language Law was adopted. If this did not help to avoid the adoption of the law, journalist Vorontsov then called on Russians to remember that they made up more than 40 per cent of the entire Latvian population, and could use even more radical methods to defend their culture.²⁰⁰

Non-citizens continued to demonstrate against the Latvian government. On 17 March 1998 around 10,000 people marched to the government buildings to present a petition. This followed a similar demonstration in February. Demonstrators complained of the chaos surrounding the distribution of non-citizen's passports, administrative humiliation suffered by non-citizens, and their inability to pay

¹⁹⁷ Selga Amata, 'Ja Nebūtu Pirts un Rutku', *Baltic Times*, 21 June 1997, p. 8.

¹⁹⁸ The Labour Code amendments would have allowed employees to be dismissed if they had insufficient command of the Latvia language. Employers could also be prosecuted if they failed to abide by the Language Inspectorate ruling and dismiss employees.

¹⁹⁹ *RFE/RL*, 10 February 1998.

²⁰⁰ Latvia: Russian Journalist Accused of Inciting National Hatred, *Radio Riga Network*, 26 November 1997, *FBIS-SOV-97-334*, Daily Report, 30 November 1997.

municipal charges.²⁰¹ Many of the differences between citizens' and non-citizens' rights had been eliminated by this time. However, there remained approximately 5000 people who had no status. These were people who did not have identification documents at the time of independence and had never regained status of any kind.²⁰² In addition, there were those who received a round stamp during the registration process, including former KGB members, Defence Ministry Officers, and others, who would never receive Latvian citizenship.²⁰³

More peaceful protest continued as over 2000, mostly elderly, demonstrators rallied in Riga on 17 March to protest what they said were overly strict citizenship rules and official discrimination against the country's Russian-speaking population. Latvian Interior Minister Ziedonis Ceveris met briefly with the protesters and accepted a petition from them. Unlike a demonstration earlier that month that resulted in scuffles between pensioners and police, the 17 March rally was authorised and passed without incident.²⁰⁴

The Socialist Party used the 1998 May Day celebrations as a chance to highlight what it perceived as the difficulties facing non-citizens in Latvia. Two rallies were held in Riga with around 200 people in attendance at each.²⁰⁵

Whilst many of the Russian social movements in Latvia are based around social and cultural issues, there are some more extreme political movements. The Russian National Unity, a radical Russian nationalist group, nicknamed *Barkashovians* by the press, caused controversy in January 1999 by publishing the newspaper *Russkaya Ataka* in Liepāja in Western Latvia. The publication described the aims of the organisation as the preservation of Russian culture, residents' links to Russia and working towards the improvement of the rights of the Russian speaking population.²⁰⁶ It declared that the use of a salute similar to the Nazi one was historically justified. The publication declared that 'The swastika turned in the left

²⁰¹ *Latvian Radio*, Riga, 17 March 1998, *SWB* SU/3179 E/1.

²⁰² Interview with Nils Muižnieks, Director Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, Riga, 19 October 1998.

²⁰³ Pavel Shinkarenko, 'Russians in Latvia', *Rossiiskie Vesti*, 1 September 1994, p. 4.

²⁰⁴ *RFE/RL*, 18 March 1998.

²⁰⁵ *Latvian Radio*, 1 May 1998, *BBC SWB*, SU/3271, E/1, 4 May 1998.

²⁰⁶ *BNS*, 24 August 1999.

direction symbolises the presence of God in fight against the enemy'. The group warned of the threat to Russia's territorial integrity, claiming that the Russian Federation could be next to collapse after the Soviet Union.²⁰⁷ In July 1998, youths in Riga held the founding meeting of *Kolovrat*. This group, which sought official registration, planned to promote Russian culture and the rights of Russian speakers while acknowledging the need to learn and respect the state language. However, Government officials' attention focussed on the fact that the majority of the organisers were allegedly also members of Russian National Unity. *Kolovrat* founders' statement that they would give instruction on gun use, martial arts and self-defence to members, attracted the notice of the Constitutional Protection Office.²⁰⁸

Other examples of fringe groupings are the *Limonovsti*, or National Bolsheviks. They do not impact upon the legislative process, but they do provide a target for Latvian nationalist criticism. The mainstream groups defending non-citizens rights complained that the fringe groups came to rallies, released balloons with portraits of Stalin, and other Soviet symbols painted onto their sides and discredited the whole non-citizen's cause, and their actions did not just reflect on the extreme elements but also became associated with the campaign for non-citizens' rights as a whole. They attracted unfavourable media coverage and detracted from the real issues which the original campaign organisers sought to highlight.²⁰⁹

NGOs representing the radical Latvian nationalist perspective include a number dominated by Latvian SS veterans. Associations of politically repressed persons, Union of Latvian warriors etc., regularly issue political statements, participate in rallies, and ally themselves to the most radical nationalist parties. NGOs representing the interests of minorities protested the Education Law adopted on 28 October 1998, which aimed to help non-Latvian children identify with the Latvian state, while NGOs such as the Association of Schools with Russian as the Language of Education saw this as assimilation and campaigned for the maintenance of minority

²⁰⁷ *BNS*, 17 February 1999.

²⁰⁸ *Central Europe Review*, Vol. 1, No 5, 26 July 1999.

²⁰⁹ *BNS*, 16 March 1999.

schooling. The group complained that the Ministry of Education was free to define what the meaning of 'a minority' was and that they had jurisdiction over which subjects were taught in which language.²¹⁰ The organisation stressed a growing concern that educating children in a language they did not speak at home would distance the parents from their education. The Equal Rights faction collected 75,000 signatures in favour of preserving non-Latvian education. The organisation for the support of Russian language schools in Latvia ran a series of conferences and, in Spring 1998, joined with other NGOs to lobby parents for their support. They gained around 75,000 supporters in Riga and 4500 in the rest of Latvia. The group uses its dialogues with the Ministry of Education to promote models of minority schooling.²¹¹

As late as 12 February 1998, the *Saeima* still refused to amend the Citizenship Law. A Harmony Party proposal to allow all children born in independent Latvia to gain citizenship was defeated.²¹² By March 1999, only 20 people had requested citizenship for their child born in Latvia after 1991, and only around 100 had enquired about the procedure out of 19,000 who were eligible.²¹³

The non-citizen's community remained divided and ineffective as a political force. They contributed little to the debate and had virtually no effect on government policy. In the NGO sector only the Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies (LCHRES) has had significant access to government and been able to bring the citizenship debate into the Latvian public arena. LCHRES's position is due in no small part to the work of its Director, Nils Muižnieks, an émigré Latvian who, prior to moving to Latvia wrote academic articles on Latvian nationality policy and, in common with former Defence Minister Jans Trapans and Estonia Foreign Minister Ilves, worked for RFE/RL. He has knowledge of and has gained acceptance in the Latvian and international arenas. He can manipulate the international system to gain

²¹⁰ *Mazākumtautību pamatizglītības programmas paraugs*, Apstiprināts ar Izglītības un zinātnes ministrijas, 1999. [Minority Education Programme]; Latvijas Republikas Ministru Kabineta Paziņojums, 5 September 2000. [Announcement of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, 5 September 2000].

²¹¹ Interview with Igor Pimenov, Association of Schools with Russian as the Language of Education, Riga, 22 October 1999.

²¹² *Latvian Radio, Riga*, 12 February 1998, in *BBC SWB*, SU/3151,E/2, 14 February 1998.

²¹³ *BNS*, 11 March 1999.

funding and influence policy whilst communicating effectively with members of the Latvian domestic arena. He is willing to cooperate with both sides of the nationalist debate and is not afraid of attracting criticism from radical nationalist elements in Latvia.²¹⁴

Conclusions

Nationality policy in the domestic sphere changed considerably from 1991 to 1999. In the early years of independence, supporters of restitutionist nationalism held the balance of power and were able to ensure a restrictive citizenship policy. Their coalition partners in government required their support to stay in power so had to accept their radical nationalism. However, even at this stage, the President acted to liberalise the law citing outside pressures and the good of the Latvian nation. The tense years of 1992–4 coincided with economic hardship in the region and citizenship issues dominated the 1993 *Saeima* elections heralding a period of stagnation where a government coalition agreement prevented any changes being made to the citizenship legislation. During this period, the President worked to prevent the passage of restrictive nationality legislation in other fields such as employment. In party political debate there was a sharp divide between those wanting concessions to the non-citizens and nationalist parties continuing to campaign for repatriation of the non-citizens they referred to as colonists. This division tended to hinder change. Following their rejection from the first echelon of EU entry talks, all parties except for the For Fatherland and Freedom /Latvian National Independence Party began to see the worth in liberalising the law. A concerted effort was made by the President and political parties to address citizenship legislation problems and to accelerate the naturalisation

²¹⁴ Interviews with: Undine Bollow, Deputy Head of OSCE Mission to Latvia, 13 October 1998; Nils Muižnieks, Director Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, Riga, 19 October 1998; Boris Tsilevich, *Saeima* Deputy National Harmony Party, For Human Rights in a United Latvia Faction, Riga, 20 October 1998; Ole Espersen, Commissioner of the Council for the Baltic Sea States on democratic Institutions and Human Rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, Copenhagen, 12 October 1999; Latvian Foreign Ministry Official, 15 October 1999; Anda Celme United Nations Development Programme, seconded to the Naturalisation Board, 20 October 1999; Pauls Raudseps, Managing Editor, *Diena*, Riga, 25 October 1999; Muižnieks is well known in Latvian and international circles dealing with Latvian nationality policy, and was discussed at each of the above interviews. He has been closely involved in many activities and educational projects regarding integration in addition to advising governments and international players hoping to influence Latvian policy.

process. The NGOs and Russophone communities were, with a few notable exceptions, fairly ineffective. The organisations were divided by those who were citizens, non-citizens, and Russian citizens, recent settlers and historical communities, and monolingual and bilingual speakers.²¹⁵ This changed with the advent of the Integration Programme. However, at the end of 1999, the Integration Programme seemed to be losing momentum and political backing was no longer there.

Moves towards liberalisation of the Citizenship Laws, which were unacceptable as late as February 1998, were adopted as party policy as it became clear that the cost of an exclusive policy was denial of entry to EU talks. Looking at the domestic arena suggests that party policy would not have changed without outside pressure and intervention. A discussion of Latvian nationalism within the confines of the domestic arena is insufficient to explain the process of change in Latvian nationality policy. Taking the nationalism and state-building models, the Latvian majority would be expected to work towards an exclusive citizenship policy. The Russophone minority is disorganised and has such disparate interests it cannot even be called a community. Given that the majority of the Russophone population in Latvia does not have the right to vote, Latvian lawmakers would not be expected to take that constituency's wishes into account. Non-citizens have no influence on the politicians' electoral success. However, the nationality laws have become more inclusive. Therefore the domestic unit level of analysis does not provide a full explanation for the thesis question.

This leads to a suggestion that the unit level of analysis is insufficient as a tool of analysis, as it does not include all the actors involved in the change in Latvian nationality policy. The unit level of analysis can explain the initially restrictive nature of Latvian citizenship policy, as the ethnic Latvian majority took control of the government. However, it fails to explain the shift away from an exclusive policy to a more civic ideal.

²¹⁵ G. Smith, 'Nation Re-Building and Political Discourses of Identity Politics in the Baltic States', G. Smith, et. al., *Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: The Politics of National Identities*, (Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 115.

It is suggested that this level of analysis does not provide a complete account of the development of nationality politics so it is necessary to examine the sub-regional level. Traditional nationalism theory is restricted to the sphere of domestic politics. Focussing on the relationship between the national majority and the national minority within the country study of these actors alone does not fully explain the shift in Latvian citizenship policy. Such an approach treats these variables as independent of the international system and fails to acknowledge that international politics and domestic political actors are part of an interactive system.

Latvia does not exhibit signs of a robust civil society as organisations are unable to foster productive debate, form civic consciousness, maintain a clear sense of identity or further the progress of nationality policy. The conferences connected to the survey 'Towards a Civic Society' attempted to encourage discussion of the development of civil society in Latvia and the consequences of such development for nationality policy. The elected representatives of the *Saeima* are hampered by the unstable coalitions which prevent them from taking a liberal stand on the issue of citizenship and the constitutional position of the President makes him/her more vulnerable to international opinion rather than domestic pressures.

After the emotional debates surrounding the changes to the Citizenship Law, Latvian civil servants claimed that nationality policy was no longer considered such a crucial issue. They, and a number of politicians, imagined that the Language and Education Laws were an internal matter for Latvia and would not attract such adverse publicity as the Citizenship debate.

Chapter Four

The role of state actors and nationality policy in Latvia

Introduction

It is not possible to explain the liberalisation of Latvian nationality through an examination of domestic political change. The previous chapter suggested that a purely domestic driven agenda would have resulted in the maintenance of an exclusive nationality policy. It could be useful to examine the role of external factors, both other states and outside institutions. The focus of this chapter is on the role of external states; namely Estonia and Lithuania, the Nordic countries, the Russian Federation, and the United States. All the sections look at what each state actor wanted in terms of Latvian nationality policy, which instruments they may have had to effect a change in policy, and whether they attained their goals. The first section looks at the possible impact of Estonian and Lithuanian nationality policy on Latvian policy making. In addition, the section tries to establish if the other two Baltic States have cooperated with Latvia over nationality policy or, perhaps, that their own policies have emulated, or been emulated by, Latvia's own behaviour. This chapter then acknowledges that Latvia is part of two regions, the post-Soviet region and the Nordic area. The Russian Federation section attempts to assess the influence of its policy on Latvian nationality policy and addresses the concept of power asymmetry between the Russian Federation and Latvia, while the section on the Nordic Countries raises the question of their influence in liberalising Latvian nationality policy. The chapter then goes on to assess how far regional factors have influenced the development of Latvian nationality policy. The Latvian–US bilateral relationship is examined in light of the US hegemonic role in the international system as well as the role of the US government and its agencies in the development of the policy making process in Latvia in relation to nationality policy. The chapter then attempts to draw

conclusions regarding the influence of external state actors on the changes in Latvian nationality policy.

Section I: Estonia and Lithuania and nationality policy in Latvia

Introduction

This first section asks what kind of Latvian nationality policy Estonia and Lithuania wanted, how they pursued this policy outcome, and whether they were successful. It also examines whether the behaviour of Estonia and Lithuania has contributed to the liberalisation of Latvian nationality policy. The similar experiences of the other two Baltic States may have made them a useful source of support and possible emulation for Latvia. The three countries were incorporated into the Soviet Union through the additional protocols of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact in 1940. In 1991 they all regained independence. During that struggle for independence in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the three Baltic States' independence movements supported each other, through fora such as the Baltic Council, in putting forward nationalist agendas, confronting Moscow, creating ties with other Soviet republics, and presenting their demands to the international community.¹ Nationality policy in Lithuania is assessed briefly before commencing a more detailed study of Estonia, a case with far greater similarity to Latvia. The analysis does not strictly follow the time frames of the thesis as progress in Estonia was different from Latvia, but it attempts to assess what influence Estonian policy had on the changes in Latvia.

Lithuania

Despite their common histories and attempts at cooperation, the Baltic States were always keen to be treated as individual sovereign nations. A major break in their unity came when Lithuania took the lead in negotiating with Moscow for independence. Unlike the other two countries, Lithuania hosted a relatively small Russian minority and did not feel the same threat to the survival of their nation. In 1989, around 80 per cent of the republic's population was Lithuanian and only 9.4 per

¹ David, J. Smith, *Perestroika as the Prelude to Baltic Independence: Gorbachev's Reforms and Estonia 1987-1991*, (University of Bradford: unpublished MA Thesis, 1993), pp. 29, 47.

cent Russian, and 7 per cent Polish.² However, Lithuania's 11 March 1990 declaration of independence provoked a crippling blockade from Moscow and forced Lithuania to return to the negotiating table. During the campaign for independence, Lithuania, not faced with the same demographic issues as Latvia and Estonia, adopted the 'zero option' for citizenship, that the majority of those permanently resident at the time of independence in 1991 were entitled to citizenship. The Lithuanian Law on Citizenship passed by the *Seimas* (Lithuanian parliament), 5 December 1991, replaced the law of 3 November 1989. Unlike the 1989 law, the 1991 Law did not grant automatic citizenship to permanent residents. However, the 1991 Law included a clause that granted automatic citizenship to those persons who acquired citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania or had it restored to them prior to 4 November 1991 under the Law on Citizenship (i.e. the 1989 law), which had been in force before the enactment of this (1991) law.³ This inclusive policy allowed the development of a more productive relationship with the Russian Federation. This was especially evident in troop withdrawal negotiations and the problem of transit to the Russian Federation enclave of Kaliningrad, which is cut off from the Russian Federation by Lithuania, Poland, and Belarus. The Russian Federation negotiated a transit corridor through Lithuania to access Kaliningrad. Former Soviet troops left Lithuanian soil in 1993, a full year before they departed Latvia and Estonia. Lithuania also agreed to construct accommodation for the departing forces. The agreement in Lithuania was used by Moscow to pressure Estonia and Latvia for similar concessions.⁴ Following a visit to Lithuania 21–23 January 1993, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, High Commissioner on National Minorities (OSCE HCNM) stated that the problem of citizenship for the Russian and Polish minorities had been virtually resolved. He felt that a few administrative problems were all that remained to be

² For a detailed account of nationality issues in Lithuania see Vesna Popovski, *National Minorities and Citizenship Rights: A Case Study of Lithuania from 1988–1993*, (Department of Geography, University of Cambridge: unpublished PhD Thesis, March 1999).

³ Popovski, *National Minorities and Citizenship Rights*, p.106.

⁴ D. Smith, *Perestroika as the Prelude to Baltic Independence*, pp. 29, 47.

resolved.⁵ Since the citizenship issue was settled, there have been few problems related to nationality policy in Lithuania. It may, therefore, not be as useful a source of comparison or example for Latvian policy changes as might at first sight have been thought.

Estonia

1991–3

At the time of independence, Estonia faced similar problems to Latvia regarding nationality policy. Estonia had to balance the demands of radical nationalists in the governing coalition for an exclusive restitutionist Citizenship Law and the repatriation of Soviet immigrants with the desire to appease the West and meet that other policy priority of the Estonian government, to attract foreign investment into Estonia. In 1989, Estonia had a titular population of around 61.5 per cent and a Russian minority of 30.3 per cent of the total population of 1.5 million.⁶ Around 80,000 Russians automatically gained Estonian citizenship; the remainder, who migrated during the Soviet era, had to apply for citizenship through naturalisation. In 1991, ahead of Latvia, Estonia decided to adopt the 1938 Estonian Law on Citizenship and award citizenship to all those who had held citizenship prior to 16 June 1940, and to their descendants. Estonia established a naturalisation process for those not eligible for automatic citizenship. In setting a 2-year post-1990 residence⁷ requirement and a further 1-year waiting period, the radical nationalists prevented Estonian aliens from participating in the 1992 parliamentary election.⁸ Candidates for naturalisation were required to pass an Estonian language test, have a knowledge of the constitution and the Law on Citizenship⁹ and swear an oath of allegiance. There was no limit to the

⁵ Letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, HE Mr Povilas Gylys, from CSCE HCNM Max van der Stoep, The Hague, 5 March 1993.

⁶ *Natsional'nyi Sostav Naseleniia SSSR*, Moscow, 1990, in David Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*, (Cornell University Press, 1998).

⁷ Estonia declared independence on 23 March 1990.

⁸ Naturalisation candidates had to have lived in Estonia on the basis of a permanent residence permit for no less than 5 years prior to the date on which an application for Estonian citizenship was submitted and for 1 year from the date following the date of registration of the application. This did not apply to persons who lived in Estonia before 1 July 1990 and who applied for a residence permit before 30 April 1996, as specified by the Citizenship Act.

⁹ The examination fees were 20% of the minimum wage compared with around 30% of average income in Latvia.

numbers who could apply per year. Estonia did, however, limit the number of new immigrants to 0.25 per cent of the total population per year. This had the effect of limiting family reunification, including for those wishing to be reunited with family members living in the Russian Federation. A UN fact-finding mission expressed concern over problems of family reunification.¹⁰ In May 1992, at the inaugural meeting of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev termed the system in Estonia apartheid.¹¹

The strong criticism from the Russian Federation and the cautious response from the international community¹² to Estonian policies provided Latvia with an idea of how their own nationality policy proposals would be greeted. The acceptance of a restrictive policy based upon the continuity of the Estonian state permitted Estonia to base its citizenship on the original inter-war citizenry. This, in turn, set a precedent which also allowed Latvia to continue with similar policies. The negative attention focussed on Estonia at this time took away considerable pressure from Latvia and allowed that country to make policy in a less pressured environment. The controversy over the Estonian Citizenship Law was limited compared with the fury evoked by the Aliens Law of 1993 designed to give status to those in Estonia without citizenship. Estonia drew heavy criticism from the Russian Federation and the West when, in 1993, it compelled all persons in Estonia to apply for residence permits. Temporary residence permits were valid for 5 years, while permanent residence permits could be issued to an alien who had held temporary status for 3 of the previous 5 years. All those wishing to remain in Estonia had to apply for a permit. The exclusion of Soviet/Russian military and their families from applying for residence permits concerned the OSCE HCNM. He felt that this subparagraph of the Aliens Law seemed to open the door for the expulsion of a great number of Russians residing in Estonia. He suggested that the article could be reformulated to restrict its application

¹⁰ I. Fall, 'Allegations of Discriminatory Practice against Minorities in Estonia', *Report on a Fact-Finding Mission to Estonia 7–11 February and to Russian Federation 12 February 1993*, Geneva, United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

¹¹ D. Smith, *Legal Continuity and Post-Soviet Reality*, p. 118

¹² The Council of Europe, UN, and OSCE all commented on the Estonian legislation and advised Estonia to ensure that it was within international norms.

to officers and their families who had been demobilised in Estonia after 1991.¹³ The Law aimed to provide aliens in Estonia with an internationally recognised status and to outline their duties whilst living in Estonia. Aliens who settled in Estonia prior to 1 July 1990 had to apply for permanent residence and employment permits. At the same time, an application for an Alien's passport was also submitted. This had to be done within 2 years of the implementation of the law. The 1993 Law on Aliens legislated the issue of Aliens' passports, documentation which allowed non-citizens to travel more easily. Estonia received criticism from external organisations and the Russian Federation for compelling existing residents to apply for residence permits. The Russian Federation was furious and accused Estonia of apartheid. During this period of tense relations, non-political exchanges were interpreted as a judgement on Estonian nationality policy. On 25 June 1993, Russian *Lentransgaz* stopped the daily shipment of 500,000 cubic meters of natural gas. *Lentransgaz* commercial director claimed the termination of supplies was due to Estonia's discrimination against Russian speakers. However, the claim that it was due to Estonia's failure to pay existing gas debts of about \$11 million has far more credence as gas supplies were restarted as soon as the debt was paid.¹⁴

At the same time, this Aliens Legislation received criticism from the Swedish Prime Minister. Prior to this time, Sweden had supported Estonia's right to decide their nationality legislation independently. He expressed concern that the law resembled the laws of Soviet times.¹⁵ This also gave Latvia a warning that the Nordic countries were not universally sympathetic to Baltic States' nationality policies, a lesson that Latvia learnt during the 1994 Citizenship Law debate, when the Nordic countries cautioned against the proposed quota system.

¹³ Letter from OSCE HCNM Max Van der Stoep to Estonian President Lennart Meri, 1 July 1993. Article 12, paragraph 4, subparagraph 7 of the Aliens Law, stated that a residence permit shall not be issued to any alien 'who has served in a career position in the armed forces of a foreign state or has entered the reserve forces or retired from a career position in the armed forces of a foreign state, nor to his or her family members, who have entered Estonia in conjunction with the service or retirement of a member of such armed forces'.

¹⁴ *RFE/RL*, 28 June 1993.

¹⁵ G. Sootla 'Political Background and Possible Consequences of the Summer Crisis in Estonia', *Monthly Survey of Baltic and Post-Soviet Politics*, July 1993, pp. 50–51.

In July 1993, the Russian *Duma* passed a resolution giving the government 2 weeks to suspend Russian troop withdrawals. The *Duma* also urged the government to tell the UN, the CSCE, and the Council of Europe about Estonia's allegedly discriminatory policy toward national minorities. The Estonian Foreign Ministry accused Russia of trying to bring Estonia back into its sphere of influence and added that the resolution contradicted the final act of the CSCE Helsinki meeting of July 1992.¹⁶ The CSCE HCNM and the Council of Europe stepped in to suggest alterations to the Bill to allow for unemployment benefit to be counted as a legal source of income, to prevent aliens from having to renew residence permits every 5 years, and to allow those in the military who retired before August 1991 to obtain residence permits. On 8 July 1993 the *Riigikogu* approved 20 amendments to the Law on Aliens, as recommended by the CSCE and Council of Europe. An article was added retaining for non-citizens, who had arrived before 1 July 1990, all the rights and responsibilities laid down in previous laws. Residence permits were still to be refused to former military and security workers.¹⁷

During this period, Estonia was ahead of Latvia in terms of enacting nationality legislation. By the end of 1993, Estonia had a Citizenship and Aliens Law in place. Latvia had still only just held their first post-independence *Saeima* elections and had not yet passed a Citizenship Law nor given any status to non-citizens. Estonia provided an example of the likely reaction of the West and the Russian Federation to Latvian nationality policy, but its policymaking did not encourage Latvia to implement their own legislation, suggesting there were factors other than the example set by Estonia which affected the pace of change of nationality policy in Latvia.

1993–7

¹⁶ *RFE/RL*, 2 July 1993.

¹⁷ *RFE/RL*, 9 July 1993.

Regarding the question, ‘what did Estonia want in terms of Latvian nationality policy?’ the Estonian government had been extremely supportive of Latvia’s right to decide their naturalisation process independently. Mindful of its own situation, Estonia did not demand Latvia enact a certain type of legislation and was careful not to interfere in the Latvian policymaking process. However, Estonia openly criticised Latvia for the first time following the introduction of naturalisation quotas in 1994.¹⁸ Estonia advised against the imposition of the Latvian naturalisation quotas. Estonia continued gradually to liberalise their nationality legislation. As part of the troop withdrawal agreements with the Russian Federation in July 1994, Russia agreed to remove its remaining 2000 troops from Estonia by 31 August. In return, Estonia awarded 10,000 former Soviet military pensioners the same rights as Estonian citizens. Prior to this, Russian servicemen in Estonia could only gain residency if they were born before 1930, retired from the army before 20 August 1991, or had a spouse or children with a residency permit. However, Estonian Foreign Minister Juri Luik noted that persons considered to be a danger to Estonia's security would be denied residency.¹⁹ Latvia had already signed an agreement on 30 April 1994 on the social protection of military personnel and their families who remained in Latvia.²⁰

In February 1995, Estonia adopted a new Language Law, replacing the 1989 legislation. Latvia was still working through language legislation changes. This period saw a marked deterioration in Russian–Estonian relations. However, Estonia was able to survive the barrage of criticism from the Russian Federation and emerged from this period with nationality legislation which struck a balance between the radical nationalists and the liberalising demands of the international community. Estonia was better able than Latvia to stand up to the Russian Federation as Estonia conducted far reaching economic reforms, which reoriented their economy towards the West and decreased dependence on Russia. Through the currency board system

¹⁸ *Appeal of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia to President of the State Guntis Ulmanis*, June 1994.

¹⁹ *RFE/RL*, 27 July 1994.

²⁰ *Agreement between the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation on Terms, Time Limits, Procedure of a Complete Withdrawal of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the Legal Status thereof during Withdrawal from the Territory of the Republic of Latvia*, 30 April 1994. *Diplomaticheskii Vestnik*, No. 11–12 June 1994, p. 13 ff.

Estonia imported the stability of its reserve currency country, Germany. Latvia was far slower in instigating economic reform and, with closer economic ties to Russia, could not so easily ignore Russian pressures. However, as Estonia was ahead of Latvia in terms of reform, this suggests that there were factors other than the pressure from the Russian Federation which influenced change in nationality policy. Differing domestic circumstances in Estonia could have had an impact. Estonia was able to gain more of a consensus on nationality issues than Latvia. Numerically, and as a proportion of the Estonian population, there were fewer non-citizens and perhaps this led to their being less of a perceived threat to giving them more rights. The progress in Estonia should not be over stated as they did not give local election voting rights until 1996.

As well as decreasing their dependence on Russia economically, the initial antagonism between the Russian Federation and Estonia regarding nationality policy was tempered by a number of concessions which put Estonia ahead of Latvia in liberalising nationality policy and, perhaps, contributed to Latvia taking up the role of primary offender against Russian minorities in the eyes of the Russian Federation. The Estonian naturalisation did not have a 'windows' system. All suitably qualified applicants could naturalise when they chose, unlike in Latvia. Subsequent to this, Estonia enjoyed a faster rate of naturalisation than the 'windows' controlled system in Latvia. By early 1998, a total of 97,380²¹ aliens had received Estonian citizenship through naturalisation compared with 6993 by the end of 1997 in Latvia.²² In a concession to those non-citizens who had supported independence, the coalition government agreed in October 1992 that those possessing a Congress Green Card²³ be allowed to complete a simplified naturalisation process excluding the language test. In a further conciliatory move, not followed by Latvia, after the Citizenship

²¹ *Citizenship Statistics*, Estonia Today, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 1998. At this time the population of Estonia was 1, 453, 200, 1, 046, 197 (72%) held Estonian passports, 168, 294 (11%) applied for aliens passports, over 100, 000 took the citizenship of another country mainly the Russian Federation.

²² *Information on Naturalization Process January 1, 1995–December 31, 1999*, Naturalization Statistics Fact Sheet, Republic of Latvia Naturalization Board, 2000.

²³ The green card had been designed by the nationalist Congress Movement to reward those who had demonstrated loyalty to the cause of independence.

Legislation had been passed, the Estonian government awarded loyal non-Estonian elites citizenship for special services. Citizenship for special services was offered to all Russophone former deputies of the Supreme Soviet, regardless of their earlier political affiliation. All but two deputies accepted the offer of citizenship.²⁴

To encourage faster applications, the examination fees were waived for students, pensioners, and unemployed candidates. The concession, long called for by the Russian Federation and the Council for the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) High Commissioner, allowed alien residents to vote in local elections. Estonia had a government-recognised representative assembly of Russian speakers. All these concessions helped to take the international pressure off Estonia and, perhaps, assisted in their entry to EU accession talks in 1997.

In addition, in April 1997, the Estonian government appointed the Russian speaking Evgenii Golikov as counsellor for ethnical and cultural questions. At the same time, and a year before similar moves in Latvia, a committee in charge of amending existing laws on citizenship, language, and foreigners was founded. Again, ahead of Latvia, a Non-Estonian Integration Foundation was established in March 1998 to facilitate the overall integration process. In 10 June 1998, the Parliament adopted a document on 'The Integration of non-Estonians into Estonian Society'.²⁵

Latvian President Ulmanis used the experience of Estonia when discussing Latvian needs for integration, but again emphasised that the two countries were not the same and that different issues required different approaches. In expressing support for the proposed Social Integration programme, Ulmanis referred to the recently adopted programme for integrating aliens adopted in Estonia. He argued that, while Latvia had much in common with Estonia, the programme had to reflect subtle differences between the situation in the two countries.²⁶

²⁴ D. Smith, *Legal Continuity and Post-Soviet Reality*, p. 171.

²⁵ *Regular Report from the Commission on Estonia's Progress Towards Accession*, European Commission, 1998.

²⁶ *Interfax*, 13 February 1998, *FBIS-SOV-98-044, Daily Report*, 13 February 1998.

On 24 September 1997, the *Riigikogu* amended the Aliens Act, making holders of temporary residence permits before 12 July 1995 eligible for permanent residence permits from 12 July 1998.²⁷

1997–9

In 1997, Estonia became the first Baltic State to gain entry to EU accession talks. This threatened to divide the Baltic States. The Estonians refused to see this as encouraging division but said that it would inspire the other two countries to seek entry to accession talks.²⁸ The Baltic States found it harder to agree on unity of purpose as they were increasingly split over Estonian entry to the EU and Lithuanian bids to enter NATO. When Latvia was struggling through changes to Citizenship, Language, and Education Bills, Estonia fell behind in terms of liberalisation of nationality policy. During the 1998 citizenship debate in Latvia, the Estonians were also discussing similar issues. The Estonians suspended readings of their legislation to await the result of the Latvian referendum.²⁹ After the positive result of the Latvian referendum and pressure from the European Commission, on 8 December 1998, the Estonian *Riigikogu* adopted amendments to the Citizenship Law to grant Estonian citizenship, upon their parents' request, to children of non-citizens, born in Estonia after the 26 February 1992.³⁰

Estonia continued to have substantially higher naturalisation figures compared with Latvia, but they still maintained around 165,000 legally resident aliens, 88,000 holders of Russian Federation passports, as well as an estimated 23,000 illegally resident members of the alien population.³¹

While the Baltic States increasingly went their own way with EU and NATO accession strategies, they united when faced with the common foe of the Russian Federation. During the marked deterioration in Latvian–Russian relations in March

²⁷ *Citizenship Statistics*, Estonia Today, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 14 November 2000.

²⁸ *Estonian Review*, vol. 7, no. 50, 7–13 December, 1997.

²⁹ Interview with Undine Bollow, Deputy Head of OSCE Mission to Latvia, 13 October 1998.

³⁰ *1999 Regular Report from the Commission on Estonia's Progress towards Accession*, European Commission 2000.

³¹ *Estonia: Non-citizen's Naturalisation Remains Slow*, Oxford Analytica Daily Brief, Part I, 25 January 2001.

1998, Estonia came out strongly in support of Latvian nationality policy and against interference in Latvian internal affairs by the Russian Federation.

The *Riigikogu* adopted a set of amendments to the 1995 Language Law, which came into force in July 1999, shortly before Latvia introduced a new Language Law. The amendments distinguished and regulated the use of Estonian in the private and public sectors. The European Commission claimed the Law could conflict with Estonian obligations under the Europe Agreement, particularly in the fields of free movement of persons, right of establishment, supply of services, capital movements, and award of public contracts (Title IV and V of the EA).³² President Lennart Meri went against OSCE HCNM recommendations and promulgated the law. Faced with similar criticism of the Latvian Language Law, President Vaira Vike-Freiberga sent that law back to the *Saeima* for reconsideration. The Latvian media claimed that the EU and European bodies in line with Russia only criticised Latvia. The allegation was that EU policy was being driven by a desire to avoid Russian–EU tension.³³

Conclusion

Until the 1998 referendum, Estonia tended to enact nationality legislation and amendments ahead of Latvia. This allowed Latvia to view the likely Russian Federation and international reaction to their own policies. With the exception of the 1994 Latvian proposal to adopt a naturalisation quota, Estonia remained supportive of Latvia's right to decide their own nationality policy freely without outside intervention. It is, therefore, not useful to look for Estonian policy instruments or assess their success in obtaining changes to Latvian nationality policy. However, whilst Estonia provided an idea of the impact of Russian Federation policy, it differed from Latvia in that it was not so closely bound to the Russian Federation, either historically or economically. Estonia enacted far more radical economic reforms than Latvia. They quickly became very much less dependent on the Russian Federation in

³² *Regular Report from the Commission on Estonia's Progress Towards Accession*, European Commission, 1998.

³³ *Jamestown Monitor*, 19 July 1999.

the economic sphere as they reoriented towards the West. They did not have to contend with the same transit and business interests which restricted the Latvian economy. The more hesitant Latvian administration did not undergo nearly such a radical economic reform process as the Estonians and so retained closer links to Russia. The Estonians did not obviously contribute to the liberalisation of Latvian nationality policy. However, they showed how restrictive a policy external actors would tolerate and still allow access to Western institutions and cooperation agreements. Early entry to EU accession talks could have encouraged Latvia to reform their own laws and catch up quickly with Estonia.³⁴

³⁴ Interview with Indulis Berzins, Latvian Foreign Minister, *Saeima* Deputy Latvia's Way, Riga, 21 October 1998.

Section II: The Russian Federation and nationality policy in Latvia

Introduction

This section analyses the role of the Russian Federation in changing Latvian nationality policy from an exclusive, restitutionist policy to a more liberal and inclusive one. It asks what Russia wanted vis-à-vis Latvian nationality policy, what instruments Russia used to get what they wanted, and how successful they were? This section analyses Russian Federation involvement in Latvian nationality policy by examining a number of key issues, the withdrawal of the former Soviet troops from Latvia and the status of Soviet military pensioners, the signing of a Russian–Latvian border treaty, and the transit of Russian goods through Latvia. The section also looks at the Russian Federation attempts to utilise the support of external organisations to change Latvian nationality policy. The Russian Federation sought to link Latvian nationality policy to the above issues and to use the position of the predominantly ethnic Russian non-citizens in Latvia to further their own political goals in relation to the above issues. As all ethnic Latvians can be citizens, and the vast majority of non-citizens are ethnic Russians or Russian speakers, an otherwise political dispute was couched in ethnic terms. The issues will be examined in chronological order to observe the development of Russian–Latvian relations in connection with Latvian nationality policy. There will be some overlap with the original time periods of the thesis. The troop withdrawal and negotiations took place between 1991 and 1994, with the final Skrunda Radar Base troops leaving in 1998. The border issue was raised during the troop withdrawal negotiations and concluded with the agreement of the, as yet unratified (by the Russian Federation), treaty in 1997.³⁵ The transit of Russian goods through Latvia occurred throughout the entire 1991–9 period. To facilitate comparison with actors covered in the other chapters, these specific events will be related to the thesis time periods and an assessment made of if and how they contributed to the changes in Latvian nationality policy.

