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THE ETHNIC ASPECTS OF POPULATION CHANGE
IN LATVIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE

by

Ilmārs Mežs

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
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Ilmārs Mežs

THE ETHNIC ASPECTS OF POPULATION CHANGE IN LATVIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Ilmārs Mežs, M. A.

Western Michigan University, 1994

This study examines current and historic ethnic and demographic trends and their spatial and cultural contexts within Latvia. Comparisons with the other two Baltic states are also presented and discussed. The Latvian population underwent fifty years of Soviet rule, with deliberate policies to dilute the homogeneity of Latvians through Russification, immigration, and political dominance. The period from 1940 to 1991 greatly impacted Latvians and immigrants, who were mainly Russians, by placing stresses on the spatial structure of the ethnic groups and their cultural relationship.

Latvians in particular feared ethnic and cultural extinction. The process of ethnic dilution and mixing under the Soviets is examined in terms of rural-urban contexts, the workplace, employment, housing, and education. Current demographic trends are analyzed and prospects for ethnic harmony in a multi-cultural society are interpreted. The major turning point of Latvia's ethnic processes is analyzed as well as predictions for future developments are made.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Ethnicity is an increasingly important issue for the entire world. Ethnic tensions are especially evident in post-communist regions. During the last decade the democratic governments were concerned with human rights, political prisoners, and freedom of religion in communist states. These concerns have changed to ethnic and national conflicts since the end of communist regimes. There is no post-communist country which is not directly connected with an ethnic conflict, either on its own territory, or the problem is connected with co-patriots in neighboring countries.

The smallest share of the titular nationality is in Bosnia and Hercegovina (see Table 1), the only state in a region, where not a single ethnic group forms a majority. Ethnic tensions are strong in Moldova and Slovakia, where minorities form 35 % and 20 % respectively. Relatively stable ethnic situations only exist in several countries, for example, Poland and Hungary where minorities are less than 5 % (see Table 1). There are different views expressed whether the ethnic homogeneity affects the possibility for conflicts. As from Vanhanen, the degree of ethnic cleavages explains approximately half of the variation in the degree of ethnic conflicts (Vanhanen 1992).

For the Baltic countries ethnicity has been a concern for half a

Table 1

The Percentage of Ethnic Minorities in the
Postcommunist Countries in Europe, 1994

Country	Percentage of Minorities	Percentage of Titular Ethnic Group
Poland	2%	98%
Albania	3%	97%
Czech Republic	4%	96%
Hungary	4%	96%
Romania	12%	88%
Slovenia	12%	88%
Bulgaria	15%	85%
Russia	18%	82%
Lithuania	19%	81%
Slovakia	20%	80%
Belorus	20%	80%
Croatia	22%	78%
Ukraine	27%	73%
Macedonia	35%	65%
Moldova	35%	65%
Yugoslavia (Serbia)	38%	62%
Estonia	39%	61%
Latvia	46%	54%
Bosnia and Hercegovina	56%	44%

Source: Coopers Lybrand, Eastern Europe Business Investment Guides,
June 2, 1994 (Lexis/Nexis).

century. Estonians and Latvians in particular have feared ethnic, and therefore, cultural extinction. Such fears were engendered by discrimination against the indigenous populations of these countries by wars, Moscow's rule, the influx of large numbers of Russians, other migrants from the east, and by the deliberate policy of Russification. Latvia has the second largest number of minorities in post-communist Europe, after Bosnia and Hercegovina. A major difference is that in Latvia, and Estonia as well, the population of minorities increased 5-10 times during the Soviet Union's annexation of their territories.

The Baltic states regained independence in the period 1989 to 1991. Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians (often referred to as Balts) have changed their status from oppressed minorities inside former USSR to titular nationalities of their respective states. In turn, they have been accused by Moscow of suppressing the Russian minority, especially in Estonia and Latvia. A portion of minorities, who arrived in Latvia during the Soviet occupation (or "migrants", as they are commonly called) may not be actually oppressed, but in the drive to reestablish ethnic and cultural values within their territories, the Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians have insisted that their native languages, not Russian, be used in official contexts, and that the indigenous cultures define the national culture of each state.

During the Soviet period, tens of millions of Russians settled in republics of the former Soviet Union outside Russia. In a year or so, more than 25 million Russians accidentally discovered themselves living not in their own country. On average, the Russian population in the fourteen

former republics of the USSR form an 18% minority (Harris 1993). The number of Russians in Latvia might seem relatively low, less than a million, if compared to more than 11 million in Ukraine and over 6 million in Kazakhstan. In relative numbers, Latvia has the second largest Russian population share (34%), slightly less than in Kazakhstan (38%).

The problem addressed by this research is two fold:

1. It is hypothesized that the national identity of Latvians was seriously threatened during the 1970's and 1980's as a result of deliberate policies of demographic minoritization, and Russification.

2. It is hypothesized that the ethnic structure of the population in Latvia is becoming more homogeneous since independence. The major turning point of ethnic processes towards Latvian extinction ended in 1989, with the regaining of independence. Post independence in Latvia is restoring the ethnic balance in education, housing, politics, etc.

Sources and Organization of the Study

In this work, the current and historic spatial and demographic aspects of ethnicity in Latvia are examined, and comparisons with the other Baltic states are made. The major sources of data for the study are the 1989 census of population, more recent data from unpublished materials from Latvia's Ministry of Education, and annual reports by the Statistical Committee of Latvia. The censuses of 1959, 1970, and 1979 have also been used. These censuses were all completed under Soviet supervision. Censuses conducted by the Baltic states during the 1920s-1930s provide a historic, comparative dimension.

This research entails an examination of the 1989 census in order to determine its characteristics and scientific reliability. It is well known that the Soviet Union was secretive about all information, and manipulated and distorted it for political and ideological ends. Census data was no exception.

The census takers interviewed and recorded answers to thirteen questions (see Appendix A) from all inhabitants (the answers for children were given by parents or available documentation) as for the state of January 12, 1989 (Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1992). For each household there were an additional seven questions (see Appendix A) regarding living space. Every fourth person interviewed was asked for more detailed information by answering five additional questions, regarding work and length of residence (see Appendix A). In principle the answers were voluntary, but since the communist government took the census very seriously, it was difficult to avoid the census, or to give false answers. After the data were collected, they came under rigorous government control. Details could then be altered, certain data could be changed, or data could be deleted altogether from public scrutiny. Thus, in Latvia the data about ethnic structure in particular cities and regions were kept under strict secrecy in order to hide the enormous in-migration and Russification that was resulting in Latvians becoming a minority in their own country.

An additional incentive for hiding such data was to obscure the location and size of Soviet military bases, as well as the integration of many thousands of draftees and career military personnel into cities and

rural localities. Today, such records can be examined. They reveal that a parallel census was taken of military personnel, not in the local language, but only in Russian (Mežs 1991). Moreover, the census questionnaires are incomplete. In order to hide the actual location of military personnel, records of individuals were scattered geographically at different locations. It is not uncommon to find data for small rural localities, with all-Latvian populations, in which there appear non-reported individuals who are non-Latvian, young males of military age (Mežs 1991).

With the above qualifications, the census is comprehensive. A comparison of the basic census data with the records kept by municipalities and other organizational units, as well as with earlier censuses verifies its general accuracy (Mežs 1991). It is possible to assume that the census was rigorous, usually with an error of one percent or less. The largest margin for error is in the approximately ten thousand illegal immigrants in the largest cities and capitals of the Baltic countries who are not reported in the census. Every Soviet resident should have in their passport an approved address of residency. Nevertheless, there were illegal persons with no valid passports, and most of those persons preferred to escape any direct contact with the state, including the census taker.

Critical to the demographics of ethnicity are such census questions as:

1. What is your nationality (ethnicity)?
2. What is your native language? and

3. In which other language of the people's USSR are you fluent? (Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1992). Thus, for example, in Latvia there could be an individual who is ethnically Polish, with Russian as the native language, and Latvian as a second language. Those cultural and demographic facts are important indicators of ethnicity as well as the assimilation processes.

The first chapter provides a survey of relevant literature and a brief historical review of the population of Latvia. The second chapter discusses the data of 1989 population census, with attention paid to cities, homogeneity, linguistic and political aspects, and status of minorities. The third chapter analyzes more recent data on birth and death rates, emigration, and language of schooling. The synthesis of the data from previous chapters is given in the fourth chapter. Predictions of the ethnic structure changes are made and topics for future research are given in the conclusions.

Background in Scientific Literature

There are just a few countries or regions in which the ethnic pattern of the population has been the focus of scholars in recent decades. Most studies have been in countries such as the United Kingdom (Hughes 1990, Williams 1988, Withers 1984), Canada (Halli et al. 1990), South Africa (Grobler et al. 1990, Van der Merwe 1993), Belgium (McRae 1986), Switzerland (Mayer 1980), and Finland (Karjalainen 1993). There were more monographs published in 1980s with a main focus on research in the USSR or satellite countries (Karklins 1986). With the collapse of the

communist system, ethnic conflicts became visible in several countries where different nationalities had been forced to live together, as in the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia. The number of articles concerning ethnic problems is increasing significantly, especially in the last year. There has been growth in both the scholarly and general literature (Harris 1993, Park 1993, Stewart 1993).

The countries of the world may be divided into five groups by the ethnic structure of the population (Pabrigs 1994). The first group of countries has an ethnic majority of 95%-99% of the total population (Japan, Korea, Iceland, Norway). The second group where one ethnic group has 60%-95% of the total population (Germany, Hungary, France, Spain). The third group of countries has one ethnic group with 40%-60% of the total population, but the remaining population consists of 7-25 minority groups (Pakistan, former USSR). Two ethnic groups with a total of 65%-96% of the total population comprise the fourth group of countries (Belgium). A fifth group of countries has three major ethnic groups with 34%-97% of the total population (South Africa).

Latvia is difficult to place in one of these groups. It might be placed in either the third or fourth group. It is possible that after a decade, Latvia will be placed in the second group of countries, when the Latvian proportion will rise above 60%.

It is impossible to discuss ethnic aspects of the population change without explaining the basic terms. Ethnic group and ethnicity carries only the ethnic aspect of population or a person. Ethnic group is a group that for physical, religious, linguistic, historical, or other defined reasons

feels by itself, and is felt by others to be a distinct people (Wixman 1980). Nation and nationality carries another meaning, which is not ethnic, but political. What is basic to the existence of an ethnic group is the consciousness of membership in the group. There are different levels of ethnic awareness. For example part of the local population of the Krāslavas region can easily change their ethnicity from Byelorussians to Latvians, Poles, or Russians, and back again.

The ethnicity of a person in Latvia has been recorded in documents for long period of time. During the soviet period the ethnicity was recorded in internal passports. Usually it was chosen from the ethnicity of the parents. In case of an ethnically mixed family, the applicant for a passport chose one of the parent's ethnicity. Sometimes clerks affected the decision, especially in cases of lesser known ethnic groups or an unusual ethnic mixture in the family. In this case, the ethnicity almost always was chosen as Russian or Latvian. For a census records proof of ethnicity was not needed. The instructions to the census taker, were to write the nationality (ethnicity) that the respondent himself indicates. Nationality of children is determined by the parents, in only cases where parents have difficulty determining, would preference be given to the nationality of the mother (Clem 1986).

Two types of ethnic research related to population geography have appeared. The first type deals with the historically formed ethnic structure of the population, especially where groups have regions of dominance (Merwe 1993, Karjalainen 1993). The main task of this group of research is to analyze ethnic balance, and find the key for stability of two or more

relatively equal parts of the population. The second type of research addresses problems rising from population movement on a large scale, in which migrants find themselves minorities in a different country with different ethnic and cultural traditions. The main task of this research is to analyze potential conflicts between groups, and suggest ways to smooth the process of acculturation and integration of the newcomers in a dominant culture.

A recent work that reflects the first type of research is by South African scholar (Merwe 1993). Language planning becomes a top priority of the agenda of constitutional reform since South Africa's changing in the 1990s. The research examined different language patterns to determine and compare linguistic regions in rural areas with urban areas of high population density. One aspect of the research is the development of a conceptual niche for urban geolinguistics in the theory that, when most of a population is urban, the inter ethnic relations occur not along wide rural frontiers, but rather in a few concentrated urbanized areas. At one time a relatively small share of the population was engaged in inter ethnic relations, mainly those who lived close to the ethnic borders. Now, inter ethnic relations are touching, in one form or another, most of the ethnic groups in urban areas. The research by Van der Merwe serves as a model for study, and what should be done in analyzing multiethnic urban areas, such as Riga and other major Baltic cities.

Another article from the same type of research was written by Finnish scholar Elli Karjalainen. The Swedish population in Finland now is less than 300,000 or only 6% of the country's total population, and these

numbers have declined for the past five decades (Karjalainen 1993). Nevertheless besides Finnish, the Swedish language has the status of an official language in Finland. All 460 Finnish municipalities are classified according to their prevailing language. According to Finland's language legislation, a municipality is considered bilingual if at least 8% or 3,000 of its inhabitants speak the minority language, otherwise the municipality is considered unilingual. Most of the municipalities in Finland (86%) are Finnish speaking, some 9% are bilingual and only 5% are Swedish speaking municipalities. The decline of the Swedish population has given rise to debate over the necessity for official bilingualism in Finland (Karjalainen 1993).

The following publications reflect the second type of research. The work of Dr. Harris on post communism states, including Latvia, briefly examines and compares them (Harris 1993). Latvia has the highest percentage Russian minority among all new European states. The percentage of Latvians decreased from 82% to 52% or by 30 points in the time period from 1941 to 1989 (Harris 1993).

Estonia and Latvia share a common history, especially in the last half century, and there are many parallels to the ethnic problems in both countries. A case in point is the research by Andrus Park. The ethnic status in Estonia has improved in contrast to other post-communist states, such as former Yugoslavia, Moldova, and the Transcaucasian states (Park 1993). After the independence declaration, there was a decline in the intensity of ethnic tensions. The same might be true for Latvia. Similar to Latvia, Estonia has a difficult inheritance - about one-quarter of the

population were citizens of the former USSR. Many of the citizens of the now disbanded USSR are reluctant to recognize the right of Estonia for independence. They would like to remain in Estonia, with the old status of a privileged class, rather than under the laws of a new democratic Estonia (Park 1993). Estonia experienced a decline from 95% to 61% of the national ethnic group from 1945-1989. There are significant similarities between Estonia and Latvia in terms of migration patterns, schools, official language, and social structure of major ethnic groups.

One can find a good review of the changing population structure of Latvia in an article in the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Report. During the past four years the population of Latvia has undergone remarkable changes: its overall size declined and the Latvian share of the population grew. The principal causes were a negative natural increase (deaths exceeding births), and a significant net emigration of Slavs (Bungs 1993).

On the other hand, more political aspects of ethnicity are analyzed in the article by Eric Rudenshiold. The process of change in Latvia has passed the point of no return. Although the re-creation of a Latvian nation-state seems almost anachronistic in Europe, it must be remembered that Latvia democratically rejected more than five decades of collectivized economies (Rudenshiold 1992). Perhaps, the greatest and most difficult Soviet inheritance to accept is a multi-ethnic state, that could eventually make ethnic Latvians a minority group in their own republic (Rudenshiold 1992).

In the former USSR there was strong censorship of all publications. Only those researchers, who supported dogmas and ideas of Communist party officials, were permitted to publish their works. The ethnic question was viewed in very short limits, and it emphasized and overestimated the role of Russian language. The perspective development for each ethnic group other than Russian was clearly stated - gradual and historically inevitable development of the Russian language into the second native language for all ethnic groups of the country (Hanazarov 1982). The forcible Russification was valued as the only perspective of development for all non-Russians within the former USSR as well as in Latvia.

Very little research is published about Latvia's ethnic problems during Soviet dominance. One of the researches printed in Moscow states that the process of ethnic consolidation is still occurring among Latvians. The cause of consolidation is viewed as socialistic industrialization. The increase of ethnically mixed marriages is noted, as well as the minimal assimilation in comparison to other ethnic groups in the former USSR (Bromley 1983).

The ethnic structure of Latvia is characterized by an increase of Latvian linguistic assimilation in the book written by a collection of authors in 1986. Attention is paid to the large increase of Russians, Ukrainians, and Byelorussians in Latvia, as well as to the low proportion of Latvians in cities (Naselyeniye 1986).

Some sizable and important publications, where the discussion of ethnic aspects of the population would be appropriate, authors tried to escape this topic by inserting only very general information on the ethnic

structure of Latvia, and by mentioning some unimportant information (Latvijas Ģeogrāfija 1975).

Most publications on the topic are written by exile-Latvians (Dunsdorfs 1983, Dreifelds 1990, Karklins, 1993). Some population and ethnic oriented scholars from Latvia have written research reports about Latvia's population in the last few years (Zvidriņš 1992, Eglīte 1991). The book by Dr. Zvidriņš and Vanovska appears to be the first comprehensive publication, collecting and commenting on statistical data available on the ethnic status of Latvians, not only in Latvia but all over the world (Zvidriņš 1992). Emphasis is given to age structure, birth and death rates, and other demographic factors. Dr. Zvidriņš is also the author of a number of articles in journals and newspapers about demography and the ethnic structure of Latvia's population (Zvidriņš 1994).

One of the first scholars from Latvia to express concerns about the unfavorable demographic status of Latvians was Dr. Eglīte. In her article she discusses tendencies of assimilation among the major ethnic groups of Latvia (Eglīte 1991). The higher birth rate among Latvians was indicated, as well as the tendency of Latvians to increase by percentage in the total population (Eglīte 1991).

Another article by Dr. Vēbers describes war losses of Latvians, and their unfavorable demographic situation (Vēbers 1993). The basic principles of the Language Law are given, such as an explanation of the status of Latvian as the official language, as well as rights of other languages in Latvia. The effectiveness of the Migration Department in order to control immigration to Latvia is also discussed (Vēbers 1993).

Historical Review

Ethnic problems in Latvia, as well as in the other Baltic states, are a heritage of Soviet domination. Before annexation to the USSR in 1940, the ethnic structure in Latvia was relatively homogeneous (see Figures 1, 2). There were minorities, but not sufficient to be the cause of major internal political problems, and minorities lived peacefully. During the 1930s all minorities in Latvia had their own state-funded schools, and a wide range of national organizations to express their ethnicity. Laws protected language rights. The cultural self-government system in Estonia was hailed worldwide as a unique, liberal, and successful model for managing multi-national relations (Loeber 1993). Latvia and Estonia were considered to be among the most democratic countries in Europe in terms of minority rights, particularly Latvia, because minority nationalities were granted appreciably greater rights than internationally defined norms required (Kalnciema 1992).

Prior to 1940, the population of the Baltic states was approximately five million, of which fewer than one million were minorities. Latvia had the largest proportion of minorities, 23% of the total population in 1935 (see Figure 2, Table 2). Estonia had the smallest proportion, about one tenth of the population. To put these figures in perspective, during the same period Czechoslovakia had a minority population (non-Czechs and non-Slovaks) of 31%, and Poland had 35% (Latviešu Konversācijas Vārdnīca 1928-1938).

During that period in the Baltic States, Russians and Slavs in general, were a far less significant minority than today. Their numbers

Table 2

Ethnic Structure of Latvia's Population, 1935-1994

Ethnicity	1935	1943	1959	1970	1979	1989	1994 (a)	1935	1943	1959	1970	1979	1989	1994 (a)
Total	1,905,373	1,760,162	2,093,458	2,364,127	2,502,816	2,666,567	2,565,892	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Latvians	1,467,035	1,441,536	1,297,881	1,341,805	1,344,105	1,387,757	1,391,498	77.0%	81.9%	62.0%	56.8%	53.7%	52.0%	54.2%
Russians	168,266	167,773	556,448	704,599	821,464	905,515	848,644	8.8%	9.5%	26.6%	29.8%	32.8%	34.0%	33.1%
Belorussians	26,803	48,601	61,587	94,898	111,505	119,702	105,506	1.4%	2.8%	2.9%	4.0%	4.5%	4.5%	4.1%
Ukrainians	1,844	11,339	29,440	53,461	66,703	92,101	78,389	0.1%	0.6%	1.4%	2.3%	2.7%	3.5%	3.1%
Poles	48,637	37,996	59,774	63,045	62,690	60,416	57,325	2.6%	2.2%	2.9%	2.7%	2.5%	2.3%	2.2%
Lithuanians	22,843	24,094	32,383	40,589	37,818	34,630	33,296	1.2%	1.4%	1.5%	1.7%	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%
Jews	93,370	*	36,584	36,671	28,318	22,897	13,130	4.9%	*	1.7%	1.6%	1.1%	0.9%	0.5%
Gypsies	3,839	2,998	4,301	5,427	6,134	7,044	7,250	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%
Tatars	39	*	1,811	2,671	3,764	4,828	*	0.0%	*	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	*
Germans	62,116	17,648	1,609	5,413	3,299	3,783	*	3.3%	1.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	*
Estonians	6,928	5,389	4,610	4,334	3,681	3,312	*	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	*
Moldavs	*	*	228	1,591	1,392	3,223	*	*	*	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	*
Armenians	83	*	1,060	1,511	1,913	3,069	*	0.0%	*	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	*
Azerbaijans	*	*	324	558	954	2,765	*	*	*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	*
Chuvashes	1	*	432	736	988	1,509	*	0.0%	*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	*
Georgians	38	*	458	680	911	1,378	*	0.0%	*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	*
Mordovians	*	*	426	673	823	1,053	*	*	*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*
Kazakhs	*	*	143	523	447	1,044	*	*	*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*
Livonians	844	455	185	48	107	135	*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*
Others	2,687	2,333	3,774	4,894	5,800	10,406	30,854	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	1.2%
* - lack of data		a- estimate												

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata. Rīga, 1993.

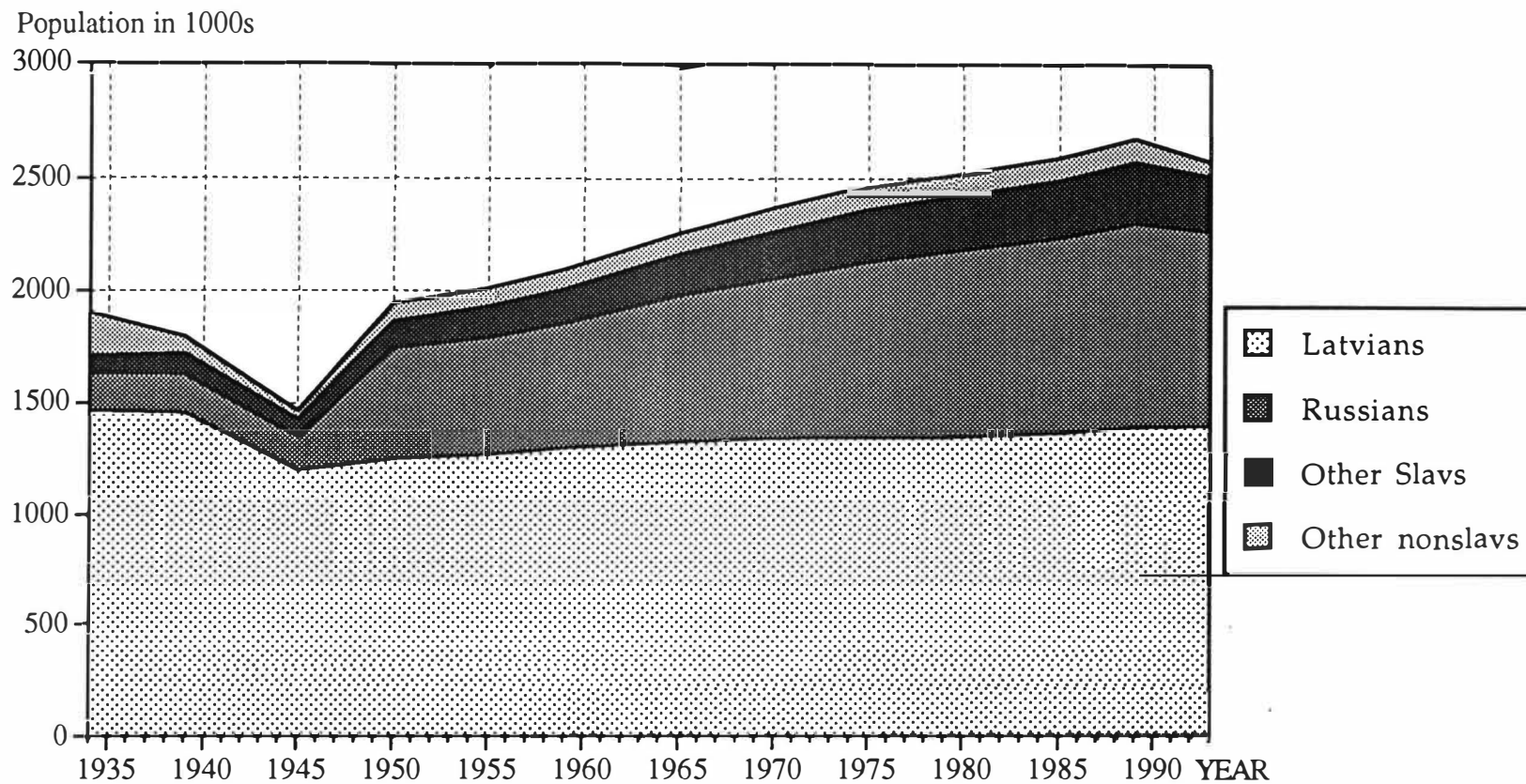


Figure 1. The Ethnic Structure of Latvia, 1935-1993.