³⁵ *Moscow RIA*, 18 April 1997, *FBIS-SOV-97-108*, Daily Report, 18 April 1997.

Russian foreign policy

To place Latvian–Russian relations into context, it is useful to outline briefly a number of developments in Russian foreign policy from 1991 to 1999. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian foreign policy has passed through several phases. Towards the Baltic States, including Latvia, it has been characterised by inconsistency and lack of direction and although it has been varied, two broad phases can be identified. In the initial post-Gorbachev period, Yeltsin adopted a liberal, western oriented approach to foreign policy³⁶ while relations with the republics of the former Soviet Union suffered some neglect at this time. Russia did not have a coherent foreign policy or concrete proposals for forming one. Kozyrev attempted a pro-Western policy, the army quietly ran its own, and Yeltsin often countermanded them both.³⁷

Towards the end of 1992 and the beginning of 1993, conservatives accused Yeltsin of neglecting Russian relations with the republics of the former Soviet Union and demanded that Russia reassert power over them. Conservative politicians and the resurgent armed forces increasingly utilised ethnic issues for their own purposes.³⁸ Russian Federation interest in the near abroad came from a fear of instability on their borders affecting Russian security. It was not in Russia's interests to have inter-ethnic rivalry causing instability and refugee flows into Russia as the country was completely unprepared to deal with substantial flows of migrants during their attempts at political and economic reform. The Russian Federation President, the *Duma* (Parliament), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Defence Ministry, and the military establishment all had different priorities and sought to utilise the position of the ethnic Russian non-citizens in Latvia for their own domestic political ends. The fragmentation of the government meant that it often appeared that Russia was pursuing several different policies simultaneously. On the one hand, the official line

³⁶ Andrei Kozyrev, 'Vneshnyaya Politika Preobrazhayushchiesya Rossii', *Voprosy Istorii*, no. 1, 1994, p. 6.

³⁷ *The Economist*, vol. 330, 26 February 1993, no. 7852, p. 47.

³⁸ Peter J.S. Duncan, 'Russian Neo-Imperialism: Fact or Fiction?', unpublished submission to the House of Commons Defence Committee, 1994.

from Kozyrev's Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought integration into the Western system on the basis of a commitment to 'Western values', but, at the same time, the Ministry of Defence and other security agencies appeared to pursue an independent 'neo-imperial' line in the near abroad. Thus, Russia appeared to have one foreign policy run by civilians, the 'dinner jacket policy', and another conducted by the military, dubbed the 'camouflage suit policy', as seen in Georgia, Tajikistan, and Azerbaijan.³⁹

In February 1994, shortly after the increased success of nationalist forces in the December 1993 parliamentary elections, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs outlined the situation of the Russian minorities in the Baltic States as a particular concern for them. In March 1994, Foreign Minister Kozyrev stated that the issue of Russian minorities in Latvia was on the agenda in talks at all levels. He also stated that Russia was bidding for help from international organisations such as the UN, CSCE, and the Council of Europe.⁴⁰

In Summer 1996, a Russian Council on Foreign and Defence Policy report considered Latvia to be the most likely of the Baltic States to join a resurrected Soviet Union by 2005.⁴¹ Latvia was perceived as the most important Baltic State for Russian policy, being of strategic importance to Russia. In 1991, Moscow lost access to Latvia's Baltic Sea ports and the highest number of military bases in a post-Soviet state.⁴²

The status of Latvia from 1940 to 1991 was a major area of disagreement between Latvia and the Russian Federation, which impacted on Latvian nationality policy. The Latvian authorities always maintained that the Soviet Union illegally occupied Latvia and that the persons, mainly Russophones, who were sent to Latvia under that regime, constituted part of that illegal occupation. They maintained that the only legitimate Latvian citizens were those from the pre-1940 period of

³⁹ *Moscow News*, no. 37, 10 September 1993, p. 7; Richard Sakwa *Russian Politics and Society*, 2nd ed., (Routledge, 1996), p. 298–9.

⁴⁰ *Voprosy Istorii*, no 1, January 1994, *FBIS-USR-94-002-L, JPRS, FBIS Report*, 25 March 1994.

⁴¹ *Prism*, Jamestown Foundation, vol. II, no. 12, pt. 3, 14 June 1996.

⁴² Juris Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition*, (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 7.

independence and their descendants. The Russian side said that Latvia asked to join the Soviet Union and that, therefore, all persons resident in Latvia in 1991 should automatically be granted citizenship. The *Duma* claimed that Latvia's insistence upon the recognition of the fact of occupation was used to justify 'illegal acts already carried out and an attempt to create a legal basis for continuing a discriminatory, humiliating policy in respect of people living in Latvia whose native language is Russian, to whom the Latvian side intends to give the status of invaders'.⁴³

In 1996, a Presidential election year, the Russian Federation continued to pressurise Latvia over nationality related policies. In July, the *Duma* criticised the first reading of the Latvian Education Bill and threatened economic sanctions against Latvia. The *Duma* appealed to President Yeltsin stating that, as Russians permanently resident in the Latvian Republic were being discriminated against and being deprived of their language, Russia should deprive Latvia of preferential terms in the sphere of trade and economic relations. The *Duma* members referred to the first draft of the Latvian Education Bill as the start of enforced assimilation of Russians permanently resident in Latvia. The Russian *Duma* accused the Latvians of trying to exclude all languages except for Latvian from their education system and suggested that trade with Latvia be conducted using world prices. They also demanded that, if the closure of Russian language schools in Latvia continued and the Education Law was adopted in the current form, economic restrictions should be placed on Latvia until they changed the Law.⁴⁴

In February 1997, the Russian Federation Presidential Press Service outlined Russia's long term strategy towards the Baltic States. The document repeated the demand that all Russians living in Estonia and Latvia, and those born in the Baltic States after 1991, be granted citizenship. The publication also stated that Russian policy in the region should be directed at the protection of ethnic Russians in the Baltic States.⁴⁵

⁴³ *BNS*, 26 January 1998.

⁴⁴ Document dated 21 June 1996, Moscow, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 25 July 1996, p. 6.

⁴⁵ *BNS*, 12 February 1997.

During 1997, Latvian–Russian relations improved, with an exchange of letters between Presidents Ulmanis and Yeltsin referring to constructive dialogue and a possible meeting to resolve problems. A border agreement was signed, although not ratified, and there was dialogue between the parliaments of the two countries. Yeltsin talked about new forms of dialogue which would help to advance Latvian–Russian relations.⁴⁶ The Latvian–Russian Intergovernmental Commission, established in 1994, held its first meeting on 27 February 1997. The Commission set up working groups to analyse human rights issues arising between the two countries.⁴⁷ However, they ran into operational difficulties. There have been problems with appointments to the committee and also the setting of the agenda with the Russian side wanting to limit discussions to issues of human rights and the Latvian delegates to conduct wide ranging discussions.

By January 1998, following a meeting with then Russian Federation Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, which included a discussion of the status of non-citizens, Latvian President Ulmanis announced that he was likely to meet President Yeltsin in the first half of 1998. Chernomyrdin also stated that, if the draft Language Law was passed in its current form, it would complicate Latvian–Russian relations. In an *ITAR-TASS* interview, Chernomyrdin stated that, if the situation for non-citizens did not improve, Russia could use political and economic pressure on Latvia.⁴⁸ Despite these reservations, communication continued to improve between the Latvian and Russian Federation authorities. On 19 February 1998, Yeltsin sent Ulmanis a letter, which a spokesman termed hopeful and positive about inter-state relations.⁴⁹ This gradual improvement in relations was halted by the events of March 1998, which severely strained Latvian–Russian Federation relations.

⁴⁶ *Moscow RIA*, 18 April 1997; *FBIS-SOV-97-108, Daily Report*, 18 April 1997.

⁴⁷ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 2nd Quarter 1997, p. 20.

⁴⁸ Latvia: Ulmanis: No 'Reproaches' from Chernomyrdin over Rights, *Radio Riga Network*, 23 January 1998; *FBIS-SOV-98-02, Daily Report*, 24 January 1998.

⁴⁹ Paul Goble, 'Playing the Ethnic Card,' *RFE/RL Newline Endnote*, 10 March 1998.

March 1998

Following a series of events in March 1998, relations took a significant downturn. A rally of mainly Russian-speaking pensioners in Riga was broken up by the Latvian police, Soviet servicemen's graves in Liepāja were desecrated, the Latvian Legion SS veterans marched through Riga, and the Synagogue was bombed for the third time in three years. Latvia received heavy criticism from the Russian Federation for its treatment of the pensioners and its reaction to the other events.⁵⁰ The Russian Federation Senate adopted a decree condemning the dispersal of the Russian-speaking pensioners' rally in Riga and the desecration of the Soviet war memorial in Liepāja.⁵¹ Tempering these comments, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin denied that Russia would be imposing economic sanctions against Latvia.⁵² The Russian authorities took advantage of the disturbance in Riga to increase criticism of Latvian policy towards non-citizens. Presidential Press Secretary Yastrzhembskiy announced, on 5 March, that President Yeltsin supported Foreign Minister Primakov's statement, in which he expressed 'indignation' over the dispersal of the demonstration and called it a 'flagrant violation of basic human rights'.⁵³ The Latvian authorities continued to state that it was a matter for public order and did not have a political or ethnic dimension.⁵⁴

From 1991 to early 1998, Russian–Latvian relations showed a very slow gradual improvement. However, after March 1998, relations seriously deteriorated and had not shown any significant improvement by the end of 1999. The following sections outline specific events in Latvian–Russian Federation relations, which the Russian Federation have attempted to link to the status of Latvia's Russian-speaking population.

⁵⁰ Statement of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council in Connection with the Events of 3 and 8 March 1998 in the Latvian Republic, no. 70, Moscow, 12 March 1998 and signed by the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council.

⁵¹ Russia: Possibility of Sanctions against Latvia Discussed, *Russkiy Telegraf*, 13 March 1998, p. 3; *FBIS-SOV-98-072, Daily Report*, 13 March 1998.

⁵² *ITAR-TASS*, 19 March 1998; *FBIS-SOV-98-078, Daily Report*, 19 March 1998.

⁵³ *ITAR-TASS*, 4 March 1998.

⁵⁴ *Riga Radio*, 5 March 1998; *ITAR-TASS*, 6 March 1998.

Troop withdrawal

An early priority for the newly independent Latvia was the rapid removal of the Soviet/Russian forces from their territory. The continued presence of 40,000 Russian troops in Latvia became a key stumbling block to improved Latvian–Russian relations. The Soviet/Russian troops were viewed as an occupying army. Latvian political leaders believed Latvia could not be truly independent without the removal of the troops.⁵⁵ In October 1991, Ojars Kalnins, the Latvian delegate to the UN General Assembly, indicated that Latvian economic progress depended on the early withdrawal of Soviet troops. He stated that this would enhance security and cooperation in the region.⁵⁶ The Russian authorities had a number of options on how to approach troop withdrawal. They had to decide whether to utilise the withdrawal as an instrument to try and gain certain goals regarding Latvian nationality policy. A suggestion aired in 1992–3 by the Russian Military and echoed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was that Russia had to complete the troop withdrawal from Germany and from Central Europe before they could contemplate beginning the withdrawal from the Baltic States. The Baltic States troop withdrawal would then commence in 1995 and be completed by 1999. However, the Russian Federation decided to commence and complete the withdrawal as quickly as possible.⁵⁷ Following the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia faced a number of serious problems. With nuclear weapons in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus, multiple conflicts in Georgia, fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh and Tajikistan, and elsewhere, the Baltic States were not a policy priority for the Russian Federation. There was a desire to avoid the issue of troop withdrawal at that particular time but the OSCE, nevertheless, forced Russia to confront the problem in April/May 1992. Paragraph 15 of the 1992 CSCE Helsinki Summit Declaration called for the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Baltic States,

⁵⁵ Economist Intelligence Unit, *Baltic Republics: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Country Profile, Annual Survey of Political and Economic Background, 1993–4*, pp. 24–5; Michael Haxton, ‘The Russians of Latvia’, in *MINEIRES*, www.bsos.umd.edu/cidcum/mar/latruss.htm, 28 July 1994.

⁵⁶ *RFE/RL*, 11 October 1991.

⁵⁷ Interview with Dr. Arkady Moshes, Head, Section for Security of the CEE and the Baltic Sea Region, Institute of Europe, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 10 December 1999.

and for negotiations to achieve this.⁵⁸ Outside pressure established the sovereign right of the Baltic States to have the troops removed from their soil. Talks started properly several months later, but the Lithuanian Defence Minister short circuited these and gained a rapid settlement by making a separate agreement with Defence Minister Grachev. On the condition that Russian troops left Lithuania early, Lithuania established a complex set of arrangements, including arms purchases and building flats in Kaliningrad for returning troops. This may have been connected to a suggestion of Lithuania being accommodating towards Russian Federation military transit to Kaliningrad. Following this arrangement, which was negotiated in September 1992, the claim that withdrawal was logistically impossible lost credence. This signalled the beginning of substantial troop withdrawal from the three Baltic States. The acceptance of the Lithuanian deal made it clear to the Russian Federation Army that the Baltic States were 'lost'. There followed asset stripping of former Soviet military facilities by the departing forces in the Baltic States. Estonia and Latvia did not, however, have the same rapid success seen in Lithuania. Both countries had to contend with larger military assets, more troops, and pensioners. The Lithuanian precedent, Western pressure, and, by 1993, a Baltic tendency to mention the Russian occupation of the Baltic States at every international forum persuaded the Russian Federation to accelerate their troop withdrawal and try to maintain a positive image in the West to enable them to continue to receive aid.⁵⁹

Although the troop withdrawal negotiations proceeded, there were many instances when they were delayed to try and affect Latvian policy towards non-citizens. On 17 July 1992, the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet threatened economic sanctions after producing documents accusing the Baltic States of human rights violations. The Latvian government considered them part of an effort to postpone troop withdrawals and hinder the development of bilateral relations.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *The Challenges of Change*, 1992 Summit Helsinki 9–10 July 1992, CSCE Helsinki Document 1992 *The Challenges of Change*, paragraph 15.

⁵⁹ Personal correspondence with Nicholas Redman, 7 December 2000; Redman, *Dilemmas of engagement: Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian policies towards Russia, 1992–1996*, (University of Oxford, unpublished D.Phil Thesis, 1999).

⁶⁰ *RFE/RL*, 24 July 1992.

Latvia was determined that the withdrawal should continue unhindered. On 15 September 1992, the Latvian Supreme Soviet adopted further guidelines for Russian troop withdrawal negotiations. The documents requested the unconditional withdrawal of all troops by the end of 1993, the recognition of Latvian borders, and no naturalisation until all foreign troops had left Latvian soil.⁶¹ In response, the head of the Russian delegation for troops negotiations, Sergei Zotov, emphasised that troops would be withdrawn on Russia's terms when conditions were suitable for the Russian Federation. Russia would not accept such a Latvian ultimatum. He linked the withdrawal to housing and social welfare guarantees for servicemen.⁶² In November 1992, Yeltsin claimed that he had suspended troop withdrawals because of logistical problems and denied that it was due to internal political pressure.⁶³ This contradicted an earlier threat in October that no troop withdrawal agreements would be signed until Latvia and Estonia provided greater minority rights for Russians when Yeltsin accused both countries of gross violations of the rights of Russian minorities and claimed that all negotiations had been fruitless.⁶⁴

On 29 March 1993, Russian Federation Defence Minister Grachev announced a suspension of the withdrawal of troops but harsh statements from the US, Britain, Norway, Canada, and the NATO Secretary-General compelled Russia to revoke the threat.⁶⁵ Pressure from the West, especially the US,⁶⁶ to remove troops appeared to be a greater incentive to continue with troop withdrawals, than the obstacle of going against Latvian wishes. Latvia had addressed the problem of power asymmetry with the Russian Federation by looking to external organisations and other states for support.

The pressure from the Russia Federation on Latvian nationality policy continued with President Yeltsin again, in June 1993, linking the withdrawal of troops to the rights of Russians in Latvia, including the supply of housing for the forces

⁶¹ *RFE/RL*, 17 September 1992.

⁶² *RFE/RL*, 21 May 1993.

⁶³ *RFE/RL*, 6 November 1992.

⁶⁴ *RFE/RL*, 8 October 1992.

⁶⁵ *Baltic Independent*, 2–8 April 1993.

⁶⁶ See US section of this chapter for details of US involvement in the troop withdrawal process.

returning to the Russian Federation. Each time the Russian Federation tried to use a delay in troop withdrawal negotiations to gain a concession from Latvia on nationality policy, Latvia reiterated its wish to keep the issues separate. This Latvian stance was strengthened by full support from the US and Western European countries. The Chairman of the *Saeima* also rejected Russian claims that local elections discriminated against non-Latvians in their demand that candidates should know Latvian. The Latvian authorities stated that this too was Latvia's internal affair and was not connected to the issue of troop withdrawal.⁶⁷

The failed coup in the Russian Federation in October 1993 saw a brief period of presidential⁶⁸ supremacy over policy-making and, coupled with a period of intense interest and pressure especially from the US, resulted in Russia proposing a deadline of 31 August 1994 for the completion of troop withdrawal from Latvia and Estonia.⁶⁹

In early 1994, the Latvian delegation to the talks on troop withdrawal declined to discuss the status of the Russophone minority, stating that they had not yet implemented a Citizenship Law.⁷⁰ This resulted in Russian President Yeltsin complaining in writing to Latvian President Ulmanis, on 21 February 1994, about the legalisation of ethnic discrimination in Latvia. Continuing a theme voiced in 1992, Yeltsin stressed that settling the conduct of the Russian troop withdrawal and the social protection of Russian servicemen would aid the settlement of other difficult issues in their bilateral relationship.⁷¹

Five days prior to the signing of the Latvian–Russian troop withdrawal agreement, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaly Churkin protested about the continued alleged abuses of Russian human rights in Latvia. On 24 February, President Yeltsin promised he would protect Russians living outside the Russian

⁶⁷ RFE/RL, 28 December 1993.

⁶⁸ RFE/RL, 11 June 1993.

⁶⁹ *Estonian Radio*, 17 November 1993, SWB SU/1848 E/2, 17 November 1993; *Estonian Radio*, 24 November 1993; SWB SU/1854 E/1-2, 24 November 1993.

⁷⁰ Ambassadors View Relations with Baltic Countries, *Moscow Mayak Radio Network*, 2 January 1994; FBIS-SOV-94-001, *Daily Report*, 3 January 1994.

⁷¹ Yeltsin Letter to Latvia on 'Ethnic Discrimination', *ITAR-TASS*, 22 February 1994; FBIS-SOV-94-036, *Daily Report*, 23 February 1994.

Federation and, in March, announced a fund to encourage Russian cultural and educational facilities in the former USSR.⁷²

In April 1994, the signing and ratification of the Russian–Latvian troop withdrawal negotiations was put in jeopardy by President Yeltsin's statement that he intended to locate military bases in Latvia. Although the Russian side claimed it was a 'technical mistake' in the text of Yeltsin's resolution, the Latvians demanded an official statement before troop withdrawal agreements could be initialled.⁷³

On 30 April 1994, Latvia and Russia signed four agreements, one on the full withdrawal of the armed forces of the Russian Federation from the territory of the Republic of Latvia, with associated terms and conditions,⁷⁴ a second on the legal status of the armed forces during their withdrawal, a third on the Skrunda radar station, and a fourth on the social protection of Russian military personnel and their families until the moment of withdrawal, and on the social protection of military personnel and their families who remained in Latvia.⁷⁵ The Russian authorities requested that their military personnel be permitted to remain in Latvia beyond the August 1994 withdrawal date. This was to allow suitable housing to be found for them on their return to the Russian Federation.⁷⁶ Former USSR troops resident outside Latvia before they commenced their service were only allowed Latvian citizenship for special services to the state.⁷⁷ The agreements gave the Latvians legal authority to expel Russian officers dismissed from the Army after 28 January 1992 but still living in Latvia.⁷⁸ The 30 April 1994 agreement allowed the Russians to continue using the Skrunda Early Warning Radar Base until August 1998, when dismantling work began.⁷⁹ By the time the 22 July 1994 Citizenship Law had been passed by the *Saeima*, the Russian Federation had already agreed on a date for troop

⁷² The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 2nd Quarter 1994, pp.24-25.

⁷³ BNS, 7 April 1994.

⁷⁴ *Agreement between the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation on Terms, Time Limits, Procedure of a Complete Withdrawal of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the Legal Status thereof during Withdrawal from the Territory of the Republic of Latvia*, 30 April 1994.

⁷⁵ *Diplomaticheskii Vestnik*, no. 11–12 June 1994, pp. 13 ff.

⁷⁶ *Latvia Commission on Russian Withdrawal Ratification*, Moscow INTERFAX, 28 September 1994; FBIS-SOV-94-189, Daily Report, 28 September 1994.

⁷⁷ *Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, Chapter 2, Section ii, Clause 5, Section 13, paragraph 1, Amendment*, 16 March 1995.

⁷⁸ *Radio Riga*, 24 November 1994; FBIS-SOV-94-227 Daily Report, 24 November 1994.

⁷⁹ BNS, 21 October 1999.

withdrawal. The Russian authorities were furious at the introduction of a naturalisation quota system.⁸⁰

Russian troops withdrew, as agreed, from Latvia in 1994, with the exception of the limited force that, under OSCE monitors, guarded the Skrunda Radar Base until 31 August 1998.⁸¹ This base was a key element in the former Soviet Union's radar location system to control American strategic missile attacks. The shut-down created a temporary 2500 km gap in Russia's tracking capabilities, namely the north Atlantic sector between the United Kingdom and Greenland, while a projected replacement station in Baranovici, Belarus, was under construction.⁸² The dismantling of the Skrunda Radar Base was completed by 21 October 1999 and the premises handed back to the Latvian authorities.

The departure from Skrunda marked the end of the Russian military presence in Latvia and the failure of the Russian Federation to influence Latvian nationality policy through delays in troop withdrawal. Pressure from the West, especially the US, had established the initial timetable and then kept the Russian Federation on track. At the same time, Latvia had succeeded in ensuring all Russian troops left their territory before naturalisation commenced.

Border Dispute

While not directly linked to the status of Latvian non-citizens, the progress of Latvian–Russian border negotiations was constantly disturbed by the arguments over the status of the ethnic Russians living in Latvia, but holding no citizenship. Latvia and Russia disagreed over the demarcation of their border with Latvia insisting on Russia recognising the 1920 Treaty of Riga under which part of the Pytalovskii/Abrene area now in Russia belonged to Latvia. Russia thought that the document had lost force and that the dialogue should concentrate on the present-day

⁸⁰ Stephen Erlanger, 'Latvia Amends Harsh Citizenship Law that Angered Russia,' *New York Times*, 26 July 1994.

⁸¹ *Soglashenie mezhdyy Latviiskoi Respublikoi i Rossiiskoi Federatsiei o pravovom stysye Skruntskoi radiolokatsionnoi stanntsii na period ee vremennovo fynktsionirovaniya i demontazha*, Articles 15 and 16, Moskva, 30 April 1994 [Agreement on the Legal Status of the Skrunda Radar Station during its Temporary Functioning and Dismantling].

⁸² *LETA*, 31 August 1998.

borders. Latvian politicians had asserted that the minority question had been dealt with, but Russia was keen to continue to refer to it during the conduct of bilateral relations, including border negotiations, which had become more symbolic and political than practical as a *de facto* border regime already operated.

In Moscow in December 1994, Russia and Latvia signed six agreements relating to practical border issues. These included initiating a border crossing regime for residents of border areas and those visiting relatives' graves. Resident non-citizens were permitted to travel to Russia without a visa and citizens requiring visas could obtain a free permit to visit a relative's grave. In addition, residents in border areas would be able to cross the border⁸³ at special passage points if trips were connected with their jobs as well as for visits to their kith and kin and graves of relatives.⁸⁴ Towards the end of 1996, the border negotiations had made little progress and concerns were raised about NATO membership since there was a requirement that there be no outstanding territorial disputes. As with the case of the EU, NATO expansion criteria made it clear that new members would not bring outstanding border or other disputes into the Alliance. Latvian negotiators realised that this was one of the reasons the Russians were delaying progress towards a border agreement.⁸⁵

In October 1997, the Russian Foreign Ministry was continuing to link border negotiations with the rights of non-citizens. The Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Gennadii Tarasov, criticised Latvian Prime Minister Guntars Krasts's intention to revive territorial claims by citing the Riga Treaty of 1920. Tarasov also declared that Krasts's statement that the problems of the Russian-speaking population had been solved were totally false.⁸⁶

Towards the end of 1996, the Latvian Prime Minister Andris Skele had suggested that Latvia should give up its demand that a border agreement with Russia

⁸³ *Temporary Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Favourable Order of Crossing the Border of Latvia and Russia for Frontier People*, 14 December 1994; *Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Mutual Travels of Citizens*, 14 December 1994.

⁸⁴ *ITAR-TASS*, 14 December 1994; *FBIS-SOV-94-241, Daily Report*, 14 December 1994.

⁸⁵ Redman, *Dilemmas of Engagement: Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian Policies towards Russia, 1992–1996*, (University of Oxford unpublished D.Phil. Thesis, 1999).

⁸⁶ *RFE/RL*, 22 October 1997.

had to refer to the continued validity of the 1920 peace treaty.⁸⁷ This concession allowed an agreement to be signed in 1997, prior to the significant deterioration in Latvian–Russian relations. Since the signing of the agreement, there have been no high level Latvian–Russian meetings and the agreement has not been ratified. Russian Embassy officials in Riga indicated to the Latvian authorities that ratification by the *Duma* was almost impossible and, due to domestic political considerations, the treaty could not even be debated.⁸⁸

Latvia gave in to demands from the Russian Federation regarding the Border Treaty, not because of their nationality policy, but because they wanted to qualify for NATO membership. The debates around the Border Treaty were a fairly weak and ineffective tool for Russia to use to defend the rights of non-citizens because of the existence of the *de facto* border regime. In the case of the EU, non-ratification has not been an issue, since the EU acknowledges that the Latvians have made the effort to get an agreement and that they should not be penalised for Russian delays. For NATO, given that there is a border *de facto* in place, it may not be the problem of ratification *per se* that is the issue but rather the underlying tensions in the Russian–Latvian relationship that such an impasse illustrates.

Transit trade

Given the seeming ineffectiveness of using the troop withdrawal and Border Treaty negotiations to try and change Latvian nationality policy, perhaps the lucrative transit trade would prove to be a more effective tool. In 1997, an estimated 10 per cent of Latvian GDP came from servicing Russian transit trade.⁸⁹ Around 27 per cent of exports of prepared foodstuffs were exported to Russia, while 60 per cent of mineral products were imported from Russia. For Russia, however, trade with Latvia made up less than one per cent of total exports and imports. As well as bilateral trade there were also Russian business interests in Latvia, including *Gazprom's* 16.25 per cent

⁸⁷ RFE/RL, 7 November 1996.

⁸⁸ Interview with Aivars Groza, adviser to the Prime Minister Skele on Foreign Affairs, Riga, 21 October 1999.

⁸⁹ *Diena*, 17 October 1998. This is not a universally accepted figure and Russian Federation estimates put it much higher.

stake in *Latvijas Gaze* and *LUKOil*'s interest in the privatisation of the Latvian Ventspils oil terminal.⁹⁰ It could be seen as being in the interests of both sides to promote harmonious economic relations.

In February 1996, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Krylov made it clear to Latvian Foreign Ministry Secretary of State Maris Riekstins that Moscow was concerned about continued discrimination against Russian speakers in Latvia, and that the level of Russian–Latvian cooperation in trade and economic matters depended on the observance of the rights of these Russians in Latvia.⁹¹ These threats, however, were not followed by actions.

In March 1997, the Russian Federation Minister for Transport declared an interest in reorienting transit currently through the Baltic States to the North Western Russian Federation. He admitted that this was not easy to implement and that it was not in Russia's economic interests to suspend transit through the Baltic States. He said that, 'If one takes as guidance economic criteria instead of jingoism, one would have to admit that suspending transit through the Baltic countries would not be to Russia's benefit'.⁹² At the beginning of 2000 around 20 per cent of Russian crude oil exports were routed through the Baltic States.⁹³ An additional consideration was that many ethnic Russians in Latvia worked in the industries which would be targeted by Russian Federation sanctions and any reduction in transit trade would harm the very people the Russian Federation professed to want to help.

Closed parliamentary hearings, 'Concept of the Policy of the Russian Federation in Respect to the Baltic States', were held with the participants concluding that the Baltic States continued to discriminate against their Russian populations. Given this conclusion, the participants of the hearing announced that the defence of compatriots' rights was a priority when it came to observing Russia's national interests in the region. Real progress in the sphere of economic relations, Parliament

⁹⁰ Arkady Moshes, *Overcoming Unfriendly Stability*, Programme on the Northern Dimension of the CSFP, (Helsinki: Ulkopolittinen Instituutti & Institut für Europäische Politik, 1999), p. 61.

⁹¹ *Interfax*, 6 February 1996; *FBIS-SOV-96-026, Daily Report*, 6 February 1996.

⁹² *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 29 March 1997, p. 11; *FBIS-SOV-97-070, Daily Report*, 29 March 1997.

⁹³ *Reuters*, 5 April 2001.

said, should be possible only after a positive change in the policy of the Baltic States in regard to assurance of the rights of the Russians who lived there. The development of economic relations, it was acknowledged, was also being held back by the policy of the Baltic States of charging the Russian Federation more than was economically justified for the transit and re-exportation of commodities, primarily energy sources and nonferrous metals. Russia felt that mutual advantage should be the sole firm basis of trade and economic cooperation. As far as Russia's treaties with the Baltic States on its borders were concerned, the State *Duma* made their ratification directly dependent on an improvement in the position of Russia's compatriots in the region.⁹⁴

On a trip to Latvia in early 1998, Russian Federation Prime Minister Chernomyrdin declared that if discrimination against Russians in Latvia continued, Russia would be forced to take political and economic measures against Latvia. Specifically, Russia threatened to use Finland as a transit for Russian goods in place of Latvia. Alternatively, if Latvia did as Russia requested, they would be offered assistance in joining the EU.⁹⁵ It is unclear how Russia thought they could assist in this process.

On 6 March, the *Duma* voted unanimously for a resolution requesting that Yeltsin take all necessary measures, including the imposition of economic sanctions, to protect the economic, social, and political rights of Russians in Latvia.⁹⁶ Although there is no evidence that sanctions were implemented, there was a decline in Russian–Latvian business in 1998. This was thought more likely by Latvian businessmen to have been due to the August 1998 economic crisis in Russia than to any formal sanctions from the Russian Federation.⁹⁷ Again, the Russian Federation can be seen to have been issuing empty threats which they could not follow up with actions. There is no evidence that these threats made the Latvian government alter their nationality policy.

⁹⁴ Moscow *Delovoy Mir*, 18 November 1997, p. 5; FBIS-SOV-97-330, *Daily Report*, 26 November 1997.

⁹⁵ Moscow *Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskv* in FBIS-SOV-98-024, *Daily Report*, 24 January 1998.

⁹⁶ RFE/RL, 9 March 1998.

⁹⁷ Interview with Dr Alexadr Gaponenko, Baltic Russian Institute, 23 October 1998, Riga.

Russia and external organisations

The Russian Federation made frequent representations to external organisations in an attempt to persuade Latvia to change their nationality policy. In November 1992, President Yeltsin appealed to the UN, citing human rights violations against the Russian minorities in the Baltic States.⁹⁸

As Latvian President Ulmanis decided whether to send the Citizenship Law stipulating quotas back to the *Saeima*, Russian *Duma* deputy Vladislav Tumanov announced, at a meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in June 1994, that, 'Latvia's passed Citizenship Law contradicts the European norms and the principles of democracy'. He stated that the Latvian Citizenship Law disregarded human rights, the reasons and consequences of inhabitants' migration, and that the law reflected the thesis 'Latvia for Latvians'. He also argued that different standards within Europe could not be tolerated and that the problems with the law would have to be resolved.⁹⁹ These statements concerning human rights abuses were investigated by external organisations but found to be inaccurate, thus diminishing the impact of the Russian Federation's continued appeals to external actors.

At a time of stagnation in Latvian nationality policy, the Russian Federation was anxious to maintain world attention on the Russian populations of the Baltic States, possibly as a distraction from their own domestic politics. At the annual session of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva in 1997, the head of the Russian delegation, Boris Krylov, reminded session participants that protection of rights of compatriots living abroad was a key task of Russian politics. He added that, 'One cannot keep silent about curtailment of Russian information and cultural space, limits on the right to Russian-language education, a ban on activities of some public organizations which represent the interests of Russian ethnic communities, and the striving to limit the use of the Russian language as means of communication'. He

⁹⁸ RFE/RL, 10 November 1992.

⁹⁹ BNS, 29 June 1994.

urged the international community to pay close attention to the problems faced by Russians in Latvia.¹⁰⁰

There was a marked upsurge in Russian appeals to external organisations during the significant worsening of Latvian–Russian Federation relations surrounding the events of March 1998 including an announcement by Russian Federation First Deputy Foreign Minister Dmitrii Ushakov that Moscow intended ‘to make active use of the entire authority of international organisations, the OSCE, and the Council of Europe’. He expressed the opinion that, in the long run, international pressure would be the best way to isolate Latvia and Estonia and compel them to rectify their human rights situation. Russian Federation First Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov added that Russia would also raise the question of human rights violations in both Latvia and Estonia with the appropriate UN commission.

Members of the Russian *Duma* also appealed to the international community in an attempt to pressure Latvia into changing its citizenship legislation. At the 11 March 1998 session of the Council of Europe monitoring committee, the MPs highlighted the controversy surrounding the pensioners’ rally in Riga. The Council of Europe monitoring group agreed to visit Latvia to assess whether Latvia was complying with its obligations as a Council of Europe member.¹⁰¹ International monitoring found that while there were individual problems, there was no systematic abuse of human rights in Latvia.

Also in March 1998, the State *Duma* adopted an address to heads of state, governments, and parliaments of OSCE member-countries, urging them ‘to demand most determinedly that the Latvian authorities should fully observe the political, social, economic, and cultural rights of all Latvia’s residents, and cease supporting right-wing extremism and discriminating against people on ethnic grounds’. The address was carried by 373 votes to nil, with no abstentions. The document also

¹⁰⁰ *ITAR-TASS*, 25 March 1997, *FBIS-SOV-97-084*, *Daily Report*, 25 March 1997.

¹⁰¹ *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* 20 March 1998 p. 5; *FBIS-SOV-98-079*, *Daily Report*, 20 March 1998.

expressed 'extreme anger and resolute protest' over Latvian SS legion veterans' marches held in Riga.¹⁰²

The Russian Federation continued to use the UN as a forum for protest and, in May, on the Russian Federation's initiative, the 54th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution entitled 'Human Rights and Arbitrary Deprivation of Citizenship'.¹⁰³ On this occasion the word 'isolate' was voiced for the first time by a representative of the executive power. Previously threats of sanctions had been considered idle threats of the Russian State *Duma*.¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

It appears from this analysis that Russian Federation policy has not been directly effective in altering Latvian nationality policy. Latvian resistance to outside intervention and a determination to prove that, however small, they are an independent sovereign nation, would perhaps suggest that, if anything, the Russian Federation pressure worked to delay liberalisation of nationality laws. During the troop withdrawal negotiations, despite concerted efforts by the Russian authorities to delay the withdrawal until Latvia implemented a Russian approved Citizenship Law, the Latvians maintained their position and, with outside assistance, successfully refused to commence naturalisation of non-citizens until former Soviet troops had left Latvia, in accordance with the August 1994 timetable. While Latvia conceded to Russian Federation demands on the demarcation of their border, this turned out to be a largely symbolic gesture as the existence of a *de facto* border regime significantly reduced the impact of Russia's refusal to settle the dispute. Latvia did not give in to pressure regarding nationality policy in connection with this border dispute. NATO demands for a stable border were satisfied by the existence of a *de facto* regime.

Suggesting withdrawal of the lucrative Russian transit trade from Latvia also appears to have failed as a means of persuading Latvia to liberalise their laws. It

¹⁰² *Moscow RIA*, 20 March 1998; *FBIS-SOV-98-079, Daily Report*, 20 March 1998.

¹⁰³ *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 14 May 1998, p. 7; *FBIS-SOV-98-134, Daily Report*, 14 May 1998.

¹⁰⁴ *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 14 March 1998, pp. 1, 6.

would not have been in the Russian Federation interests, nor the interests of the ethnic Russians living in Latvia, to have this business curtailed in order to try and obtain concessions on the Latvian treatment of its non-citizens. The cost to the Russian Federation, and to the non-citizens they professed to help, was simply too high. Even the Russian utilisation of external organisations proved to be of limited use. The Russian Federation insistence on making, at times, exaggerated claims which, when examined by external organisations, proved to be unfounded, gave the Latvian authorities ammunition to claim that the Russian Federation demands were unreasonable. However, the complex nature of the international system meant that it was not just a simple Latvian–Russian bilateral relationship. The Russian Federation also interacted with other states and external organisations to try and pressure Latvia indirectly into liberalising their nationality policy. The external actors, notably the US and the EU, had also to be mindful of their own relationship with the Russian Federation and how this relationship would be influenced by their dealings with Latvia. These relationships could not be considered as separate isolated interactions but more as a complex web. Utilising a counterfactual and removing the Russian Federation from the equation, it is difficult to establish whether Latvian nationality policy would have been liberalised in the way that it was. It is not clear that, without the desire to keep the peace between the Russians and the Latvians, the US or EU would have become quite so closely involved in the affairs of a small country located on the edge of the EU. It is suggested that the desire to maintain good US–Russian and EU–Russian relations may have led to these two external actors exerting pressure on Latvia in order to appease Russia.