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata. Rīga, 1993.

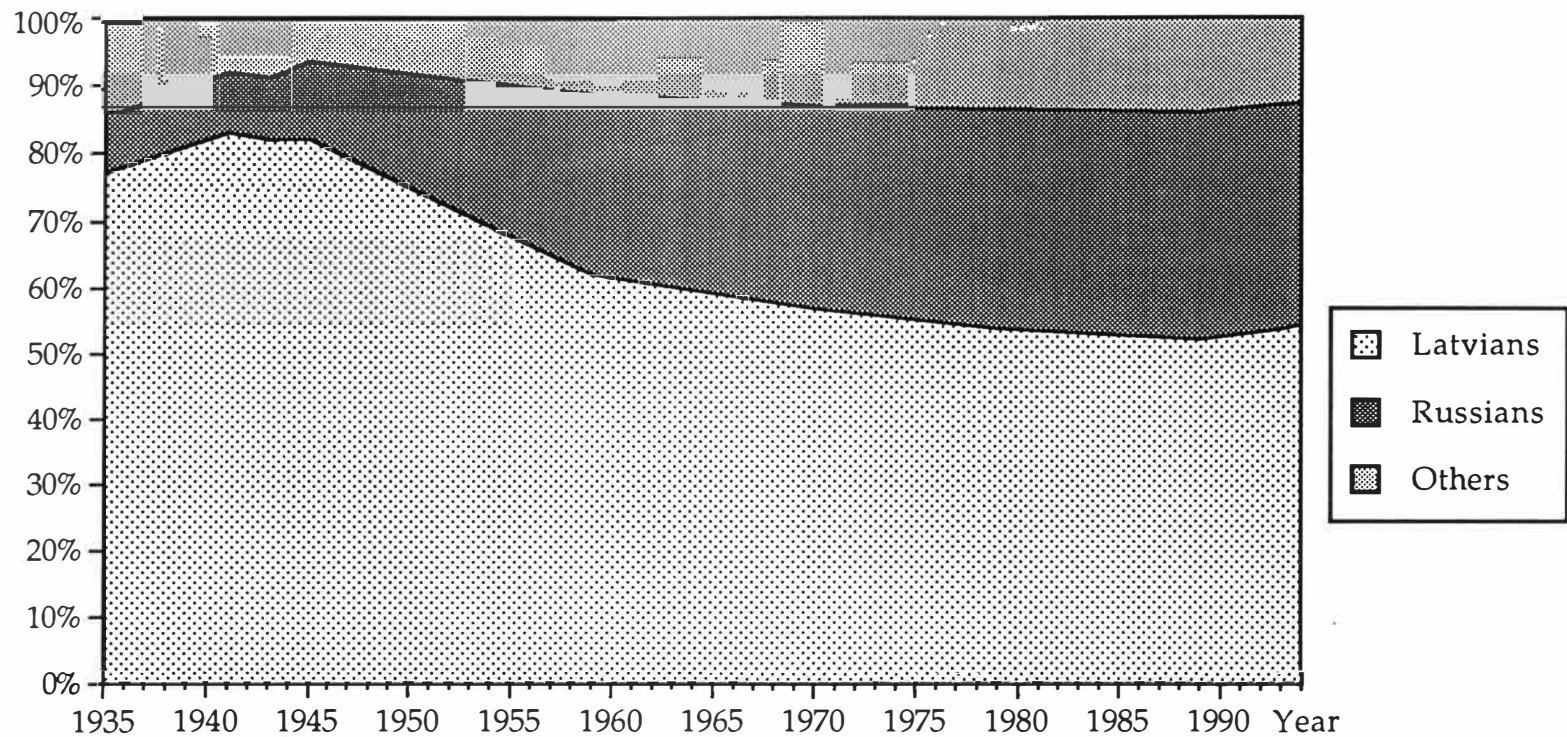


Figure 2. Ethnic Groups in Latvia (percentages), 1935-1994.

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata. Rīga, 1993.

have increased almost nine times, and form 22% of the total population in the Baltic states. Still, with some 200,000 people, Russians were the largest ethnic minority group in the Baltics prior to World War II. However, they still represented less than 5% of the total population. Russians made up the largest ethnic minority group in both Latvia and Estonia, 10% and 8% respectively. The percentage of Russians in Lithuania was only 2.5%, mainly due to the lack of a common border with Russia.

After the collapse of Swedish and Polish powers, and the capture of Baltic lands by Russia during the eighteenth century, the Russian government's policy was to dilute these non-Russian regions with Russians (Dunsdorfs 1983, Stalšāns 1958). Moreover, many persecuted Russian Old Believers fled westward to the Baltics. Special privileges to hold land, not available to the indigent Catholic population, were granted to the Orthodox Russians in the eastern part of Latvia. Russian migration westward continued until the First World War (Dunsdorfs 1983, Stalšāns 1958).

The first complete population census was taken in 1897. Persons were asked to indicate their native language, but not ethnicity. In the territory of Latvia, some 68% of the population claimed Latvian as their native language (Zvidriņš 1992). Some Latvians indicated Russian, German or Polish as their native language. Therefore the recorded number of 68% Latvians can be viewed only as a minimum (Dunsdorfs, 1983). During the First World War Latvia lost almost 30% of its population, with some refugees returning in 1919-1925.

The population censuses from 1920, 1925, 1930, and 1935 reported a slowly growing dominance of Latvians. The Latvian proportion in 1935 was recorded as 75.5%. This number is ingrained as the highest ever recorded percentage of Latvians in Latvia. To compare, it should be recalculated in today's borders, because part of Latvia (the city of Abrene with adjacent territory) was declared a part of the Russian Federation in 1944. With this later change, Latvians were 77% of the total population in 1935 (see Figure 2). The largest ethnic minority groups in Latvia were Russians (9%), Jews (5%), and Germans (3%) (see Table 2).

In the period from 1930 to 1935 the absolute increase of Latvians was 77,655 (Dunsdorfs 1983). Only about one third of that number was due to the natural increase of Latvians (births exceeding deaths). Therefore, about 50,000 former non-Latvians became Latvians by assimilation, most of them in eastern Latvia.

A major decline in minorities occurred during World War II. In 1939 and later years, nearly all of the 60,000 Germans in the country emigrated to Germany (Misiunas 1993; Dunsdorfs 1983). They were called "home" by Hitler, but actually many were resettled in territories annexed from Poland. Many Jews and Russians fled east with the retreating Russian Army. The Jewish and Gypsy populations were each greatly reduced through extermination by the Nazis during the occupation from 1941 to 1945.

The registration of the population in Latvia, by German officials was organized in the summer of 1941. They were registered by sex, place of residence and whether they are Latvians or not. The Latvian proportion

was recorded as 81%, or in today's borders 83% (Iedzīvotāju 1941), which is the highest recorded percentage of Latvians ever recorded in Latvia. Non-Latvians were mainly concentrated in eastern Latvia. There were 91% of Latvians in Latvia without the territories of four eastern districts.

The next census was taken by German officials in 1943. The proportion of Latvians was 1 percent lower than in 1941 (Latvijas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1991). This decrease might be explained by the fact, that about 10,000 Ukrainian captives were settled in Latvia as labor for farms, and about 10,000 - 15,000 Germans settled from Germany, mainly in the capital, probably as government and army figures.

At the time of the second takeover (1944-1945) of Latvia by the Soviet Union, minorities constituted about 18 percent of the total population (Zvidriņš 1992, see Table 2). This proportion changed radically following annexation. Not only did several hundred thousand Latvians flee to the West, but a policy of Russification was pursued by Moscow. The demographic genocide of Latvians was a deliberate policy. During the past few years historians have begun to document the full scale of this policy and its practices, (Riekstiņš 1993, Strods 1992, Zīle 1992) the shifting of populations into the Baltic countries, and the deliberate Russification of Baltic people.

This plan of demographic genocide was put into effect on June 14, 1941, when in one night about 50,000 Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians were deported to Siberia, where it was intended they would perish (and many did). This deportation was part of a larger plan to deport most of the native population from the Baltics (Moriss 1991, Misiunas 1993). During

1943-1944, the entire populations of Chechens, Ingushes, Kalmyks, Crimean Tatars, and Volga Germans, among others, were deported from their homelands in Northern Caucasus, Crimea and Lower Volga regions in Russia. The total number of deportees exceeded several million. Most of the deported Crimean Tatar and Volga German population are still not able to return to their pre-war homelands.

The German attack on the Soviet Union at the end of June 1941 arrested these practices for three years, only to be resumed in 1944. The arrest and deportation of innocent people, including children, continued until Stalin's death in 1953. The greatest mass deportation occurred in 1949 when approximately 119,000 people from Latvia, who were mostly successful, small, independent farmers and their families, were arrested and transported to Siberia (Strods 1992, Levits 1991). It is estimated that only 15 to 20% survived (Levits 1991).

Total wartime losses in the Baltics reached approximately one million, or one-fifth of the total population. Moscow and its surrogate local governments organized mass in-migrations to the Baltic republics (see Figures 1, 2; Table 2) to fulfill employment in extensive, artificially developed industry in order to fill this gap and to dilute the nationalist inclined Balts. Large industrial enterprises were built, which relied mostly on imported raw materials, supplies, and labor. Examples include a knitted goods factory in Ogre, a haberdashery factory Lauma in Liepāja, chemical enterprises in Olaine, synthetic fiber factories in Daugavpils and Valmiera among others. Many of the existing factories were enlarged several times, in order to create a need for additional labor. Moreover, the

Baltic republics were attractive to newcomers. Despite the consequences of World War II, a western work ethic among the Baltic peoples had resulted in a better infrastructure and a higher standard of living than in the rest of the Soviet Union. Thus, more and more immigrants were attracted to the relatively better conditions in Latvia and, over time, arrived from Russia and other parts of the Soviet Union (see Figures 1, 2).

Many industrial enterprises were located at a distance from major cities creating artificial non-Latvian islands. The industries of building materials and peat extraction were developed by imported labor. Seda in the Valkas region and Zilaiskalns in the neighboring Valmieras region are typical soviet style settlements, built after establishing peat extraction factories. The proportion of Latvians in 1989 is accordingly 11% in Seda and 28% in Zilaiskalns, or one of the lowest in Latvia. A smaller factory for peat extraction was built in Strūžāni of the Rēzeknes district. The Latvian proportion is 62%, or about 30% lower than in neighboring area. The drain tube factories were built in Kuprava (25% Latvians) in the region of Balvi, and Lode (45% Latvians) in the Cēsis region. Close to Rīga, in Vangaži, there is a major factory of ferroconcrete constructions, and the proportion of Latvians is 28%, or one of the lowest in area.

An additional external source of population was the Soviet military. As military garrisons were enlarged in the Baltic countries, hundreds of thousands of officers and their families became permanent residents. When Soviet officers were demobilized, they were offered new state built apartments in the city of their choice anywhere in the Soviet Union. Only Moscow, Leningrad (St. Petersburg), and the Black Sea Coast

were closed territories, and permission to settle there was difficult to obtain. On the other hand, Rīga was open and it became one of the favorite places for Soviet officers to settle.

One of the principal tasks of local government was to secure apartments, good jobs, and other privileges for the newcomers. The local communist party was staffed by Russians and Russified Latvians rather than by Latvians, and in carrying out this charge, such governments were especially zealous (Šilde 1990, Gore 1992, Levits 1991). The latter group came from Russia, where they had lived since the turn of the century when approximately 150,000 Latvians had gone to Siberia to take up land. During the First World War they were joined by more refugees from Latvia. Many refugees returned to Latvia after 1920, but approximately 200,000 stayed in Russia (Zvidriņš 1992). The percentage of communists among them was very high, and many held high-level posts in the government (Lieven 1993). Born in Russia, most of them did not speak Latvian. They were inordinately enthusiastic in carrying out Moscow's plans as the appointed rulers of Latvia.

The degree of support for the communist party differed among the three Baltic nations, and had far-reaching consequences. Baltic communist parties were insignificant with only two thousand members before annexation in 1940 (Misiunas 1993). After annexation, Russians took control of the communist parties. Since native Estonians and Latvians rarely joined the party, they became a minority in them and, therefore, in government. Among Latvia's communists in 1953, only 29% were Latvians (Gore 1992). Among ten members of the Central

Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia in 1985, five were Russian Latvians, three were Russians and two were local Latvians (Levits 1991).

Lithuanians present an important contrast. Lithuanians joined the party in greater numbers and controlled the majority. A popular and controversial Lithuanian communist leader, Antanas Sniečkus was able to preserve Lithuanian interests. Especially critical was the success of the Lithuanian communists to reject much of the extensive and illogical industrialization and, therefore, to avoid the many immigrants that arrived in Latvia and Estonia. The net result was that Lithuanians maintained an 80% majority in their land (see Table 3).

Latvians also enjoyed the more benevolent rule of a Latvian communist, Eduards Berklavs for a short time during the late 1950s. During the period known as the "spring" following the Stalinist terror, the immigration of Russians was reduced, and the first steps were taken to restore Latvian as the official language of the land (Gore 1992). Unfortunately, everything was changed following Khrushchev's visit to Rīga in 1959. All national communists (Latvian, as well as the Russian nationals who supported Latvians) were removed from power, with some being deported to Russia. It is likely that such a policy change was instigated by the local leaders of the Russian military and by Russian-Latvian communists, for the later took over the key posts vacated by their erstwhile Latvian comrades. The result was that Latvian disappeared rapidly from official use, in part due to the fact that most Russian-Latvians did not speak Latvian. At the same time, most enterprises changed their office language to Russian (Zile 1991). Latvian was supplanted by Russian

Table 3

Ethnic Structure of the Population of the Baltic States in 1989

Ethnicity	Baltic states	%	Lithuania	%	Latvia	%	Estonia	%
Lithuanians	2961449	37.5%	2,924,251	79.6%	34,630	1.3%	2,568	0.2%
Russians	1724804	21.8%	344,455	9.4%	905,515	34.0%	474,834	30.3%
Latvians	1395121	17.6%	4,229	0.1%	1,387,757	52.0%	3,135	0.2%
Estonians	967191	12.2%	598	0.0%	3,312	0.1%	963,281	61.5%
Poles	321418	4.1%	257,994	7.0%	60,416	2.3%	3,008	0.2%
Byelorussians	210582	2.7%	63,169	1.7%	119,702	4.5%	27,711	1.8%
Ukrainians	185161	2.3%	44,789	1.2%	92,101	3.5%	48,271	3.1%
Jews	39824	0.5%	12,314	0.3%	22,897	0.9%	4,613	0.3%
Finns	17247	0.2%	162	0.0%	463	0.0%	16,622	1.1%
Tatars	14021	0.2%	5,135	0.1%	4,828	0.2%	4,058	0.3%
Gypsies	10427	0.1%	2,718	0.1%	7,044	0.3%	665	0.0%
Germans	9307	0.1%	2,058	0.1%	3,783	0.1%	3,466	0.2%
Armenians	6386	0.1%	1,648	0.0%	3,069	0.1%	1,669	0.1%
Moldavs	5886	0.1%	1,448	0.0%	3,223	0.1%	1,215	0.1%
Azerbaidzhanians	5310	0.1%	1,307	0.0%	2,765	0.1%	1,238	0.1%
Chuvashes	3323	0.0%	669	0.0%	1,491	0.1%	1,163	0.1%
Uzbeks	2972	0.0%	1,452	0.0%	925	0.0%	595	0.0%
Georgians	2631	0.0%	647	0.0%	1,378	0.1%	606	0.0%
Mordovians	2525	0.0%	487	0.0%	1,053	0.0%	985	0.1%
Kazakhs	2126	0.0%	658	0.0%	1,044	0.0%	424	0.0%
Others	19320	0.2%	4,614	0.1%	9,171	0.3%	5,535	0.4%
Total	7907031	100.0%	3,674,802	100.0%	2,666,567	100.0%	1,565,662	100.0%

Source: Gosudarstvennyi Komitet SSSR po Statistike. *Itogi Vsesoiuznoi Perepisi Naselenia 1989 goda*. Moscow: Goskomstat SSSR, 1991-1993.

as the language of social intercourse in many places. The rule of thumb in most social or work circumstances was that Russian would always be the language of choice, if one or more persons in a group preferred to speak Russian.

Due to the Russian immigration, the possibility developed that Estonians and especially Latvians would become minorities in their own lands (see Figure 2, Table 3). At the 1980s rate, the minority status would have occurred in 2000 in Latvia, and approximately in 2020 for Estonia.

Ethnic complexity in the Baltic states is also mirrored in the mix of religions. Only Lithuania has a remarkably dominant religion, Catholicism. Before World War II Protestantism was the dominant religion in Latvia. A quarter of the population was Catholic and was concentrated mainly in the eastern part of the country. In 1994, these religions had roughly an equal numbers of adherents, with possibly a few more Catholics. Approximately 10 to 20 percent of the population follows Russian Orthodox and Old Believer faiths in Latvia. Judaism and Baptist are small, but very active, minority religions. Protestantism continues to dominate in Estonia, but a variety of other Christian faiths have increases in their followings.

CHAPTER II

LATVIA'S ETHNIC MOSAIC : 1989

General Information

The 1989 census indicated there were 2,666,567 people in Latvia, of whom 52% were ethnic Latvians (see Tables 2, 3). Latvians are the only people in Europe whose population numbers have not recovered from the impact of the Second World War. In 1935 there were 1,467,035 Latvians. In 1989 there were 1,387,757, or only 95% of the number prior to the war (see Table 2). Before the First World War the number was even greater, with a population of more than 1.5 million. If normal growth rates had been maintained, there would have been over four million Latvians by 1989, or about the same number as the population of Finland or Norway.

The decline in the proportion of Latvians, beginning in 1941, resulted in an overall decrease from 83 percent to 52 percent of the total population by 1989 (see Table 2, Figure 2, Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1992). In comparison, the percentage of ethnic Estonians living in Estonia has decreased from 95% to 61% of the total population during the same period (Kale 1992). In Lithuania the percentage of ethnic Lithuanians among the population has remained at approximately 80% (Gaučas 1981, see Table 3).

Ethnic Groups in Urban Areas

In the urban regions of all three nations the ethnic population is much less homogenous than in the rural areas. This is because immigrants settled in the capitals and other large cities, a pattern established during serfdom, when barriers against Balts settling in cities were eased. Estonians and Latvians became the dominant group in certain cities with the gradual abolishment of serfdom at the beginning to middle of the nineteenth century. During the period of independence the indigenous population was in the majority in most Baltic cities.

The communist's policy dictated that cities be especially developed, and the countryside received relatively less attention. This did not relieve the countryside of change. Soviet officials developed a special system to eradicate the traditional pattern of dispersed single-family farms, a pattern which was dominant in Latvia. Kolhoz (collective) and Sovhoz (state) farms were developed under the socialist model. The intensive development of industry attracted immigrants to settle in Baltic cities. Large factories were built in Latvia with the plan calling for a non-Latvian labor force, due to a low index of unemployment (*Latvijas Padomju Enciklopēdija* 1984). Immigrants from outside of Latvia almost made up the entire labor force in certain industries, such as building materials manufacturing, chemical and pharmaceutical industries, and peat extraction, as well as others. The pattern developed where 83 percent of all non-Latvians resided in Latvia's cities, while only 60 percent of the ethnic Latvian population was urban. Latvians comprised 44 percent of the total urban population, and 71.5 percent of the rural population (*Latvijas*

Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1992). In 1989 Latvians were a minority in eight of the country's largest cities (see Figure 3). There is an inverse relationship between the proportion of ethnic Latvians in cities and the total population of cities. By comparison ethnic Estonians make up less than one-half of the total population of six largest cities in Estonia, whereas in rural areas they make up more than four-fifths. The percentage of the total population of ethnic Lithuanians living in cities (76%) is lower than in the countryside (83%) in Lithuania.

Comparative data for Baltic urbanization reveals the exaggerated development of capital cities. This is true for Estonia, and also Latvia (see Figure 4). Forty-eight percent of the urban population of Latvia is concentrated in Rīga, and Tallinn has 43 percent of the total population of Estonia. The figures would be even larger if the full spatial extent of the urban agglomerations were taken into account.

Very low percentages of the indigenous ethnic group have remained in the capitals of the Baltic states. The lowest percentage is in Rīga with Latvians being a 37% minority in the city (see Figure 4). In comparison, in Tallinn the Estonians comprise 47% of the city's total population. The percentage is also comparatively low in Vilnius, although the number of Lithuanians has been increasing, recently exceeding 50% (Centre of National Researches of Lithuania, 1992).