Having recently gained independence from Soviet rule, the Latvia government was determined to emphasise that, despite the imbalance of power, that, as an independent sovereign nation, they were free to legislate as they wished. The Russian Federation had little discernible direct effect on Latvian nationality policy until, perhaps, the events of March 1998. This, and the crisis in Russia–Latvian relations, convinced the international community to mount sustained pressure on Latvia to

persuade them to change their laws. However, it cannot be ruled out that indirect pressure from Russia, filtered through the US and external organisations did have an influence on Latvian policymakers throughout the 1991-9 Period.

Section III: The Nordic countries and nationality policy in Latvia

Introduction

The Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden) have been strong supporters of the Baltic States since they re-gained their independence in 1991. Initially, they supported the bid for independence and, once this was secured, invested in the re-building of institutions within the Baltic States. More recently, their efforts have become concentrated on helping the Baltic States to gain entry to the European Union.¹⁰⁵ Finland has tended to have a closer relationship with Estonia as the similar languages aided co-operation while Denmark has developed close relations with Latvia, assisting in military cooperation and funding the language programme. In Sweden and Norway's case, they found the centrality of the Latvian capital Riga a useful location from which to establish their interests in the Baltic States. The Nordic countries differed from the Russian Federation in that they offered practical assistance, as well as advising the Latvian authorities to revise their nationality policy in line with OSCE recommendations. The Nordic countries were also functioning democratic polities and, with the exception of Norway, members of the European Union, the very organisation Latvia wished to join. Latvia also benefited from considerable investment from the Nordic Countries. An already massive commitment to the Baltic States was planned to increase in 2000 with Swedish Prime Minister Persson's announcement of the Year of the Baltic States and a promise of one billion Kroner in aid (US\$119.3 million).¹⁰⁶ From 1991 to 1999, the Swedish International Development Agency, responsible for 69 per cent of Swedish bilateral cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe, administered 663.5 million (US\$65 million) Swedish Kroner in bilateral cooperation.¹⁰⁷ From 1991-2000, Norway donated 89

¹⁰⁵ *Developing Co-operation between Neighbouring Countries: Swedish Co-operation with Central and Eastern Europe 1999–2001*, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2 March 1998.

¹⁰⁶ 'Sentinel Risk Pointers: Sweden', www.Janes.com, January 2001.

¹⁰⁷ Sweden has contributed to Central and Eastern Europe through multilateral cooperation channelled through organisations including the EBRD and, since 1995, the EU. From 1991 to –1999, this totalled 2.3 billion Swedish Kroner.(US\$225 million), *Sweden 1999, Statistical Yearbook*, Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete, [Swedish International Development Agency], Stockholm, 2000.

million NOK (US\$9.4 million) to Latvia including 18.3 million NOK (US\$1.9 million) for democracy building projects.¹⁰⁸ By 2000, Denmark had donated approximately 1 billion DKK (US\$120 million), including 160 million DKK in 1999 alone when special attention was given to the support of EU accession measures.¹⁰⁹ From 1990 to 1991, Finnish aid to neighbouring areas was aimed mainly at Russia and Estonia¹¹⁰ but from 1992 to 1999, Finnish aid to Latvia including credits and guarantees amounted to 262.6 million Finnish Markas (US\$40 million).

This section assesses the assistance afforded to Latvia by the Nordic countries and its effectiveness in persuading Latvia to enact a liberal and inclusive nationality policy in line with OSCE recommendations. This section asks what instruments they used to achieve this and whether they were effective. The Baltic States saw the Nordic countries as role models with useful experiences of being small nations which had recently joined the European Union. There was a strong orientation in the Baltic States towards cooperation with the Nordic Countries.¹¹¹ The possible role of the Nordic countries in the liberalisation of Latvian nationality policy making between 1991 and 1999 is also examined.

1991–3

During the first years of Latvian independence, the Nordic countries were anxious to support independence and help to rebuild the country. Their main priority was to make sure that Latvian independence was irrevocable and they saw involving Latvia in Western co-operation and institutions as the best way of doing this.¹¹² There was minimal criticism of policy at this time. A Finnish official noted that the Soviet period had so fundamentally altered Latvian demographics that it would not be useful to give advice based on the Finnish experience of dealing with their historical

¹⁰⁸ Personal correspondence with Line Bøystad, Utenriksdepartementet/Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo, Norway, 21 May 2001.

¹⁰⁹ *Royal Danish Embassy in Riga*, 2001.

¹¹⁰ Personal correspondence with Katja Bordi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Unit for Cooperation with Neighbouring Areas, Helsinki, 27 March 2001.

¹¹¹ Interview with Undine Bollow, Deputy Head of OSCE Mission to Latvia, 13 October 1998.

¹¹² Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 11 October 1999.

Swedish minority. It was rather a case of trying to persuade Latvia to alter its nationality policy for the sake of long term stability within the country.¹¹³ The Swedes felt they would be most successful in influencing Latvian policy if they were sympathetic and understanding of the main principles of Latvian nationality legislation.¹¹⁴ In October 1991, Swedish Foreign Minister Margaretha Ugglas stated that the citizenship issue was an internal matter for Latvia. Sweden would not seek to influence who gained citizenship and who did not. Minister for Foreign Aid Alf Svenson also made it clear that Swedish aid to the Baltic States would remain in place regardless of the outcome of the citizenship issue.¹¹⁵ The only clearly stated condition attached to Swedish foreign aid was that the money be used in an appropriate way. To date, the Swedish authorities are satisfied that this has been done.¹¹⁶ One criticism of this period is that all the Nordic countries rushed into the Baltic States with aid and advice but there was very little effort to coordinate their contributions. Instead, there was an informal competition to see who could have the most impact.¹¹⁷

1993–7

The first signs of criticism came as the 1994 Citizenship Law was drafted. In June, when the naturalisation quota system was approved by the *Saeima*, Sweden criticised Latvian policy. Up until this point, Sweden had supported Latvia's right to decide who should become citizens.¹¹⁸ The external interest in nationality policy was seen at times as an irritant for Latvia. However, it served a dual purpose in that international monitors could also counter many of the sweeping and at times groundless accusations made by the Russian Federation.¹¹⁹

¹¹³ Interview with Timo Lahelma Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, former Ambassador to the OSCE Mission to Estonia, 20 October 1999.

¹¹⁴ 'Sweden and the Baltic States', Excerpts from an address by the Prime Minister, Mr Carl Bildt, to the Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm, 17 November 1993; *Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1993*, (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Stockholm, 1994); Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 15 June 2000.

¹¹⁵ *RFE/RL*, 30 October 1991.

¹¹⁶ Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 15 June 2000.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Lykke Friis, Dansk Udenrigspolitisk Institut (DUPI) [Danish Institute of International Affairs], Copenhagen, 12 October 1999.

¹¹⁸ *Appeal of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia to President of the State Guntis Ulmanis*, June 1994. The appeal noted the organisation and countries which had objected to the naturalisation quotas. The list of countries included Sweden.

¹¹⁹ Krister Wahlbäck, *The Russians in Estonia and Latvia: Present Situation, Prospects for the Future*, Unpublished Paper, 6 November 1997.

After the 1994 Citizenship Law was passed and naturalisation requirements published, very few people applied for citizenship. There were a number of rumours about the impossible and arbitrary nature of the language and history tests. In order to promote naturalisation, the Finnish government gave support to an information campaign to try and increase knowledge of the requirements. However, as well as supporting increased naturalisation, the Finnish government also provided vouchers to support the campaign backed by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the US for voluntary repatriation of former Soviet military to Russia.¹²⁰

The Nordic countries saw language training as the most important aspect of social integration. They supported the UNDP Latvian Language Training Programme and in April 1995, Norway announced finance for Latvian language training for Russian speakers in Latvia. The Norwegian Ambassador to Latvia, Knut Tøraasen, stated that this was considered to be the most effective way to influence the integration process in Latvia.¹²¹ In addition, Norway financed a booklet, in Latvian with a Russian summary, to assist naturalisation applicants. The Nordic countries could also take some credit at this time for Latvia's decision to drop quotas from the Citizenship Law.

1997–9

Nordic officials have readily admitted that the prospect of becoming a member of an enlarged EU is the strongest incentive for Latvia to bring their nationality policy into line with EU-backed OSCE HCNM standards on citizenship and language policy.¹²² The Nordic countries felt that, as the strongest supporters of Baltic States membership in the EU, it was in their interests to ensure that Latvia was not refused entry to the EU talks on the grounds of its nationality policy.¹²³ Finland, Sweden, and Norway all recently went through the negotiation process and felt able to share this expertise with

¹²⁰ Interview with Timo Lahelma, former OSCE Ambassador to Mission to Estonia and Tiina Jortikka-Laitinen, political desk officer for the Baltic States, Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Helsinki, 20 October 1999. see US section for details.

¹²¹ *Riga Radio Riga*, 18 April 1995; *FBIS-SOV-95-075, Daily Report*, 18 April 1995.

¹²² Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 11 October 1999.

¹²³ Interview with Lykke Friis, DUPI, Copenhagen, 12 October 1999.

the Baltic States¹²⁴ so it will be seen as a considerable blow for the Nordic countries' own policy in this area if Latvia does not succeed. By the time Latvia had been rejected from EU accession talks in December 1997, Latvian membership of the EU had become a Swedish foreign policy priority¹²⁵ as Latvian economic and political development affected the Nordic region as a whole. Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh praised Latvia's plans for the integration of society and the positive vote in the October 1998 referendum on the Citizenship Law amendments.¹²⁶ Sweden wished EU talks to be opened as soon as possible, adding that Finland's presidency would promote integration.¹²⁷

In 1998, at the height of the crisis in relations with the Russian Federation, Latvia complained that international actors were each demanding different and ever changing standards from Latvia. In response to this, the Nordic countries adopted the OSCE HCNM recommendations, to allow children of non-citizens to register for Latvian citizenship and to end the 'windows' system, as their requirements for Latvian nationality policy.¹²⁸ Prior to this, advice had been given on an ad hoc basis rather than as part of a coordinated effort. They all wished to emphasise that it was the OSCE conditions alone which should be passed into law and no other demands, notably those from the Russian Federation, need to be adhered to.¹²⁹ Finland emphasised the need to adhere only to OSCE HCNM recommendations and felt that the differing advice from the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Commissioner, which went beyond the OSCE recommendations,¹³⁰ was divisive and gave the Russian Federation leverage to demand different standards.¹³¹ The OSCE standard was also quoted by the Nordic countries in discussions with the Russian Federation

¹²⁴ Interview with Tiina Jortikka-Laitinen, Political Desk Officer for the Baltic States, Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Helsinki, 20 October 1999; *Developing Co-operation between Neighbouring Countries: Swedish Co-operation with Central and Eastern Europe 1999–2001*, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2 March 1998.

¹²⁵ *A Good Neighbourhood: Sweden's Co-operation with Central and Eastern Europe*, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 1998.

¹²⁶ *BNS*, 26 January 1999.

¹²⁷ *BNS*, 15 January 1999.

¹²⁸ Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 11 October 1999.

¹²⁹ Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 15 June 2000; Interview with Timo Lahelma Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, former Ambassador to the OSCE Mission to Estonia, 20 October 1999; Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 11 October 1999.

¹³⁰ Detailed discussion of the role of the CBSS Chapter 5.

¹³¹ Interview with Timo Lahelma, former OSCE ambassador to Mission to Estonia, and Tiina Jortikka-Laitinen, political desk officer for the Baltic States, Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Helsinki, 20 October 1999.

over rights of non-citizens in Latvia and while the Nordic countries resisted threatening the Latvian authorities in public, they felt that it was far more effective to use bilateral contacts with politicians and opinion makers to stress the importance of compliance with OSCE HCNM recommendations.¹³²

The Nordic countries supported the admission of all three Baltic States to EU accession talks. However, the Finnish delegation noted that a political compromise was necessary to allow Estonia to enter the EU talks.¹³³ The argument here was that it would be better in the long run to have one Baltic Country, namely Estonia, enter the EU early than delay any one of them until they were all ready. However, the two tier accession system suggested by the commission in 1997, and supported by Finland, was seen by Sweden and Denmark as disadvantaging the second tier candidates when, in fact, none of the candidates were ready for accession. Sweden and Denmark felt it would have been better to give all three Baltic States the same chance to undertake the accession process together, with all of them participating in accession negotiations from the beginning.¹³⁴

The Nordic countries continued to support the integration of the Latvian non-citizens.¹³⁵ The UNDP Latvian language training programme continued to receive enthusiastic backing, Sweden having been the largest donor for the first phase by donating SEK 5.6 million (US\$0.5 million) to implement the first 5 years of the programme.¹³⁶ In 1998, Sweden decided to provide additional funds to see the implementation of the programme through its 10-year cycle. The Latvian government indicated that the language training programme was a key element of the Latvian integration strategy and that continued foreign investment was crucial for its maintenance.¹³⁷ The programme administered by the Latvian Education and Research

¹³² Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 11 October 1999.

¹³³ Reijo Kemppinen, spokesman for the Finnish delegation, European Union, *Estonian Review*, vol. 7, no. 51, 14–20 December, 1997.

¹³⁴ Finland: Nordic Prime Ministers Seen Disagreeing on EU Enlargement, Helsinki *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 11 November 1997, p. 6; FBIS-WEU-97-317, Daily Report, 13 November 1997.

¹³⁵ *A Good Neighbourhood: Sweden's Co-operation with Central and Eastern Europe*, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 1998. Sweden offered help with integration through the Swedish Institute. 1990–7 SEK 560 million was donated to projects in Latvia. 90% of projects concern the fulfilment of EU membership criteria.

¹³⁶ Lisa Román and Claes Sandgren, *Co-operation with Latvia: A Results Analysis*, (Department for Central and Eastern Europe, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, August 1998).

¹³⁷ *Remarks for UNDP Language Training Project Revision Signing Ceremony*, Ministers Golde and Zile, 20 October 1999.

Ministry and the UN Development Programme received financial aid from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, the European Union, and the Baltic Trust Fund.¹³⁸ In August 1999, the OSCE HCNM promised to help secure the \$1.3 million needed to fully fund the Latvian language training programme. The following day, the Finnish government announced a further \$100,000 of funding in addition to their original \$100,000 donation.¹³⁹

The 1999 proposed Latvian Language Law brought the most overt and public criticism from the Nordic countries to date. Having decided that the OSCE HCNM standards were also those of the EU, a law unacceptable to the OSCE HCNM was also unacceptable to the EU. The Nordic countries continued with behind the scenes persuasion but the Latvian President's appraisal of the Language Law coincided with two high profile visits. In Riga in July 1999, the year in which Finland held the EU Presidency,¹⁴⁰ Finnish Foreign Minister Tarja Halonen requested that President Vaira Vike-Freiberga refuse to promulgate the Language Law. Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen, on 2 July 1999, stated that Latvia's chances of acquiring EU membership could be damaged if the country's parliament passed the proposed new Language Bill. While acknowledging that Latvia had fulfilled all the requirements to begin EU accession negotiations, he felt that the new Language Law could become a barrier if it were found to violate EU regulations. Outgoing Prime Minister Vilis Kristopans said other world leaders had raised the issue with him at the recent World Economic Forum in Salzburg.¹⁴¹

Conclusions

Looked at in isolation, the quiet diplomacy of the Nordic countries had little impact on Latvian nationality policy. It was not until they were able to use the prospect of European Union membership talks that the Latvian authorities were encouraged to

¹³⁸ *BNS*, 1 October 1998.

¹³⁹ *RFE/RL*, 15 July 1999; Interview with Tiina Jortikka-Laitinen, Political Desk Officer for the Baltic States, Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Helsinki, 20 October 1999.

¹⁴⁰ *RFE/RL*, 15 July 1999.

¹⁴¹ *RFE/RL*, 7 July 1999.

liberalise their legislation in line with OSCE recommendations suggesting that the EU is the important factor. Nordic Foreign Ministry officials involved in advising Latvia over nationality policy felt that the Latvians had kept to their original guiding principles regarding nationality policy and that the outside pressure had simply brought about minor changes in detail.¹⁴² The Latvian authorities considered the Nordic countries to be allies and worthy of emulation. It was in their interests that Latvia should join the European Union and they, therefore, worked hard to persuade Latvia to abide by the OSCE HCNM and, hence, EU conditions for nationality policy. Nordic behind the scenes diplomatic assistance was particularly appreciated following the heightened tensions of March 1998, in marked contrast to the forceful and public rhetoric of the United States.

¹⁴² Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 15 June 2000.

Section IV: The United States and nationality policy in Latvia

Introduction

This section assesses the role of the United States in changing Latvian nationality policy, asking how far one can answer the question, ‘Why has the policy changed from an exclusive restitutionist policy to a more liberal and inclusive one by reference to US policy?’ Again, the section questions what the US wanted from Latvian nationality policy, which instruments were utilised to reach this goal, and any results that were achieved. US involvement in Latvian nationality policy can be analysed by examining US influence on specific events linked to such a policy. The events are examined in chronological order in order to observe the progression in policy. While they fit broadly into the original time categories of this thesis, there is some overlap. The main events under examination were first, during the 1991–3 period, the withdrawal of Soviet, then Russian, troops from Latvian soil; second, and moving into the 1993–7 timeframe, the new citizenship legislation proposed in 1993 and passed in 1994; third, intensifying with the 1994 Brussels Summit, the controversial issue of NATO expansion was a key issue for Latvia in dealing with the US and, once again, the issues of nationality policy and relations with Russia were linked to this strategy; fourth, linked to NATO expansion and NATO–Russian relations, the 1998 Baltic–US charter gave political credence to the evolving Latvian–US relationship and, finally, the implementation of citizenship policy and the passing of the 1999 Language Law attracted US criticism of the methods yet, at the same time, assisted in the integration process in Latvia.

The section seeks to analyse the US role in these events and assess its importance in the overall change in Latvian nationality policy, including an examination of the role of the Latvian–American groups who had very little interest in Latvian nationality politics. The key issue for Latvian–American and Baltic–American groups was the campaign for the admission of the Baltic States to

NATO.¹⁴³ The Baltic–American lobby utilised moral and emotive pressure to persuade the government to allow Latvia to join NATO. The Joint Baltic American National Council (JBANC) is non-partisan but advocated a strong US foreign policy that included real support for development of democracy, the free market, security, the rule of law, and human rights in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.¹⁴⁴

Outside the region of Northern Europe, the United States has been influential at a more systemic level. The position of the US in the international power structure justifies its inclusion in the wider theoretical analysis of what causes states to behave in the way they do. The US is the most powerful state in the international system, and one producer of hegemonic ideas such as democracy, interdependence, and liberal economics. It also has the world's pre-eminent force projection capability, and substantial forces forward deployed in Europe.¹⁴⁵ In the case of Latvia, the US initially followed a 'Russia first' policy. Perhaps later than in the rest of the former Soviet space in 1998, the signing of the Baltic treaty signalled a shift in policy towards the other post-Soviet states, rather than simply dealing primarily with Russia.

In Latvia, the US has been involved in economic restructuring, the promotion of democratic pluralism and environmental protection, including enhanced efficiency in the use of energy.¹⁴⁶ The USAID programme in Latvia commenced in November 1991. Since then, and until its completion in 1999 under the Support for East European Democracy Act (SEED), USAID coordinated more than 60 activities valued at over US\$57 million. These included the donating of agricultural commodities valued at around US\$20 million and supporting the withdrawal of Russian forces by providing housing for around 2,500 retired military officers and their children.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Conversation with Karl Altai, Joint Baltic American National Committee, INC, Washington DC, 9 February 2000.

¹⁴⁴ *JBANC Chronicle*, March 1999, no. 13. p. 1.

¹⁴⁵ *Statement Released by the Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs, U.S. Department of State*, February 24, 1997.

¹⁴⁶ *The United States Agency for International Development*, Riga, Latvia, 25 November 1997.

¹⁴⁷ *Latvia Graduates from U.S. Development Assistance*, Embassy of the United States in Latvia, July 1999.

Troop withdrawal

The withdrawal of Soviet/Russian troops from Latvian soil was a key issue with the US, and one which the Russian Federation sought to link to Latvian nationality policy. In November 1991, the Senate approved a resolution pressing the Soviet Union to begin troop withdrawals without delay stating that the continued presence of troops threatened the peace and independence of the Baltic States.¹⁴⁸

From the beginning of his Presidency, the White House claimed that the promotion of an agreement on Russian troop withdrawal from Latvia was amongst Clinton's highest foreign policy priorities.¹⁴⁹ He clearly differentiated between human rights, citizenship, and the withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia, stipulating that troops must be withdrawn without any conditions being attached. He also urged that the problems of citizenship and human rights be resolved in the spirit of the CSCE recommendations.¹⁵⁰ On a visit to Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the Latvian Foreign Minister Georgs Andrejevs received the message that, while the US supported the unconditional and rapid removal of Russian troops from Latvian soil, the Latvians must show 'concern and sensitivity for the Russian minority'.¹⁵¹ Earlier in September 1993, President Clinton indicated a willingness to work with both parties to assist in the resolution of outstanding issues.¹⁵² Clinton also acknowledged the assistance of Sweden in brokering the final troop withdrawal agreement.¹⁵³

As the talks to remove Russian troops from Latvian soil reached deadlock, President Clinton offered a number of measures to aid their progress. During the Vancouver and Naples meetings between Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton, and during three other face-to-face meetings, Clinton raised the issue of troop withdrawal as a priority. He also had regular contacts and meetings with the Baltic leaders, on these

¹⁴⁸ *RFE/RL*, 26 November 1991.

¹⁴⁹ *Latvia and Russia Agree on Withdrawal of Military Forces*, Statement Released by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Washington D.C., 30 April 1994.

¹⁵⁰ Latvia President Clinton Telephones Ulmanis, Moscow *ITAR-TASS*, 21 January 1994; *FBIS-SOV-94-014*, 21 January 1994.

¹⁵¹ *RFE/RL*, 2 February 1994.

¹⁵² *The White House Office of the Press Secretary Statement by the Press Secretary*, 7 September 1993.

¹⁵³ *Latvia and Russia Agree on Withdrawal of Military Forces*, Statement Released by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Washington D.C., 30 April 1994.

occasions, pressing the leaders on the need to come to an agreement.¹⁵⁴ According to Maris Grinblats, a *Saeima* Deputy for the Fatherland and Freedom Party, the US and Sweden worked together to pressure Latvia into signing an agreement that would permit the Skrunda Radar station to operate for a further 4 years. The deal was worked out by Clinton on a visit to Moscow in 1994. A Latvian delegation was then invited to Washington and briefed as to what was considered the wisest course of action for Latvia with regard to troop withdrawal. On the way home, the Latvians stopped in Sweden to be briefed by Swedes and diplomats from ten other countries on the agreement and, according to Grinblats, who was a member of the delegation, to be told that if Latvia failed to make this compromise they were 'on their own'.¹⁵⁵

Clinton made it clear to Russian Federation President Yeltsin in meetings and telephone calls that US–Russian relations would be seriously and negatively affected if Russian troops were not withdrawn by 31 August 1994. On every occasion when Yeltsin and Clinton communicated, President Yeltsin raised concerns over the political rights and living conditions of those Russians who elected to stay in the Baltic States. Clinton stated that, as a democracy, the US believed that minorities had certain rights to participate and were entitled to fair treatment but that the troop withdrawal should continue on schedule.¹⁵⁶ The Russian side raised the question of where to house the troops as they left Latvia and, following this, the US Congress authorised US\$160 million to build 5000 units of accommodation for the soldiers. In an effort to speed up the troop withdrawal negotiations, the US offered half of the 5000 housing units in voucher form so that officers could leave Latvia in Summer 1994 and purchase existing housing in the Russian Federation.¹⁵⁷

Financial pressure as well as inducements were used by the US to try to keep the withdrawal process going. The US Senate put forward a provision on the Foreign Operations Bill on 13 July 1994 to block US\$839 million in aid to the former Soviet

¹⁵⁴ *Background Briefing by a Senior Administrative Official*, White House, 27 July 1994.

¹⁵⁵ *Dagens Nyheter*, 15 June 1994.

¹⁵⁶ *Press Conference by President Clinton, President Ulmanis of Latvia, and President Meri of Estonia*, State Room Riga Castle, Riga, Latvia, 6 July 1994: *RFE/RL*, 6 July 1994.

¹⁵⁷ *Background Briefing by a Senior Administrative Official*, White House, 27 July 1994.

Union. The stated aim was that the Russian Federation would not receive aid unless troops were withdrawn from Latvia and Estonia by 31 August 1994.¹⁵⁸ In the event, the signing of a troop withdrawal agreement made this legislation unnecessary.

The US sought to distance the issue of troop withdrawal from the situation of the non-citizens and Russian minorities in Latvia.¹⁵⁹ However, they made it clear that the Latvian government was expected to treat its minorities fairly and in line with Western standards. On 22 July 1994, the *Saeima* passed amendments to the Citizenship Law to end the quota system, but stipulated that naturalisation would not begin until the Russian troops had left Latvia. The original law adopted earlier in the month received sharp criticism from the US who counselled against such a provocative law, given the remaining Russian troops in Latvia.¹⁶⁰

A pivotal role was played by the US as facilitator for the Latvian–Russian troop withdrawal negotiations. While they sought to separate the issues of Latvian nationality policy and troop withdrawal, they tried to alert Latvia to the expediency of treating the non-citizens well according to international law, and of maintaining good relations with the Russian Federation.

Citizenship legislation

While the US and Latvia tried to keep the issue of troop withdrawal separate from the development of Latvian citizenship legislation, the two processes took place concurrently. Advice on citizenship emanated from several levels within the US, including the President, State Department, and Congress, as well as NGOs and interest groups. The State Department criticised Latvian nationality policy through its annual Human Rights assessments. However, they made sure that their view that

¹⁵⁸ RFE/RL, 14 July 1994.

¹⁵⁹ Press Conference by President Clinton, President Ulmanis of Latvia, and President Meri of Estonia, State Room, Riga Castle, Riga, Latvia, 6 July 1994.

¹⁶⁰ Stephen Erlanger, 'Latvia Amends Harsh Citizenship Law that Angered Russia,' *The New York Times*, 26 July 1994.

there had been significant progress on these issues in Latvia was communicated to the Russian Federation.¹⁶¹

The US government reacted in a very negative manner to the proposed Citizenship Law of 1994, which included quotas for those who could naturalise. President Clinton emphasised the need for Latvia to assure the political rights of the non-Latvians and for a generally inclusive political process.¹⁶² He communicated his concerns about the proposed Citizenship Law to President Ulmanis,¹⁶³ stating that the Law should ensure that the ethnic minorities in Latvia had a fair possibility to obtain citizenship and a chance to participate fully in Latvian life. The White House, State Department, and diplomats stated publicly and privately to the Russian Federation that they recognised the need for the Law to change, but counselled that unrelenting pressure was not the most productive way of doing this as it would inflame nationalists.¹⁶⁴

The White House administration was extremely pleased when President Ulmanis refused to sign the Citizenship Law and sent it back to the *Saeima* for reconsideration.¹⁶⁵ The US had strongly advised the Latvians to adhere to OSCE recommendations and change their legislation accordingly. The US had also held extensive discussions with Latvia regarding the situation of the non-citizens and backed the work of the OSCE, especially HCNM Max van der Stoep. The refusal of President Ulmanis to sign the initial Citizenship Law and the dropping of the quota system seemed, at this stage, to be the only discernible result of Western, including US, pressure.

Outside pressure on, and interest in, Latvian nationality affairs intensified following the December 1997 failure of Latvia to gain admission to EU entry talks,

¹⁶¹ John Shattuck, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, 14 April 1997.

¹⁶² *The White House Office of the Press Secretary Background Briefing by Senior Administrative Official*, 29 September 1993.

¹⁶³ *Press Conference by President Clinton, President Ulmanis of Latvia, and President Meri of Estonia*, State Room Riga Castle, Riga, Latvia, 6 July 1994; *RFE/RL*, 6 July 1994.

¹⁶⁴ *Press Conference by President Clinton, President Ulmanis of Latvia, and President Meri of Estonia*, State Room Riga Castle, Riga, Latvia, 6 July 1994; *RFE/RL*, 6 July 1994.

¹⁶⁵ *The White House Office of the Press Secretary Background Briefing by Senior Administrative Official*, 1 July 1994.

and increased tensions with Russia while the controversial Language Law was being debated in the *Saeima* and during the disturbances of March 1998. In March 1998, a number of Western figures, including US Ambassador Larry Napper, suggested Latvia postpone debates on the Language Law until international organisations pronounced their opinion. Following his comments, the For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK faction accused him of unnecessary interference in the internal concerns of his host country.¹⁶⁶

President Clinton wrote to Ulmanis in April 1998 urging Latvia to engage in dialogue with Russia to sort out the dispute over treatment of non-citizens. The US also spoke with the Russian government in order to try to find out what was required to resolve the problems.¹⁶⁷ Up to this point, the US had managed a fairly even handed approach, recognising Russian concerns, yet also understanding the difficulties of the Latvian government. However, White House officials expressed increasing concern over Russian ‘bullying rhetoric and tactics against Latvia’. The US sought to try quiet diplomacy consisting of Clinton writing to Ulmanis, and Secretary of State Madeline Albright writing to Yevgenii Primakov about her concern over rising tension and warning against the use of sanctions.¹⁶⁸

The State Department also praised Latvia’s proposed amendments to the citizenship legislation,¹⁶⁹ adding that an integrated society helped Latvia move toward its ambition of joining NATO and the EU.¹⁷⁰

Although the US could not directly assist Latvian entry into the EU, their positive rhetoric, praising Latvian progress, and the fact that meetings had taken place, was of value to the Latvians as it enabled them to quote US sources, who stated that there was no evidence of a systematic abuse of human rights. The Latvian government used the backing of this powerful ally to bolster their resistance to

¹⁶⁶ Baltic States, US Envoy Accused of Interference over Language Bill, *Moscow RIA*, 12 March 1998; *FBIS-SOV-98-071*, 12 March 1998.

¹⁶⁷ *BNS*, 13 April 1998.

¹⁶⁸ *RFE/RL*, 17 April 1998.

¹⁶⁹ Steven Erlanger, ‘US Turns to Russia-Latvia Dispute,’ *The New York Times*, 17 April 1998; *RFE/RL*, 17 April 1998.

¹⁷⁰ *RFE/RL*, 24 June 1998.

Russian rhetoric. The US was anxious that only the OSCE standards should be applied, that Latvia should clearly know what was required, and that ‘the goal posts should not be moved’.¹⁷¹ This application of a single set of standards was a reference to the pressure from the Russian Federation to demand more and more changes to the citizenship legislation.

NATO expansion

The Baltic States believed that in order to ensure their security they had to be members of NATO¹⁷² so Latvia has made membership a policy priority. An examination of their bid to join is relevant to the thesis question because the treatment of their non-citizens has been a key stumbling block to membership.

The Clinton administration was a strong advocate of NATO expansion to include the Baltic States, provided they met the necessary criteria but faced the difficult task of trying to promote Baltic security without incurring the wrath of the Russian Federation. Opposition from the Russian Federation to NATO expansion was especially prevalent in connection with the Baltic States, with the issue of the status of the Russian minorities once again being raised.

President Clinton did not, however, have overwhelming support in his professed desire to expand NATO to include the Baltic States either from his Western allies or from his domestic constituency.¹⁷³ In any US support for NATO expansion, it has to be noted that the US was only one member of NATO, and still had to garner the support of their allies for any expansion; it could not be a unilateral decision and they could not make absolute promises to Latvia that they would definitely be admitted. Germany was not in favour of a further expansion to include the Baltic States, whilst Italy, France, Spain, Greece, and Turkey supported a southern

¹⁷¹ *Remarks by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot, Joint Communiqué Signing Ceremony and Press Conference, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Algirdas Saudargas, Latvian State Secretary Maris Riekstins, and Estonian Foreign Minister Toomas Hendrik Ilves Washington D.C., 16 July 1999.*

¹⁷² *Latvia in NATO: Why it's good for the United States and Europe*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Latvia/ Embassy of Latvia, Washington D.C., March 1999.

¹⁷³ *White House on Clinton Meeting with Baltic Presidents*, United States Information Agency, 20 January 1998; ‘Clinton Urges NATO expansion by 1999; Dole sees “foot dragging”’, The Associated Press, 22 October 1996.

expansion of the alliance.¹⁷⁴ It is possible that the cost of supporting the Baltic States was deemed lower for the US Presidency than for his European allies. Removed from the immediate geopolitical vicinity, the new NATO borders would not be in the immediate US geographical sphere. In terms of self-interest, supporting the desire of the Baltic States to join NATO meant that these countries had to spend a considerable amount on upgrading their military systems and training personnel. The US loaned a substantial sum of money to these countries, most of which was used to purchase US weaponry. NATO members could, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty, and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area, to accede to NATO.¹⁷⁵ If there was no political will within NATO for Latvia to join, then they would not become members, no matter how much progress they made in improving their own military capabilities.

In a cost benefit analysis, for those opposing the inclusion of the Baltic States in NATO, the gain of Baltic States membership could be outweighed by the negative impact on Western–Russian Federation relations. As well as concerns over Russian reactions, US Congress felt Latvia should address the issues of treatment of minorities and also confront their past, particularly in relation to the role of Latvia during the Holocaust. Those opposing Latvian membership pointed out that NATO was not just a military organisation but also a ‘community of values’.¹⁷⁶ The unresolved issue of the large Russian minority in Latvia had, however, weakened as a Russian Federation argument against Latvian membership in NATO when the Latvians passed citizenship and language policies broadly in line with OSCE recommendations, thus helping to reduce Russian–Latvian tensions in the area.¹⁷⁷

After the April 1999 Washington Summit failed to name any new NATO members, the candidate countries each received an individually tailored Membership

¹⁷⁴ *Independent Task Force Report U.S. Policy Toward North-eastern Europe*, Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Chairman and F. Stephen Larrabee, Project Director, Released April 1999, <http://www.foreignrelations.org/public/resource.cgi?pub!3!27>

¹⁷⁵ Article 10, The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C., 4 April 1949.

¹⁷⁶ *Independent Task Force Report U.S. Policy toward North-eastern Europe*, Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Chairman and F. Stephen Larrabee, Project Director, Released April 1999, <http://www.foreignrelations.org/public/resource.cgi?pub!3!27>

¹⁷⁷ Joffe, Joseph, ‘How America Does It,’ *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 76, no. 5, p. 23, September–October 1997.

Action Plan (MAP) detailing the exact requirements for membership. The plans mentioned the issue of minorities and praised Latvia for meeting OSCE requirements. Applicant countries were required to settle ethnic disputes or external territorial disputes, including irredentist claims or internal jurisdictional disputes, by peaceful means, in accordance with OSCE principles, and to pursue good neighbourly relations.¹⁷⁸

The Baltic–American organisations lobbied strongly for NATO membership for the three Baltic States¹⁷⁹ and claimed that the US should have recognised the leading role of the Baltic States in the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the peace dividend of improved growth and prosperity, which the US enjoyed as a result. Although they argued that the US was morally obliged to share the peace dividend with the Baltic States and demanded US support for their entry into NATO, it seems unlikely that the Baltic–American groups will affect the decision of the U.S. Congress on whether or not to support for the Baltic States' admission to NATO¹⁸⁰ because, despite operating under the umbrella of the Central and East European Coalition (CEEC), they suffer from a lack of coordination. Except for short annual meetings at the Joint Baltic American National Committee (JBANC), there is no event that brings together all the American–Baltic organisations. The small size of the Baltic constituency in the US also hampers their operations. However, in an attempt to counter this, Baltic organisations tend to concentrate their lobbying efforts on members of the House Baltic Caucus and the Senate Baltic Freedom Caucus and depend on these members to champion Baltic interests to the wider House and Senate. The House Caucus had 69 members and the Senate Caucus 7 members in the 106th Congress. The Baltic-American organisations are keen to emphasise that their objective is to lobby for the interests of the US and not to act as lobbyists for the

¹⁷⁸ *NATO Membership Action Plan, Press Release, NAC-S (99) 66, 24 April 1999.*

¹⁷⁹ *BNS*, 30 January 1999.

¹⁸⁰ Peter Blumbergs, ALA Vice President for Public Affairs, 'NATO Summit: Will it be "Madrid Plus"?', *Latvian Dimensions*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1999, American Latvian Association, p. 3.

Baltic States. JBANC's Altau stated that 'Our main idea is that the enlargement of NATO would be important for the U.S. security interests'.¹⁸¹

Baltic-US Charter

As NATO membership was not an immediate prospect in 1998, US-Baltic States relations were consolidated in a formal accord when, on 17 January, the three Baltic Presidents and US President Clinton signed the US-Baltic Charter. President Clinton declared that, while the charter supported Baltic States membership of NATO, it did not guarantee it¹⁸² while the Baltic States were keen to emphasise that the signing of the charter was not a substitute for NATO membership.

The Baltic-US Charter also outlined support for NATO expansion whilst, at the same time, emphasising the need for Latvia to respect human rights. The integration of all Latvian residents into Latvian society was a key element of the Charter's aim of bringing Latvia fully into European and Transatlantic institutions.¹⁸³ The Partners reaffirmed their commitment to the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent OSCE documents. The signatories committed to implementing legislation which embodied these OSCE sentiments. This Charter was seen as a sign of political support for the Baltic States to boost their confidence in relations following the signing of the NATO-Russian agreement in 1997. It was clearly stated that the Charter had no legal force, did not guarantee membership of NATO, nor should it be viewed as a back-door security guarantee.¹⁸⁴

The Charter also stressed the support of the signatories for democratic reform in Russia and for the endurance of Russia's close ties to NATO. The carefully worded document mentioned the importance of the promotion of cooperation and

¹⁸¹ Ieva Raubiško, *Baltic Activists in Washington Focus on NATO*, Latvians Online, www.latviansonline.com, 24 February 2001.

¹⁸² *Estonian Review*, vol. 8, no. 5, January 25-31, 1998.

¹⁸³ *Press Statement by James B. Foley*, Deputy Spokesman US Department of State, 10 December 1999.

¹⁸⁴ *A Charter of Partnership among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, Republic of Latvia, and Republic of Lithuania*, 16 January 1998, the White House Office of the Press Secretary, 16 January 1998.

good neighbourly relations to advance integration in Europe and enhance regional security. This was a clear reference to the need to cooperate with Russia.¹⁸⁵

OSCE citizenship regulations passed

Following the rejection by the European Union from the first round of accession talks in December 1997, and the March 1998 deterioration in Russian–Latvian relations, the Latvian government re-examined its nationality policy. This suggests that it may have been a combination of factors that led to the change in Latvian nationality policy. The US strongly encouraged progress on these issues with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright counselling the Russian Federation not to put pressure on Latvia and President Clinton urging President Ulmanis to adopt a conciliatory approach towards relations.

Following the Latvian decision to hold a referendum, the outgoing US Ambassador to Latvia travelled around the country campaigning for people to vote for the changes to the citizenship legislation in the October 1998 referendum. As previously discussed, he received heavy criticism for such a politicised stance. His actions angered nationalist MPs who were more inclined to speak out against the proposed amendments to prove that they would not allow external interference in Latvia's internal affairs but the Ambassador had the full support of the State Department and the opinions he expressed were in line with US policy. The US favoured a more up-front approach to the behind the scenes diplomatic pressure the Nordic countries exerted around the same time. President Clinton wrote to President Ulmanis on 31 August 1998, strongly supporting the amendments. The US did acknowledge, however, that it had to be the choice of the Latvian electorate on whether to vote to retain the amendments.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ *A Charter of Partnership*, 16 January 1998.

¹⁸⁶ *Press Statement by James B. Foley*, Deputy Spokesman US Department of State, 30 September 1998.

Implementation of legislation

By 1998–9, the debate had moved onto the implementation of these laws. The US was eager that Latvia should integrate its minority and also conduct civil and productive relations with Russia.¹⁸⁷ The US spoke of being satisfied that Latvia had met all the OSCE requirements but that now they would be closely observing to ensure that the policies were implemented. They committed US\$500,000 to promoting naturalisation opportunities for the non-citizens.¹⁸⁸

In terms of implementation, the US joined the UNDP language-training programme 2 years late, but became enthusiastic supporters and, in conjunction with USAID and Freedom House, developed their own separate bi-lateral programmes. The US contributed US\$136 million to the Baltic States, within the remit of the Support for East European Democracy Programme (SEED).¹⁸⁹ At the first anniversary of the signing of the Baltic–American charter, the US State Department outlined its interests in the region as working through defence and economic working groups and international organisations to focus on investment in the region, promote the full integration of minorities, and build on progress in the areas of environment, health, crime, and civil society.¹⁹⁰

USAID-funded Freedom House embarked on a number of projects to facilitate integration through increased naturalisation. In conjunction with the Latvian Naturalisation Board, an information centre was developed to try to help motivate people through the process of naturalisation while a new fast track language-teaching scheme, administered by the Latvian Folk School,¹⁹¹ and the Naturalisation Board also received Freedom House assistance.¹⁹²

A number of other USAID-funded projects connected to the naturalisation process also helped the naturalisation board to expand its mandate to include the

¹⁸⁷ Joffe, Joseph, 'How America Does It,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 5, p.23, September-October 1997.

¹⁸⁸ *Press Statement by James B. Foley*, Deputy Spokesman US Department of State, 5 October 1998.

¹⁸⁹ *A Charter of Partnership among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, Republic of Latvia, and Republic of Lithuania*, 16 January 1998, the White House Office of the Press Secretary, 16 January 1998.

¹⁹⁰ *BNS*, 15 January 1999.

¹⁹¹ Freedom House put out to tender the task of teaching Latvian rapidly to people who did not benefit from the UNDP Programme. The NGO the Latvian Folk School, with a network of adult education centres, won the contract.

¹⁹² *Latvian Naturalization Project: A Freedom House Project Funded By USAID*, March 1999 – March 2000.

implementation of the integration programme. These included outreach to educational institutions and others to become partners in community programmes. A US-based Visiting Fellows programme allowed Latvian Naturalisation Board staff to shadow US counterparts in the US Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Department of Education Public Relations Office, and US NGOs specialising in issues of citizenship and minority rights. A significant result was that Russian language media was more willing to facilitate the naturalisation process and agreed to publish sample examination papers.¹⁹³ A US NGO was also active in backing a discussion on integration in Latvia, the Project on Ethnic Relations, founded in the US in 1991, supported a 2-day conference, in February 1999 in Riga, on geopolitics and the ethnic situation in the Baltic region attended by political leaders, diplomats, and NGOs from the region.¹⁹⁴ The meeting was unsuccessful and no report was produced.

In a meeting with Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot stated that one of the main projects for the US would be working out how to finance social integration strategies in Latvia.¹⁹⁵ The US Northern European Initiative (NEI), launched in Bergen, Norway in September 1997, sought to promote economic and social unity in the Baltic, Nordic, and in North-western Russia with cross border ties and links between private sectors and NGOs of the countries. In Latvia and Estonia there was a particular focus on projects to promote social integration of the non-titular minorities.¹⁹⁶ Critics argued that the US failed to put adequate funding behind social integration projects and could not expect the EU or Nordic countries to fund integration initiatives which the US itself was not prepared to back.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹³ *Latvian Naturalization Project: A Project of Freedom House*, Associate Cooperative Agreement No. DGS-A-00-99-00006-00, 9 February 2000; Personal Correspondence with Indra Arone, USAID Representative at the US Mission to Latvia, 18 October 1999 and 21 January 2000; Interview with Lisa Davis, Freedom House, Washington DC, 10 February 2000.

¹⁹⁴ *BNS*, 26 February 1999.

¹⁹⁵ *Latvian Radio Riga, BBC SWB*, 28 April 1998.

¹⁹⁶ *Northern Europe Initiative Fact Sheet* released by the Bureau of European Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC, 10 January 2000.

¹⁹⁷ *Independent Task Force Report U.S. Policy Toward North-eastern Europe*, Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Chairman and F. Stephen Larrabee, Project Director, Released April 1999, <http://www.foreignrelations.org/public/resource.cgi?pub!3127>.

The Latvian government social integration programme also incorporated an IOM project for the voluntary return of Russian non-citizens to the Russian Federation. This project commenced in June 1999 and received funding from the US and Finland. A total of US\$220,000 was granted in the first 4 months of the programme and a further US\$200,000 promised. The help was directed at the old, sick, and unemployed. Around 1500 individuals left Latvia in the first half of 1999, many receiving assistance from the IOM project.¹⁹⁸ Not all external actors were willing to discuss this openly. It was difficult to get Western actors to talk openly about repatriation. Initially the Latvia call for assistance with repatriation was refused by the West. However, countries including the US and Finland were more willing to assist in the repatriation of former Soviet Officers, the elderly, and infirm who volunteered to return to the Russian Federation and were only prevented from doing so by lack of funds.

The United States was quick to congratulate Latvia on passing the 1999 Language Legislation broadly in line with international recommendations. The US had criticised drafts of the Law for threatening international business opportunities.¹⁹⁹ However, the US also urged the Latvian government to maintain the momentum of reform by implementing the new Language Legislation and abiding by all Latvia's international obligations.²⁰⁰ The US did not donate money to the UNDP Latvian Language training programme until 1999 when they contributed US\$120,000 to the UNDP initiative and also an additional US\$80,000 to a language training programme based at the Naturalisation Board.²⁰¹ This second initiative, in conjunction with Freedom House and USAID, was aimed at those who wished to become naturalised but did not have access to any language training. The courses run by the Latvian Folk School (an NGO) provided, free of charge, the level of Latvian language required to pass the naturalisation exam.

¹⁹⁸ *Return Assistance to Non-citizens of Russian Origin from Latvia to Russia*, IOM Office in Riga, regional office for the Baltic and Nordic States, info sheet #1, October 1999.

¹⁹⁹ *BNS*, 20 January 1999.

²⁰⁰ 'US Welcomes Amended Latvian Language Law', *Reuter News Service – Eastern Europe*, 14 December 1999.

²⁰¹ *Remarks for UNDP Language Training Project Revision Signing Ceremony*, Ministers Golde and Zile, 20 October 1999.

The US is continuing to promote implementation of the changes to the Citizenship Legislation to ensure that the momentum is not lost. They are, however, eager that other sources of funding, namely from the EU, are found so that these initiatives can be continued.

Conclusion

The US relationship with Latvia evolved since 1991. In the immediate post-1991 period, the US was cautious in its relations with Latvia and unwilling to offend the Russian Federation, with whom it was trying to develop a stable post-Cold War relationship.

During the negotiations over Russian troop withdrawals from Latvia, the US sought to separate the issue of minorities and non-citizens rights from the withdrawal of forces. Yet the US always pressed Latvia to consider the rights of its minorities and non-citizens. This outside pressure had little effect on the draft citizenship legislation going through the *Saeima* in 1993–4. The inclusion of quotas in the Bill met with a very negative reaction from Western powers, including the US. There was strong pressure on Latvian President Ulmanis to veto²⁰² this version of the Bill and send it back to the *Saeima* for revision. US involvement in troop withdrawal talks gave them opportunity to raise the issue of fair treatment of non-citizens and counsel the Latvian authorities against provocative legislation. Their message simply repeated OSCE HCNM guidelines.

From 1994, the US still maintained an even handed approach to nationality questions in Latvia, advising tolerance from the Latvians and trying to persuade the Russian Federation that relentless pressure was not the most productive stance. However, by 1994, the dynamic of Russian Federation and US relations was shifting and the US was less inclined to support a ‘Russia first’ policy. This may have been because the Clinton presidency exhibited a bolder approach, especially regarding security issues, and became a strong supporter of NATO enlargement to include the Baltic States. This policy drew strong opposition from the Russian Federation, who

²⁰² Ulmanis refused to sign the bill and sent it back to the *Saeima* for reconsideration in June 1994 See chapter 3.

again raised the question of the rights of Russians living in the Baltic States. It was not until Latvia was refused entry to EU admission talks in December 1997, that there was much movement on Latvian nationality issues.

The US continued to urge the Latvian authorities to observe OSCE HCNM recommendations, but there was little reaction from the Latvian authorities. The US also criticised the Russian Federation's use of bullying and threatening tactics to coerce Latvia into complying with Russian wishes. At the time of the 1998 referendum on citizenship, the US played a very public and political role in trying to persuade the *Saeima* and then the Latvian voters to support the amendment to the Law. While their advice was the same as that coming from the Nordic countries, the EU, and the OSCE, their direct style received criticism from the Latvian authorities. However, despite this criticism, the US involvement may have been just as effective as the less confrontational dealings with, for example, the Nordic countries. It was not merely the style of the US engagement with the Latvians that was important but the power base of the US, and the US need to maintain a stable relationship with the Russian Federation that could have made them eager to assist with the liberalisation of Latvian nationality policy. The Russian Federation desire to see a more liberal nationality policy in Latvia could have persuaded the US to act on Latvia in order to maintain stability in Latvian–Russian Federation relations. The US had a greater role to play in relation to troop withdrawal and in supporting the Latvian bid to gain entry to NATO. However, as a non-EU member, the US could not promise Latvia an easier passage into the EU even if they liberalised their nationality legislation.

The US actions had tangible results in the area of Russian troop withdrawal. However, their persuasion during the citizenship debate did not bear fruit until after Latvia failed to gain entry into the European Union, suggesting that EU membership may have been the key issue.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter suggests that external state pressures have had a limited impact on altering Latvian nationality policy. Estonia, in the early stages, created its nationality policy ahead of Latvia and provided Latvia with a role model and an idea of how the Russian Federation and the international community were likely to react to similar policies. The Russian Federation wanted Latvia to award citizenship to all those resident in Latvia at the time of independence in 1991. They tried unsuccessfully to pressurise Latvia into liberalisation but succeeded instead in alienating the Latvians further and failing to gain support in the international community for their unsubstantiated accusations against Latvian nationality policy. The Nordic countries used a diplomatic, behind the scenes, approach to try and liberalise Latvian laws. However they, themselves, acknowledge that their policies only became effective when backed by EU entry requirements. Finally, the US, whilst instrumental in assisting with troop withdrawal, could not persuade the Latvians to meet OSCE HCNM criteria for nationality legislation until Latvia failed to gain entry to EU accession talks. The final chapter explores the role of external institutions in the liberalisation of Latvian nationality policy.

Chapter Five

Institutions and nationality policy in Latvia

Introduction

This chapter builds on the investigations of the previous chapters, which looked at domestic politics and the role of external state actors in influencing changes in Latvian nationality policy. Theories of interdependence suggest that there is an increased recognition that state-building in the international system cannot take place in isolation. The state operates in an increasingly restrictive international environment, where international regimes have a marked impact upon policy at both national and regional levels.¹ The separation of domestic and international levels of analysis cannot be sustained, given the influence of the nature of international institutions upon the domestic policy making of states.² Chapter Five describes the role of institutions; sub-regional, regional, trans-Atlantic, and international organisations and looks at the role of Baltic States regional organisations, including the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Council of Europe, the EU, Organisation for Security and Co-operation In Europe (OSCE), NATO, and the UN. The various sections ask what each group of organisations wanted from Latvian nationality policy, the instruments available to get what was wanted and whether this aim was achieved. The chapter then attempts to draw conclusions regarding the influence of external institutional actors on the changes in Latvian nationality policy.

Section I: Baltic regional organisations

Introduction

¹ Andrew Hurrell and Anand Menon, 'Politics Like Any Other? Comparative Politics, International Relations and the Study of the EU', in *West European Politics*, Vol. 19, No. 2, April 1996, pp. 397-9.

² Hurrell and Menon, 'Politics Like Any Other? Comparative Politics, International Relations and the Study of the EU', p. 388.

When asking why Latvian nationality policy has become more liberal, it is instructive to examine the role of organisations within the Baltic Sea region. Chapter Four discussed the possible roles of Estonia and Lithuania as individual states relating to Latvia. Whilst this cooperation was at times informal, the Baltic States and other Baltic Sea states have also established more formal structures of cooperation. Again this section asks what these regional organisations wanted from Latvian nationality policy, if indeed they wanted to influence policy, how they went about it, and what, if any, results they gained.

1991–3

In the early days of cooperation, especially at the Baltic States level, the primary aim of cooperation was to achieve the rapid removal of former Soviet troops from the territory of the Baltic States. In November 1991, the Baltic States established the Baltic Assembly, an instrument of cooperation for the parliaments of the three Baltic countries. One of the Assembly's earliest discussions was on the withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia. The Baltic Assembly also acted as a platform for cooperation in the broader Baltic and Nordic areas. A formal agreement of cooperation signed with the Nordic Council in 1992 afforded practical assistance and advice in the formative stages of the Assembly's work. At this stage, the Baltic States did not address the issue of nationality policy during their meetings as they felt that nationality policy was an internal matter and not an issue that required outside intervention or inter-state agreement.³

At the wider Baltic Sea level, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), established in 1992, consisted of representatives of 11 countries bordering the Baltic Sea. In March 1992, the Danish and German Foreign Ministers called a meeting with the Foreign Ministers from Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, and a member of the European Commission to meet in Copenhagen

³ A number of other Baltic organisations existed but they did not address nationality issues: Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, The Baltic Sea States Sub-Regional Co-operation, Union of the Baltic Cities etc.

in order to strengthen existing co-operation among the Baltic Sea States and to decide on the establishment of the CBSS.⁴ These meetings did not address issues of security, borders, and minorities; the focus, instead, was on broader regional co-operation. The formation of democratic institutions, environmental issues, and efforts to combat organised crime were covered by the CBSS's remit.⁵ In this early period, the focus of Baltic area cooperation was also on troop withdrawal. At this stage, the Nordic Countries were broadly supportive of the policies of the Baltic States and aimed to assist them in regaining their sovereignty and returning to independent statehood.

1993–7

The CBSS became a vociferous contributor to the debate on nationality issues in Latvia when, in May 1994, they appointed the Dane, Professor Ole Espersen, as Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Including the Rights of Persons belonging to Minorities. The independent Commissioner's role was to promote the consolidation of democratic development, facilitate the activities of human rights organisations and, act as a spokesman for the Baltic Sea Region. He cooperated closely with the OSCE but a key difference was that the CBSS Commissioner, unlike the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), could receive complaints from individuals and groups of individuals.⁶ Espersen did intervene in connection with a number of individual complaints but, due to the confidential nature of the procedures, no further information is publicly available.

1997–9

The organisations discussed thus far in this section did not represent the Russian-speaking sectors of the societies of the Baltic States. In 1995, Estonian, Latvian, and

⁴ Council of the Baltic Sea States, *General Information*, 2 October 2000.

⁵ Anthony Robinson and Matej Vipotnik, 'Baltic States Discuss New Links,' in *The Financial Times*, 21 January 1998.

⁶ *Mandates of Human Rights Institutions with Competence in the CBSS Area – Differences and Similarities*, Secretariat of the Commissioner of the CBSS, 1 September 1999.

Lithuanian MPs from ethnic Russian parties established the Baltic Russian Assembly. An April 1997 meeting focussed on the problems with Russian language education and disputes in the Orthodox Church. The meeting also included Belarusian and Russian legislators.⁷ However, such meetings failed to have an impact on the legislative process in Latvia as representation of the Russian parties in the *Saeima* was so small.

The events of March 1998 and the subsequent deterioration in Russian–Latvian relations drew the attention of external actors. CBSS Human Rights Commissioner Espersen pressed the Latvian *Saeima* to back the 1998 liberalised Citizenship Law and also told them to bring the Labour Code and Language Bill into line with international norms.⁸ While the CBSS had the advantage of including the Russian Federation within in its remit, their inclusion also led to problems. Following a visit to the Russian Federation, CBSS Commissioner Espersen declared that the Russian Federation wanted Latvia to abolish the ‘windows’ system, automatically award citizenship to the children of non-citizens born in Latvia, abolish the history and language exams for citizenship, and remove the ban on non-citizens working in certain occupations. The Russian Federation also requested that regulations be introduced to ease the granting of citizenship to the elderly and allow non-citizens to participate in local elections. In transmitting this information, Espersen stated that these demands were not to be seen as official. However, the CBSS Commissioner’s association with the Russian demands did not endear him to the Latvian authorities at this tense time in their relations with the Russian Federation.⁹ More positively, in addition to the work of the High Commissioner, the CBSS also provided a useful forum for Russian Federation–Latvian discussions, especially when official high-level meetings were not taking place. In January 1998, a meeting in Riga of the CBSS saw the first visit of a Russian Federation Prime Minister to Latvia since 1991.¹⁰

⁷ RFE/RL, 7 April 1997.

⁸ RFE/RL, 14 May 1998.

⁹ *Latvian Television, Riga*, 13 May 1998; *BBC SWB, SU/3227, E/2*, 13 May 1998.

¹⁰ *ITAR-TASS World Service*, 22 January 1998; *FBIS-SOV-98-022, Daily Report*, 22 January 1998.

By 1998, the CBSS recommendations were being met with some reservation by the international community in Riga. The Russian Federation claimed to follow CBSS recommendations but this association of the CBSS with the Russian Federation policy affected how the Latvian authorities viewed the CBSS advice. By this stage, all supportive countries and organisations, including the EU, stated that the OSCE HCNM recommendations were the only ones which they required of Latvia. The CBSS High Commissioner went beyond the requirements of the OSCE in advising that Latvia allow non-citizens to vote in local elections. In addition, he recommended that Latvia ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Minorities.¹¹ This divergence of opinion created tensions in Latvia within the international community. Latvia had complained that the demands made upon them by various countries and organisations were varied and changing. In an effort to coordinate advice, Western countries and the EU adopted the OSCE recommendations as their requirements.

Following the successful Citizenship Law referendum, the CBSS Commissioner turned his attention to the Language Law dispute. During meetings with the Chairman of the *Saeima* Cultural Committee and also through correspondence, Espersen stated that the Language Law should not deal with the private sector. He also urged the law makers to clarify who would be responsible for the interpretation of the law and recommended that the fines levied upon those who broke the Law should not be used as income for the language directorate. The legislators accepted that those levying the fines should not benefit from their income and that it must not be up to the government to decide which sanctions to impose for contravening the Law. He proposed that the Law be made clear and transparent to ensure that people knew who was responsible for administering it and noted that there was considerable opportunity for corruption as language certification was required for a number of jobs. Espersen also stated that he was the only one to make this point about compliance and clarification on who was responsible for monitoring the Law and on collecting a fine if a person failed to have the correct language certificate. President Vaira Vike-Freiberga noted this point in her letter of July 1999 to the *Saeima*

¹¹ *BNS*, 3 March 1999.

when she refused to sign the Law. However, Espersen pointed out that, as the OSCE HCNM had been closely involved in the Language Law debate, his office had more or less restricted themselves to recommending that Latvia follow the advice given by the OSCE HCNM.¹² This addressed some of the criticism levelled at Espersen during the Citizenship debate that his additional recommendations were not assisting the international community to give Latvia clear and unambiguous advice regarding nationality policy.¹³ Espersen also worked successfully to decrease the number of occupations closed to non-citizens although his campaign for non-citizens to have the right to vote in local elections was unsuccessful.¹⁴

Organisations at the Baltic Sea level, especially the CBSS, have had a limited impact on Latvian nationality policy. However, the effectiveness of the CBSS Commissioner has also been marred by the tension with the international community in Latvia and also with the Latvian authorities due to the identification of Russian criticisms with the demands of the CBSS Commissioner.

Section II: Council of Europe

Introduction

Latvia joined the Council of Europe in 1995 although the Council of Europe had already played a major role in Latvian nationality policy before Latvia became a member. This section looks at what the Council of Europe wanted from Latvian nationality policy, the tools they used to get what they wanted, and the results of Council of Europe activity.

1991–3

¹² Interview with Ole Espersen, Commissioner of the Council of the Baltic Sea States on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Including the Rights of Persons Belonging to Minorities, Copenhagen, 12 October 1999.

¹³ Letter from Ole Espersen, Commissioner of the CBSS on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Including the Rights of Persons Belonging to Minorities, to Hans van den Broek, Commissioner External Affairs, European Commission, 2 November 1998.

¹⁴ Interview with Ole Espersen Commissioner of the Council of the Baltic Sea States on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Including the Rights of Persons Belonging to Minorities, Copenhagen, 12 October 1999.

Latvia applied to join the Council of Europe on 13 September 1991. However, nationality issues prevented Latvia from early accession.¹⁵ In order to join the Council of Europe, a state had to comply with requirements related to the rule of law, have a genuine pluralistic society, and ensure that all persons in the state enjoyed human rights.¹⁶ The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) opinion on Latvia's membership application included an assessment of the compliance of Latvian legislation with the general principles of the Council of Europe and the European Convention on Human Rights. Rapporteurs of the three PACE committees concerned visited Latvia (21–24 April, 10–12 June, and 20–21 December 1992) and also observed the *Saeima* election on 5 and 6 June 1993. The PACE report concluded that the lack of a Citizenship Law and there being no legal status for non-citizens remained key problems for the prospect of Latvian membership of the Council of Europe.¹⁷

1993–7

Membership of the Council of Europe was seen as doubly important as it was viewed as a necessary prelude to European Union membership.¹⁸ The 24–28 January 1994 Council of Europe meeting clearly stated that Latvia was unlikely to enter the Council of Europe in that session as it still lacked a Citizenship Law. The Latvian representatives were presented with the PACE experts' recommendations on the citizenship policy.¹⁹

In March 1994, a PACE delegation visited the Latvian government to review the Citizenship Law and to discuss a possible entry date for Latvia into the Council of Europe. CSCE observers noted that, as Latvian membership to the Council of Europe

¹⁵ Interview with Ole Espersen Commissioner of the Council of the Baltic Sea States on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Including the Rights of Persons Belonging to Minorities, Copenhagen, 12 October 1999. In 1991, Ole Espersen was a member of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and the rapporteur on Latvia. He stated that one of the reasons Latvia gained Council of Europe membership later than Estonia and Lithuania was the initial lack of a Citizenship Law followed by the imposition of 0.1 per cent quotas.

¹⁶ Margaret Killerby, 'Steps taken by the Council of Europe to Promote the Modernization of the Nationality Laws of European States', Síofra O'Leary and Teija Tiilikainen, *Citizenship and Nationality Status in the New Europe*, (London: Sweet & Maxwell, 1998).

¹⁷ Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, *Information Report on the Elections in Latvia 5 and 6 June 1993*, 10 December 1993, Doc. 6908.

¹⁸ *Appeal of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia to President of the State Guntis Ulmanis*, June 1994.

¹⁹ *BNS*, 31 January 1994.

was imminent, the Council's input into Latvian citizenship legislation was extremely important.²⁰

In June 1994, the *Saeima* adopted a version of the Citizenship Law which allowed for restricted naturalisation. This stated that after Year 2000, a quota of 0.1 per cent of the population could be naturalised. However, the Council of Europe objected to this quota. This external pressure was recognised by the Latvian government and, in March 1994, a Latvia's Way draft Citizenship Law was used as a discussion document for parliamentary negotiations. This document contained a Council of Europe formula for establishing a timetable for naturalisation, which closely resembled the eventually adopted 'windows' system.²¹ A number of Council of Europe suggestions were accepted by the Latvian authorities, for example that invalids be exempt from the Latvian language and history tests. They also suggested that the Cabinet should not be responsible for naturalisation but that the Naturalisation Board should be established²² and that court appeals regarding naturalisation should be expanded.. However, at this stage, a number of Council of Europe recommendations were not implemented by the Latvian authorities, including priority for those rendered stateless by the fall of the Soviet Union. The Council of Europe noted that a state could not bar or permit dual citizenship, but only regulate its own citizenship but Latvian law required persons to renounce citizenship of another country on Latvian naturalisation. The CSCE and the Council of Europe both pointed out that international conventions gave a child the right to acquire citizenship. If that child were stateless, s/he should have the right to gain citizenship of the state of residence without regard to quotas, if s/he fulfilled naturalisation requirements. The Council of Europe also noted that total exclusion of former Soviet military personnel from citizenship was too rigid.²³ In an appeal to President Ulmanis, the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers stated that Latvia's entry into the Council of Europe would be

²⁰ CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 3*, 16 March 1994.

²¹ CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 6*, 15 July 1994.

²² For a detailed explanation of the roles of the CID and the Naturalisation Board see Chapter 3.

²³ *The Latvian Citizenship Law and its Incorporation of International Recommendations*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, 1994. *On Application by Latvia for Membership of the Council of Europe*, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe 1995 Session Opinion No. 183 (1995).

further delayed and that the associated status of Latvia in the EU, as well as EU membership itself, would be jeopardised by continuing to allow the quota system.²⁴ The adoption of the July 1994 Law on Citizenship was a major pre-condition for Latvian membership of the Council of Europe. In the final presentation to the *Saeima* directly preceding the 21 June 1994 vote on the Citizenship Law, the Latvian Prime Minister clearly outlined the reversal of Latvia's move into the Western community, should they fail to pass an internationally acceptable law. In addition, on refusing to sign the original Citizenship Law, which included the quota element, President Ulmanis also pointed out the consequences of such an exclusive law. He went on to say that Latvians had to develop an understanding of the suffering of others in order to promote reconciliation in the country. The Latvian leaders were acutely aware of the consequences of not following international guidelines in their citizenship policy.²⁵

In June 1994, a Latvian delegation, including Latvian State Minister for Human Rights Olafs Bruvers, consulted with representatives of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Bruvers announced that the draft Law on Citizenship, endorsed in its second reading by the *Saeima* on 9 June, did not meet Council of Europe approval; and were this draft to become law, Latvia could not hope to be admitted to the Council. The objections related to the retention of the quota system for naturalisation.²⁶

The PACE President praised President Guntis Ulmanis's decision to send the Citizenship Law back to the *Saeima* with a request to observe the recommendations of the experts of the Council of Europe. In a 29 June 1994 statement, PACE reported that the Citizenship Law now met all necessary requirements for Latvia to become a member of the Council of Europe.²⁷

Council of Europe experts visiting Latvia in 1994 recommended they be accepted to the organisation as their legislation now complied with Council of Europe standards, but the ultimate decision remained with the Parliamentary Assembly of the

²⁴ *Appeal of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia to President of the State Guntis Ulmanis*, June 1994.

²⁵ CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 6*, 15 July 1994.

²⁶ *RFE.RL*, 15 June 1994.

²⁷ *BNS*, 29 June 1994.

Council of Europe. Espersen as delegation head cautioned that language skills should not be used as a barrier for the expansion of the body of citizens and suggested that the regulations governing the legislation should be sufficiently liberal and reasonable to give the Latvian government the opportunity to initiate language training to enable non-citizens to meet the requirements of the Citizenship Law. The experts acknowledged that there were individual cases where the rights of non-citizens had been violated, but that it was not institutionalised, nor was it a widespread problem.²⁸

In an exchange of letters with the Secretary General and the Latvian government in September 1994, a commitment was made to continue consultation and co-operation with the Council of Europe to implement the Citizenship Legislation, detail the rights and status for non-citizens, and develop the language legislation. PACE considered that legislation and its implementation must be in line with the principles of the Council of Europe, especially Protocols 4 and 7 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Convention on Establishment. Citizens and non-citizens should not be subject to discriminatory practices. On the understanding that Latvia signed the European Convention on Human Rights at the moment of accession and submitted to the authority of the European Court of Human Rights the Assembly recommended that Latvia be invited to join the Council of Europe.²⁹ On 31 January 1995, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly voted unanimously to grant membership to Latvia.³⁰

1997–9

During the tense period of March 1998 and immediately afterwards, Latvia received some strong criticism from the Council of Europe and from PACE. On 24 March 1998, representatives of the Council of Europe met with deputies of the *Saeima* and underlined that the draft state Language Law violated the European Convention on Human Rights.³¹ Articles 10 and 11 of the convention cover the right to freedom to

²⁸ BNS, 5 August 1994.

²⁹ Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Opinion No. 183, 1995.

³⁰ OMRI Daily Digest, 1 February 1995.

³¹ Latvian Radio, 24 March 1998; BBC SWB SU/3186, E/4.

hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. In addition, everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

In April 1998, as Russian–Latvian relations reached another crisis point, the Council of Europe sent a monitoring mission to Latvia and, in May 1998, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's monitoring committee criticised Latvia's Citizenship Law. Committee head Terry Davis pointed out that ‘after seven years of independence, Latvia has not yet managed to successfully integrate its non-citizens’. He added that ‘particularly worrying is the practice of classing many children born in Latvia after 21 August 1991 as non-citizens, the inclusion of history exams in the naturalisation procedure, and the insistence on a knowledge of the Latvian language for any job in the private sector’. The fact that the additional points about the language and history exams were outside the OSCE recommendations was frustrating for other Western countries and organisations, which had been trying to present a united front and demand the OSCE conditions ‘no more no less’³² from Latvia. The Latvian authorities complained that every time they took on board recommendations there would be further new demands.³³

In March 1999, the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance criticised individual cases of aggressive nationalism and anti-Semitism in Latvia, but pointed out that these were not characteristic of Latvian society as a whole. The report which had been compiled in the first half of 1998 drew criticism from the Latvian government, which complained that it did not take into account changes introduced in June 1998. The Council of Europe suggested that

³² Interview with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 11 October 1999.

³³ *BNS*, 18 May 1998; *RFE/RL*, 19 May 1998.

restrictions on non-citizens should be eliminated, especially those in employment and social areas. In addition, the report urged Latvian authorities to improve the Latvian language skills of non-Latvian residents and noted that Latvia had failed to ratify a number of international conventions, including that of the International Labour Organisation concerning employment matters, the European Social Charter etc. The report indicated that some of the restrictions placed upon non-citizens could be considered discriminatory in relation to being unable to vote, establish political parties, or become civil servants and landowners. The Latvian Foreign Ministry termed this report poorly prepared, not reflecting the actual situation in Latvia and appearing to contradict the findings of OSCE HCNM.³⁴ President Guntis Ulmanis deemed the report too severe, arguing that Latvia differed little from other European countries.³⁵

The Council of Europe had a profound impact on Latvian nationality policy at the time of Latvia's accession to the Council of Europe, which coincided with the passing of Latvian citizenship legislation. The OSCE, Latvian parliamentarians, and others acknowledge that the desire to join the Council of Europe was key to Latvia passing the initial Citizenship Law and also to their amending it to remove the much criticised quota system. Membership of the Council of Europe was seen as a prerequisite for EU membership, a stated policy priority for the Latvian government. Once Latvia had become a member, it appears that Council of Europe leverage declined and their other recommendations, which coincided with the OSCE HCNM suggestions, were not adopted until after Latvia failed to gain entry into the EU accession talks. Those PACE recommendations which did not coincide with OSCE HCNM advice attracted strong criticism from the Latvian authorities and frustrated attempts by the international community in Riga to present Latvia with a uniform set of demands.

³⁴ *BNS*, 15 March 1999. The legislation has been amended to allow non-citizens to buy land in towns.

³⁵ *BNS*, 16 March 1999.

Section III: The OSCE

Introduction

Latvia is also a member of the CSCE/OSCE.³⁶ The OSCE Mission to Latvia, essentially a monitoring organisation established in 1993, tackled citizenship issues, gathered information, and reported on developments which concerned OSCE principles, norms, and commitments. It was also available to advise the Latvian Government, institutions, organisations, and individuals concerned with citizenship issues.³⁷

1991–3

The CSCE/OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), who made a number of visits to Latvia, beginning in early 1993, acted to seek the early resolution of ethnic tensions that could endanger peace, stability, or friendly relations between OSCE member states, acting as ‘an instrument of conflict prevention at the earliest possible stage’.³⁸ The HCNM only addresses citizenship issues in relation to national minorities if they are a source of tension in inter-ethnic relations within the country and, in his judgement, could escalate into conflict.³⁹ The Commissioner tried to influence policy and gave legal advice on how to effect these changes. The Mission and the OSCE HCNM are connected through OSCE Headquarters in Vienna. The Mandate of the OSCE Mission to Latvia emanates from the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna and the HCNM also reports to the Permanent Council. However, the Mission and the HCNM cooperate closely bilaterally without the need to go through Vienna.⁴⁰ While they assist each other, they are independent branches of the OSCE.

³⁶ The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe was formed in the 1970s and met as a series of conferences. It has developed into a permanent institutionalised arrangement. The First Review Conference in Budapest 10 October – 2 December 1994, decided that, from 1 January 1995, the CSCE should be renamed the Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

³⁷ *The OSCE Mission to Latvia Survey*, 17 January 2000.

³⁸ *OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Background*, March 2000.

³⁹ Arie Bloed, ‘Citizenship Issues and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities’, Siofra O’Leary and Teija Tiilikainen, *Citizenship and Nationality Status in the New Europe*, (London: Sweet & Maxwell, 1998), p. 41.

⁴⁰ *Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Mission Reports on Human Dimension Activities*, Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, Warsaw, 17–27 October 2000.

The main concern of the HCNM is that laws that are being drafted in Latvia are in accordance with Latvia's international obligations. The Mission tends to work through embassies, keeping them informed of developments and suggesting that they get involved in these issues rather than initiating direct action from the Mission itself.⁴¹

Initially the CSCE concentrated their efforts on monitoring the progress of troop withdrawal negotiations. In 1993, the efforts of the CSCE turned increasingly to the realm of nationality policy. Following visits to Latvia on 15–20 January and 1–2 April 1993, CSCE HCNM Max van der Stoel made a number of recommendations concerning the non-Latvian population. Working from the assumption that the vast majority of non-Latvians would remain in Latvia and that, therefore, their needs had to be addressed, he did not accept calls to assist in the repatriation of non-citizens but warned of the serious international repercussions such a policy would prompt, quoting Latvian data from March of 1993 that suggested that, out of a total of 617,443 persons registered as inhabitants of Latvia, who were not Latvian citizens, 593,008 wanted to acquire citizenship. He counselled against setting requirements for citizenship so high that a large percentage of applicants would be unable to meet them. Van der Stoel suggested that Latvia should make sure its requirements for citizenship would not, broadly speaking, exceed those of other CSCE states. He also suggested that the Latvian government's need to preserve the Latvian nation would be best met by means other than the Citizenship Law in order to promote and strengthen the Latvian identity, especially in the cultural, educational, and linguistic fields. The CSCE HCNM recommendations suggested that the adaptation of Latvia to an independent state would be accelerated if Paragraph 15 of the 1992 CSCE Helsinki Summit Declaration were rapidly implemented and that there would be 'the conclusion, without delay, of agreements, including timetables, for the early, orderly and complete withdrawal of foreign troops from the territories of the Baltic states'.⁴² The letter

⁴¹ Interview with Undine Bollow, Deputy Head of OSCE Mission to Latvia, 13 October 1998.