The domination of the non-indigenous ethnic groups in the capital cities of Latvia and Estonia is further dramatized by the much smaller proportion of the population in the second largest cities. Daugavpils in Latvia has only 14 percent of Rīga's population, while Tartu in Estonia has

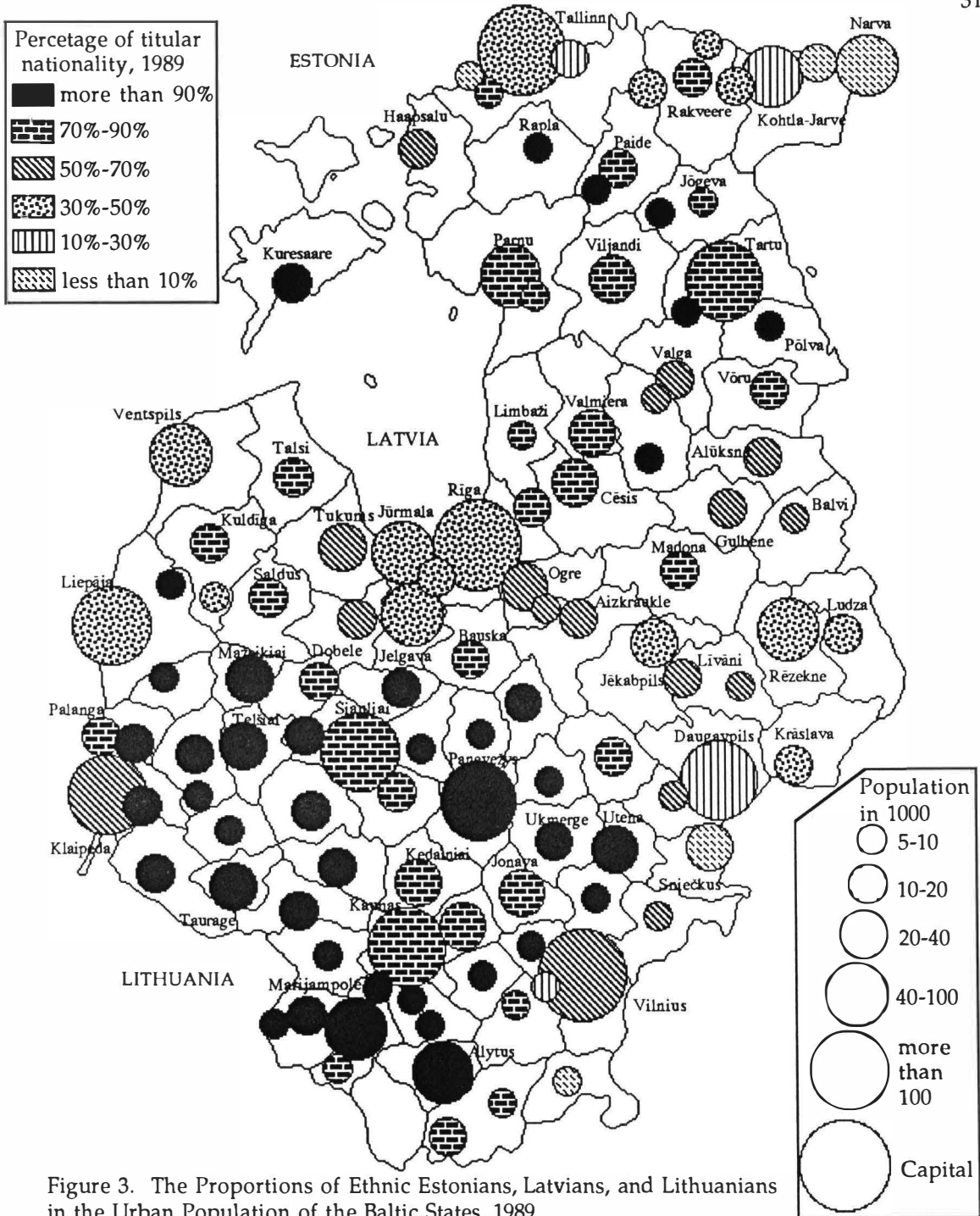


Figure 3. The Proportions of Ethnic Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians in the Urban Population of the Baltic States, 1989.

Source: Mežs, I., Bunkše, E., Rasa, K. "The Ethno-Demographic Status of the Baltic States." *GeoJournal* Vol. 33, No. 1 (1994): 16.

a population equal to 24 percent of Tallinn's. In comparison, the second largest city in Lithuania, Kaunas has a population equal to 72 percent of the population of Vilnius.

There are two large cities in the eastern region of Estonia, Narva and Kohtla-Järve, as well as the smaller city of Sillamäe where Russians are a majority (see Figures 3, 4). Oil shale, the single most important energy source for Estonia, is mined in this region. Almost all the workers in this industry immigrated from Russia.

The ethnic mosaic of cities is most diverse in Latvia. There was not a single county seat city in 1989 with 90 percent or more ethnic Latvians (see Figure 3). Four cities in Estonia had 90% or more of the population from the national ethnic group. Almost all county seat cities in Lithuania had more than 90% of ethnic Lithuanians (see Figure 3). The Baltic states as a whole, with nineteen of the largest cities with a population over 40,000 people, only nine had the indigenous nationality in the majority. Seven of those nine cities were in Lithuania, two in Estonia, and none in Latvia (see Figure 3). The numbers of the indigenous ethnic group were lower than average in all the largest port cities of the Baltic states (see Figures 3, 4).

The urbanization process attracted migrants from other republics of the former Soviet Union, making complex patterns of ethnicity as well as specific ethnic configurations. Russians, Byelorussians, and Ukrainians constitute a cultural-ethnic unity in the Baltic states, based not only on linguistic ties, but also on historic circumstances. The majority migrated to the Baltic states as part of the major relocation and Russification after

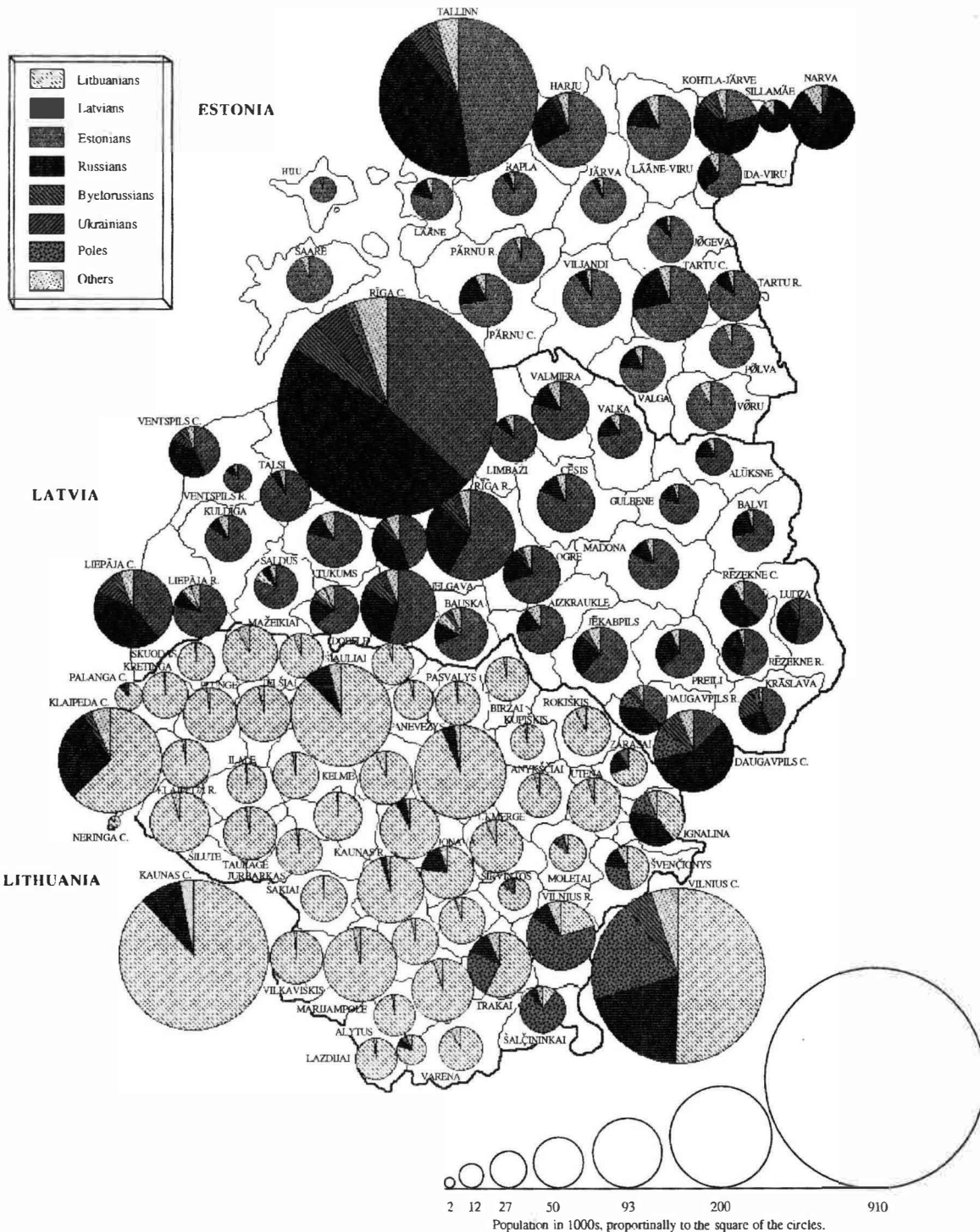


Figure 4. The Ethnic Structure of the Population in Baltic States by Regions and Major Cities in 1989.

Source: Mežs, I., Bunkše, E., Rasa, K. "The Ethno-Demographic Status of Baltic States." *GeoJournal* Vol. 33, No. 1 (1994): 18.

the Second World War.

Ethnic Homogeneity

All three countries have similar patterns of ethnicity in their rural areas. In each instance the Balts are in the minority in the eastern border regions adjacent to Russia or Belarus. Thus, the lowest proportion of Lithuanians is in the east including the regions surrounding Vilnius, Šalčininkai and Ignalina (see Figure 4). Beyond the eastern-most regions, Lithuanians comprise more than 90 percent of the population. The greatest non-Estonian concentrations outside of cities in Estonia are in the northeast. Ethnic Estonians constitute as much as 90% of the population in the rest of Estonia (see Figure 4).

The western and northern regions in Latvia have remained strongholds of the Latvians. The largest numbers of minorities live in Riga and its vicinity, as well as in the eastern-most regions. Latvians are a minority in the seaport cities of Liepāja and Ventspils (see Figures 3, 4).

Often in nations of mixed ethnicity, there are discrete territorial concentrations of specific ethnic groups. This is the case in Belgium, Switzerland, and Canada. The Swedish minority in Finland, albeit small, is nevertheless concentrated in specific areas (Karjalainen 1993). Obviously, the more homogenous the group, the more resistance it shows towards an assimilation. On the other hand, if a large part of the group is scattered as a minority among the dominating group, it is more likely assimilation processes will occur.

The cities of Liepāja, Krāslava, Rēzekne, and Olaine, Daugavpils

region, as well as in four of six districts of the capital, the percentage of Latvians was in the range of 30% to 39% in 1989. Summing up the absolute numbers of Latvians living in these areas, would obtain the number 346,776, which is 25% of all Latvians in Latvia. Therefore one can say, that every fourth Latvian is residing in a locality where Latvians form a minority of 30% to 39% (see Figure 5).

There are regions in Latvia, where the differences among the ethnic proportions are rather small. The difference between the highest and lowest proportion of Latvians in the smallest municipalities (pagasts) in the region of Limbaži was 17%, and 18% in Tukums region. There are other regions where this difference is large, like in the districts of Ludza, Krāslava, and Daugavpils, 86%, 83%, and 80% respectively. Sometimes there are significant concentrations of different ethnic groups inside pagasts, especially in the eastern part of the country.

To compare different years, and due to the lack of detailed information of ethnic structure in Estonia and Lithuania, it is suitable to use as raw data for calculating homogeneity, the ethnic structure at the level of regions and cities.

As is obvious from the foregoing discussion, Lithuania has the highest degree of homogeneity, and Latvia has the lowest. In 1989 almost 60 percent of ethnic Lithuanians resided in places where over 90% of the population belong to their ethnic group. One-third of Estonians lived in such regions. In Latvia there was no region or major city, where Latvians made up more than 90% of the local population (see Figure 5). Therefore,

there is almost a total lack of an entirely Latvian ethnic environment, as opposed to Estonians, and especially Lithuanians.

In 1989, 38% of Latvians inhabited places where they were in the minority (see Figure 5). For Estonians and Lithuanians the number is 26% and 2%, respectively. In Estonia, and especially in Lithuania, minorities are much more spatially compact than in Latvia. They form definite, recognizable districts in which the indigenous ethnic group shows up as a small percentage of the total population. For example, in the northeastern corner of Estonia, in Narva, Sillamäe, and environs, Estonians comprise less than 5% of the population. Russians, on the other hand, constitute approximately 90% of the population (see Figure 4). Similarly, in southeastern Lithuania, in the districts of Salcininkai and Vilnius, the Lithuanian presence ranges from 10% to 20%, with Poles being the dominant group (see Figure 4, Centre of National Researches of Lithuania 1992).

There are no regions where Russians are a majority in the eastern border regions of Latvia. Only in the cities of Rēzekne and Daugavpils is there a Russian ethnic majority, 56% and 58% respectively (see Figures 3, 4). Located near the Russian border, these cities are rather like Russian enclaves separated from Russia by Latvian territories where the Russian ethnic group is a minority.