⁴² Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Summit Helsinki 9–10 July 1992, CSCE Helsinki Document 1992 *The Challenges of Change*, paragraph 15.

indicated that the rapid adoption of a Citizenship Law would help to give the non-Latvian population confidence and promote continued harmonious relations between Latvians and non-Latvians. There was also a proposal to establish a National Commissioner on Ethnic and Language Questions to examine complaints about differing interpretations of the same laws by different authorities and also to act as a go-between for the Government and the community concerned. The CSCE HCNM advised that children born in Latvia, who would otherwise be stateless, should be awarded citizenship. Van der Stoel proposed that the residency requirement be 5 years. This would be a conciliatory gesture as the longer residency, favoured by the more radical nationalists, of 16 years would include 93 per cent of non-citizens and a 10-year requirement would include 98 per cent. The HCNM suggested that there should not be a delay in acquiring citizenship once all the requirements were met, that language requirements should not exceed conversational levels, and that people over 60 should be exempt from the language examinations. Highlighting the lack of Latvian language skills in the non-Latvian population, van der Stoel said that the Latvian authorities had to increase their efforts in assisting the non-Latvians to gain a reasonable level of Latvian language and to clarify the Language Law. He added that the government should initiate a visible policy of dialogue and integration towards the non-Latvian population and make sure the non-Latvian population was aware of its rights and obligations.⁴³

In response to these recommendations, the Latvian government emphasised that the situation in Latvia was the consequence of the suffering Latvia faced under Soviet occupation. The lack of citizenship legislation was due to there not being a legally elected legislature in Latvia. The 1990 Supreme Soviet, which was operating as the government in Latvia, had been elected by all Latvian residents while nationalists felt that only a parliament elected by Latvian citizens alone could legitimately decide the new Citizenship policy. The *Saeima* to be elected in June

⁴³ Letter to Georgs Andrejevs, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, from CSCE HCNM Max van der Stoel, The Hague, No 238/93/L/Rev, 6 April 1993.

1993 would be able to enact legislation and all recommendations would be presented to the *Saeima* at this time. The Minister felt that the existing system of human rights protection in Latvia was sufficient and he claimed that there was no need for new institutions for problem solving.⁴⁴ This early period did not produce enacted nationality legislation in Latvia.

1993–7

Following the election of 1993, the *Saeima* produced a draft Citizenship Law. The Bill passed its first reading on 25 November 1992. The HCNM gave the following response to the draft: all non-Latvians, with the exception of those who constitute a clear threat to the vital interest of Latvia, should obtain the right to become Latvian citizens if they expressed such a wish, provided that they accepted certain conditions. They would have to show their interest in becoming integrated into Latvian society by acquiring a basic knowledge of the Latvian language, which would be tested in the course of the naturalisation process according to standardised procedures; acquiring a knowledge of the basic principles of the Latvian Constitution, which would also be tested during the naturalisation process according to standardised procedures; and swearing an oath of loyalty to the Republic of Latvia.⁴⁵

Referring to the actual draft law, the CSCE HCNM criticised Article 9, which made annual quotas to be determined by the Government and approved by the *Saeima*, a central element in the naturalisation system. The lawmakers had stated that the quotas would be decided upon ‘taking into consideration the demographic and economic situation in the country, in order to ensure the development of Latvia as a single-nation state’. This system gave the government considerable latitude in deciding how many people became citizens and presented the prospect that very few people would gain citizenship. Van der Stoel then outlined what was to become the ‘windows’ system. He argued again for a 5-year residence requirement. He did not

⁴⁴ Letter to Max van der Stoel, CSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, from Georgs Andrejevs, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Latvia 18 April 1993.

⁴⁵ Letter to Georgs Andrejevs, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, from CSCE HCNM Max van der Stoel, The Hague, 10 December 1993.

express outright opposition to some groups receiving priority access to naturalisation but felt that it was important to note that provisions for privileged groups did not contravene Articles 1(3) and 5(d) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, prohibiting discrimination based on nationality.⁴⁶ He also felt that, in awarding citizenship for special accomplishments, the authorities might consider dropping the naturalisation criteria. As his initial recommendations were ignored, van der Stoel again stressed that children, who would otherwise be stateless, should be awarded citizenship. Specific recommendations included advice that the courts should be responsible for deciding if people were not eligible for citizenship and that actions which made one ineligible were clearly defined to try and avoid arbitrary denial of citizenship. The correspondence ended with a request that the Latvian government inform non-citizens of the procedures for gaining citizenship.⁴⁷

In November 1993, the CSCE Mission to Latvia opened in Riga. In December 1993, the CSCE urged the Russian Federation to draw up a specific timetable for troop withdrawal.⁴⁸ At this time, the Mission was concerned with issues of citizenship and Latvian compliance with CSCE principles, norms, and commitments. The CSCE Mission to Latvia initially worked from the premise that non-citizens would have no political rights but that they would enjoy full and equal social rights, that is the right to an education, employment opportunity, permanent residence permit etc.⁴⁹ The CSCE Mission conceded that, given a strict definition of human rights, the Mission could endorse the findings of other external actors that the problems and abuses in Latvia did not fit into the category of human rights abuses. However, the Mission felt that the Citizenship and Immigration Department practice of withholding residency status for a large number of non-citizens impacted on the fundamental

⁴⁶ United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, Adopted and opened for signature and ratification by General Assembly resolution 2106 (XX) of 21 December 1965 *entry into force* 4 January 1969, in accordance with Article 19 of the Convention.

⁴⁷ Letter to Georgs Andrejevs, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia from CSCE HCNM, Max van der Stoel, The Hague, 10 December 1993.

⁴⁸ *RFE/RL*, 1 December 1993.

⁴⁹ Interview with Helge Blakkisrud, NUPI, OSCE Mission to Latvia 1994, 14 June 2000.

interests of these individuals, concerning their home, family, and work.⁵⁰ The OSCE Mission to Latvia has tended to be fairly isolated from the OSCE Headquarters in Vienna, their mandate only coming up for renewal by the Permanent Council every 6 months. It has, therefore, been up to individual mission members, often on short contracts, to decide which problems to approach and how best to address them. Unlike the HCNM, who only visited periodically, the continued presence of the OSCE Mission meant they tended to be more in touch with what was happening on a day-to-day basis. One concern raised by a Mission member in 1994 was the non-implementation of court decrees against the Citizenship and Immigration Department (CID) regarding the registration process.⁵¹ This later became a major issue. Because the issue of citizenship was politicised at the time, registration and naturalisation were run by separate organisations. The CID was not very cooperative towards the OSCE. They refused to reveal all their regulations, claiming that they were internal and that the OSCE could not have access to them. As a result of the attitudes of the CID and the lack of any naturalisation process, many potential candidates for citizenship were lost in the early 1990s. These individuals simply gave up and adjusted to life without political status.⁵²

The CSCE Mission arrived at a difficult time in Latvia when the opinions within parliament on the citizenship question were becoming increasingly polarised, making a liberal and inclusive piece of legislation less likely. Early on in discussions with the Ministers of Justice and Interior, the head of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the CSCE Mission identified the Citizenship and Immigration Department as the continuing source of the vast majority of problems facing non-citizens in Latvia. The CID refusal to provide several thousand long term residents with a residency stamp and, in addition, ignoring court orders against CID decisions meant that these stateless individuals faced problems in finding work, accommodation, child, and health

⁵⁰ CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 2*, 7 February 1994.

⁵¹ For a full explanation of the registration controversy see Chapter 3.

⁵² Interview with Helge Blakkisrud, NUPI, OSCE Mission to Latvia 1994, 14 June 2000.

benefits etc. At the meeting, the Minister for the Interior undertook to examine five representative cases and to establish why the system had failed to protect their rights.⁵³ The CSCE Mission gained an assurance from the CID that court rulings would be implemented.⁵⁴ However, implementation was dependent on the will of individuals and did not usually take place. By the end of July 1994, the CSCE reported that CID officials in Jelgava, on instruction from the radical nationalist *Latvijas Nacionālais Neatkarības Kustības* (LNNK) party, visited, unannounced, a number of houses late at night in the company of police officers to annul the residence stamps of non-citizens. The failure of the central CID to condemn these actions led the CSCE to voice concern that they would be repeated elsewhere. The CSCE Mission reported that reaction to the work of external organisations in Latvia was one of resentment at these organisations' perceived interference in Latvian internal affairs.⁵⁵

The Bill on Local Elections, passing its second reading in January 1994, was considered by van der Stoel to be inadmissible as it included the removal of non-citizens from participation in local government.⁵⁶ However, the HCNM advice had no impact and non-citizens were not permitted to take part in local elections.

In January 1994, commenting on a draft of the Citizenship Law, van der Stoel suggested that the number of years a person had lived in Latvia should count towards citizenship. *Saeima* Chairman Anatolijs Gorbunovs opposed this, saying that it would lead to a huge wave of naturalisation. Gorbunovs, instead, promoted the idea of a repatriation programme which would encourage people to leave voluntarily. However, despite this exchange, the Latvian Foreign Ministry press service reported that, at the meeting with the Head of the Foreign Political Department, the CSCE commissioner said he could 'see no violations of human rights in Latvia'.⁵⁷ This followed on from van der Stoel's earlier statement that there had been no evidence of

⁵³ CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report* # 2, 7 February 1994.

⁵⁴ CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report* # 5, 30 May 1994.

⁵⁵ CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report* # 6, 15 July 1994; CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report* # 7, 30 July 1994.

⁵⁶ *ITAR-TASS*, 5 January 1994; *FBIS-SOV-94-004, Daily Report*, 6 January 1994.

⁵⁷ *ITAR-TASS*, 7 January 1994; *FBIS-SOV-94-006, Daily Report*, 10 January 1994.

persecution of the non-Latvian population since the re-establishment of Latvian independence.⁵⁸ By March 1994, Latvian Foreign Minister Georgs Andrejevs was sounding more reconciliatory. In an interview with a Russian language newspaper, he stated that Latvia's policy choices were either to return to the fold of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) or, while living alongside the CIS, to 'relate more closely to western society. And if we choose this second path, we will have to conform to a whole series of criteria. Otherwise we will not succeed'.⁵⁹

On 22 July 1994, the *Saeima* passed amendments to the Citizenship Law to end the quota system. The original law adopted earlier in the month received sharp criticism from external actors, including the CSCE HCNM.⁶⁰

While the CSCE HCNM could only recommend changes to the Latvian government and had no sanctions to enforce such changes, a number of suggestions regarding the Citizenship Law were incorporated into the legislation. These included the adoption of a 5-year residency requirement and the removal of the quota system. As the CSCE does not possess power in and of itself, it depends upon the support of member states to enforce its recommendations. For example, during the controversy over quotas during the Third Reading of the Citizenship Law in 1994, the CSCE Mission to Latvia lobbied the ambassadors of the EU countries in Latvia to approach different factions within the *Saeima* to try and persuade them to drop the quota system and introduce the CSCE backed 'windows' system instead. At the time, Latvia was interested in joining the Council of Europe, which was, in turn, seen as a necessary prelude to joining the EU. This was a major motivation which the CSCE member states could use to persuade Latvia to abide by CSCE recommendations. Although the effort was coordinated by the CSCE and was an attempt to bring organised pressure to bear on different factions, it was ultimately the decision of the ambassadors of individual countries as to how to convince the factions within the

⁵⁸ Letter to Georgs Andrejevs, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, from CSCE HCNM, Max van der Stoep, The Hague, No 238/93/L/Rev, 6 April 1993.

⁵⁹ CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 3*, 16 March 1994.

⁶⁰ Stephen Erlanger, 'Latvia Amends Harsh Citizenship Law that Angered Russia', *The New York Times*, 26 July 1994.

Saeima. All countries, except for the Russian Federation, agreed that the Soviet immigrants should initially be excluded from Latvian citizenship. The disagreement with the Latvian authorities was over how these individuals should then be re-integrated into Latvian society. In relation to this goal of an integrated society, the main priority in Summer 1994 was to banish the quota system to avoid prolonging the integration process indefinitely.⁶¹

Once the Citizenship Law had been passed and the naturalisation requirements set to include a language test, the CSCE HCNM urged Western donors to support Latvian language training. He emphasised that the need was great but the country's budget small.⁶²

The CSCE Mission sought to become directly involved in the practical aspects of democratisation by suggesting specific policies and helping to implement them rather than putting forward general statements of advice.⁶³ They declared the Citizenship Law to be a balanced piece of legislation but highlighted the need to ensure adequate implementation. In practical terms, they maintained contact with the Naturalisation Board and followed the implementation process closely. In their observation of the naturalisation process as a whole, they also conducted on-site assessments of the language and history tests. The role played by the OSCE was a key one in the development and application of citizenship policy in Latvia. Their recommendations were much more direct than those of the EU, which was more concerned with economic and trade matters. The EU felt that the OSCE covered nationality policy sufficiently so that they could simply follow the OSCE recommendations.⁶⁴ These were seen to be effective for a number of reasons. First, the OSCE HCNM was active on the ground; second, he was specifically charged with reducing inter-ethnic tension; and third, OSCE membership was broader than that of the EU, Council of Europe, or CBSS.

⁶¹ Interview with Helge Blakkisrud, NUPI, OSCE Mission to Latvia 1994, 14 June 2000.

⁶² *RFE/RL*, 19 September 1994.

⁶³ *OSCE Handbook 1996*, 2nd ed., Secretariat of the OSCE, Vienna, 1996.

⁶⁴ Interviews with European Commission Official, 20 October 1998; Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 11 October 1999.

When the OSCE HCNM visited Latvia in January 1996 to assess the process of naturalisation he offered a number of recommendations. At the time of the visit the number of registered aliens and stateless persons totalled 731,078.⁶⁵ The slow rate of naturalisation prompted suggestions that the cost of learning Latvian, notarising up to 25 documents, and the application fee may have been prohibitively high. The language and history exams were criticised by the OSCE HCNM⁶⁶ for demanding more than a basic knowledge. Given that polls indicated a high interest in naturalisation compared with the low take-up rate, the HCNM felt that people were being put off by the requirements.⁶⁷ He suggested the following: Candidates' scores for oral and written language tests should be combined rather than insisting that each section be passed individually; a reduction in the history requirements; a reduction in the fee; and exemption for over 65s for the language test.⁶⁸

In response to these comments, the Latvian authorities replied that the Naturalisation Board had issued a publication, 'The Basic Issues of Latvian History and the State Constitutional Principles' to assist naturalisation applicants. The chapters were summarised in Russian and English and the book included the basic facts required for the history and constitution tests. The Naturalisation Board recommended a reduction in the naturalisation fee by 50 per cent for students aged 16 to 20. However, on 20 February 1996, the Cabinet of Ministers affirmed the previous naturalisation fee for 1996, with the proviso that they would discuss reduced categories the following year. The suggested alterations to the language testing were rejected on the grounds that they would necessitate a change in the law, which was at that time prohibited by the government coalition agreement. The same argument was used against relaxing the requirements for persons over 65. Following the HCNM

⁶⁵ Figure for 10 October 1995.

⁶⁶ Letter to Valdis Birkavs, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia from OSCE HCNM, Max van der Stoep, The Hague, 14 March 1996.

⁶⁷ See discussion of opinion poll, Chapter 3, p. 119.

⁶⁸ Letter to Valdis Birkavs, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia from OSCE HCNM, Max van der Stoep, The Hague 14 March 1996.

advice that Latvian language learning should be a priority, the Government outlined the UNDP language programme.⁶⁹

The drafting of a new Language Law in 1997 prompted further comments from the OSCE HCNM who objected to several paragraphs in the 1997 draft Language Law. He told President Ulmanis that the current Language Law was sufficient for Latvia and advised that an increase in Latvian language teaching was what was required, not new legislation. Ulmanis disagreed, saying that the state language had suffered open discrimination in several areas. Van der Stoel had to be content with submitting recommendations on how to align the more controversial articles in the Bill with international law.⁷⁰ In October 1997, van der Stoel highlighted provisions of the Language Bill regulating the use of language in the private sphere, deeming these articles to be in contravention of international conventions to which Latvia was party.⁷¹

As the pace of naturalisation continued to be slow, van der Stoel stated, on an 8 April 1997 visit to Latvia, that the citizenship test was too complex and should be simplified so that more than 4 per cent of the estimated 55,000 eligible applicants could apply successfully for citizenship.⁷² The Latvian Naturalisation Board head claimed that the test was not too difficult and that one of the reasons that applications were low was because of young males wanting to avoid military service.⁷³ Through Spring and Autumn 1997, van der Stoel continued to urge Latvia to drop the nationality entry in the passport and to grant citizenship automatically to children born in Latvia with no other citizenship.⁷⁴ He reiterated these themes on a visit to Riga and also recommended exemption from the language examination for applicants over 65, reducing the naturalisation fee, and making the nationality entry in passports voluntary.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Letter to Max van der Stoel, OSCE HCNM from Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Valdis Birkavs, 22 April 1996.

⁷⁰ *BNS*, 29 October 1997; *OSCE Newsletter*, vol. 4, no. 10, October 1997.

⁷¹ *RFE/RL*, 31 October 1997.

⁷² *RFE/RL*, 8 April 1997.

⁷³ *RFE/RL*, 10 April 1997.

⁷⁴ *BNS*, 17 April 1997.

⁷⁵ *Latvian Radio*, Riga, 29 October 1997; *BBC SWB*, SU/3064, 29 October 1997.

By 1997, both OSCE Mission Heads also promoted an increase in the pace of naturalisation. Charles Magee, departing from his post as the head of the OSCE Mission in Latvia, recommended making the naturalisation process in Latvia easier and faster, urging the *Saeima* to support the advice of President Ulmanis. Magee also stated that such a decision would speed up Latvia's movement toward the European Union.⁷⁶ Richard Samuel, on taking up the post as the new leader of the OSCE Mission to Latvia in 1997, also used the opportunity to try and persuade the Foreign Minister of the need to accelerate naturalisation. President Ulmanis reminded Samuel that the government coalition agreement prevented any changes to the Citizenship Law but indicated that there could be a possibility for public discussion regarding changes to legislation. These might include the opportunity to give citizenship to children born in Latvia whose parents were not citizens, and the reduction of the unjustified number of professional restrictions on non-citizens.⁷⁷

1997–9

This lack of progress on increasing the rate of naturalisation continued until December 1997 when Latvia failed to gain entry to EU accession talks. In line with the OSCE's desire for an increased pace of naturalisation, the OSCE Mission to Latvia was closely involved in the *Towards a Civic Society* survey project, which sought to establish why so few people applied for naturalisation.⁷⁸ The project found that one factor discouraging naturalisation was the 'windows' system, which prevented families from applying together.

As Russian–Latvian relations deteriorated in March/April 1998, a session of the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna expressed profound regret at the breaking up of the Russian-speaking pensioners' demonstration and the defiling of Soviet servicemen's graves in Liepāja. However, the OSCE Mission head, Richard Samuel sought to play down the protest, referring to the events of March 1998 as a social, not

⁷⁶ *Riga Radio Riga*, 8 September 1997; *FBIS-SOV-97-251, Daily Report* 8 September 1997.

⁷⁷ *Riga Radio Riga*, 7 October 97; *FBIS-SOV-97-280, Daily Report*, 7 October 1997.

⁷⁸ Interview with Undine Bollow, Deputy Head of OSCE Mission to Latvia, 13 October 1998.

an ethnic conflict.⁷⁹ He felt it was a protest about living conditions and poverty rather than ethnic identity. Samuel used the opportunity to highlight the problems of integration, naturalisation, and the draft laws affecting the non-Latvian population.⁸⁰

Following the March 1998 crisis in Russian–Latvian relations, many Western actors, including the EU, agreed that the OSCE HCNM recommendations would also be their requirements for Latvian nationality policy. By April 1998, the OSCE HCNM felt that Latvian parliamentarians were increasingly willing to follow his advice on nationality policy. On the question of granting children of non-citizens citizenship if they were born in Latvia, van der Stoep noted that such a mechanism already operated in other European countries, especially the EU, of which Latvia wished to become a member.⁸¹ The Latvian Cabinet followed the advice of the OSCE HCNM in tabling amendments to allow all children born in Latvia after 21 August 1991 to be awarded citizenship. Originally, they had wanted the law to make these children wait until the age of 16 before being allowed to apply. The HCNM advised that such an arrangement would be inconsistent with international standards and would provoke a negative response in Europe.⁸² An October 1998 referendum confirmed the abolition of the ‘windows’ system and the right of children of non-citizens to gain Latvian citizenship through registration.

Following the successful passage of the Citizenship Law amendments, attention turned to the Language and Education Bills. The OSCE HCNM made a visit to Riga in January 1999 to discuss the new Language Bill with the *Saeima* Human Rights and Social Issues Committee but made no new recommendations. The previous year he had objected to any regulation of use of the state language in the private sphere. He now modified this to saying that such use could be regulated in so far as the interests of workers and consumers were considered. He also urged Latvia

⁷⁹ *Moscow Russkii Telegraf*, 17 March 1998 p 12; *FBIS-SOV-98-076, Daily Report*, 17 March 1998.

⁸⁰ *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* 14 March 1998, pp. 1, 6.

⁸¹ *Latvian Radio*, Riga, 2 April 1998; *BBC SWB*, SU/3193, E/2, 4 April 1998.

⁸² *RFE/RL*, 7 May 1998.

to honour their international obligations when adopting the new Education and Language Laws.⁸³

In April 1999, the Latvian Foreign Ministry admitted that eight areas of the Language Bill did not meet OSCE requirements. The Latvian government had promised in April 1998 that the Education and Language Bills would meet OSCE recommendations. The *Saeima* Committee on Education, Culture, and Science took advice from the OSCE during the drafting of the law and claimed that most of their advice had been taken into account.⁸⁴ Van der Stoel, while appreciating Latvian motives for having a Language Law, insisted that any legislation must comply with international requirements. He was very vocal in his praise for the new President and her refusal to promulgate the Law in July 1999.⁸⁵

In August 1999, Latvian Foreign Minister Indulis Berzins tried to get the OSCE HCNM to address Russian speakers in Latvia to persuade them to learn Latvian and to apply for citizenship. As Berzins pointed out, the OSCE did not threaten Latvia in any way but simply put forward suggestions. He felt that the OSCE HCNM was working towards the interests of an integrated society and would, therefore, not be seen as having a vested interest by the Russian speakers and would perhaps be better received as a result.⁸⁶ At a meeting with government officials the OSCE HCNM urged Russian speakers to learn Latvian and become Latvian citizens and promised to help secure \$1.3 million to continue funding the UNDP Latvian language training programme.⁸⁷

The following October, the OSCE HCNM again appealed to the Latvian lawmakers to separate the private sphere from the influence of the state Language Law. The recommendations stated that the use of the state language could not be regulated in the private sphere unless it was in the interests of public security, state, society, economic well-being, health care, and human rights protection.⁸⁸ While

⁸³ *BNS*, 11 January 1999.

⁸⁴ *BNS*, 9 April 1999.

⁸⁵ *BNS*, 25 August 1999.

⁸⁶ *BNS*, 24 August 1999.

⁸⁷ *RFE/RL*, 26 August 1999.

⁸⁸ *BNS*, 25 October 1999.

acknowledging that the Language Law passed in December 1999 was broadly in line with international obligations and commitments, he still cautioned the Latvian authorities to ensure that it was properly implemented.⁸⁹

Conclusions

The OSCE HCNM provided the Latvian authorities with very detailed advice on how their legislation could be made to comply with their international obligations and also to promote a more integrated and peaceful Latvian society. The Laws, which were in place by the end of 1999 when Latvia gained entry to EU accession talks, were broadly in line with the HCNM recommendations. However, the advice given by the OSCE HCNM was not fully taken until Latvia was rejected from the first echelon of EU entry talks. Prior to this, the changes which were made, for example the dropping of the quota system, were channelled through countries rather than directly through the OSCE. The OSCE advised diplomatic representatives in Riga of their wish to abolish the quota system. The diplomats representing the EU countries in Riga each approached a political faction in the *Saeima* and encouraged it to vote against the use of quotas in the naturalisation process.⁹⁰ The OSCE HCNM did not himself have the power to compel Latvia to change its laws. However, as the process advanced, the advice of the OSCE HCNM became the measure for all countries (except the Russian Federation) seeking to influence Latvian nationality policy. Having a mission in Latvia the OSCE were better placed than the Council of Europe or the CBSS to monitor the nationality situation closely and to build a constructive relationship with the Latvian authorities. They could also liaise more easily with international state actors and institutional representatives concerned with Latvian nationality policy. The CBSS may not have set the standard as, working from Copenhagen, the Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Including the Rights of Persons belonging to Minorities was more removed from actual events in Latvia, he

⁸⁹ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, High Commissioner on National Minorities, Statement Regarding the Adoption of the State Language Law by the Latvian Parliament, The Hague, 9 December 1999.

⁹⁰ Interview with Helge Blakkisrud, NUPI, OSCE Mission to Latvia 1994, 14 June 2000.

made broader demands on the Latvian authorities, which were identified with the Russian Federation demands, thus making them unacceptable to the Latvians. The Council of Europe again suffered from being removed from the immediate issues and its criticisms tended to be delayed and out-dated. For example, a report from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe compiled at the beginning of 1998 did not appear until 1999 when some of the issues criticised had already been addressed by changes to the Citizenship legislation enacted in 1998. This meant that Latvia could no longer complain that all its outside critics wanted different things, as the US, EU, and other Nordic Countries were all supporting the OSCE HCNM recommendations.

Initially, the OSCE Mission was on the ground to provide feedback and to monitor the situation and highlight specific events and to gain support for campaigns such as that against the discrimination in the registration process. The problem was that the Mission did not possess any real independent means of persuasion, so could only really be effective if they had the support of other states, especially the EU, through which to channel their suggestions. However, the fact that the OSCE was a constant presence and a reminder to the Latvian authorities of Latvia's international obligations regarding nationality policy may have helped to shape the form of Latvian nationality policy. Having every policy proposal closely monitored and commented upon by the OSCE Mission may have brought Latvia to the point where the final pressure from the EU was effective in getting them to abide by all OSCE recommendations regarding citizenship, language, and education policies.

Section IV: EU

Introduction

Latvia applied to join the EU on 13 October 1995.⁹¹ The EU set very specific criteria for membership. If Latvia does not fulfil these, including those relating to nationality

⁹¹ *Saeimas Politisko Partiju Deklarācija*, Jūrmala, 14 October 1995.

policy, they will not gain admission. This section examines what the EU wanted regarding Latvian nationality policy, what instruments they had to influence it, and how successful they were in influencing it. The concept of Latvian foreign policy, delineated by the Latvian government and accepted by the Parliament (*Saeima*) in 1995, stated that accession to the EU was vital for the survival of the Latvian state and people. The Latvian government believed that alignment with the EU economic system was bound to promote faster development of the Latvian economy, science, education, and culture.⁹² A less explicit reason for wanting membership may be their preference for being in the orbit of power of the EU rather than the Russian Federation.

1991–3

Towards the end of 1993 and in early 1994, as the Citizenship Law was being drafted, Latvian politicians approached the European Union and other Western countries to fund a repatriation scheme. They argued that the West had to take responsibility for the demographic consequences of Latvia's post-WWII occupation. These requests were not granted.⁹³

1993–7

In June 1993, the Copenhagen European Council⁹⁴ committed the EU to further enlargement, agreeing that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe should become members of the EU when they were able to assume the obligations of membership. The European Council further agreed that the Union's capacity to absorb new members was also an important consideration.⁹⁵ In order to accede to the EU, the European Council in Copenhagen declared that the associated countries of

⁹² *Latvijas Republikas valdības memorands par Eiropas savienības Komisijas dokumentu 'Agenda 2000 Eiropas Komisijas atzinums par Latvijas pieteikumu iestāties ES'*, [Memorandum of the Government of the Republic of Latvia on Agenda 2000 European Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union], 1997.

⁹³ *Izvestiya*, 20 January 1994, p. 5.

⁹⁴ Meetings of EU Heads of State and Government.

⁹⁵ UK: Foreign and Commonwealth Office White Paper on IGC, 13 March 1996; *FBIS-WEU-96-052, Daily Report* 13 March 1996.

Eastern and Central Europe had to have achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities; there had to be a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union; and, finally, applicants had to have the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic, and monetary union. In addition, a vital consideration was the EU's capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration.⁹⁶

This time period also saw the signing of a number of agreements on trade, fisheries, and related matters. On 12 June 1995, Latvia and the European Communities concluded an Association Agreement which created a judicial basis for their mutual relations.⁹⁷ On the same day, all parties in the *Saeima* supported the President's Declaration on the Policy of Latvian Integration in the EU.⁹⁸ The Europe Agreement, whilst concentrating on issues of economic and trade relations, included the following political references

to further development of Latvia's new economic and political system which respects – in accordance inter alia with the undertakings made within the context of the CSCE – the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, ... Respect for democratic principles and human rights, established by the Helsinki Final Act and in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, as well as the principles of market economy, inspire the domestic and external policies of the Parties and constitute essential elements of this Agreement.⁹⁹

In response to Latvia's application to join the EU, the European Commission (EC) provided an assessment of Latvia, published in the 1997 European Commission Agenda 2000 Report. This section concentrates on that part of the EU assessment covering Latvia's ability to sustain institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of

⁹⁶ *Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union*, DOC/97/14 Brussels, 15 July 1997, p. 7.

⁹⁷ *Europe Agreement*, establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Latvia, of the other part, signed 12 June 1995.

⁹⁸ Latvijas Republikas valdības memorands par Eiropas savienības Komisijas dokumentu 'Agenda 2000 Eiropas Komisijas atzinums par Latvijas pieteikumu iestāties ES', Memorandum of the Government of the Republic of Latvia on Agenda 2000 European Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union.

⁹⁹ *Europe Agreement*, establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Latvia, of the other part, signed 12 June 1995.

law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities to try and establish if Latvia's desire to join the EU has contributed to the liberalisation of Latvian nationality policy.¹⁰⁰

In preparation of their regular reports, the Commission used assessments made by the Member States, particularly with respect to the political criteria for membership, and the work of various international organisations. In particular, they used the contributions of the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and the international financial institutions, as well as that of non-governmental organisations.¹⁰¹

With reference to naturalisation, the EU's main recommendations related to the 'windows' system and the granting of citizenship to children born in Latvia to non-citizen parents. The report suggested that the 'windows' system was no longer required as there had not been the expected flood of applicants. Given the shortage of applicants and the inhibiting effect of the 'windows', the EC suggested that the 'windows' were no longer warranted. The report suggested that Latvia had to accelerate the process of naturalisation and also, whilst the proportion of non-citizens remained so high, must also reduce the differences in status between citizens and non-citizens.¹⁰² An additional criticism was the high examination enrolment fees. The EU has campaigned for an inclusive society but stopped far short of recommending an all-inclusive citizenship policy, perhaps because the EU's own member states would be reluctant to expose their own nationality policies to such close scrutiny. The Latvian response to the EU report that the naturalisation fee was too high was to pledge that the Ministry of Justice would draft *Regulations on Fee for Examination of Naturalisation Applications* to determine a differentiated fee structure.¹⁰³ A decision was subsequently taken by the Cabinet of Ministers on 22 July 1997 to decrease the naturalisation fee for certain groups of applicants to further promote naturalisation; for

¹⁰⁰ *Europe Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Latvia, of the other part*, 12 June 1995; *Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union*, DOC/97/14 Brussels, 15th July 1997, Preface p. 2.

¹⁰¹ *Regular Reports for the Commission on Estonia's Progress Towards Accession*, 1998.

¹⁰² 'Minority Rights and the Protection of Minorities' *Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union*, DOC/97/14 Brussels, 15 July 1997, p. 20.

¹⁰³ *Memorandum of the Government of the Republic of Latvia on Agenda 2000, European Commission Opinion of Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union*, 1997.

other groups, including orphans, the naturalisation fee was abolished altogether.¹⁰⁴ The Agenda 2000 report also suggested that Latvia should make it easier for stateless children born in Latvia to become naturalised, so that the European Convention on Nationality concluded by the Council of Europe could be applied. The unequal status of citizens and non-citizens also concerned the EU. There was concern expressed about the need to know Latvian in order to receive unemployment benefit, the obligation to pass a high-level language test to be able to stand for election, and occupational restrictions. The Latvian Government undertook to abolish these instances of discrimination and a first legislative step in this direction was taken at the beginning of 1997. The EU report discussed the entry of EU nationals to the Latvian labour market. These employment restrictions could raise the spectre of an EU national being permitted to work in certain occupations from which non-citizens holding Latvian non-citizen passports, and permanently resident in that country, were barred. Latvian Prime Minister Guntars Krasts said that the process of abolishing the ban on some professions for non-citizens in Latvia would be inevitable because the World Trade Organisation, which Latvia planned to join, had much stricter criteria in the field of free competition than the EU.¹⁰⁵ The EC suggested that the right to vote in local elections would be a powerful factor for encouraging integration.

In the field of education, the EC report was concerned with amendments to the Education Law and the lack of provision for minority education. The 1995 amendment of the Education Act, which introduced the obligation for schools to increase the number of lessons taught in Latvian, was highlighted, along with the problems of finding enough qualified teachers to implement such a policy. The main EU criticism concerned the fact that Latvia had not yet introduced legislation on education for the minorities. The EU wanted the Latvian Government to provide a solid framework for approaching the education of minorities in the medium term. This delay provoked fears amongst the minorities concerning the permanence of the

¹⁰⁴ *Basic Directions of Latvia's Foreign Policy to the Year 2005*, I, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Riga, 1998.

¹⁰⁵ *FBIS-SOV-97-293: Daily Report*, Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1300 GMT 20 October 1997.

measures provided by the public authorities in the mid-1990s to promote their educational establishments.¹⁰⁶

The report concluded that there were no major problems over respect for fundamental rights, but that Latvia must take measures to increase the rate of naturalisation and improve the integration of Russian-speaking non-citizens into Latvian society. Latvia was also required to ensure general equality of treatment for non-citizens and minorities, in particular for access to professions and participation in the democratic process. Bearing in mind these reservations, according to the EC, Latvia demonstrated the characteristics of a democracy, with stable institutions guaranteeing the rule of law and human rights.¹⁰⁷ In the light of the considerations of the Report, the Commission concluded that negotiations for accession to the European Union should be opened with Latvia as soon as it had made sufficient progress in satisfying the conditions of membership defined by the European Council in Copenhagen. The EC forecast that the reinforced pre-accession strategy would help Latvia to prepare itself better to meet the obligations of membership, and to take action to improve the shortcomings identified in the Agenda 2000 Opinion. The Commission presented a report at the end of 1998 on the progress Latvia had achieved.¹⁰⁸

The EU Commission proposed that the following countries be included in the first group allowed to negotiate on membership to the union: Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, and Cyprus. The Agenda 2000 judgement made it clear that none of the applicants met the criteria for accession but that the six selected countries came the closest. At the 13 December 1997 Luxembourg Summit of the European Council, Estonia, along with five other countries was given the 'green light' to start accession talks in April 1998.

¹⁰⁶ *Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union*, DOC/97/14 Brussels, 15 July 1997, p. 21.

¹⁰⁷ *Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union*, DOC/97/14 Brussels, 15 July 1997.

¹⁰⁸ *Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union*, DOC/97/14 Brussels, 15 July 1997, p. 114.

On receipt of the EU assessment of Latvia's suitability for joining the EU, the Latvian Government responded with a promise to prepare a differentiated fee structure, to analyse the causes of slow naturalisation, and to examine the restrictions on employment of non-citizens.¹⁰⁹ Following Agenda 2000, the EU also sought to continue to assist Latvia in the practical aspects of nationality policy. The UNDP-administered Latvian language training programme was funded by the EU PHARE programme. On EU advice, the information campaign was extended as previously non-citizens did not know the requirements for naturalisation. The EU helped to provide information sources and publications, including a book on how to become a citizen. Also following the publication of the Agenda 2000 Opinion, the naturalisation application fee was reduced from 30 to 15 lats for some groups and the ban on non-citizens being fire-fighters and pharmacists lifted.¹¹⁰

1997–9

As tension rose around March 1998, the EU sought to downplay events, taking the opportunity to reiterate concern over the pace of naturalisation.¹¹¹ The EU backed the OSCE stance that inter-ethnic relations in Latvia were harmonious and urged that the incident not be blown out of proportion and be allowed to discontinue efforts to integrate ethnic minorities. A statement by permanent and associate members of the EU suggested that 'confrontational statements and threats' could only harm the integration process. They emphasised that the EU was still concerned about the slow rate of naturalisation. The Council of the European Union also stressed that a short-term goal for Latvia had to be to take measures to facilitate the naturalisation process to better integrate non-citizens, including stateless children, and to enhance Latvian language training for non-Latvian speakers.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ *The Government of the Republic of Latvia Action Plan for Intensifying Integration into the European Union*, 1997.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Katarina Areskoug Latvian Desk Officer European Commission Brussels, 12 March 1998.

¹¹¹ *RFE/RL*, 20 April 1998.

¹¹² European Council and Council of the Union, *Council Decision of 30 March 1998 on the Principles, Priorities, Intermediate Objectives and Conditions in the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Latvia*, OJ C n L 121 of 23/04/1998, p. 0021–0025, 98/263/EC.

After the rejection of Latvia from the first echelon of EU accession talks and a further deterioration in Latvian–Russian relations, which was criticised by the West, the Latvian government took steps to amend the Citizenship Law to abolish the ‘windows’ system and allow children born in Latvia to non-citizen parents to register for citizenship. Following the June 1998 *Saeima* approval of the Citizenship Law amendments, the European Commission stated that the amendments met the recommendations made by the OSCE and addressed ‘one of the priorities in Latvia’s preparations for EU membership’. The statement added that the application of this legislation would greatly facilitate the integration of minorities in Latvia.¹¹³

Prior to the adoption of the amendments and subsequently in the run-up to the referendum on the liberalisation of the Citizenship Law, Latvia was subjected to sustained pressure from external actors to encourage a vote in favour of the amendments. This pressure was utilised by those for and against the Citizenship Law amendments. Those opposed to the amendments cited European pressure as undue interference in the internal mechanism of Latvian policymaking. President Ulmanis also stated that the referendum campaign had drawn sufficient public support because people perceived Western recommendations as pressure and they wanted to have a popular vote on this sensitive issue.¹¹⁴ Those who wished for the amendments to go through worked on the assumption that there was no alternative but for Latvia to join the European Union. In order to do so they had to abide by certain rules so it was in the country’s interests to vote in favour of the amendments.¹¹⁵

After the *Saeima* vote, but before the referendum, EU Commissioner for External Affairs Hans van den Broek, warned Latvia against delaying the granting of citizenship to the Russian minority.¹¹⁶ He stressed that passing the amendments

¹¹³ *RFE/RL*, 24 June 1998.

¹¹⁴ ‘West Blamed for Controversial Latvian Citizenship Referendum’, *New Europe*, 30 August–5 September 1998.

¹¹⁵ Interview with EC Official, Riga, Latvia, 20 October 1998. Interview with Boris Tsilevich, Member of the Party and Parliamentary Faction, For Human Rights in a United Latvia, Riga, 13 May 1999. Personal Correspondence from Juris Sinka, *Saeima* Deputy For Fatherland and Freedom/ Latvian National Independence Party, 30 November 1999.

¹¹⁶ ‘EU warns Latvia against Delaying Russians’ Rights’, *New Europe*, 26 July–1 August 1998.

would avoid the creation of a divided society in Latvia and would also reduce tensions with the Russian Federation.¹¹⁷

The European Parliament sustained the pressure on the EU to stress the need for improved rates of naturalisation. The rapporteur on Latvia for the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence Policy, Ernesto Caccavale, stressed that further movement toward the European Union depended on the success of the referendum on the amendments to the Citizenship Law.¹¹⁸ In the year and a half before the referendum vote, the EU had made it clear that liberalisation of the Citizenship Law and the integration of the non-citizen population were prerequisites for meeting the political criteria. With not all member states in favour of admitting Latvia, that country had to make sure that there were no excuses to exclude Latvia from accession talks. The OSCE HCNM received many letters of complaint from nationalist politicians about undue interference in Latvian politics. The EU on the other hand were not seen by Latvian nationalists to be acting as an instrument of Russian Federation policy and did not receive Latvian nationalists' letters of complaint.¹¹⁹

After the Cabinet of Ministers had drawn up the proposals to abolish the 'windows' system and allow children of non-citizens to naturalise, but before the *Saeima* voted on the proposals, the UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, in his capacity as President of the EU, wrote to Prime Minister Guntars Krasts to express the concern of the EU over the slow pace of naturalisation in Latvia. Blair was careful to state that the decision to change the law lay solely with the *Saeima*. However, he noted that, 'bearing in mind Latvia's future membership of the EU, the EU considers it essential that this legislation should be in full compliance with the recommendations of the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities...a delay in implementation of the legislation, implementation of legislation that is not in line with the High Commissioner on National Minorities' recommendations, would not be seen as a

¹¹⁷ 'No Amendments, No EU?', *The Baltic Times*, 16–22 July 1998.

¹¹⁸ *BNS*, 2 October 1998.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Nils Muižnieks, Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, Riga, 19 October 1998.

positive development by the EU'.¹²⁰ During the lead up to the referendum vote on a visit to Latvia, Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari assured Latvia that, after this vote, the EU would not ask for further liberalisation of the Citizenship Legislation.¹²¹ The EC warmly welcomed the result of the referendum, stating that it addressed one of the concerns of the 1997 Agenda 2000 report on Latvian accession to the EU.¹²² Latvia tried to utilise this support to gain entry to accession talks during the December 1998 European Council Meeting in Vienna. The Chairman of the Latvian European Affairs Committee stated that the referendum showed Latvia's commitment to the EU and that, given Latvia's economic and political progress, their accession should be supported. The European Parliament agreed to support Latvian accession to negotiations in 1998 but the European Council failed to include Latvia that year.¹²³

After this perceived succumbing to international pressure over the Citizenship Law, the radical nationalists wanted to use the Education and Language legislation to secure the future of the Latvian nation.¹²⁴ The EU was also critical of the draft Language Bill. In July 1999, during the debate on the Language Bill, Western observers became concerned that Latvia was returning to 'old ways' and that moves to introduce a restrictive Language Law would hinder Latvia's progress towards European Union membership. Comments reported in the Wall Street Journal suggested that Latvia's international image was not being improved by failing to observe Brussels recommendations and by provoking the Russian Federation. European Commission Press Secretary Niko Wegter made it clear that the EC was very critical of the proposed Language Bill. He voiced a hope that Latvia would appreciate the seriousness with which the EC viewed the Law. Western observers, including the EU, suggested that regulation of language in the private sector would have a negative impact on the Russian-speaking minority. Concerns were also voiced

¹²⁰ Letter to Latvian Prime Minister Guntars Krasts from UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, London, 2 June 1998.

¹²¹ 'Finnish President Touches on EU, Latvian Citizenship', *The Baltic Times*, 6–12 August 1998.

¹²² Note Bio Aux Bureaux Nationaux, Martine Reicherts, *Latvian Referendum on Citizenship*, Brussels, 5 October 1998.

¹²³ Letter to Ernesto Caccavale, Member of the European Parliament, Rapporteur for Latvia, from Edvīns Inkēns, Chairman of the European Affairs Committee, *Saeima* of the Republic of Latvia, 2 November 1998.

¹²⁴ Interview with Boris Tsilevich, Member of the Party and Parliamentary Faction, For Human Rights in a United Latvia, Riga, 13 May 1999. Interview with EC Official, Riga, Latvia, 20 October 1998.

about EU companies operating in Latvia with a restrictive law.¹²⁵ The OSCE HCNM and, following OSCE recommendation, European Union External Affairs Commissioner Hans van den Broek attempted to delay the adoption of the 1999 Language Law as it contained excessive regulation of the use of language in the private sector. The Delegation of the EU in Riga increased the pressure by warning that the adoption of a discriminatory law would endanger the prospect of Latvia's admission to EU accession talks. The outside pressure could have led to a number of undecided *Saeima* members voting in favour of the Law as it was felt that the recommendations threatened the desire to maintain Latvia as a monolingual nation. The vote was 73 for, 16 against, and 8 abstentions. Following the vote, the OSCE HCNM, the EU, and Russia put pressure on President Vike-Freiberga to return the law to the *Saeima*.¹²⁶ The parties that voted the President into office were the same as those which approved the restrictive Language Law, so there seemed little possibility that the Bill would be sent back. However, the OSCE discussed the issue with diplomatic missions of EU countries as well as domestic actors, and other NGOs. The EU also commented on the text adopted in the Second Reading and had already pointed out the shortcomings to the EU criteria.¹²⁷ In her July 1999 decision to send the Language Bill back to the *Saeima*, President Vike-Freiberga cited pressure from international critics and describing a number of the amendments as not conforming to European norms. The European Union's External Affairs Commissioner, Hans van den Broek, whose office in turn acted as an enforcer for the recommendations made by the OSCE HCNM, in conjunction with Brussels and the European Union's mission in Riga, warned repeatedly that promulgation of the Language Law, as it stood, would harm Latvia's progress towards European Union accession talks. Vike-Freiberga had commented that the OSCE HCNM one-man critique of the Language Law did not speak for Europe. However, Günter Weiss, the Head of the EU Mission to Riga, stated that the OSCE HCNM recommendations were also those of the EU and,

¹²⁵ *BNS*, 6 July 1999.

¹²⁶ *Jamestown Monitor*, 13 July 1999.

¹²⁷ Interview with Heidi Bottolfs, OSCE Mission to Latvia, 25 October 1999.

therefore, no separate recommendations needed to be submitted, suggesting that van der Stoep did indeed set the European demands.¹²⁸

During August 1999 discussions with the OSCE HCNM concerning the Language Law, *Saeima* Education, Culture, and Science Committee Chairman, Dzintars Abikis said that the OSCE HCNM's role should be to assist Latvia's entry into the European Union rather than to lecture to the country.¹²⁹ However, the Government claimed that it was exactly these EU recommendations that were dictating the policy change and that the EU progress report had specifically mentioned the Language Law, so the Government would do its utmost to adhere exactly to the EU stipulations.¹³⁰

On 10 December 1999, the Helsinki meeting of the European Council decided to begin accession negotiations with Latvia and the remaining second wave candidates. Prime Minister Andris Skele described it as the most important event for Latvia since Soviet/Russian troop withdrawal.

Conclusion

The Latvian desire to join the EU has been instrumental in the liberalisation of their nationality policy. Prior to the rejection from EU accession talks in December 1997, Latvian lawmakers showed great resistance to changing the legislation. Even following the 1998 decision to amend the Citizenship Law, the EU and OSCE had to maintain continuous pressure to make clear the consequences of a vote against liberalisation. This was perceived by radical nationalists as interference in the internal affairs of Latvia. However, other parties used it as a tool to promote Latvian integration into the EU as the only option to ensure that Latvia maintained its new place in the West rather than returning to the influence of the CIS region. However, it has to be questioned why the EU adopted this role. It could have simply been that the EU activity was motivated by a desire to appease the Russian Federation and to

¹²⁸ *Jamestown Monitor*, 19 July 1999.

¹²⁹ *BNS*, 24 August 1999.

¹³⁰ Interview with Aivars Groza, Advisor to the Prime Minister Andris Skele on Foreign Affairs, Riga, 21 October 1999.

maintain good EU–Russian relations by advising Latvia to amend their nationality policy as the Russian Federation wished.

Section V: NATO

Introduction

Latvia has consistently expressed a desire to join NATO.¹³¹ This section examines what NATO wanted regarding Latvian nationality policy, what instruments they had to influence Latvian policy, and how successful they were in influencing Latvian nationality policy.

A key tenet of nation building for Latvia is security. Using the classic definition of security as a state-to-state issue, the Latvian national elite deals with the Russian Federation. Yet the break-up of the bipolar spheres of influence, following the end of the Cold War, has contributed to Latvia's desire to join NATO and seek assurance from the West re its security. In the early days of Latvian independence, the focus was on the survival of the Latvian nation rather than on any specific policy. In 1998, the Russian Northern Military Region had 52,000 troops, 467 aircraft and 870 tanks; Latvia had 24,500 troops and eight aircraft, so Latvia had to gain its security through partnership and stability.¹³² Exclusion from the first round of NATO expansion talks drove the Latvians to look for security partnerships elsewhere.¹³³ The small Latvian armed forces, which are being brought under democratic control, are being reorganised to meet NATO requirements. Latvia participates in the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion (BALTBAT) and played host to a major Partnership for Peace (PfP) exercise (Baltic Challenge) in 1996. Such shows of co-operation are looked

¹³¹ Latvijas Valsts prezidentes V. Vīķe-Freibergas runa 7. Saeimas ārkārtas sēdē, 8. jūlijā 1999. [Speech of the President of Latvia Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, Saeima, 8 July 1999]; Latvijas Republikas Prezidentes Vairas Vīķes-Freibergas uzruna konferencē, kas veltīta Aukstā kara beigai, 10. gadadienas atcerei Jivaskilā, Somijā, 8. Novembrī 1999. [Address by H. E. Dr. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, President of Latvia, to the participants of the conference to mark the tenth anniversary of the end of the Cold War in Jyväskylä. Finland, November 8, 1999].

¹³² *The Economist*, 17 January 1998.

¹³³ NATO has made it clear that the enlargement process is continuous and that exclusion in the first round does not necessarily mean exclusion from further rounds. However, unlike the EU where are applicants who meet the criteria may enter, entry to NATO is a political decision. If the security of the alliance is jeopardised, further enlargement will not take place. Briefing at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, 13 March 1998.

upon favourably by the EU as a demonstration of a more general ability to co-operate in international organisations. Although NATO is not directly interested in Latvian nationality policy, Latvia must show it has a stable political system, no outstanding border problems, and a stable relationship with its neighbours. These are all influenced by changing nationality policy in Latvia. Latvia states that its primary goals in external security policy are integration into European and transatlantic political, economic, security, and defence structures, firstly the European Union (EU) and NATO; maintenance of good relations with all neighbouring countries, to include Russia and Belarus; co-operation with the most reliable security and defence organisation in Europe, NATO; and the graduated realisation of the possibility for joint activities and the eventual assumption of the duties and responsibilities of a full member state.¹³⁴ On 10 January 1994, at the NATO Summit in Brussels, the 16 Allied leaders said they expected and would welcome NATO enlargement that would reach to democratic states to the East. While NATO does not have the same clearly defined accession process as the EU, in order to prepare themselves for entry to NATO candidates are required to meet a number of political criteria. They must have demonstrated a commitment to, and respect for, OSCE norms and principles, including the resolution of ethnic disputes, external territorial disputes, including irredentist claims or internal jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means. Resolution of such disputes would be a factor in determining whether to invite a state to join the Alliance. Candidates must also show a commitment to promoting stability and well-being by economic liberty, social justice, and environmental responsibility.¹³⁵

1993–7

In 1997, the NATO summit in Madrid invited Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to accede to NATO in 1999. Denmark, supported by Germany and with direct US backing, secured a mention of ‘those countries in the Baltic region which

¹³⁴ *Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia*, Approved by the Cabinet of Ministers 6 May 1997.

¹³⁵ *Study on NATO Enlargement*, NATO Basic Texts, September 1995.

are aspiring to membership'. This roundabout reference to the Baltic countries was the culmination of Denmark's commitment over many years on behalf of the three Baltic countries' integration into the Western world and the Western institutions.¹³⁶

1997-9

In 1998, 0.67 per cent of GDP and 0.9 percent of GDP in 1999 were allocated to Latvian defence spending. This was well short of the NATO target of 2 per cent of GDP.¹³⁷ NATO has not been directly involved in pressing Latvia to amend its nationality policy. Latvia's biggest barrier to entry is likely to be the poor state of its military infrastructure and the lack of support from existing members for an enlargement that would enrage the Russian Federation.

Conclusion

The desire for NATO membership may have had an indirect impact on Latvia since in order to join NATO they must resolve all ethnic difficulties in accordance with OSCE norms. However, NATO was not involved in lobbying Latvia or in directly persuading them to amend their legislation.

Section VI: United Nations

Introduction

The United Nations was one of the first external organisations to be involved in Latvian nationality issues. In October 1992, a fact-finding mission was sent to examine accusations by the Russian Federation of human rights abuses. Within Latvia, the UNDP runs the Latvian language training programme, which is deemed to be one of the most successful international projects in connection with nationality issues. A number of UN fact-finding missions have also travelled to Latvia. These

¹³⁶ *Copenhagen Politiken* in Danish 9 July 1997 Section 2 p. 2; *FBIS-WEU-97-190, Daily Report*, 9 July 1997.

¹³⁷ *BNS*, 18 February 1999.

include the UN Human Rights Committee, which commented on Latvia's compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹³⁸ and the Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination.¹³⁹

1991–3

In the early stages of the UN involvement in Latvia, the focus was on the issue of Russian troop withdrawal. In August 1992, the Baltic States formally appealed to the UN to address the issue of Russian troop withdrawal. In a letter to the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Baltic representatives claimed that there had been little progress working with the CSCE and that bilateral talks with the Russian Federation had been unsuccessful.¹⁴⁰ On 16 November 1992, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling for all parties to reach an agreement on the withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territories of Estonia and Latvia.

In October 1992, a fact-finding Mission from the United Nations visited Riga at the invitation of the Latvian government and presented their findings to the 47th session of the General Assembly.¹⁴¹ At this session, the General Assembly, in its resolution 47/115 of 16 December 1992, entitled 'Situation of human rights in Estonia and Latvia', voiced concern over the situation of minorities in Latvia. The Mission called on Latvia to increase bilateral efforts and resolve problems relating to the Russian-speaking population on the basis of norms of international law in the area of human rights.¹⁴²

In response to allegations from the Russian Federation of human rights violations of Russian speakers in Estonia and Latvia, the UN General Assembly referred to the conclusions and recommendations of their fact-finding mission of

¹³⁸ 'Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee: Latvia, 03/10/95, CCPR/C/79/Add.53; A/50/40. paras. 334–361, concluding observations/comments', United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 3 October 1995.

¹³⁹ 'Third Periodic Report of States parties due in 1997: Latvia, 25/03/99, CERD/C/309/Add.1, State Party Report', United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, 25 March 1999.

¹⁴⁰ *RFE/RL*, 20 August 1992.

¹⁴¹ An executive summary of that report was issued on 2 December 1992 (A/47/748, annex).

¹⁴² *Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Situation of Human Rights in Estonia and Latvia*, General Assembly, A/48/511, 26 October 1993, 48th session, agenda item 115, introduction, paragraph 1; Fact Finding Mission to Riga October 1992, Annex A/47/748.

October 1992. The Mission's report noted concern about issues affecting portions of the Latvian and Estonian population and urged Latvia to intensify bilateral efforts to resolve the problems facing the Russian-speaking population within the accepted norms of international law in the field of human rights. They also requested that the General Assembly be kept informed of developments.¹⁴³

In the face of criticism from the Russian Federation, the UN continued to inspect and clarify any problems relating to nationality policy in Latvia. Soykan Ganev, the Chairman of the UN General Assembly, travelled to Riga in 1993 and announced that there was no discrimination against minorities and that any problems could be solved at the local level. He noted that Russia had failed to comply with the 25 November 1992 UN resolution calling for the early and complete withdrawal of Russian forces from Latvia.¹⁴⁴

1993–7

In 1993, Latvia submitted a report to the UN as part of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹⁴⁵ which included details of the renewal of citizenship and naturalisation procedures proposed by the Latvian government. Responding to this submission, the UN Human Rights Committee sought confirmation as to how many of the 700,000 persons rendered stateless by the renewal of citizenship declaration would be eligible for naturalisation under the proposed legislation. They also expressed concern over proposals that a person's right to vote would be affected by whether they gained citizenship through birth or naturalisation.¹⁴⁶ This proposal did not enter the final Latvian citizenship legislation. The United Nations continued to be involved in Latvian nationality issues, mainly in the role of observer. In April 1994, the UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali met the Latvian Prime Minister Valdis

¹⁴³ *Situation of Human Rights in Estonia and Latvia*, United Nations, A/RES/47/115, General Assembly, 16 December 1992, 89th plenary meeting, 16 December 1992.

¹⁴⁴ *RFE/RL*, 5 July 1993.

¹⁴⁵ 'Initial Report of States Parties due in 1993: Latvia, 19/10/94, CCPR/C/81/Add.1/Rev.1, State Party Report', United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 19 October 1994.

¹⁴⁶ 'Summary Record of the 1422nd Meeting: Latvia, 20/07/95, CCPR/C/SR, 1422, Summary Record', Human Rights Committee, United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 20 July 1995.

Birkavs to discuss Russian troop withdrawal and guarantees of national minority rights in Latvia.¹⁴⁷

In October 1994, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Jose Ayala Lasso announced that Latvia observed human rights. The Commissioner urged Latvia to begin the naturalisation process rapidly, declaring that lack of language should not prevent this. With this in mind, he promised that that UN, CSCE, and the Nordic countries would assist in Latvian language training.¹⁴⁸

United Nations Centre for Human Rights Group Director Ibrahim Fall issued a report on the 1994 draft Citizenship Law, which declared that it was acceptable, bearing in mind recognised international rights principles on the question of granting citizenship, as reflected by the International Court decision in the *Noteboma* case. In accordance with the court decision, 'each sovereign nation has the right through its legislative process to define laws on granting its citizenship, and on the naturalisation process by which citizenship is conferred, as performed by the state institution, in accordance with legislation'. He added that, 'Therefore, it cannot be stated that Latvia is violating international rights through the fact that it is defining how it grants citizenship'. However, Fall referred to earlier criticism of the exclusive Latvian Supreme Soviet 15 October 1991 ruling on Citizenship and cautioned the *Saeima* deputies to address these problems in relation to texts of the reports by experts, including his own as the, United Nations Human Rights Center Director, as well as of the European Human Rights Judge J. de Meyer and European Human Rights Commission member C. Rozakis.¹⁴⁹

In October 1995 the Concluding Observations of UN the Human Rights Committee judging Latvian compliance with its obligations under the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, expressed concern that the Covenant had not been given an overriding status in the Latvian legal order and that the Constitutional Law on the Rights and Obligations of a Citizen and a Person of 10

¹⁴⁷ *ITAR-TASS*, 9 April 1994; *FBIS-SOV-94-069*, *Daily Report*, 9 April 1994.

¹⁴⁸ *RFE/RL*, 20 October 1994.

¹⁴⁹ *Latvijas Jaunatne* 13, 24 November 1993; *FBIS-USR-94-002*, *FBIS Report*: 10 January 1994.

December 1991 had no constitutional status. The Committee also noted that it had not been made sufficiently clear how the human rights of resident non-citizens were guaranteed, in accordance with Article 2, Paragraph 1, of the Covenant. The Committee expressed concern that a significant segment of the population would not enjoy Latvian citizenship owing to the stringent criteria established by the Latvian Citizenship Law, and the policy deliberately chosen to consider each case on an individual basis and pursuant to a timetable calculated to delay the naturalisation process for many years. In the view of the Committee, the legislation still contained criteria of exclusion, which gave room for discrimination under Articles 2 and 26 of the Covenant and raised difficulties under Articles 13 and 17 of the Covenant. The Committee recommended that the State party take all necessary measures to guarantee that the citizenship and naturalisation legislation facilitated the full integration of all permanent residents of Latvia, with a view to ensuring compliance with the rights guaranteed under the Covenant, in particular with Articles 2 and 26.¹⁵⁰

Once the Citizenship Law was in place, naturalisation proceeded very slowly. A possible cause of this was the shortage of Latvian language teaching available to potential applicants. The United National Development Programme (UNDP) was critical in establishing The National Programme for Latvian Language Training as a Means of Integration, a 10-year (1996–2005), \$24 million national programme aimed at developing widespread teaching capacity in ‘Latvian as a Second Language’.¹⁵¹ This Latvian language training programme was instigated as part of the integration

¹⁵⁰ ‘Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee: Latvia, 03/10/95, CCPR/C/79/Add.53; A/50/40. paras. 334–361, concluding observations/comments, United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 3 October 1995. Article 2 Part 1 states Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Article 13 states An alien lawfully in the territory of a State Party to the present Covenant may expelled there from only in pursuance of a decision reached in accordance with law and shall, except where compelling reasons of national security otherwise require, be allowed to submit the reasons against his expulsion and to have his case reviewed by, and be represented for the purpose before, the competent authority or a person or persons especially designated by the competent authority. Article 17 states No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks. Article 26 states All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

¹⁵¹ UNDP: *Country Co-operation Frameworks and Related Matters First Country Co-operation Framework for Latvia* (1997–1999).

process. The citizenship legislation was seen by the UNDP as only one element of the development of inter-ethnic society in Latvia.

The Latvian authorities, the UNDP, and the countries funding the Latvian Language Training Programme saw the most effective way to encourage naturalisation as promoting Latvian language training.¹⁵² The Government of Latvia successfully co-operated with the UNDP in drafting the National Programme for Latvian language training, which was approved on 31 October 1995. The project utilised the teaching concept of 'Latvian as a Second Language' for minority school students and adults. The project also included activities to support operational delivery of language training and develop managerial and implementation capacities to sustain the National Programme beyond the lifetime of the project. Phase 1 covered 2 years (mid-1996 to mid-1998) and was financed by the UNDP with very significant cost-sharing by major bilateral donors (approximately 4 million USD). The Government established a working group responsible for the implementation of this project.¹⁵³ The UNDP project *Promotion of Social Integration in Latvia: Support to the Implementation of the National Programme for Latvian Language Training*, which was signed on 6 December 1996, was designed to enhance social integration in Latvia by providing broader access to Latvian language training for non-Latvian speaking residents of Latvia. The project envisaged a gradual increase in the number of subjects taught in Latvian in minority schools from 10 per cent in junior grades to 50 per cent in the 9th Grade. By September 1997, the core body of teachers for Latvian language education had received the necessary training.¹⁵⁴

1997-9

¹⁵² Interviews with Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 15 June 2000; Nordic Foreign Ministry Official, 11 October 1999; Norwegian Diplomat, 13 June 2000; Swedish Foreign Ministry Official, 15 June 2000; Guntars Catlaks, Soros Foundation, Latvia, Transformation of Education Program Director, 15 October 1999; Aivars Groza, advisor to Prime Minister Andris Skele on Foreign Affairs, Riga, 21 October 1998.

¹⁵³ Letter to Max van der Stoep, OSCE HCNM from Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Valdis Birkavs, 22 April 1996.

¹⁵⁴ *Basic Directions of Latvia's Foreign Policy to the Year 2005*, 1, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Riga, 1998.

In August 1999, the UN Committee on Racial Discrimination strongly criticised Latvia's treatment of national minorities.¹⁵⁵ The report highlighted the slow pace of naturalisation in Latvia. It added that Latvia should address the problems of minority language education. Many members of the *Saeima* angrily rejected the report. Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK deputy Juris Dobelis complained that the criticism was baseless and that the situation in Latvia meant it was impossible to implement all international demands. He condemned Latvian politicians for failing to convince the international community that the problems faced by Latvia were due to the occupation by the Soviet Union. Latvia's Way Deputy Edvins Inkens noted that, prior to the report, it was only the Russian Federation UN representatives who had voiced such strong criticism of Latvian treatment of minorities.¹⁵⁶

Conclusions

The UN's major contribution to Latvian nationality policy was the instigation of the widely praised Latvian Language Training Programme which has increased the number of Latvian language teachers available for training non-Latvians in the state language, a key requirement for naturalisation. As the first external organisation to assess Latvian nationality issues, the UN has continued to observe progress in Latvian nationality policy. Given the instruments at their disposal, the UN could not compel Latvia to alter its nationality policy. Rather they supplied a forum for the expression of Russian Federation criticism of Latvian nationality policy and an opportunity to look at Latvian nationality policy in terms of Latvia's international obligations.

Chapter Conclusions

Following the appointment of Ole Espersen as CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Including the Rights of Persons belonging to Minorities, the CBSS began to have a limited impact on Latvian nationality policy

¹⁵⁵ *United Nations Press Release*, Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination Completes Review of Report of Latvia, Hr/Cerd/99/48/Rev.1, 12 August 1999.

¹⁵⁶ *RFE/RL*, 30 August 1999.

although organisations in the Baltic States area had very little overall impact. However, the activities of the CBSS Commissioner were not always in harmony with the EU and OSCE actors and created some tensions within the international community in Latvia. The adoption of CBSS demands by the Russian Federation further limited Espersen's effectiveness in the Latvian arena.

On the other hand, the Council of Europe had a major influence on Latvian nationality policy during that country's bid to accede to the Council of Europe, which happened as the *Saeima* was considering the passage of the 1994 Latvian Law on Citizenship. The desire to join the Council of Europe acted as an incentive for the *Saeima* deputies to adopt a law in accordance with international recommendations. Once Latvia had become a member of the Council of Europe, the organisation became a less effective source of persuasion in getting Latvia to liberalise legislation.

The OSCE HCNM has been the most closely involved in the detail of Latvian nationality legislation. His recommendations were eventually adopted as those to be promoted by all EU countries. When the weight of the EU was brought to bear on Latvia, the OSCE HCNM recommendations were adopted more or less in full, in time for Latvia to gain entry to EU accession talks in December 1999. Before a high profile role was taken by the EU, the OSCE channelled advice through embassies in Riga rather than issuing it directly from the OSCE as they had no authority to enforce policy and no real reward to bestow on Latvia.

The rejection of Latvia from EU accession talks in December 1997 was a major turning point in Latvian nationality legislation. Before this event, *Saeima* lawmakers refused to alter existing legislation. Even after the Spring 1998 *Saeima* vote to amend the Citizenship Law, the EU and OSCE continued to remind Latvia of the need to vote for liberalisation and tried to encourage them not to instigate a referendum which would further delay the acceleration of the naturalisation process.

NATO had little direct influence on Latvian nationality policy, although failure to implement liberalisation and the subsequent presumed worsening of relations with the Russian Federation would have damaged the Latvian accession bid.

The United Nations was the first external organisation to be involved in Latvian nationality policy. Although they continued to assess the treatment of non-citizens in Latvia and acted as a forum of protest for the Russian Federation, they were not directly involved in advising the Latvian authorities on specific changes in policy, rather they gave general advice on Latvia fulfilling its international obligations. The UNDP Latvian Language Training Programme has been widely recognised as the most successful practical tool to encourage greater naturalisation and further integration of the non-Latvian population.

In terms of the overall argument of the thesis, this chapter looks at the role of external state actors in changing Latvian nationality policy from an exclusive, almost restitutionist, policy to a more liberal inclusive one. The chapter suggests that there was no substantive change to Latvian nationality policy until Latvia failed to gain admission to EU entry talks. It was only when Latvia had a clear goal in mind, which compelled them to alter their nationality legislation, that the authorities took concrete steps to bring their legislation into line with their international obligations, as defined by the Council of Europe and then the OSCE HCNM. This occurred twice. The first occasion was when Latvia wanted to join the Council of Europe in 1994 and then again when Latvia failed to gain entry to the European Union in 1997.

This analysis argues that Latvia's desire to join the EU has been crucial in the reform of Latvian citizenship legislation. Although it is agreed that one cannot account for the evolution in citizenship policy through a single level analysis – domestic, regional, and international bilateral contexts are all necessary aspects of an explanation – they may not fully account for the liberalisation of the citizenship legislation. Indeed, the dependence of the governing coalitions on the support of radical nationalists would suggest a political need to restrict naturalisation, despite protests from the Russian Federation, various Western nations, and external organisations. It was not until the exclusion from EU accession talks and a marked deterioration in relations with the Russian Federation, which was criticised by the West, that the Latvian *Saeima* and electorate amended the Citizenship Law to

conform to OSCE HCNM recommendations. This may suggest that the conditionality of the EU is a powerful force in persuading applicant countries to alter their legislation to comply with a civic conception of citizenship.

Conclusion

The thesis has examined the question why, since regaining independence in 1991, Latvian nationality policy has developed from an exclusive, almost restitutionist, policy seeking to identify the Latvian state with the Latvian nation into a more inclusive civic definition of Latvian citizenship.

The key theoretical question of the thesis is the role of external actors in affecting the internal policies of states. Gourevitch's second image reversed is apt as it appears that external actors were instrumental in changing the policy of the small state of Latvia. In terms of the realist versus liberal institutionalist debate, it is suggested that larger states were the key players because they put pressure on organisations which, in turn, persuaded Latvia into changing its nationality policy. The realist argument is the strongest here as institutions appear to carry out the wishes of states rather than behave as independent actors. The use of the realist paradigm is problematic as large states would have no interest in the internal policies of a small state. Perhaps this would then lead to the suggestion that it was in fact a desire to maintain stable relations with the Russian Federation which led the Western countries individually and through external organisations to pressure Latvia into liberalising its nationality legislation.

The thesis question has been addressed by examining the role of various domestic, regional, and systemic level actors. Reviewing the theoretical issues introduced in Chapter 1, the unit level of analysis includes nationalism theory, comparative politics, political institutions, and the role of leadership. Nationalism would have suggested an exclusive nationality policy but, although this is a useful theory because the early period of independence appeared to be dominated by nationalist forces, the research question reveals other factors in the equation. These include the leadership having to play a two-level game with the President acting as mediator between international and domestic wishes. Examination of the role of Latvian domestic actors suggests that, in the early days of independence, supporters of

restitutionist nationalism held the balance of power in the domestic arena and, after much delay, ensured the enactment of a restrictive Citizenship Law. While the more liberal coalition partners in government required the support of radical nationalists to stay in power, there was a polarisation of political opinion between those who favoured more concessions for the non-citizens and those who supported repatriation programmes. Such extreme differences in viewpoint provided little common ground on which to discuss Latvian nationality policy at a domestic level. Each President of Latvia since independence has acted as a means of transmitting international opinion into the domestic arena but this Latvian policy was not moderated until after the country had been rejected from European Union (EU) accession talks in December 1997. Following this rejection, President Ulmanis and the political parties (apart from For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK) made a concerted effort to address international criticism of Latvian nationality policy and to modify legislation in line with EU backed OSCE recommendations. On the other hand, NGOs and the Russophone communities were, with a few exceptions, mostly ineffective in changing Latvian nationality policy. An examination of the role of domestic actors suggests that Latvia would have continued to maintain an exclusive nationality policy had they been exposed only to domestic influences.

Analysis of the external actors has been divided into states and institutions. Within these two broad categories the states or institutions have been grouped together according to the circle of Latvian interest into which they fall. The inner circle includes Latvian domestic political actors the next Latvia's principal bilateral relationship with the Russian Federation, followed by the Baltic States, then by the Baltic Sea regional cooperation. The EU and OSCE, NATO, the UN, and the United States lie in the outer circles.

At each stage of analysis the chapters explain what each actor wanted in terms of Latvian nationality policy, the instruments at their disposal to effect a change in policy, and how far they were able to achieve the desired result.

At the regional level of analysis, the theory of regional hegemony proved problematic when referring to the Russian Federation. The large number of Latvian

bilateral and multilateral relationships, combined with internal weaknesses in Russia, challenge Russia's leadership role in the region. The concept of Russia as a homeland state also seems questionable since there is little kinship between the Russians in Latvia and those in the Russian Federation. Far from feeling affinity with their Russian Federation homeland, many Russians in Latvia feel like pawns in the Federation's game of power politics. On the other hand, regionalism at the Nordic level has provided immediate assistance but the Latvian government is keen to emphasise that regional cooperation is not a substitute for their primary aim of NATO and EU membership.

The findings of the unit and regional levels of analysis have been used as a base on which to construct a more complete answer to the research question at the systemic level. In the specific contexts of troop withdrawal and assistance over NATO enlargement the US appears to be an active hegemon utilising soft power influence as a leader in the world system and the institution of NATO. However, this does not fully explain the research question as the US has no power over EU membership and must step aside to allow other powers to exercise their influence.

An assessment of the bilateral Russian Federation – Latvian relationship reveals that the Russian Federation had little effect on Latvian nationality policy until the events of March 1998, when Russian protesters were broken up by police, the SS veterans marched through Riga, and the Synagogue was bombed for the third time. Russia criticised the Latvian authorities heavily and the subsequent worsening of Latvian–Russian relations brought international pressure onto both parties to engage in constructive dialogue and to address their differences, most notably problems over the treatment of non-citizens. Although the outcome of a more liberalised nationality policy reflected the wishes of the Russian Federation to a considerable degree, the Federation failed to present a very coherent policy towards Latvia. At times it was difficult to establish what the Russian Federation was doing and what it hoped its actions would achieve in relation to Latvian nationality policy. Additionally, the constant pressure from the US and the EU on the Russian Federation to stop interfering in Latvian domestic politics increased Russia's

difficulty in trying to influence Latvian nationality policy. Russian appeals to the EU and US to pressurise Latvia into liberalising its nationality policy, and the EU and US pressure on Russia not to interfere, illustrate the complex and multi-directional influences at work demonstrating that it was important not to assess each actor in isolation. Using a counterfactual, and removing the Russian Federation pressure, it is not self-evident that the changes in Latvian internal policies would have been made for the EU may not have felt so obliged to press Latvia had Russia not been a near neighbour. This might suggest that while the influence of the EU was crucial in persuading Latvia to bring their nationality policy in line with OSCE recommendations the Latvian authorities may not have been receptive to EU pressure to change if they had not been subjected to the continued prior pressure from the Russian Federation and other state and institutional actors.

In examining the role of the United States the thesis suggests that they were pivotal in securing the scheduled withdrawal of former Soviet troops from Latvia. Again using a counterfactual and taking the US out of the equation, the troop scenario might have been different but as the US had little influence regarding citizenship, language, or education policy the absence of the US would have made little difference to the changes in Latvian nationality policy. The US continued to urge the Latvian authorities to abide by the OSCE recommendations but, again, there was little change in Latvian nationality policy until the post-December 1997 liberalisation. So external state pressure alone did not lead to a more liberal Latvian nationality policy. However, the state actors may have been influential in bringing the Latvian politicians to the position where they were receptive to the idea of changing nationality policy. By taking out the individual state actors, especially the Russians, it is doubtful if the EU, including the states that make up the EU, alone would have made the Latvians change their policy. It is more likely that Latvia needed to be primed by the pressure which built up over the years from state actors. This process also applied to pressure from the OSCE and other external organisations.

Chapter 5 examines the role of external organisations with the ‘circle’ approach again being taken, encompassing the Baltic Sea area organisations, broader European, Transatlantic, and international organisations. In parallel with the structure

of Chapter 4, this chapter looks at what each organisation wanted in terms of Latvian nationality policy, the instruments at their disposal to gain what they wanted, and what they managed to achieve.

In the Baltic Sea region, the Nordic countries in particular worked hard to persuade Latvia to modify its nationality policy in line with OSCE recommendations but their advice proved to have only limited impact on Latvian policymakers until the December 1997 rejection from EU accession talks. The influence of the other two Baltic States of Estonia and Lithuania was minimal. The effectiveness of the Council for the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Commissioner was marred by tensions with the international community in Latvia over presenting a united front, and also with the Latvian authorities. This was due to the identification of Russian criticisms with the demands of the Commissioner.

Latvia's accession to the Council of Europe coincided with the passing of Latvian citizenship legislation so the Council had a profound impact on Latvian nationality policy at this time ensuring that the controversial quota system was abolished. The Council of Europe has subsequently been less effective and its other recommendations, which coincided with the OSCE HCNM suggestions, were not considered until after Latvia failed to gain entry into the EU accession talks.

The OSCE HCNM was the actor most directly involved in the legal detail of Latvian nationality policy. His recommendations were eventually adopted as those to be promoted by all EU countries. When the full influence of the EU was brought to bear on Latvia, the OSCE HCNM recommendations were adopted more or less in full in time for Latvia to gain entry to EU accession talks in December 1999. Previously, before the EU took such a high profile role, the OSCE, unlike the EU, had no authority to enforce policy and no real economic or political reward to bestow on Latvia, having to channel advice through embassies in Riga rather than campaigning directly as the OSCE.