The measure of ethnic mixing, or, conversely, homogeneity, is revealed most clearly in rural areas. In the rural districts of Latvia the presence of ethnic Latvians usually ranges from 70% to 80% of the proportion (see Figures 4, 5). In Lithuania, 34 of the 44 districts have

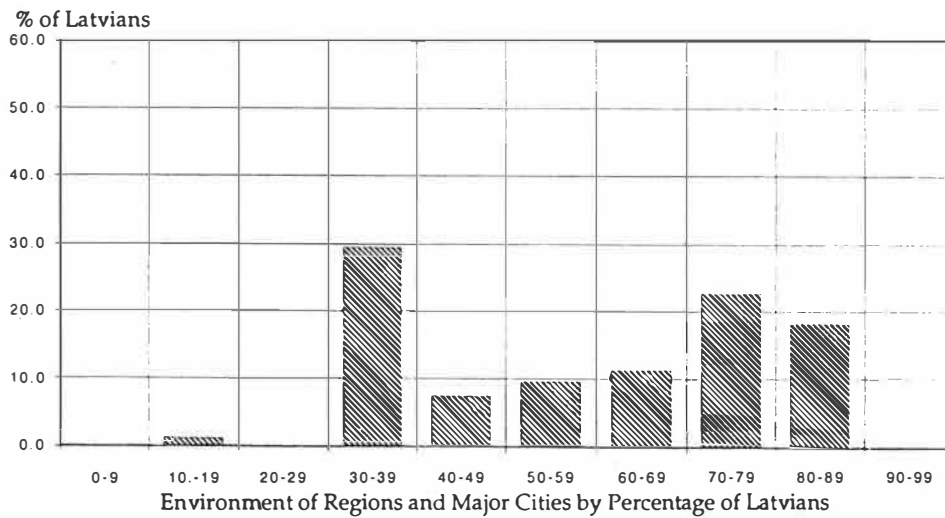
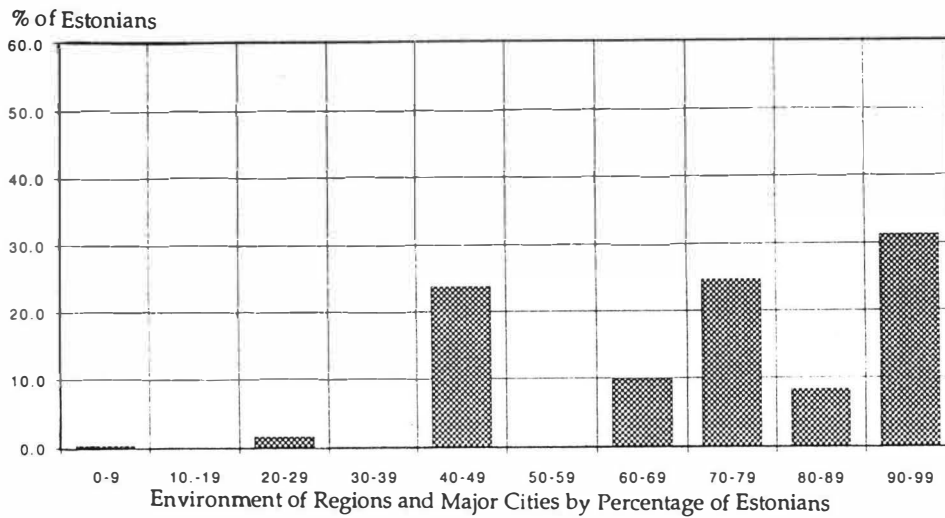
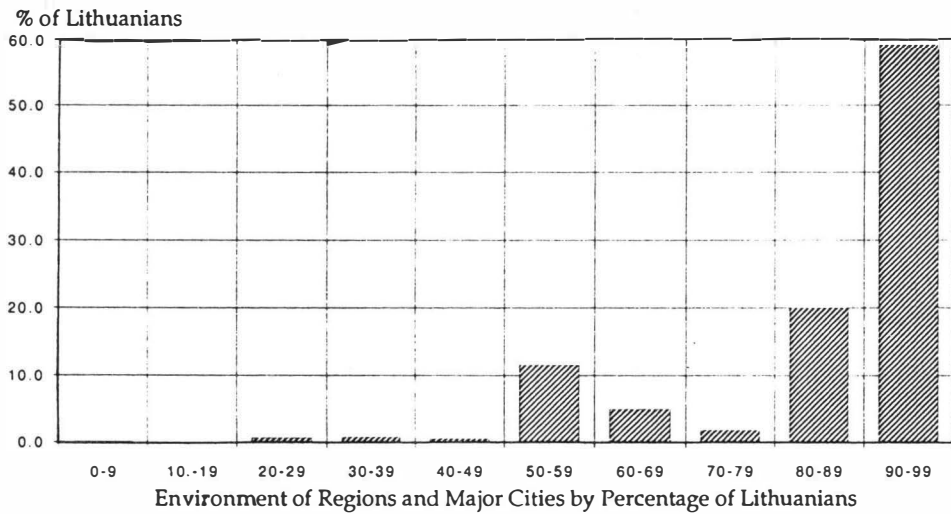


Figure 5. Ethnic Homogeneity of Lithuanians, Estonians, and Latvians by Regions in 1989.

Lithuanians in excess of 90%. In Estonia the number is eight out of fifteen districts. By contrast, in 1989 there was only one district (Talsi) in Latvia where the proportion of ethnic Latvians reached nearly 90% of the total population (see Figure 4).

The most homogeneous Latvian ethnic environment is in northern Kurzeme (historical region in the west of Latvia), and in the central-eastern part of Latvia (regions of Balvi, Gulbene, Madona as well as the northern parts of Rēzekne and Ludza regions). More homogeneous Latvian ethnic environment remained in these areas because of : (a) underdeveloped system of roads, especially railways; (b) relatively longer distance from the capital; (c) dominance of collective farms, rather than state farms, because the latter were more attractive to immigrants; (d) special regime of border control in the western regions of Liepāja, Ventspils and Talsi, which directly faced the Baltic Sea; (e) smaller consequence of mass deportations.

Ethnic pluralism is also reflected in marriages between members of different ethnic groups. Every third marriage in Latvia is inter-ethnic, and Latvia has the most such marriages. Indeed, in the former Soviet Union, Latvia had one of the highest inter-ethnic marriage rates. However, since only 18% of ethnic Latvians choose partners from other ethnic groups, it means that most inter-ethnic marriages in Latvia were among non-Latvians. Mixed marriages are rarer among Estonians and Lithuanians, being 9% and 7%, respectively. The divorce rate is lower among single ethnic group marriages (Zvidriņš, 1992).

The ruling factor in determining the ethnic choice of children of mixed marriages is the dominant ethnic milieu of a region. During the Soviet period the smaller the proportion of ethnic Latvian population, the more it was probable that children of mixed marriages would acculturate towards the Russian group, since it was the only major non-Latvian influence. Approximately 30 percent of the children from mixed Latvian families acculturated to Russian. This was mainly in Riga and the eastern Latgale region (Krastiņš 1992).

Language

Language is the most important marker of Baltic identity. Education and family are the strongest social components supporting language. The census reports on the nationality (ethnicity), native language, and second language. Therefore, the census is an indicator of assimilation of Balts into Russian culture and of the latter into Baltic cultures by virtue of language.

To obtain a more realistic understanding of language statistics, both native and second languages are summed up. Otherwise, the census data can be misleading if relying only on second language knowledge. For example, census tables show that less than one-half of Byelorussians speak Russian in Latvia. In reality almost all Byelorussians (97%) speak Russian, because most of them recognized Russian as their native language.

Looking at the population as a whole, in Lithuania there is a 96% match of ethnicity and native language. In Estonia the figure is 94% and in Latvia it is 90% (see Table 4). The situation is most stable in Lithuania,

while Latvia is experiencing the greatest assimilation. Assimilation has been occurring in the cities at the greatest rate in all three nations. During Soviet rule, assimilation was mainly towards the Russian language, even though the titular nationalities of the Baltic states were in absolute majority. Lithuanians are the most successful in keeping their language, and 99.5% of all Lithuanians use their native tongue. For Estonians the figure is 98.9%, and the Latvians have the lowest percentage, 97.4% (see Table 4). In short, 2.6% of Latvians, or approximately 36,000 individuals, do not recognize Latvian as their native tongue. Most frequently, these individuals identify linguistically with Russian.

In the Baltic countries the policy of Russification did not bring as rich a harvest as in the Ukraine, and particularly Byeloruss. Nevertheless, most Baltic peoples were forced to use Russian on a daily basis. Immigrants from the east behaved negatively, even contemptuously, toward local languages. This situation was exploited by local communist regimes. To speak Latvian, Lithuanian, or Estonian from an official rostrum was especially daring. Suggestions that it might be worthwhile for a new Russian immigrant to learn the national language were greeted with accusations of "nationalistic fascism", and threats to be fired from the job, or even arrested. The result was that most Balts were forced to learn Russian, whereas few foreigners took interest in the local languages, and more than 80% of Russians did not learn the language of the respective Baltic state (see Tables 4, 5).

Russification in Latvia and Lithuania differed from Estonia partially due to basic differences in linguistic families. The two former languages

are Indo-European, which made it easier for people to learn Russian. As a Finno-Ugric language, Estonian is radically different from Russian. Much greater difficulties for the mutual learning of Russian and Estonian were encountered. The proximity to their linguistic brethren, the Finns, also may have given the Estonians moral support to resist Russification. Finish television was visible in northern Estonia, therefore the Finnish language replaced Russian among some Estonians. Avoiding the Russian language, or showing ignorance of Russian, was a common form of resistance in occupied Estonia, and reaction of Estonians against the intense Russification (Taagepera 1990). When traveling in Estonia, it was a commonplace practice for Latvians to first show their own Latvianness by a Latvian phrase, or by speaking heavily-accented Russian. During the decade of the 70s, Estonian Russian speakers declined to 25% and then increased to 35% by 1989 (see Table 4). At the same time the number of Latvians who spoke Russian increased steadily to 68%. The number of Lithuanian Russian speakers was 38% in 1989 in Lithuania (see Table 4). On the other side, few Russians in Estonia spoke Estonian. Among Estonian minorities only one in ten knew Estonian, while in Latvia the figure was one in four, and more than one in three in Lithuania (see Table 4, Taagepera 1990).

The knowledge of Latvian gradually decreased in Latvia during the period from 1970 to 1989. The Latvian language was known to 65% of Latvians in 1970, and is now known by less than 62% of the Latvia's population (see Table 5). Even ethnic Latvians themselves showed a slight decrease of Latvian language knowledge from 99.0% to 98.7%.

Generally, the relative numbers of Latvian language knowledge slowly increased for most of the non-Latvian ethnic groups in Latvia. Only Lithuanians, Gypsies, and Estonians recorded Latvian language knowledge for the largest part of their communities. These are historical minorities who lived in Latvia before Soviet annexation. For Russians, Byelorussians, and Ukrainians the Latvian language knowledge is still low, 22%, 18%, and 10% respectively of their ethnic groups (see Table 5). The low level of Latvian language knowledge can be explained in that most of the Eastern Slavs currently residing in Latvia were born outside of the country, especially Ukrainians.

The knowledge of Russian language during the same period increased significantly from 67% in 1970, to 81% in 1989. The lowest percentage of Russian language knowledge is recorded for Gypsies and Lithuanians. This can be explained by the fact that the Russian language is less widespread outside major cities. Lithuanians have the highest proportion of rural population in Latvia (47%). Lithuanian is the only language related to Latvian, therefore it was easier for a Lithuanian to learn Latvian rather than Russian. Most of the Lithuanians are concentrated along the border with Lithuania in southern Latvia, where Russian language influence is lower. The proportion of rural population among Gypsies is lower (19%) than average, but the major portion of Gypsies is concentrated in the smaller cities of western Latvia, where the Latvian language still dominates.