Latvia's desire to join the EU was a crucial instrument in the liberalisation of their nationality policy. Prior to the failure to gain entry to EU accession talks in December 1997, Latvian lawmakers showed enormous reluctance to change the

legislation. However, it has to be questioned why the EU took on this guise. Were they simply implementing Russian wishes in order to keep peace in the Russian Latvian area? In other words, was their agenda to calm the Russians rather than intervene in the internal politics of a state? It is quite possible that the EU simply wished to improve relations with the Russian Federation and saw ameliorating Latvian–Russian relations through modifying Latvian nationality policy as a good way of doing this. Even following the 1998 decision to amend the Citizenship Law, the EU and OSCE felt they had to maintain continuous pressure to make clear the consequences of a vote against liberalisation.

NATO has had little direct influence on Latvian nationality policy, although the post-Washington 1999 Membership Action Plan made it clear that failure to implement liberalisation and the subsequent presumed worsening of relations with the Russian Federation would have damaged the Latvian accession bid.

The United Nations was the first external organisation to be involved in Latvian nationality policy. They continued to assess the treatment of non-citizens in Latvia, by sending observer missions to Latvia and acting as a forum of protest for the Russian Federation. They were not directly involved in advising the Latvian authorities on specific changes in policy, rather they gave general advice on how Latvia might fulfil its international obligations. The UNDP Latvian Language Training Programme is widely recognised as the most successful practical tool to encourage greater naturalisation and further integration of the non-Latvian population.

The thesis suggests that Latvia's desire to join the EU was critical in the reform of Latvian citizenship legislation. However, one cannot account for the evolution in nationality policy through a single level analysis. Domestic, regional, and international bilateral contexts are all necessary aspects of an explanation, although they might not account fully for the liberalisation of the citizenship legislation. However, it was not until the rejection from EU accession talks, a marked deterioration in relations with the Russian Federation, and the West made clear its concern over this deterioration, that the Latvian *Saeima* and electorate amended the

Citizenship Law to conform to OSCE HCNM recommendations. This suggests that the conditionality of the EU is a powerful force in persuading applicant countries to alter their legislation to comply with a civic conception of citizenship.

Note

The Bibliography lists only works cited in the thesis.

Bibliography:

Books

Allworth, Edward, ed., *Soviet Nationality Problems*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1971.

Alexiev, Alexander R., *Dissent and Nationalism in the Soviet Baltic*, A Project AIR FORCE Report prepared for the United States Air Force, The Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, C.A., September 1983.

Apine, Ilga, 'Nationality policy in the Baltic States', in *The Baltic States at Historical Crossroads*, Academy of Sciences of Latvia, Riga, 1998.

Aron, Leon and Kenneth M. Jensen, eds., *The Emergence of Russian Foreign Policy*, United States Institute for Peace Press, Washington D.C., 1994.

Artéus, Gunnar and Atis Lejiņš, *Baltic Security: Looking Towards the 21th (sic) Century*, Latvian Institute of International Affairs and Försvarshögskolan, Riga, 1997.

Azrael, Jeremy R., *Soviet Nationality Policies and Practices*, Praeger Scientific, New York, 1978.

The Baltic States at Historical Crossroads, Academy of Sciences of Latvia, Riga, 1998.

Barry, Donald B. and Carol Barner-Barry, *Contemporary Soviet Politics: an Introduction*, 4th edn., Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1991.

Berg, Arved, *Latvia and Russia: One Problem of World Peace Considered*, Dent, London, 1920.

Bideleux, Robert and Ian Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change*, Routledge, London, 1998.

Bihlmanis, Alfreds, *Latvia in the Making: Historical Survey and Actual Conditions*, B. Lamey, Brīvības ielā 36, Riga, 1925.

Bihlmanis, Alfreds, *Latvia in the Making 1918–1928 (Ten Years of Independence)*, Riga Times, Riga, 1928.

Bihlmanis, Alfreds, *What Latvia Wishes from this War*, The Latvian Legation, Washington, 1944.

Bihlmanis, Alfreds, *A History of Latvia*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1951.

Bloed, Arie, 'Citizenship Issues and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities', Síoфра O'Leary and Teija Tiilikainen, *Citizenship and Nationality Status in the New Europe*, Sweet & Maxwell, London, 1998.

Bremmer, Ian and Ray Taras, eds., *Nations and Politics in the Soviet Successor States*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993.

Brown, Archie, ed., *New Thinking in Soviet Politics*, St. Antony's College Series, Macmillan, Oxford, 1992.

Brown, M.E., ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1993.

Brubaker, Rogers, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996.

Bull, Hedley, ed., *Systems of States*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, 1977.

Buzan, Barry, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd edn., Harvester Wheatsheaf, London, 1991.

Buzayev, Vladimir, Genady Kotov and Tatyana Zhdanok, *Welcome to the Apartheid State*, Russian Public Information Centre in Latvia, Riga, September 1995.

Chinn, Jeff and Robert Kaiser, *Russians as the New Minority: Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Soviet Successor States*, Westview, HarperCollins, Boulder, Colo., 1996.

Conquest, Robert, *The Soviet Deportation of Nationalities*, Macmillan, London, 1960.

Conquest, Robert, ed., *The Last Empire: Nationality and the Soviet Future*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford CA, 1986.

Cox, Aidan and Jenny Chapman, 'EC Cooperation with the New Independent States', *The European Community External Cooperation Programme: Policies, Management and Distribution*, Overseas Development Institute, London, 1999.

Crampton, R. J., *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century*, Routledge, London, 1994.

Dellenbrandt, Jan Ake and Ole Norgaard, eds., *The Politics of Transition in the Baltic States: Democratisation and Economic Reform Policies*, Umea University Printing Office, Umea, 1994.

Deng, Francis M., Sadikiel Kimaro, Terrence Lyons, Donald Rothchild, and I. William Zartman, *Sovereignty as Responsibility: Conflict Management in Africa*, Publications of the Brookings Institution's Conflict Resolution in Africa Project, Washington DC, 1996.

Dreifelds, Juris, *Latvia in Transition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996.

Dreifelds, Juris, 'Latvian National Demands and Group Consciousness since 1959', in *Nationalism in the USSR & Eastern Europe in the Era of Brezhnev & Kosygin: Papers and Proceedings of the Symposium held at University of Detroit on October 3-4, 1975*, University of Detroit Press, Detroit MI, [1977].

Duff, Andrew, ed., *The Treaty of Amsterdam: Text and Commentary*, Federal Trust, Sweet and Maxwell, London, 1997.

Eatwell, John, Michael Ellman, Mats Karlsson, D.Mario Nuti, Judith Shapiro, *Not Just Another Accession: The Political Economy of EU Enlargement to the East*, Institute for Public Policy Research, London, 1997.

El-Sayed Selim, Mohammed, *A New Dimension in Egypt's Foreign Policy*, Strategic Papers, no. 27, Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Al-Ahram Foundation, Cairo, 1995.

Evans, Peter Dieter Reuschmeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985.

Evans, Peter B. Harold K. Jacobson, Robert Putnam, eds., *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*, University of California Press, Berkeley CA, 1993.

Ezergailis, Andrew, *The 1917 Revolution in Latvia*, East European Quarterly. Distributed by Columbia University Press, New York, 1974.

Foot, Rosemary, *The Practice of Power: US Relations with China since 1949*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995.

Franklin, Bruce, ed., *The Essential Stalin*, Major Theoretical Writings 1905–52, Croom Helm, London, 1973.

Fulbrook, Mary, 'Germany for the Germans' in David Cesarani and Mary Fulbrook, eds., *Citizenship, Nationality and Migration in Europe*, Routledge, London, 1996.

Garrett, Geoffrey and Peter Lange, 'Internationalization, Institutions and Political Change', in Robert Keohane and Helen Milner, eds., *Internationalization and Domestic Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996.

Gellner, Ernest, 'A Year in the Soviet Union', *Contention*, Winter 1992, cited in Hassner, Pierre, 'Beyond Nationalism and Internationalism: Ethnicity and World Order', in M. E. Brown, ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1993.

Gerner, Kristian and Stefan Hedlund, *The Baltic States and the End of Soviet Empire*, Routledge, London, 1993.

Gitelman, Zvi, 'Nations, Republics and Commonwealth', in Stephen White, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics*, 2nd edn., Macmillan, London, 1990.

Gitelman, Zvi, *The Politics of Nationality and the Erosion of the USSR*, St. Martin's Press, Macmillan, London, 1992.

Gleason, Gregory, *Federalism and Nationalism: The Struggle for Republican Rights in the USSR*, Westview, San Francisco CA, 1990.

Goldstein, Judith and Robert O. Keohane, 'Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework', in Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas in Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, Cornell University Press, London, 1993.

Goldstein, Judith and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas in Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, Cornell University Press, London, 1993.

Hamm, Michael, *The City in Russian History*, [Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Out of Print Books on Demand, 1989].

Hassner, Pierre, 'Beyond Nationalism and Internationalism: Ethnicity and World Order', in M. E. Brown, ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1993.

Heyking, Baron A., *The Main Issues Confronting the Minorities of Latvia and Eesti*, King, London, 1922.

Heyking, Baron A. 'Chapter VI Nationality a Plea for Reform', paper presented to Committee on Nationality appointed by the International Law Association at 2 King's Bench Walk, Temple, London, 24 February 1922, *The Main Issues Confronting the Minorities of Latvia and Eesti*, King, London, 1922.

Hiden, John and Patrick Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, Longman, London, 1994.

Hollis, Martin and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990.

Hope, Nicholas 'Inter-War Statehood: Symbol and Reality' in Graham Smith, ed., *The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, Macmillan, London, 1996.

Huttenbach, Henry R., *Soviet Nationality Policies: Ruling Ethnic Groups in the USSR*, Mansell, London, 1990.

Ignatieff, Michael, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1993.

Independent Task Force Report U.S. Policy Toward North-eastern Europe, Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Chairman and F. Stephen Larrabee, Project Director, Washington D.C., Released April 1999.

The Information Department of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, Oxford University Press, London, 1938.

Joeniemi, Pertti, and Juris Pirkulis, eds., *The Foreign Policies of the Baltic Countries: Basic Issues*, Centre of Baltic-Nordic History and Political Studies, Riga, 1994.

Jopp, Mathias, and Sven Arnsward, *The European Union and the Baltic States: Visions, Interests and Strategies for the Baltic Sea Region*, Programme on the Northern Dimension of the CFSP, Ulkopolittinen Instituutti and Institut für Europäische Politik, Helsinki, 1998.

Kaiser, Robert J., *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1994.

Kalnins, Bruno, 'The Social Democratic Movement in Latvia', in Alexander and Janet Rabinowitch, eds. with Ladis K.D. Kristof, *Revolution and Politics in Russia: Essays in Memory of B.I. Nicolaevsky*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington IN, 1972.

Kanet, Roger E. and Alexander V. Kozhemiakin eds., *The Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation*, Macmillan, London, 1997.

Karklins, Rasma, *Ethnic Relations in the USSR: the Perspective from Below*, Unwin Hyman, London, 1986.

Keohane, Robert and Helen Milner, eds., *Internationalization and Domestic Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Killerby, Margaret, 'Steps taken by the Council of Europe to Promote the Modernization of the Nationality Laws of European States', Síofra O'Leary and Teija

Tiilikainen, *Citizenship and Nationality Status in the New Europe*, London, Sweet & Maxwell, 1998.

Kirby, David 'Incorporation: the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact' in Graham Smith, ed., *The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, Macmillan, London, 1996.

Korboński, Andrzej, 'United States Policy toward Eastern Europe and the Baltics', in Antoni Kukliński, ed., *Baltic Europe in the Perspective of Global Change*, Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa, 1995.

Kotov, G. and V. Buzajev, *Main Characteristics of Latvian Human Rights and International Humanitarian Co-operation Committee Activities*, 1 July 1994, in Ole Nørgaard, Lars Johannsen, and Hello Willumsen, 'Divided Societies', in *The Baltic States after Independence*, Elgar, Cheltenham, 1996.

Kukliński, Antoni, ed., *Baltic Europe in the Perspective of Global Change*, Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa, 1995.

Kuznetsov, S., *Russian Language History of Independent Latvia*, Riga, 1996.

Laitin, David, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations of the Near Abroad*, Cornell University Press, London, 1998.

Lapidus, Gail W., 'New Thinking and the National Question', in Archie Brown, ed., *New Thinking in Soviet Politics*, St. Antony's College, Macmillan, Oxford, 1992.

Latvijas Statistika Gada Gramata 1930, Riga 1931, p.3 cited in Nicholas Hope, 'Inter-War Statehood: Symbol and Reality' in Graham Smith, ed., *The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, Macmillan, London, 1996.

Latviskii Komitet po pravam cheloveka (Latvian Human Rights Committee), Riga, May, 1996.

Latvian Legation Washington D.C., *Latvian USSR Relations*, Memorandum, Washington D.C., September 1944.

Lejiņš, Atis, 'Latvia in a Post-Cold War Europe', in Don M. Snider and Arne Olav Brundtland, *Nordic-Baltic Security: An International Perspective*, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo, 1994.

Lejiņš, Atis, Žaneta Ozoliņa, eds., *Small States in a Turbulent Environment: The Baltic Perspective*, Latvian Institute of International Affairs, Latvijas Arpolitikas Instituts, Riga 1997.

Lejiņš, Atis, Žaneta Ozoliņa, 'Latvia-The Middle Baltic State', in Gunnar Artéus and Atis Lejiņš, *Baltic Security: Looking Towards the 21th (sic) Century*, Latvian Institute of International Affairs and Försvarshögskolan, Riga, 1997.

Lenin, V. I., 'Resolution on the National Question', *Soldatskaia Pravda*, 16 May 1917, in V. I. Lenin and Joseph Stalin, *The Russian Revolution: Writings and Speeches from the February Revolution to the October Revolution, 1917*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1938.

Lenin, V. I., and Joseph Stalin, *The Russian Revolution: Writings and Speeches from the February Revolution to the October Revolution, 1917*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1938.

Lieven, Anatol, *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence*, 2nd edn., Yale University Press, London, 1994.

Lieven, Dominic, *Gorbachev and the Nationalities*, Centre for Security and Conflict Studies, London, 1988.

MacCartney, C. A., 'National States and National Minorities', 1934, in Stuart Woolf, ed., *Nationalism in Europe, 1815 to the Present: A Reader*, London, Routledge, 1996.

Mažeika, Povilas A., 'Russian Objectives in the Baltic Countries', in Arvids Ziedonis jr, Rein Taagepera, and Mardi Valgemäe, eds., *Problems of Mininations: Baltic Perspectives*, Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, San José, California, 1973.

Melvin, Neil, *Forging the New Russian Nation Russian Foreign Policy and the Russian Speaking Communities in the Former USSR*, Royal Institute of International Affairs Discussion Paper, London, 1994.

Melvin, Neil, *Russians Beyond Russia*, Royal Institute of International Affairs. Chatham House Papers, London, 1995.

Mihailovs, N., *The Amber Republic*, Liesma Publishing House, Riga, 1976.

Misiunas, Romuald J., 'Baltic Nationalism and Soviet Language Policy: from Russification to Constitutional Amendment', in Henry R. Huttenbach, ed., *Soviet Nationality Policies: Ruling Ethnic Groups in the USSR*, Mansell, New York, 1990.

Morgenthau, Hans, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Knopf, New York, 1948.

Moshes, Arkady, *Overcoming Unfriendly Stability*, Programme on the Northern Dimension of the CSFP, Ulkopoliittinen Instituutti & Institut für Europäische Politik, Helsinki, 1999.

Motyl, Alexander J., *Will the Non-Russians Rebel: State, Ethnicity, and Stability in the USSR*, Cornell University Press, London, 1987.

Mouritzen, Hans, ed., *Bordering Russia: Theory and Prospects for Europe's Baltic Rim*, Ashgate, Aldershot, [1998].

Muižnieks, Nils 'Latvia: Origins, Evolution, and Triumph', in Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras eds., *Nations and Politics in the Soviet Successor States*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993.

Muižnieks, Nils. *The Legal and Social Situation of Non-Citizens in Latvia: Topical Issues*, Seminar, Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, Riga, Latvia, 3 November 1995.

Natsional'nyi Sostav Naseleniia SSSR, Moscow, 1990, in David Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*, Cornell University Press, New York, 1998.

Neimanis, George J., *The Collapse of the Soviet Empire: a View from Riga*, Praeger, Westport CT, 1997.

Nationality and Citizenship in the Baltic States, Resource Paper no. 3, Washington DC, University of Cambridge Department of Geography, 1994.

Newsletter of Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, no. 1, Riga, February/March, 1994.

Newsletter of Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, no. 2, Riga, June/July 1994.

Newsletter of Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, no. 4, Riga, March/April 1995.

Non-paper distributed by Latvian Embassies, Embassy of the Republic of Latvia, London, 18 October 1999.

Nørgaard, Ole, Lars Johannsen, and Helle Willumsen, 'Divided Societies', in *The Baltic States after Independence*, Elgar, Cheltenham, 1996.

Norgaard, Ole with Dans Hindsgaal, Lars Johannsen, and Helle Williamsen, *The Baltic States after Independence*, Elgar, Cheltenham, 1996.

O'Leary, Síofra and Teija Tiilikainen, *Citizenship and Nationality Status in the New Europe*, Sweet & Maxwell, London, 1998.

Paya, Jose Ignacio Torreblanca, *The European Community and Central Eastern Europe (1989–1993): Foreign Policy and Decision-making*, Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales, Madrid, 1997.

Pinder, John *European Community: The Building of a Union*, Oxford University Press, 1995.

Plakans, Andrejs, 'The Latvians', in Edward Thaden, ed., *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1981.

Poulsen, Jørgen J., 'Nationalism, Democracy, and Ethnocracy in the Baltic Countries', in Jan Åke Dellenbrant and Ole Nørgaard, eds., *The Politics of Transition in the Baltic States: Democratisation and Economic Reform Policies*, Umeå University Printing Office, Umeå, 1994.

Putnam, Robert D., 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of Two-Level Games', Appendix reprinted in Peter B. Evans, Harold K. Jacobson, Robert Putnam, eds., *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*, University of California Press, Berkley CA, 1993.

Pranas, Rupejko, *Progress of the Extermination of the Baltic Nations (1940–1950)*, reprinted from *The Eastern Quarterly*, vol. V, no. 1/2, January–April 1952, 32 Bolton Gardens, London, SW5.

Rabinowitch, Alexander and Janet, eds., with Ladis K.D. Kristof, *Revolution and Politics in Russia: Essays in Memory of B.I. Nicolaevsky*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington IN, 1972.

Rakowska-Harmstone, Teresa, 'Nationalities and the Soviet Military' in *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society*, eds. L. Hajda and M Beissinger, Westview, San Francisco CA, 1990.

Remarks for UNDP Language Training Project Revision Signing Ceremony, Ministers Golde and Zile, Riga, 20 October 1999.

Roberts, Adam, and Benedict Kingsbury, eds., *United Nations, Divided World: The UN's Roles in International Relations*, 2nd edn., Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993.

Román, Lisa and Claes Sandgren, *Co-operation with Latvia: A Results Analysis*, Department for Central and Eastern Europe, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Stockholm, August 1998.

Rosenau, James N. and Hylke Tromp, *Interdependence and Conflict in World Politics*, Avebury Gower, Aldershot, 1989.

Rupesinghe, Kumar and Valery A. Tishkov, eds., *Ethnicity and Power in the Contemporary World*, United Nations University Press, New York, 1996.

Sakwa, Richard, *Gorbachev and his Reforms 1985–1990*, Prentice Hall, London, 1990.

Sakwa, Richard, *Russian Politics and Society*, 2nd edn., Routledge, 1996.

Saunders, George, ed., *Samizdat: Voices of the Soviet Opposition*, Monad Press, New York, [n.d].

Shtromas, Alexander, 'The Baltic States', in Robert Conquest, ed., *The Last Empire: Nationality and the Soviet Future*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, Stanford CA, 1986.

Shtromas, Aleksandras, 'The Baltic States as Soviet Republics: Tensions and Contradictions', in Graham Smith, ed., *The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, Macmillan, London, 1996.

Sikkink, Kathryn, 'The Power of Principled Ideas: Human Rights Policies in the United States and Western Europe', in Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas in Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, Cornell University Press, London, 1993.

Smith, Graham, 'Ethnic Relations in the New States' in Denis J.B. Shaw, ed., *The Post-Soviet Republics: A Systematic Geography*, Longman, Harlow, 1995.

Smith, Graham, ed., *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States*, Longman, Harlow, 1995.

Smith, Graham, 'The Soviet State and Nationalities Policy', p. 7. In Graham Smith, ed., *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States*, Longman, Harlow, 1995.

Smith, Graham, ed., *The Baltic States: The National Self-determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, Macmillan, London, 1996.

Smith, Graham 'The Resurgence of Nationalism', in Graham Smith, ed., *The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, Macmillan, London, 1996.

Smith, Graham, 'Nation Re-Building and Political Discourses of Identity Politics in the Baltic States', in Graham Smith et al., *Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: The Politics of National Identities*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.

Smith, Graham, et al., *Nation-building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: The Politics of National Identities*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.

Snider, Don M., and Arne Olav Brundtland, *Nordic–Baltic Security: An International Perspective*, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo, 1994.

Stalin, J., ‘Report on the National Question’, in J. Stalin *The Road to October, Articles and Speeches, March–October 1917*, Leningrad, 1925, in V. I. Lenin and J. Stalin, *The Russian Revolution Writings from the February Revolution to the October Revolution 1917*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1938.

Stalin, Joseph *Problems of Leninism*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1947.

Stalin, Joseph, ‘The Foundations of Leninism, the National Question’, 1924, Bruce Franklin, ed., *The Essential Stalin*, Major Theoretical Writings 1905–52, Croom Helm, London, 1973.

Steen, Anton, *Between Past and Future: Elites, Democracy and the State in Post-Communist Countries, A Comparison of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 1997.

Suny, Ronald Grigor, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*, Stanford University Press, Stanford CA, 1993.

Taylor, Paul, *The European Union in the 1990s*, Oxford University Press, 1996.

Thaden, Edward ed., *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855-1914*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1981.

Tsilevich, Boris and Alexander Ruchkovsky, *Differences in Rights between Citizens and Permanent Residents (non-citizens) of Latvia*, Insight, Riga, 15 January 1994.

Trapans, Jan ‘The Sources of Latvia’s Popular Movement’, in Jan Trapans, ed., *Toward Independence: The Baltic Popular Movements*, Westview, Oxford, 1991.

Trapans, Jan, ed., *Toward Independence: The Baltic Popular Movements*, Westview, Oxford, 1991.

Trenin, Dmitri, *Baltic Chance: The Baltic States, Russia, and the West in the Emerging Greater Europe*, Carnegie Institute for International Peace, Washington D.C., 1997.

Vershinin, Vladislav, *The Changing Security Environment in the Baltics and Russian National Interests*, Paper written whilst the author was MacArthur NGO Fellow at King’s College, London, 1995.

Vizulis, I. Josphe, *Nations under Duress: The Baltic States*, Port Washington, N.Y., 1985.

Volkovs, Vladislav, *Krievi Latvija*, Latvijas Zinatnu Akademijas Filozofijas un Sociologijas Instituta Etnisko Petijumu Centrs, Riga, 1996.

Wallace, Helen and William Wallace, eds., *Policy Making in the European Union*, 3rd edn., Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996.

Wallander, Celeste A., ed., *The Sources of Russian Foreign Policy after the Cold War*, Boulder, Colo., Westview, 1996.

Webber, Mark, *The International Politics of Russian and the Successor States*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1996.

White, James D., 'Nationalism and Socialism in Historical Perspective', in Graham Smith, ed., *The Baltic States: the National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania*, Macmillan, London, 1996.

White, Stephen, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman, *Developments in Soviet and Post-Soviet politics*, Macmillan, London, 1992.

Wight, Martin, *Systems of States*, edited with an introduction by Hedley Bull, Leicester. Leicester University Press [for] the London School of Economics and Political Science. 1977

Wood, Edward Frederick Lindley, 1st Earl of Halifax, *Speeches on Foreign Policy*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, London, 1940.

Woolf, Stuart ed., *Nationalism in Europe, 1815 to the Present: A Reader*, London, Routledge, 1996.

Žagars, Ē., *Socialist Transformations in Latvia 1940–1941*, Academy of Sciences of the Latvian SSR Institute of History, Riga, 1978.

Ziedonis, Arvids jr, Rein Taagepera, and Mardi Valgemäe, eds., *Problems of Mininations: Baltic Perspectives*, Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, San José, California, 1973.

Zile, 'A Baltic Presence at the League of Nations', *The Baltic States at Historical Crossroads*, Riga, Academy of Sciences of Latvia, 1998.

Zīle, Ļ. and Ziemelis, S. *Stages of the Great Course, 75 years of the Latvian Communist Party*, Liesma, Riga, 1979.

Journal Articles

Aasland, Aadne, 'The Russian Population in Latvia: An Integrated Minority?', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, vol. 10, no. 2, June 1994.

Baylies, Carolyn, 'Political Conditionality' and Democratisation', *Review of African Political Economy*, ROAPE Publications, no. 65, 1995.

Birkenbach, Hanne-Margaret, 'Preventative Diplomacy: Conclusions from International Intervention into Estonian and Latvian Conflicts over Citizenship', no. 44, The Schleswig-Holstein Institute for Peace Research at the Christian-Albrechts-University, Kiel, October 1997.

Blumburghs, Peter, ALA Vice President for Public Affairs, 'NATO Summit: Will it be "Madrid Plus"?', *Latvian Dimensions*, American Latvian Association, vol. 8, no. 1, 1999.

Brett, Rachel, 'Human Rights and the OSCE', *Human Rights Quarterly*, no. 18, 1996, John Hopkins University Press.

Brubaker, Rogers 'Nationhood and the National Question in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Eurasia: An Institutional Account', *Theory and Society*, vol. 23, no. 1, Kluwer Academic, February, 1994.

Bungs, Dzintra, 'Baltic Area SR/2', *Radio Free Europe Research Report*, 16 February 1988.

Bungs, Dzintra, 'Seeking Solutions to Baltic-Russian Border Issues', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 13, 1 April 1994.

Bungs, Dzintra, 'Russia Agrees to Withdraw Troops from Latvia', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 22, 3 June 1994.

Citizenship Statistics, Estonia Today, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 1998.

Cleave, Jan, 'Latvia to Hold Referendum on Citizenship Law Amendments', *RFE/RL NEWSLINE* vol. 2, no. 163(II), 25 August 1998.

'Chernomyrdin Stresses Russian Rights Case at Baltic Summit', *Moscow NTV, Segodnya, Moscow in FBIS-SOV-98-023*, Daily Report, 24 January 1998.

Chinn, Jeff and Lise A. Truex 'The Question of Citizenship in the Baltics', *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 7, no. 1, John Hopkins University Press, 1 January 1996.

Collier, Paul, Patrick Guillaumont, Sylviane Guillaumont, and Jan Willem Gunning, 'Redesigning Conditionality', *World Development*, Elsevier Science, vol. 25, no. 9, 1997.

Cook, Paul and Martin Minogue, 'Economic Reform and Political Conditionality: The Case of Myanmar', *The Round Table*, no. 325, 1993.

Coulby, David, 'Language and Citizenship in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia: Education and the Brinks of Warfare', *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 8, no.2, 1997.

Dreifelds, Juris 'Latvian National Rebirth', *Problems of Communism*, vol. 38, no. 4, July–August 1988.

- Dunlop, John B., 'Will the Russians Return from the Near Abroad?', *Post-Soviet Geography*, vol. 35, no.4, Winston, 1994.
- Economist Intelligence Unit, *Baltic Republics: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Country Profile, Annual Survey of Political and Economic Background*, 1994-1999.
- Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*, 1994-1999..
- Erlanger, Stephen, 'Latvia Amends Harsh Citizenship Law that Angered Russia,' *The New York Times*, 26 July 1994.
- Estonian Review*, vol. 7, no. 50, 7-13 December 1997.
- Estonian Review*, vol. 7, no. 51, 14-20 December 1997.
- 'EU warns Latvia against Delaying Russians' Rights', *New Europe*, 26 July-1 August 1998.
- Evans, Tony and Peter Wilson, 'Regime Theory and the English School of International Relations: A Comparison', *Millennium*, vol. 21, no. 3, 1992.
- Ezergailis, Andrew *The Latvian Impact on the Bolshevik Revolution, the First Phase: September 1917 to April 1918*, East European Quarterly, New York, Distributed by Columbia University Press, 1983.
- Fast, Tatyana, 'International Mafia: 'The Baltic Corridor'' Moscow, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 5 March 1997.
- FBIS-SOV-97-293: Daily Report, *Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1300 GMT 20 October 1997*.
- Foye, Stephen, 'Russia and the Near Abroad', *Post-Soviet Prospects*, Vol. III, No. 12, December 1995, CSIS, <http://www.csis.org/ruseura/psp/pspiii12.html>
- Girnius, Saulius, 'Relations between the Baltic States and Russia', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 33, 22 August 1994.
- Goble, Paul, 'Ethnic Politics in the USSR', *Problems of Communism*, vol. 38, July-August 1989.
- Gourevitch, Peter, 'The Second Image Reversed: the International Sources of Domestic Politics', *International Organization*, vol. 32, no. 4, Autumn 1978.
- Green, Barbara B., 'Estonian Nationalism, Independence and Ethnic Conflict', *Current Politics and Economics of Russia*, vol. 3, no. 1/2, Nova Science, 1992.
- Griffiths, Martin and Michael Sullivan, 'Nationalism and International Relations Theory', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 43, no. 1, 1997, University of Queensland Press.
- Groys, Boris, 'Russian and the West: The Quest for Russian National Identity', *Studies in Soviet Thought*, 43, Kluwer Academic, Netherlands, 1992.
- Gudkov, Leon 'The Disintegration of the USSR and Russians in the Republics', *Journal of Communist Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, Frank Cass, London, March 1993.

Hanneman, Andrea J., 'Independence and Group Rights in the Baltics: A Double Minority Problem', *Virginia Journal of International Law*, vol. 35, no. 2, Fred B. Rothman, Colorado, 1995.

Harris, Chauncy, D., 'Ethnic Tensions in the Successor Republics in 1993 and early 1994', *Post-Soviet Geography*, vol. 35, no. 4, V.H. Winston, 1994.

Harris, Chauncy, D., 'The New Russian Minorities: A Statistical Overview', *Post-Soviet Geography*, vol. 34, no. 1, V.H. Winston, 1993.

Haxton, Michael, 'The Russians of Latvia', *MINELRES (Minority Election Resources)*, www.bsos.umd.edu/cidum/mar/latruss.htm, 28 July 1994.

Henley, Jon, 'Estonia freezes out its Russians', *The Guardian*, London, 11 January 1998.

Herd, Graeme P., 'A Helping of Alphabet Soup', *The World Today*, July 1997.

Hiden, John, 'The Baltic States Since Independence', *Russia and the Successor States Briefing Service*, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, Longman, Essex, vol. 2, no. 4, August 1994.

Holt, Maria, 'Egypt and the New Millennium', *Information and Press Library, CAABU Focus*, vol. 6(3), July 2000.

Hough, William J. H. 'The Annexation of the Baltic States', *New York Law School Journal of International and Comparative Law*, vol. 6, no. 2, Winter 1985.

Hughes, Kirsty 'The 1996 Intergovernmental Conference and EU Enlargement', *International Affairs*, vol. 7, no. 1, Cambridge University Press, January, 1996.

Huysmans, Jef, 'Post-Cold War Implosion and Globalisation: Liberalism Running Past Itself?', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1995.

Immergut, Ellen M., 'The Theoretical Core of the New Institutionalism', *Politics and Society*, Sage Publications, vol. 26, no. 1, March 1998.

Joffe, Joseph, 'How America Does It', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 76, no. 5, September-October 1997.

Karklins, Rasma and Brigita Zepa, 'Religious-Centered Multiethnic Societies: Multiple Identities and Ethnopolitics in Latvia', *American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. 40, no. 1, Sage Publications, September 1996.

Kemppinen, Reijo, Spokesman for the Finnish Delegation, European Union, *Estonian Review*, vol. 7, no. 51, 14–20 December, 1997.

Kerremans, Bart, 'Do Institutions Make a Difference? Non-Institutionalism, Neo-Institutionalism, and the Logic of Common Decision-Making in the European Union', *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration*, Blackwell, vol. 9, no. 2, April 1996.

Kirch, Aksel, Marika Kirch, and Tarmo Tuisk, 'Russians in the Baltic States: to be or not to be?', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 24, no. 2, Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, Summer 1993.

Kolstø, Pål, 'The New Russian Diaspora – An Identity of its Own? Possible Identity Trajectories for Russian in the former Soviet Republic', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 19, no. 3, Routledge, 1996.

Kolstø, Pål, 'The New Russian Diaspora: Minority Protection in Soviet Successor States', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 30, no. 2, May 1993.

Laitin, David D., 'Language and Nationalism' in the Post-Soviet Republics', *Post Soviet Affairs*, vol. 12, no. 1, V.H. Winston, 1996.

Laitin, David D., 'National Revival and Competitive Assimilation in Estonia' in the Post-Soviet Republics', *Post Soviet Affairs*, vol. 12, no. 1, V.H. Winston, 1996.

'Latvia: EU Commissioner meets with Leaders', in *Radio Riga Network in FBIS-SOV-26-243 Daily Report*, 17 December 1996.

Latvian Legation Washington DC, *Latvian USSR Relations*, Memorandum, September 1944.

Leca, Jean, 'The Enduring Dialogue of Conflict and Order in a Changing World', *International Political Science Review*, SAGE publications, vol. 20, no.1, 1999.

Maley, William, 'Does Russia Speak for Baltic Russians?', *The World Today*, vol. 51, no. 1, January 1995.

Maxwell, Simon and Roger Riddell, 'Conditionality or Contract: Perspectives on Partnership for Development', *Journal of International Development*, John Wiley, no. 10, 1998.

Mearsheimer, John J., 'The False promise of International Institutions', *International Security*, vol. 19, no.3, Winter 1994/95

Menter, Ian and Nick Clough, 'Teacher Education in 'the New Europe': Some Lessons from Latvia', *The European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 6, no.2, 1995.

Metcalf, Lee Kendall, 'Outbidding to Radical Nationalists: Minority Policy in Estonia, 1988–1993', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 2, no. 2, ASEN, 1996.

Miller, David, 'Citizenship and Pluralism', *Political Studies*, vol. 43, Political Studies Association, Blackwell, 1995.

Mlechin, Leonid, 'The Last Chief of the Big House' in *New Times*, no. 15, Moskovskaya Pravda, Moscow, 1992.

Mlyn, Eric, 'The OSCE, the United States and European Security' in *European Security*, vol. 5, no. 3, Autumn 1996, Frank Cass, London.

Monitor: A Daily Briefing on the Post-Soviet States, 20 February 1998, vol. IV, no.35, Jamestown Foundation.

Mostov, Julie, 'Democracy and the Politics of National Identity', *Studies in East European Thought*, no. 46, Kluwer Academic, Netherlands, 1994.

Muižnieks, Nils, 'The Pro-Soviet Movement in Latvia', *Report on the USSR*, 24 August 1990.

Muižnieks, Nils, 'The Daugavpils Hydro Station and 'Glasnost' in Latvia', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 18, Spring 1987.

Mullerson, Rein, 'Minorities in Eastern Europe and the Former USSR: Problems, Tendencies and Protection', *The Modern Law Review*, vol. 56, no. 6, Blackwell, Oxford, November 1993.

'No Amendments, No EU?', *The Baltic Times*, 16–22 July 1998.

NATO Review

Pettai, Vello, 'The Games of Ethnopolitics in Latvia', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 12, no. 1, V.H. Winston, 1996.

Plakans, Andrejs, 'The Tribulations of Independence: Latvia 1991–1993', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 25, no. 1, Spring 1994.

Poloskova, Tatyana, 'Diaspory i Vneshniaia Politika', *Mezhdunarodhaia Zhizn*, 11, 1999, Moskva.

Preece, Jennifer Jackson, 'National Minorities and the International System', *Politics*, vol. 18, no. 1, Political Studies Association, Blackwells, Oxford, February 1998.

Rakis, G., 'Metro is not a Friend', *Staburags* 88 (Riga), no. 2, 1988, p. 20–3, cited in Dreifelds, 'Latvian National Rebirth', *Problems of Communism*, vol. 38, no. 4, July–August 1988.

Raun, Toivo U., 'The Estonian SSR Language Law (1989): Background and Implementation', *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 23, no. 3, 1995.

Resler, Tamara J., 'Dilemmas of Democratisation: Safeguarding Minorities in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 49, no. 1, University of Glasgow, 1997.

Rex, John, 'Ethnic Identity and the Nation State: The Political Sociology of Multi-Cultural Societies', *Social Identities*, vol. 1, no. 1, Journals Oxford, 1995.

Robinson, Anthony and Matej Vipotnik, 'Baltic States Discuss New Links', *Financial Times*, 21 January 1998.

Rudenshiold, Eric, 'Ethnic Dimensions in Contemporary Latvian Politics: Focusing Forces for Change', *Soviet Studies*, vol. 44, no. 4, 1992.

Schafer, Robert B., Elisabeth A. Schafer, and Signe Dobelniece, 'Latvia in Transition: a Study of Change in a Former Republic of the USSR', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 24, no. 2, Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, Summer 1993.

Schmidt, William, 'Latvia's Worry: What to do with all its Russians', *New York Times*, 1 March 1994, p. 3.