The Russian language pressure significantly reduced the number of Latvians not fluent in Russian. In 1970 more than half (53%) of Latvians

Table 4

Ethno-Linguistic Structure of the Population of the Baltic States in 1989

Ethnicity	Total	Each his own 1st. lang. %	Ind. 1st. lang.	Native Russian	Speaks Titular tongue %	Speaks Russian %			
Lithuania	3,674,802	3,530,146	96.1%	34,058	99,935	3,136,052	85.3%	1,737,787	47.3%
Lithuanians	2,924,251	2,912,247	99.6%		7,621	2,917,360	99.8%	1,100,113	37.6%
Russians	344,455	329,309	95.6%	14,040		129,255	37.5%	340,500	98.9%
Poles	257,994	219,322	85.0%	12,951	23,829	53,059	20.6%	173,314	67.2%
Byelorussians	63,169	25,560	40.5%	1,591	33,695	12,327	19.5%	55,656	88.1%
Ukrainians	44,789	22,885	51.1%	1,357	20,291	8,867	19.8%	39,156	87.4%
Jews	12,314	4,398	35.7%	827	6,989	5,504	44.7%	9,718	78.9%
Others	27,830	16,425	59.0%	3,292	7,510	9,680	34.8%	19,330	69.5%
Latvia	2,666,567	2,397,985	89.9%	34,429	227,783	1,663,312	62.4%	2,175,473	81.6%
Latvians	1,387,757	1,351,206	97.4%		35,732	1,369,469	98.7%	947,797	68.3%
Russians	905,515	894,293	98.8%	10,397		201,669	22.3%	903,841	99.8%
Byelorussians	119,702	38,527	32.2%	3,011	77,516	21,548	18.0%	113,061	94.5%
Ukrainians	92,101	45,571	49.5%	832	45,478	9,020	9.8%	85,863	93.2%
Poles	60,416	16,520	27.3%	8,895	32,734	22,692	37.6%	53,132	87.9%
Lithuanians	34,630	22,122	63.9%	8,232	4,114	22,176	64.0%	16,579	47.9%
Jews	22,897	5,159	22.5%	455	17,153	6,643	29.0%	21,158	92.4%
Others	43,549	24,587	56.5%	2,607	15,056	10,095	23.2%	34,042	78.2%
Estonia	1,565,662	1,471,716	94.0%	15,962	76,717	1,055,159	67.4%	921,630	58.9%
Estonians	963,281	953,032	98.9%		10,076	959,111	99.6%	333,426	34.6%
Russians	474,834	468,216	98.6%	6,198		71,208	15.0%	473,603	99.7%
Ukrainians	48,271	21,320	44.2%	0,594	26,301	3,918	8.1%	45,472	94.2%
Byelorussians	27,711	8,841	31.9%	0,195	18,591	1,892	6.8%	26,874	97.0%
Finns	16,622	5,155	31.0%	6,774	4,666	12,314	74.1%	11,138	67.0%
Jews	4,613	570	12.4%	0,389	3,614	1,591	34.5%	4,215	91.4%
Others	30,330	14,582	48.1%	1,812	13,469	5,125	16.9%	26,902	88.7%

Source: Gosudarstvennyi Komitet SSSR po Statistike. Itogi Vsoiuznoi Perepisi Naselenia 1989 Goda. Moscow: Goskomstat SSSR, 1991-1993.

Table 5

Language Knowledge by Major Ethnic Groups in Latvia, 1970-1989

Ethnic Group	Speaks Latvian			Speaks Russian			Speaks own language		
	1970	1979	1989	1970	1979	1989	1970	1979	1989
Latvians	99.0	98.9	98.7	47.1	60.5	68.2	99.0	98.9	98.7
Russians	18.3	20.1	22.3	99.6	99.8	99.9	99.6	99.8	99.9
Belorussians	14.3	14.7	18.0	87.8	93.3	97.4	50.8	48.4	44.3
Ukrainians	5.8	7.2	9.8	92.4	95.5	94.3	67.6	62.7	64.8
Poles	36.7	35.6	37.6	81.7	88.0	87.9	44.4	33.4	27.1
Lithuanians	55.0	57.6	64.0	35.6	46.9	47.9	83.8	77.9	73.7
Jews	22.5	23.7	29.0	88.3	94.8	92.4	49.4	32.1	33.3
Gypsies	64.6	58.8	62.5	28.2	34.6	33.4	74.1	84.1	88.8
Tatars	4.2	5.3	7.2	94.7	96.8	96.5	69.0	64.7	60.7
Estonians	53.1	54.2	53.9	50.0	57.9	64.3	75.3	68.3	63.3
Germans	18.2	30.7	28.8	81.0	86.2	89.1	68.1	39.7	34.0
Total	65.0	62.9	61.7	67.0	76.8	81.2			

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. 1989. Gada Tautas Skaitīšanas Rezultāti Latvijā. Rīga, 1992.

reported non-fluency in Russian. By 1989 this number was reduced to 32%. Excluding children under 10, the Russian language fluency among Latvians is about 85%-90%. The Russian language was known by 55%-60% of Latvians older than 40 years in 1970 (see Table 6). Older generations of Latvians, who enjoyed some schooling before Soviet annexation, knew significantly less Russian even after three decades of Russification. Starting with the first age group, representatives of which were educated during Soviet annexation, the non-fluency of Russian disappears. To have obtained some education before the Soviet period one would have to be at least 60 years old by 1989. In this age group, about half of the Latvian population is still without fluency in Russian. Schooling appears to be the major factor in obtaining Russian for Latvians, especially among children. Under 10 years of age there are very few (17%) Latvians fluent in Russian. After graduation from schools at ages 16-19, the number of Latvians fluent in Russian increased to 87% (see Table 6).

The population in rural areas of Latvia tends to have higher levels of Latvian language knowledge than Russian. More than 80% of Latvia's rural population are fluent in Latvian, as opposed to cities with only 55%. There are more Latvian speakers among Russians in rural areas (30%), than in the cities (21%). On the other hand, the Russian language is less widespread in the countryside, where only 68% of the total population speaks Russian, in comparison to 87% in the cities.

There are significant spatial differences in the status of the languages by regions and major cities (see Table 7). There are 17 regions (out of 32), where more than 80% of the total population speaks Latvian.

Only in 4 regions or cities do less than half of the population speak Latvian, including the capital, Rīga. The Latvian language is known by fewer people in the second largest city of Latvia, Daugavpils, where only 18% of the total population speak Latvian (see Table 7). In contrast, the Russian language generally is known by a higher percentage of the population. There are no regions or cities where less than half of the total population is not fluent in Russian. The Russian language is known by more than 80% of the population in eastern Latvia, and in major cities.

The level of Latvian language knowledge increased during the period from 1979 to 1989 in regions with the highest percentage of Latvians (Talsi, Limbaži, Saldus, Cēsis, and Gulbene). Regions with the lowest percentage of Latvians on the other hand, decreased their knowledge of the Latvian language from 44% to 42% in Daugavpils region, and from 46% to 44% in Krāslavas region.

By subtracting the percentage of Russian speakers from Latvian speakers we obtain the difference, or the language domination rate. In seventeen regions the Latvian language prevails, compared to fifteen with Russian language dominance (see Table 7). The higher rate of Latvian language dominance is in western Latvia, except for major cities. Eastern Latvia remains as stronghold of the Russian language.

There are more Latvians with Russian as their native language, than Russians with Latvian as their native language. The same spatial pattern remains with west and east as opposites. In the city of Daugavpils and Krāslavas region there are 25% and 20% of the Latvians, respectively, who consider Russian their native language (see Table 7).

Table 6

Nonfluency in Russian of Latvians in Latvia by Age Groups in 1970, 1979, and 1989

Age Group	Percent nonfluent in Russian		Expected % nonfluent	Real % nonfluent
	1970	1979	in Russian, 1989	in Russian, 1989
0-10	88.0	84.2	81	83.0
11 -15	61.6	41.0	24	38.3
16-19	33.0	16.0	24	13.4
20-29	24.2	11.3	9	7.5
30-39	31.2	14.8	7	8.2
40-49	47.7	22.8	10	11.6
50-59	60.8	40.1	19	20.3
More than 60	59.7	57.0	46	48.2
Total	52.8	39.6	29	31.7

Source: Taagepera, Rein. "Who Assimilates Whom?" Regional Identity under Soviet Rule, Hackettstown, NJ, 1990.

Table 7

Status of Languages by Regions in Latvia, 1989 (percentages)

Region, City	Total Speaks	Total Speaks	Difference (B-C)	Russians with Latvian Native Language	Russians with Latvian as Second Tongue	Latvians with Russian Native Language
Aizkraukles	86.4	70.3	16.1	5.3	46.8	0.9
Alūksnes	85.4	67.1	18.3	5.2	43.9	0.7
Balvu	84.4	73.0	11.4	1.4	48.1	1.1
Bauskas	83.9	67.2	16.7	5.1	44.4	0.8
Cēsu	90.0	66.2	23.8	5.5	48.9	0.6
Daugavpils c.	17.6	97.9	-80.3	0.0	7.5	25.4
Daugavpils r.	42.4	91.5	-49.1	0.5	12.3	9.5
Dobeles	76.5	69.9	6.6	3.0	29.9	1.2
Gulbenes	90.0	65.0	25.0	5.8	52.6	0.5
Jēkabpils	75.4	78.8	-3.4	2.2	38.3	1.4
Jelgava c.	62.0	84.0	-22.0	1.1	25.0	2.1
Jelgavas r.	74.6	76.5	-1.9	2.9	33.7	2.1
Jūrmala c.	52.0	88.0	-36.0	0.6	16.0	3.4
Krāslavas	44.2	94.4	-50.2	0.3	11.4	20.1
Kuldīgas	91.0	55.0	36.0	5.7	35.5	0.1
Liepāja c.	48.5	86.8	-38.3	0.6	15.7	1.9
Liepājas r.	87.7	51.1	36.6	4.0	24.7	0.2
Limbažu	93.2	55.2	38.0	6.8	59.5	0.3
Ludzas	61.3	88.1	-26.8	1.0	22.4	6.7
Madonas	90.5	65.8	24.7	7.2	50.0	0.5
Ogres	80.2	75.4	4.8	3.1	34.3	1.1
Preiļu	74.5	82.6	-8.1	0.8	32.3	1.5
Rēzekne c.	45.0	95.0	-50.0	0.5	15.0	6.9
Rēzeknes r.	61.3	87.0	-25.7	0.6	18.1	2.4
Rīga c.	48.5	91.7	-43.2	0.6	20.2	4.1
Rīgas r.	68.2	82.4	-14.2	1.4	25.6	2.0
Saldus	92.9	52.9	40.0	8.0	59.2	0.4
Talsu	96.5	51.8	44.7	17.8	65.0	0.2
Tukuma	87.5	65.7	21.8	4.7	37.5	0.4
Valkas	81.4	66.3	15.1	3.5	28.3	0.7
Valmieras	88.0	65.4	22.6	3.8	46.4	0.5
Ventspils c.	58.0	85.0	-27.0	0.6	17.0	2.2
Ventspils r.	90.6	55.1	35.5	4.7	31.6	0.4

Source: Latvijas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. 1989. Gada Tautas Skaitīšanas Rezultāti. Rīgā, 1992.

Ethnicity in Jobs and Housing

Five decades of communist party dominance resulted in social polarization along ethnic lines. There are pronounced differences between Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia in the proportion of indigenous workers in the total population (78%, 58%, and 49% respectively), and there are several distinct characteristics they share in the way that ethnicity is manifest in different types of work. The occupation that engages the largest proportion of the indigenous population is agriculture. Culture and art are also dominated by Latvians, Lithuanians and Estonians. By contrast, in industry, transportation, as well as in Soviet-run government services, the majority of workers were Russians and other immigrants from the USSR. In Estonia, for example, there was a low presence of Estonians in shale oil production (17%), building material production (29%), and machine manufacturing (32%) (Kala 1992). There was an approximately even distribution among the nationalities in education, medicine, and trade in the Baltic states. During recent years the Baltic people have also gained a foothold in areas that were previously forbidden to them: for example, aviation and seafaring. Numbers are also growing rapidly in policing and governance.