Selim, Mohammed el-Sayed, 'Mediterraneanism: A New Dimension in Egypt's Foreign Policy', *Strategic Papers*, no. 27, ACPSS Publications, 1995.

Shabdurasulov, Igor, *ITAR TASS*, Moscow, 23 January 1998, in SWB SU/3135 E/4.

Sherr, James, 'Dancing with Bears', *National Review*, 13 June 1994.

Shils, Edward, 'Nation, Nationality, Nationalism and Civil Society', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 1, no. 1, ASEN, 1995.

Silde, Adolfs, 'The Role of Russian–Latvians in the Sovietisation of Latvia', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2, 1987.

Silver, B. D., 'The Status of National Minority Language in Soviet Education: An Assessment of Recent Changes' *Soviet Studies*, vol. 26, no.1, January 1974.

Smith, Anthony D., 'National Identity and the Idea of European Unity', *International Affairs*, vol. 68, no. 1, London, 1992.

Sootla, G., 'Political Background and Possible Consequences of the Summer Crisis in Estonia', *Monthly Survey of Baltic and Post-Soviet Politics*, July 1993.

Tsygankov, Andrei P., 'From International Institutionalism to Revolutionary Expansionism: The Foreign Policy Discourse of Contemporary Russia', *Mershon International Studies Review*, vol. 41, 1997.

Trapans, Jan, 'Latvian Supreme Council Faces Split over Citizenship Law', *Report on the USSR*, vol. 3, no. 39, 27 September 1991.

'US Welcomes Amended Latvian Language Law', *Reuter News Service – Eastern Europe*, 14 December 1999.

Wallace, William, 'On the Move – Destination Unknown', *World Today*, April 1997.

'West Blamed for Controversial Latvian Citizenship Referendum', *New Europe*, 30 August–5 September 1998.

Woehrel, Steven, 'Russians in the Baltic States', *Current Politics and Economics of Russia*, Nova Science, vol. 4, no 2, 1996.

Wright, Jane, 'The OSCE and the Protection of Minority Rights', *Human Rights Quarterly*, no. 18, 1996, Johns Hopkins University Press.

Zaletayev, Sergei 'I Shall Never Say: "Go Away from Here!"' Interview with President Guntis Ulmanis, *Panorama Latvii*, Latvia, 6 October 1993.

Zepa, Brigita, 'Sabiedriskā Doma Pārejas Periodā Latvijā: Latviešu un Cittautiešu Uzskatu Dinamika (1989–1992)', *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, A 10/92. [Public Opinion in Latvia During the Period of Transition, 1989–1992: the Dynamics of Views of Latvians and Non-Latvians, *Proceedings of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, Part A*, October 1992].

Zepa, Brigita, 'Valsts Statusa Maiņa un Pilsoniskā Apziņa', *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, A 1995, nr. 7/8. [The change in the Political System and Civic Consciousness, *Proceedings of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, Part A*, 1995].

Zevelev, Igor, 'Russia and the Russian Diasporas', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 12, no. 3, V.H. Winston, 1996.

Unpublished Theses, Speeches and Papers

Aasland, Aadne, *Ethnicity and Unemployment in the Baltic Countries*, presented at the BASEES Annual Conference, Cambridge, 12–14 April 1997.

Bojars, Juris, *Human and Minority Rights and Policy in Latvia*, University of Latvia, 22 August 1993.

Duncan, Peter J.S., ‘Russian Neo-Imperialism: Fact or Fiction?’, unpublished submission to the House of Commons Defence Committee, 1994.

Ellemann-Jensen, Uffe, former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Denmark, Oxford University European Affairs Society, 7 March 2000.

Kamenska, Anhelita, *State (Latvia) Language Proficiency Testing*, Study prepared for UNDP Office in Latvia, 27 September 1994.

Meri, Lennart, President of Estonia, Oxford University European Affairs Society, 27 February 1998.

Muižnieks, Nils, *Ethnic Politics in Post-Soviet Latvia*, [n.d.]

Nyberg, René, Ambassador Head of Division for Eastern Affairs Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, *The Baltic as an Interface Between the EU and Russia*, St. Antony’s College, Oxford, 8 May 2000.

Popovski, Vesna, *National Minorities and Citizenship Rights: A Case Study of Lithuania from 1988–1993*, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge: unpublished PhD Thesis, March 1999.

Redman, Nicholas H., *Dilemmas of Engagement: Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian Policies towards Russia, 1992–1996*, University of Oxford unpublished D.Phil. thesis, 1999.

Robinson, Mary, Romanes Lecture, Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford University, 11 November 1997.

Smith, David, *Legal Continuity and Post-Soviet Reality: Ethnic Relations in Estonia 1991–95*, University of Bradford unpublished PhD thesis, 1997.

Smith, David, J., *Perestroika as the Prelude to Baltic Independence: Gorbachev’s Reforms and Estonia 1987–1991*, University of Bradford unpublished MA thesis, 1993.

Vinas, Angel, *Breaking the Shackles of the Past: External and Internal Liberating Effects of EU Membership*, Conference Building an Inclusive Society for Europe: The Challenge Facing Latvia, [n.d.]

Wahlbäck, Krister, *The Russians in Estonia and Latvia: Present Situation, Prospects for the Future*, Unpublished Paper, 6 November 1997.

Official Correspondence

Letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, HE Mr Povilas Gylys,. from CSCE HCNM Max van der Stoel, The Hague, 5 March 1993.

Letter to Georgs Andrejevs, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, from CSCE HCNM Max van der Stoel, The Hague, No 238/93/L/Rev, 6 April 1993.

Letter to Max van der Stoel, CSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, from Georgs Andrejevs, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Latvia, 18 April 1993.

Letter from OSCE HCNM, Max Van der Stoel to Estonian President Lennart Meri, 1 July 1993.

Letter to Georgs Andrejevs, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia from CSCE HCNM, Max van der Stoel, The Hague, 10 December 1993.

Letter to Valdis Birkavs, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia from OSCE HCNM, Max van der Stoel, The Hague, 14 March 1996.

Letter to Max van der Stoel, OSCE HCNM from Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Valdis Birkavs, 22 April 1996.

Letter to Latvian Prime Minister Guntars Krasts from UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, London, 2 June 1998.

Letter to Ernesto Caccavale, Member of the European Parliament, Rapporteur for Latvia, from Edvīns Inkēns, Chairman of the European Affairs Committee, *Saeima* of the Republic of Latvia, 2 November 1998.

Letter to Hans van den Broek, European Commission, from Ole Espersen, CBSS Commissioner, 2 November 1998.

External Organisations

Agenda 2000 - Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union, DOC/97/14 Brussels, 15th July 1997.

CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 7*, CSCE Mission to Latvia, 30 July 1994.

CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 6*, CSCE Mission to Latvia, 15 July 1994.

CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 5*, CSCE Mission to Latvia, 30 May 1994.

CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 3*, CSCE Mission to Latvia, 16 March 1994.

CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report # 2*, CSCE Mission to Latvia, 7 February 1994.

CSCE Mission to Latvia, *Activity Report #1*, CSCE Mission to Latvia, Riga, 6 December 1993.

Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *The Challenges of Change*, 1992 Summit Helsinki, 9–10 July 1992, CSCE Helsinki Document 1992, *The Challenges of Change*, Paragraph 15.

Council of the Baltic Sea States, *General Information*, 2 October 2000.

Mandates of Human Rights Institutions with Competence in the CBSS Area – Differences and Similarities, Secretariat of the Commissioner of the CBSS, 1 September 1999.

Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, *Information Report on the Elections in Latvia 5 and 6 June 1993*, 10 December 1993, Doc. 6908.

Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Opinion no. 183, 1995.

On Application by Latvia for Membership of the Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe 1995 Session Opinion No. 183 (1995).

1999 Regular Report from the Commission on Estonia's Progress towards Accession, European Commission 2000.

Regular Report from the Commission on Estonia's Progress Towards Accession, European Commission, 1998.

European Council and Council of the Union, *Council Decision of 30 March 1998 on the Principles, Priorities, Intermediate Objectives and Conditions in the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Latvia*, OJC n° L 121 of 23/04/1998, p. 0021-0025, 98/263/EC.

European Parliament, Committee on External Economic Relations, *Report on the Proposal for a Council and Commission Decision on the Position to be taken by the Community with the Association Council established by the European Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States of the one part, and the Republic of Latvia, of the other part, with regard to the adoption of the Rules for the Implementation of Article 64 1(i), 1(ii) and 2 of the Europe Agreement*, (4215/98-COM(98)0068 – C4-0593/98-98/0076(CNS)).

European Parliament, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security, and Defence Policy, *Report on Latvia's Application for Accession to the European Union with a View to the Vienna European Council (12/13 December 1998)*, COM (97) 2005-C4-0377/97). DOC_EN\RR\366\366543, PE 228.012/fin.

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-Force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 39, *The Social Aspects of Enlargement of the European Union*, Luxembourg, 2 February 1999, PE 168.115.

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-Force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 36, *Agenda 2000 and the Accession Process to the European Union*, Luxembourg, 22 December 1998, PE 168.008.

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-Force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 33, *The Phare Programme and the Enlargement of the European Union*, Luxembourg, 4 December 1998, PE 167.944

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 31, *Security and Defence and Enlargement of the European Union*, Brussels, 30 October 1998, PE 167.877.

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 30, *The Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Enlargement of the European Union*, Luxembourg, 26 October 1998, PE 167.822.

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 26, *Women's Rights and the Enlargement of the European Union*, Luxembourg, 14 July 1998, PE 167.735

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 24, *Pre-Accession Strategy for Enlargement of the European Union*, Luxembourg, 17 June 1998, PE 167.631

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 21, *Enlargement and Economic and Social Cohesion*, Luxembourg, 8 May 1998, PE 167.584.

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 20, *Democracy and Respect for Human Rights in the Enlargement Process of the European Union*, Luxembourg, 1 April 1998, PE 167.582.

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 14, *Russia and the Enlargement of the European Union*, First update, Luxembourg, 23 February 1999, PE 167.734/rev.1

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 10, *Latvia and the Enlargement of the European Union*, First update, Luxembourg, 17 December 1998, PE 167.532/rev.1.

European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party Task-force 'Enlargement', Briefing No 8, *Estonia and the Enlargement of the European Union*, First update, Luxembourg, 8 October 1998, PE 167.409/rev.1.

Fall, 'Allegations of Discriminatory Practice against Minorities in Estonia', *Report on a Fact-finding Mission to Estonia 7-11 February and to Russian Federation 12 February 1993*, Geneva, United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

Helsinki Watch, 'Violations by the Latvian Department of Citizenship and Immigration', Helsinki Watch, October 1993.

Return Assistance to Non-citizens of Russian Origin from Latvia to Russia, IOM Office in Riga, Regional Office for the Baltic and Nordic States, info sheet #1, October 1999.

The Latvian Elections: Democracy and Human Rights, A report by the British Helsinki Human Rights Group, 1993.

Secretariat Memorandum prepared by the Directorate of Legal Affairs, Mission of Experts to Latvia on the Laws on Citizenship and on the Status of Foreigners, Riga, 13–15 September 1993.

NATO Membership Action Plan, Press Release, NAC-S (99) 66, 24 April 1999.

Study on NATO Enlargement, NATO Basic Texts, September 1995.

Note Bio Aux Bureaux Nationaux, Martine Reicherts, *Latvian Referendum on Citizenship*, Brussels, 5 October 1998.

Official Journal of the European Communities, Debates of the European Parliament, Report of proceedings from 9–13 December 1991, No 3-412/162.

Official Journal of the European Communities, Debates of the European Parliament, Report of proceedings from 25–29 October 1993, No 3-437/132.

Official Journal of the European Communities, Debates of the European Parliament, Report of proceedings from 15-19 November 1993, No 3-438/162.

Official Journal of the European Communities, Information and Notices, Resolution on the Withdrawal of Russian Troops from the Baltic States, 9 May 1994, C128, Volume 37, No C 128/308.

OSCE Handbook 1996, 2nd edn., Secretariat of the OSCE, Vienna, 1996.

OSCE High Commission on National Minorities Background, March 2000.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, High Commissioner on National Minorities, *Statement Regarding the Adoption of the State Language Law by the Latvian Parliament*, The Hague, 9 December 1999.

The OSCE Mission to Latvia Survey, 17 January 2000.

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Mission Reports on Human Dimension Activities, Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, Warsaw, 17-27 October 2000.

OSCE Newsletter, vol. 4, no. 10, October 1997.

The OSCE in the Web of Interlocking Institutions, OSCE, Vienna, 1997.

OSCE Mission to Latvia Reports, Report of the CSCE Meeting of Experts on National Minorities, Geneva, 1991.

The OSCE Representative to the Joint Committee on the Skrunda Radar Station, OSCE, Riga, Latvia, 20 December, 1996.

Observation of the Parliamentary Elections held in the Republic of Latvia, September – October 1995, Press Release, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, OSCE, Warsaw, 1995.

The Republic of Latvia: Elections of Deputies to the Sixth Saeima 30 September–1 October 1995, Briefing Report, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Denmark, 1995.

Recent Demographic Developments in Europe, Council of Europe, Brussels, 1996.

Protection of Ethnic Minorities, Report by the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights fifty-fourth Session, Geneva, 16 March – 24 April 1998.

A/RES/46/5 1st plenary meeting 17 September 1991, General Assembly of the United Nations.

Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Situation of Human Rights in Estonia and Latvia, General Assembly, A/48/511, 26 October 1993, forty-eighth session, agenda item 115, introduction, paragraph 1. Fact Finding Mission to Riga October 1992, Annex A/47/748.

Situation of Human Rights in Estonia and Latvia, United Nations, A/RES/47/115, General Assembly, 16 December 1992, 89th plenary meeting, 16 December 1992.

Fall, Ibrahima, ‘Allegations of Discriminatory Practices against Minorities in Latvia, Summary of the Report on a Fact-Finding Mission to Latvia,’ Requested by the Secretary General of the UN, 27 November 1992. An executive summary of that report was issued on 2 December 1992 (A/47/748, annex).

‘Initial Report of States Parties due in 1993: Latvia, 19/10/94, CCPR/C/81/Add.1/Rev.1, State Party Report’, United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 19 October 1994.

‘Summary Record of the 1422nd Meeting: Latvia, 20/07/95, CCPR/C/SR, 1422, Summary Record’, Human Rights Committee, United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 20 July 1995.

‘Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee: Latvia, 03/10/95, CCPR/C/79/Add.53; A/50/40. paras. 334-361, concluding observations/comments, United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 3 October 1995.

United Nations Press Release Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination Completes Review of Report of Latvia, Hr/Cerd/99/48/Rev.1, 12 August 1999.

UNDP: *Country Co-operation Frameworks and Related Matters First Country Co-operation Framework for Latvia* [1997–1999].

Project Profile, LAT/95/002, Promotion of Social Integration in Latvia: Support to the Implementation of the National Programme for Latvian Language Training (Phase 1), UNDP, Riga, 1995.

Latvia Human Development Report 1996, UNDP, Riga, Latvia, 1996.

Latvia Human Development Report 1997, UNDP, Riga, Latvia, 1997.

Summary Record of the 1349th Meeting: Latvia, 18/08/99, CERD/C/SR.1349, Summary Record, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 55th Session, Palais des Nations, Geneva, 12 August 1999.

Country Documents and Information

Latvia

About Citizenship and Migrations Issues Board,
<http://www.pid.gov.lv/aboutpid/eabout.htm>

18 November 1998 – The 80th Anniversary of the Republic of Latvia, Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998.

Basic Directions of Latvia's Foreign Policy to the Year 2005, I, Riga, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Latvia, 1998.

Speech by Valdis Birkavs, Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 80th Anniversary of the Republic of Latvia, Riga, 17 November 1998.

Address by Dr. Valdis Birkavs, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, *How Secure are the Baltic States*’, Konrad Adenauer Foundation International Conference, Riga, 5 December 1998.

Appeal of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia to President of the State Guntis Ulmanis, June 1994.

Latvijas Republikas Ministru Kabineta Paziðojums, 5 September 2000.
[Announcement of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, 5 September 2000].

The Current Legislative Situation in Latvia, The Republic of Latvia: Human Rights Issues, Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, Standing Commission on Human Rights and National Questions, 1993.

Declaration and Recommendations. EU-Latvia Joint Parliamentary Committee, 3rd Meeting, 25–26 January 1999, Brussels.

The Government of the Republic of Latvia Action Plan for Intensifying Integration into the European Union, 1997.

History, Language, Identity, and Culture of Latvia – a Brief Synopsis, Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998.

History, Language, Identity, and Culture of Latvia, Latvian Embassy in Sweden, 1998.

Human Rights: Collection of Legislative Acts and Informative Material, The Human Rights and Public Affairs Committee of the 6th Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 1997.

Human Rights Issues and Naturalization Process in Latvia (1995–1998), Prepared for the First Accession Council Meeting, 23 February 1998, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia.

Information about Activities of Department of Citizenship and Immigration Related to Compiling the Register of Residents of the Republic of Latvia. Citizenship and Immigration Department, Riga, Latvia, 1994.

Information on Latvia's Progress in Compliance with the Copenhagen Criteria, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 1999.

Information on Naturalization Process January 1, 1995 – December 31, 1999).
Naturalization Statistics Fact sheet, Republic of Latvia Naturalization Board, 2000.

The Latvian Citizenship Law and its Incorporation of International Recommendations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, 1994.

Latvian Statistical Yearbook, Riga, Latvia, 1996.

The Government of the Republic of Latvia Action Plan for Intensifying Integration into the European Union, 1997.

Latvia in NATO: Why it's good for the United States and Europe, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Latvia/ Embassy of Latvia, Washington DC, March 1999.

Latvian Position Paper for the First Meeting of the EU–Latvia Association Council, Brussels, 23 February, 1998.

Latvijas Statistikas Gadagrāmata, Riga, Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 1999.

Lībane, Kristiāna, MP for Latvia's Way, Comments by the Latvian authorities on the preliminary draft report to the committee on the honouring of obligations and commitments by member states of the Council of Europe (monitoring committee). Doc. 8426, 24 May 1999, Appendix V.

Liege, assistant to the Latvian parliamentary commission on human rights and national questions, in *The Current Legislative Situation in Latvia*, The Republic of Latvia: Human Rights Issues, Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, Standing Commission on Human Rights and National Questions, 1993.

Mazākumtautību pamatizglītības programmas paraugs, Apstiprināts ar Izglītības un zinātnes ministrijas, 1999. [Minority Education Programme].

Latvijas Republikas valdības memorands par Eiropas savienības Komisijas dokumentu "Agenda 2000 Eiropas Komisijas atzinums par Latvijas pieteikumu iestāties ES", Memorandum of the Government of the Republic of Latvia on Agenda 2000 European Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union, 1997.

Darbības mērķi un uzdevumi, Naturalizācijas Pārvalde, 2000. [Objectives and Tasks of the Naturalisation Board].

Naturalizācijas Pārvaldes Projekti, Naturalizācijas Pārvalde, 2000. [Projects of the Naturalisation Board].

Methodological Recommendations for Applicants of the Citizenship of Latvia while Preparing for an Examination of the Knowledge of the Basic Principles of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, the Constitutional Law 'The Rights and Obligations of a Person and Citizen', the Text of the National Anthem and History of Latvia, Requirements for Applicants Forms and Procedure if an Examination, A Sample of an Examination Questions for an Examination, 1997 and 1998, Naturalizācijas Pārvalde, 1999.

Remarks for UNDP Language Training Project Revision Signing Ceremony, Ministers Golde and Zile, 20 October 1999.

Saeimas Politisko Partiju Deklarācija, Jūrmala, 14 October 1995.

Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia, Approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on the 6 May 1997.

Joint Press Release, Second Meeting of the Association Council between the European Union and Latvia, 22 February 1999, Luxembourg.

Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia Standing Commission on Human Rights and National Questions, *The Republic of Latvia: Human Rights Issues*, 1993.

Apvienības "Tēvzemei un Brīvībai"/ LNNK Programma Ievads [Fatherland and Freedom/ LNNK, Programme Introduction], Rīgā, 21 Jūnijā 1997, Apvienības "Tēvzemei un Brīvībai" / LNNK priekšsēdētājs, Māris Grīnblats.

Address by Mr Guntis Ulmanis, President of the Republic of Latvia at the Opening Ceremony of the Livs Festival Mazirbe, 1 August 1998.

Latvijas Valsts Prezidentes V.Vīķe-Freibergas runa 7.Saeimas ārkārtas sēdē, 8.Jūlijā 1999. [Speech of the President of Latvia Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, *Saeima*, 8 July 1999].

Letter from President Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga to Saeima Committee Chairman Janis Straume, 14 July 1999, published in *Diena*, 15 July 1999.

Valsts Prezidentes Vairas Vīķes-Freibergas uzruna Sarajevā, Rīgā, 29 Jūlijā 1999. [Speech by H.E. Mrs.Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia, in Sarajevo, 29 July 1999].

Latvijas Valsts Prezidentes Uzruna ANO Ģenerālās Asamblejas 54.sesijā Ņujorkā, 22 Septembrī 1999. [Speech by H.E. Mrs.Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia, at the 54th General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, 22 September 1999].

Latvijas Republikas Prezidentes Vairas Vīķes-Freibergas uzruna konferencē, kas veltīta Aukstā kara beigai, 10. gadadienas atcerei Jivaskilā, Somijā, 8. Novembrī 1999. [Address by H. E. Dr. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, President of Latvia, to the participants of the conference to mark the tenth anniversary of the end of the Cold War in Jyväskylä. Finland, November 8, 1999].

Vybor za Toboi, ispol'zui svoe pravo na grazhdanstvo!, Prospekts, 'Integratsiia negrazhdan Latvii – 98', Soros-Latviia.

Nordic Countries

An Enlarged EU: Opportunities and Problems, A Summary of Reports on the Consequences of Enlargement of the EU, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2000.

A Good Neighbourhood: Sweden's Cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe, Central and Eastern European Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Stockholm, May 1998.

Román, Lisa and Claes Sandgren, *Cooperation with Latvia: a Results Analysis*, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, August 1998.

Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1993, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Stockholm 1994.

Documents and Notes on Soviet Policy toward Estonia and other Baltic States 1975–1980: to be Presented in Connection with the CSCE Follow-up Conference in Madrid 1980, Stockholm: Estonian Information Centre, 1980.

‘Sweden and the Baltic States’ Excerpts from an address by the Prime Minister, Mr Carl Bildt, to the Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm, 17 November 1993. *Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1993*, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Stockholm, 1994.

Norway and the Baltic Countries Looking Towards the Future, Written by Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science on commission for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 26 September 1997.

Developing Co-operation between Neighbouring Countries: Swedish Co-operation with Central and Eastern Europe 1999–2001, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2 March 1998.

Sida’s Cooperation with Latvia, 1998.

Sweden 1999, Statistical Yearbook, Styrelsen För Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete, [Swedish International Development Agency], Stockholm, 2000.

The Visby Programme: Support for Exchange and Cooperation between Sweden and the Baltic Sea Area, Svenska Institute, 1999.

Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk, *The Role of Regional Organizations in the Work of the United Nations*, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 6 January 2000.

Russian Federation

Decree of the President of the Russian Federation on the guidelines of the State Policy of the Russian Federation with Regard to Compatriots Living Abroad, 19 August 1994.

Goskomstat, November, 1996.

Posol’stbo Rossii, *Press-Reliz*, Iiunia, 1998.

Statement of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council in Connection with the Events of 3 and 8 March 1998 in the Latvian Republic, no. 70, Moscow, 12 March 1998 and signed by the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council.

United States

Background Briefing by a Senior Administrative Official, White House, 27 July 1994.

Latvia and Russia agree on withdrawal of Military Forces, Statement released by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Washington DC, 30 April 1994.

Latvia Graduates from U.S. Development Assistance, Embassy of the United States in Latvia, July 1999.

Latvian Naturalization Project: A Freedom House Project Funded By USAID, March 1999–March 2000.

Latvian Naturalization Project: A project of Freedom House, Associate Cooperative Agreement no. DGS-A-00-99-00006-00, 9 February 2000.

Northern Europe Initiative Fact Sheet released by the Bureau of European Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC, 10 January 2000.

Press Conference by President Clinton, President Ulmanis of Latvia, and President Meri of Estonia, State Room Riga Castle, Riga, Latvia, 6 July 1994.

Press Statement by James B. Foley, Deputy Spokesman US Department of State, 10 December 1999.

Press Statement by James B. Foley, Deputy Spokesman US Department of State, 5 October 1998.

Press Statement by James B. Foley, Deputy Spokesman US Department of State, 30 September 1998.

Remarks by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot, Joint Communiqué Signing Ceremony and Press Conference, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Algirdas Saudargas, Latvian State Secretary Maris Riekstins, and Estonian Foreign Minister Toomas Hendrik Ilves Washington DC, 16 July 1999.

Shattuck, John, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, 14 April 1997.

Statement Released by the Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, 24 February 1997.

The United States Agency for International Development, Riga, Latvia, 25 November 1997.

The White House Office of the Press Secretary statement by the Press Secretary, 7 September 1993.

The White House Office of the Press Secretary Background Briefing by Senior Administrative Official, 29 September 1993.

The White House Office of the Press Secretary Background Briefing by Senior Administrative Official, 1 July 1994.

White House on Clinton Meeting with Baltic Presidents, United States Information Agency, 20 January 1998.

Legislation

Agreement between the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation on Terms, Time limits, Procedure of a Complete Withdrawal of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the Legal Status thereof, During Withdrawal from the Territory of the Republic of Latvia, 30 April 1994. *Diplomaticheskii Vestnik*, no. 11–12, June 1994, p. 13 ff.

Agreement between the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation on Terms, Time limits, Procedure of a Complete Withdrawal of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the Legal Status thereof, During Withdrawal from the Territory of the Republic of Latvia, 30 April 1994.

Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Russian Federation on the Social Welfare of Retired Military Personnel of the Russian Federation and their Family Members Residing on the Territory of the Republic of Latvia, 30 April 1994.

Article 10, The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington DC, 4 April 1949

A Charter of Partnership among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, Republic of Latvia, and Republic of Lithuania, 16 January 1998, the White House Office of the Press Secretary, 16 January 1998.

Constitution (Satversme) of the Republic of Latvia, Section 3, 15 February 1992.

Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR on the Renewal of Independence of the Republic of Latvia Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR, 4 May 1990.

Education Law, June 1991, Chapter 1, Article 5.

Estonian Citizenship Law, 1992.

Estonian Law on Aliens, June 1993.

Europe Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Latvia, of the other part, 12 June 1995.

Law on the Amendments to the Language Law of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic, [Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, 31 March 1992].

Law on Amendments to the Latvian Language Law of Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic, Republic of Latvia, 1992, Article, 6.

Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, Chapter 2, Section ii, Clause 5, Section 13, Paragraph 1, Amendment. 16 March 1995.

Law on Citizenship, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 22 July 1994.

Law on Religious Organisations, Republic of Latvia, adopted by the Saeima, 7 September 1997, Article 7.

Law on the Status of Former USSR Citizens who are not Citizens of Latvia or any other Country, Saeima, Republic of Latvia, 12 April 1995.

Law on the Unrestricted Development and Right to Cultural Autonomy of Latvia's Nationalities and Ethnic Groups, Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, 19 March 1991.

On the Renewal of Republic of Latvia Citizens' Rights and Fundamental Principles of Naturalisation, Republic of Latvia Supreme Council Resolution, 15 October 1991.

Provisions Amending the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community with a View to Establishing the European Community, Article G, Part Two, Article 8 and 8b, Maastricht, 1992.

Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, no. 351, 21 November 1995.

Soglashenie mezhdyy Latviiskoi Respublikoi i Rossiiskoi Federatsiei o pravovom stsyse Skruntskoi radiolokatsionnoi stanntsii na period ee vremennovo fynktsionirovaniya i demontazha, , Article 15 and 16, Moskva, 30 April 1994 [Agreement on the Legal Status of the Skrunda Radar Station during its Temporary Functioning and Dismantling].

Temporary Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Favourable Order of Crossing the Border of Latvia and Russia for Frontier People, 14 December 1994. *Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Mutual Travels of Citizens*, 14 December 1994.

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, Adopted and opened for signature and ratification by General Assembly resolution 2106 (XX) of 21 December 1965 entry into force 4 January 1969, in accordance with Article 19.

Surveys

Baltic Data House, *The Programme for Studies and Activities, 'Towards a Civic Society': Focus Group Discussions, Survey of Latvian Inhabitants*, November 1997–January 1998, Riga, Latvia, 1998.

Baltic Data House, *The Programme for Studies and Activities, 'Towards a Civic Society'*, Survey of Latvian Inhabitants November 1997–January 1998.

Baltic Data House, *The Programme for Studies and Activities, 'Towards a Civic Society'*, Report the Results of Stage 3, Expert Interviews Content Analysis of Mass Media Texts, April 1998.

Baltic Data House, *The Programme for Studies and Activities, 'Towards a Civic Society'*, Stage 4 Regional Conferences, March–April 1998, The Pupils' Competition 'On the Way to a Civil Society', November 1997–May 1998.

Monthly Omnibus Survey, Language, Baltic Data House, Riga, Latvia, June 1996, Commissioned by the UNDP.

Central and Eastern Eurobarometer. Public Opinion about the European Community, January 1992, no. 2, Annex.

Central and Eastern Eurobarometer, February 1993, no. 3, Annex.

Reif, Karlheinz, and George Cunningham *Central and Eastern Euro-Barometer 5: European Union*, November 1994, Computer file. Conducted by GfK EUROPE Ad hoc research, Brussels. ICPSR version. Köln, Germany: Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung producer, 1995. Köln, Germany: Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung/Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research distributors, 1995.

NORBALT Living Conditions Survey, Aadne Aasland *Latvia the Impact of Transition*, Fafo, Oslo, 1996.

Opinion Poll Carried out by the Naturalisation Board on Pupils at Schools using Russian as the Language of Instruction in 18 districts and Cities in Latvia between December 1995 and January 1996, 2761 Respondents, Naturalisation Board, Riga, 1996.

Rose, Richard, Vilimorus, Baltic Data House and Saar Poll, *New Baltic Barometer III*, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1997.

Rose, Richard, *Nationalities in the Baltic States*, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1994.

Rose, Richard, and William Maley, *Conflict or Compromise in the Baltic States: What do the People's there Think?*, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1994.

Rose, Richard, *Micro-Economic Conditions of Baltic Nationalities*, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1995.

Rose, Richard, Vilimorus, Baltic Data House and Saar Poll, *New Baltic Barometer II*, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1995.

Russians in Latvia Attitude Survey, Ethnicity and Citizenship in the Baltic States, Dept of Geography, University of Cambridge, 1992.

News Sources

Associated Press

Atmoda (Riga)

Baltic Independent

Baltic Observer

Baltic Times

BBC Summary of World Broadcasts

BBC World News Service on the internet

BNS, (Baltic News Service)

Diena

Diplomaticheskii Vestnik

Economist

Financial Times

Guardian

INTERFAX

ITAR TASS

Izvestiya

Keesing's Record of World Events

LETA (Latvian Telegraph Agency)

La Libre Belgique

Literaturnaya Gazeta

Moscow Times

New York Times

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

Oxford Analytica Daily Brief

Panorama Latvii

Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty Newslane. (RFE/RL)

Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty Research Report

Reuter News Service

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

Rossiiskie Vesti

Interviews

Latvia

Vitalijs Aizbalts, Managing Director Daugavpils Municipal Council.
11 June 1996

Indulis Berzins, Latvian Foreign Minister, *Saeima* Deputy Latvia's Way, Riga.
21 October 1998.

Guntars Catlaks, Soros Foundation, Latvia, Transformation of Education Program
Director.
15 October 1999.

Anda Celme United Nations Development Programme, seconded to the Naturalisation
Board.
12 May 1998.
20 October 1999.

Alexandr Gaponenko, Baltic Russian Institute, Riga.
23 October 1998.

Ilmars Geige, National Affairs Division, Latvian Ministry of Justice.
14 June 1996.

Kaija Gertnere, Head of the NGO Centre Riga, formerly nationalities advisor to Prime
Minister, formerly deputy Latvian Human Rights Office.
14 October 1999.

Aivars Groza, advisor to Prime Minister Andris Skele on Foreign Affairs, Riga
21 October 1998.

Janis Kahanovics, Deputy Head Republic of Latvia Naturalisation Board, Riga.
14 June 1996.

Angelita Kamenska, Research Associate, Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic
Studies, Riga.
10 June 1996.

Gregory Krupnikov, Head of the Jewish Community in Latvia.
21 October 1999.

Latvian Foreign Ministry Official.
15 October 1999.

Mr. Lietuvnikes, Prosecutor Daugavpils Court.
12 June 1996.

Vladimir Menshikov, Head of Sociology Department, Daugavpils Pedagogical
University.
13 June 1996.

Nils Muižnieks, Director Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, Riga.
19 October 1998.

Vaira Paegle, *Saeima* Deputy People's Party, Riga.
21 October 1998.

Igor Pimenov, The Latvia Association of Schools with Russian as the Language of Education.

22 October 1999.

Aija Priedite, State Language Training Programme, Riga.

25 October 1999.

Pauls Raudseps, Managing Editor, *Diena*, Riga.

25 October 1999.

Olgerts Tipans, advisor to the President on nationality affairs, Riga

25 October 1999.

Boris Tsilevich, *Saeima* Deputy National Harmony Party, For Human Rights in a United Latvia Faction, Riga.

20 October 1998.

13 May 1999.

Aleksejs Vidasvskis, Chairman of Daugavpils City Council.

11 June 1996.

Juris Vidins, *Saeima* Deputy, For Fatherland and Freedom.

10 June 1996.

Russian Federation

Professor Alexey Kuzmin, Research Director, Institute for Humanities and Political Studies, Moscow.

9 December 1999.

Dr. Arkady Moshes, Head, Section for Security of the CEE and the Baltic Sea Region, Institute of Europe, Russian Academy of Sciences.

10 December 1999.

Tatyana Poloskova, Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russian Federation, Moscow.

9 December 1999.

Nordic Countries

Helge Blakkisrud, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo, formerly member of the OSCE Mission to Latvia, 1994.

14 June 2000.

Lykke Friis, DUPE, Copenhagen.

12 October 1999.

Tina Jortikka-Laitinen, Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

20 October 1999.

Timo Lahelma, Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, former Head of OSCE Mission to Estonia.

20 October 1999.

Nordic Foreign Ministry Official.

15 June 2000.

Nordic Foreign Ministry Official.
11 October 1999.

Norwegian Diplomat
13 June 2000.

Swedish Foreign Ministry Official.
15 June 2000.

External organisations

Katarina Areskoug, Latvian Desk Officer, European Commission, Brussels.
12 March 1998.

Undine Bollow, Deputy Head of OSCE Mission to Latvia.
13 October 1998.

Heidi Bottolfs, OSCE Mission to Latvia.
25 October 1999.

European Commission Official.
20 October 1998.

Ole Espersen, Commissioner of the Council for the Baltic Sea States on democratic Institutions and Human Rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, Copenhagen.
12 October 1999.

Persons responsible for EC social policy towards Poland and the Baltic States, Brussels.
12 March 1998.

United States

Karl Altau, Joint Baltic American Council, Rockville, Maryland.
9 February 2000.

Lisa Davis, Freedom House, Washington DC.
10 February 2000.

Mark Levinson, USAID.
7 February 2000.

Cameron Pippit, USAID.
7 February 2000.

US Government Official.
8 February 2000.

Personal Correspondence/ Informal Conversations

Dzintars Abikis, Saeima Deputy People's Party, Chairman Committee on Education, Culture, and Science.

29 November 1999.

Alvis Ancans, US Embassy Riga.
27 September 1999.

Indra Arone, USAID Representative at the US Mission to Latvia.
18 October 1999 and 21 January 2000.

Veiko Berendsen, visiting UPI, Helsinki from Estonia.
19 October 1999.

Katja Bordi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Unit for Cooperation with Neighbouring Areas, Helsinki, 27 March 2001.

Line Bøystad, Utenriksdepartementet/Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo, Norway, 21 May 2001.

Comité International de la Croix-Rouge, Genève, RES/ARCH 99/245-FBS.
9 December 1999.

Jekaterina Dorodnova, Research Fellow (Latvia), Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, at the University of Hamburg.
15 October 1999.

Bettina Döser, European Commission, Brussels.
15 April 1999.

Juris Dreifelds, Brock University, Ontario.
2 October 1999.

Rasma Karklins, University of Illinois at Chicago.
17 September 1999.

Latvian Embassy, London.
1996-2001.

Anatol Lieven, IISS, London.
20 September 1999.

Anders Mellbourn, Director, Swedish Institute of International Affairs.
20 September 1999.

Ilmars Mezs, Head, IOM office in Riga.
28 January 2000.

Indra Oeverland, NUPI, Oslo.
14 June 2000.

Vija Pugule, Swedish Embassy, Riga.
7 July 1999.

Dr. Nick Redman, St. Antony's College, and Oxford Analytica.
7 December 2000.

Aleksandrs Rzavins, Russian Community of Latvia.
10 November 1999.

Juris Sinka, Saeima Deputy For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK.

30 November 1999.

Aivars Stranga, Department of History, University of Latvia.
2 June 2000.

Geoff Swain, University of the West of England.
24 August 2000.

Galina Vitkovskaya and Anna Rubtsova, Moscow Carnegie Center.
3 December 1999.

Helen Winnifrith, grand-daughter of one of the last British Heads of Mission to the
Baltics during the first period of independence.
31 May 2000.

Uldis Zarins, Information Specialist, USIS Riga.
6 May 1999.

Brigita Zepa, Baltic Data House
8 November 1999.

Tatyana Zhdanok, Latvian Human Rights Committee.
14 October 1999.