In Latvia, especially Riga, the long-standing privileges of Soviet immigrants for better jobs and apartments, created a disproportional balance in favor of Russians. The last census provided some revealing data about the distribution, by ethnicity, of professions and housing. Since Latvia received the largest number of Soviet immigrants, the largest proportion of housing allocation to that group was an example of general

trends, especially in Rīga (see Figure 6).

It was the policy of the communist governments to dilute the Latvian ethnic population. There was a great shortage of apartments in the cities, especially in the capital. Latvians waited for flats upwards of fifteen to twenty years, whereas immigrants were able to secure flats, often of better quality, in short order. Latvians inhabited approximately 47% of all apartments, especially older, pre-war constructions (Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1992). Latvians had 52% of the total population. The numbers in Rīga are even more dramatic, where only 25-27% of post-war housing inhabitants are Latvians (see Figure 6). They constitute over half of the population living in pre-war housing, that is often subdivided and lacking in basic amenities. So it can readily be seen that non-Latvians were accorded special privileges.

Although the majority of the population lives in apartments, the detached, private house is more in tune with the Latvian psyche. In Latvia 21% of the inhabitants live in detached houses. There are great differences between urban and rural patterns and this is especially true with Rīga. Among the rural population, 44% live in detached houses. Only 11% of the urban population lives in this style of housing, and in Rīga the figure is only 4%. Latvians have a preference for living separately; thus it is not surprising that almost three of four of those who live in detached houses are Latvians. Even in Rīga, in which Latvians are but 37% of the population, 73% of those who live in detached houses are Latvians (Latvijas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1991). Non-Latvians had the same opportunities to build individual houses as Latvians, but very likely

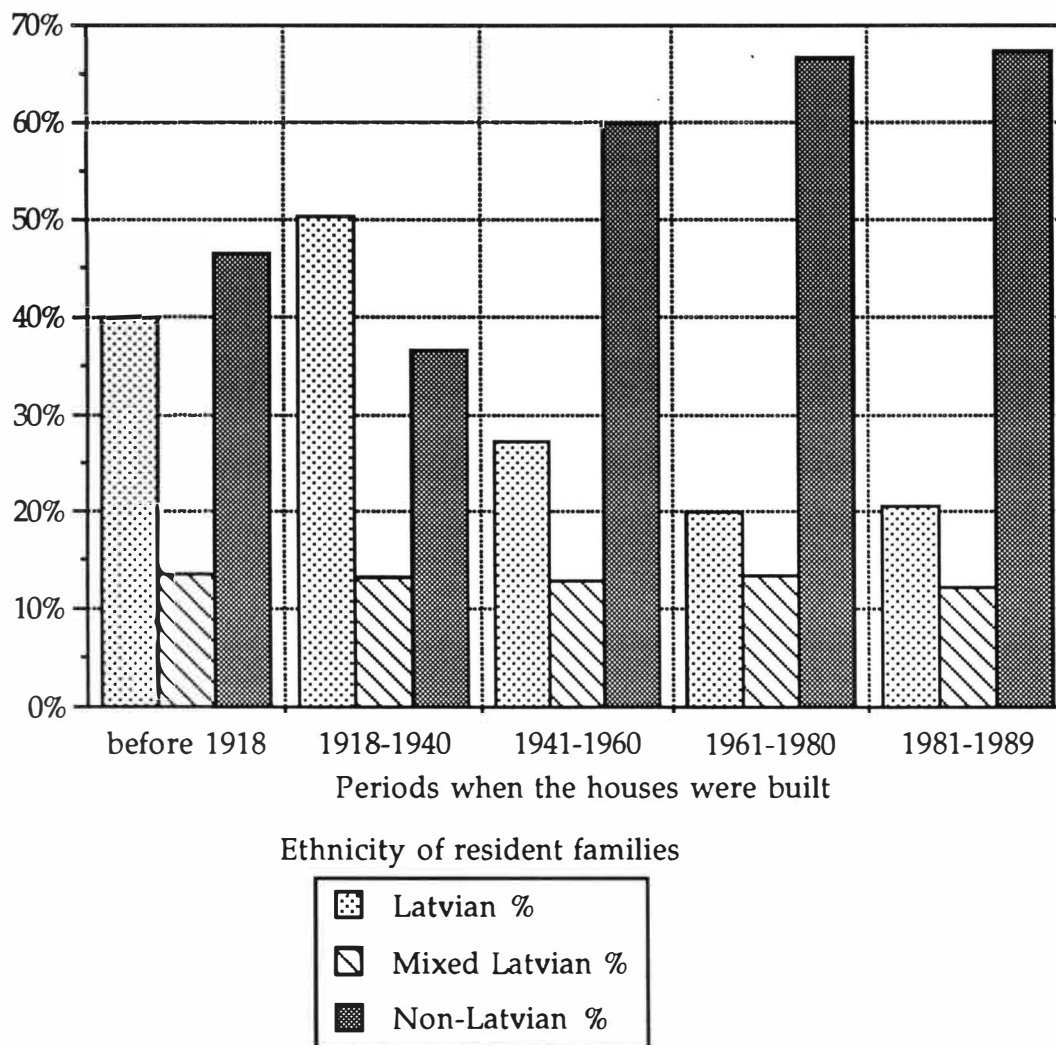


Figure 6. Age of Housing and Ethnicity of Residents in Riga, 1989.

Source: Latvijas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. 1989. Gada Tautas Skaitīšanas Rezultāti. Rīga, 1992.

that would have diminished their chances of being awarded state housing.

In 1992 almost all new construction of socialist apartment blocks in Latvia was ended. Those in progress were redesigned in order to give more space to individual units. More detached houses are now under construction, in keeping with cultural tendencies for housing.

Status of Minorities

Between the two World Wars Latvia and Estonia had among the most liberal laws in Europe concerning minority rights. Cultural autonomy of ethnic minorities in the Baltic states was exemplary and still serves as a model for non-territorial autonomy for dispersed minorities (Taagepera 1992). There was no discrimination on the basis of ethnicity or religion. In fact, the reverse was true. In 1940 there were 216 Russian, 47 Jewish, 15 Polish, 6 Byelorussian, 3 Lithuanian and 2 Estonian schools in Latvia (Krutskih 1992). The number of students studying in minority languages was similar to their proportion among the total population. In 1935 there were 22% of students studying in one of seven minority languages (Štāmers 1992). Numerically largest were Russian (9%), Jewish (5%), and German (3%) student groups (Štāmers 1992).

One of the first communist acts in Latvia was to ban or liquidate most organizations, including those of ethnic minorities (Jēkabsons 1993, Dubins 1993, Krutskih 1992). Russian schools, which had enlarged several times over were the exception as most of the minority schools were closed by 1941. The last school to close in Rīga was the Polish Gymnasium. Though overcrowded, it was closed "for lack of students" in 1947. The last

class in Lithuanian language was closed in western Latvia in the mid 1970s (Latvia's Ministry of Education 1993).

The presence of large ethnic minorities in Latvia was recognized early as a central issue, and in the course of national rebirth, the problem became a top priority for the government. Laws have been established to protect national minority rights, as well as to establish a Department of Nationalities and Minorities. Simultaneous with the national awakening, has been the establishment of nationality clubs, all of which had been strictly forbidden under the Soviets. Either renewed, or newly founded are Polish, Jewish, German, Tatar, Ukrainian, and other associations. More than twenty different national minority organizations have emerged since independence in Latvia (Kolčanovs 1994).

Rīga was the first city in the former USSR, where a Jewish school was reestablished in 1988, which is one of the largest minority schools in Latvia (Zaķe and Rirdance 1994). Since that time, government funded schools have been organized for Polish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, and Estonian minorities (Zaķe and Rirdance 1994). The Ukrainian school organized in Rīga was the first outside Ukraine in the former USSR territory in 1992 (Cinis 1994). Sunday schools are organized for other minorities including Līvs, Gypsies, Tatars, Germans, Lithuanians, Byelorussians and others (Cinis 1994).

Political and Economic Aspects

It is not within the scope of this work to examine the political process of de-colonization. Moreover, at this early point in time, data is

scarce concerning progress. With that caveat, it is fairly safe to say that decolonization, or the assertion of indigenous rule, is uneven across government and business. While government structures are largely in the hands of Latvians, there is a persistent perception that Russians and other minorities dominate the emerging business structures in Latvia, especially in Rīga (Karklins 1994). A combination of factors is at play. It is probable, but difficult to prove, that Russians and other minorities are using capital and expertise that they inherited from having been in positions of power in the Soviet system. It also seems they are more willing to take risks and invest in fast growing business ventures, and closer contacts with Russia. It is the prevalent view in the Baltic states that the majority of the nouveaux riches are Russians.

At the same time, unemployment in Latvia is highest in the regions and cities of eastern Latvia where the percentage of Russians is higher than average. For example, if overall unemployment in Latvia is 7%, in four eastern regions it exceeds 17% (LR Statistikas komiteja 1994). Similarly, in Estonia unemployment is several times the national average in Narva and its environs, as well as in the southeastern regions around Voru. It must be noted that higher unemployment in these regions is not a function of the fact that Russians are in the majority here. These regions have been economic backwaters for a considerable length of time.

Recently, several high-level international delegations have visited both Estonia and Latvia, among them Ibrahim Fall, Director of the Centre for Human Rights at the UN, in order to ascertain the status of human rights in these countries. None of the delegations found any basis for the

Russian charges of human rights violations. A segment of the report on Latvia reads as follows:

The information received and examined by the UN Fact-Finding Mission does not reveal gross and systematic violations of human rights in Latvia. Individual violations which have been reported are limited and not related to discriminatory policy as such and they should and can be remedied at the appropriate level. On the positive side, it should be emphasized that no instances of violence, no mass dismissals from employment, exclusion from educational establishment, evictions from apartments or expulsions were reported (Boutros-Ghali 1992).

The Latvian department of Citizenship and Immigration has registered all the current population and confirmed citizenship in the Republic of Latvia. This includes those persons who had citizenship in 1940 and their descendants. The total number of registered persons in the beginning of 1994 was 2,462,192, which is approximately 96% of the estimated population of Latvia (Vēbers 1994). Taking into account the historical presence of minorities in Latvia, their percentage among the citizens is 22%. Among the total population there are 72% who hold Latvian citizenship (Eglājs 1993). In every region, and every municipality (except Seda in region of Valka, with the population of 2,000) the citizens of Latvia are in the majority. In Daugavpils, where Latvians constitute only 13% of the city's population, more than 62% of the total population are citizens of Latvia (Vēbers 1994). The Latvian government, and the society, are concerned about losing majority status in their own state and homeland. This concern is magnified when considering that there are 650,000 non-Latvian residents who wish to obtain Latvian citizenship. The language requirement will serve as one of the requirements for a citizenship application.

CHAPTER III

DATA ANALYSIS

Demographic Changes

One of the three major tendencies in Latvia's demography is an increasing proportion of the total births for Latvians among an overall decreasing birthrate. Latvians had a much lower birth rate and the rate of population change was often negative, as opposed to the birthrate in the non-Latvian population. The age structure of Latvia's population is rather unfavorable (see Figure 7). Independence clearly has spurred births in the indigenous population. Today the proportion of babies born to Latvian women among all births has risen from 52% to 62% (Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas komiteja 1993, see Figure 8). By comparison, for Estonian women the share has gone from 58% to over 70% of the total births (Eesti Vabariigi Riiklik Statistikaamet 1991). Nevertheless, the overall rate of population change in the Baltic states is negative, with deaths exceeding births. This is due to a structural gap in the age pyramid and economic conditions (see Figure 7). Beginning in 1987, the natural population change in Latvia began to drop, from about 10,000 per year, to 3,100 in 1990 (see Figure 9). In 1991, for the first time since World War II, there was a negative population change rate of 116. By 1992, it had continued on the negative side, reaching almost 4,000, and passed 12,000 in 1993 (see Figure 9). In the first quarter of 1994 this tendency continued,

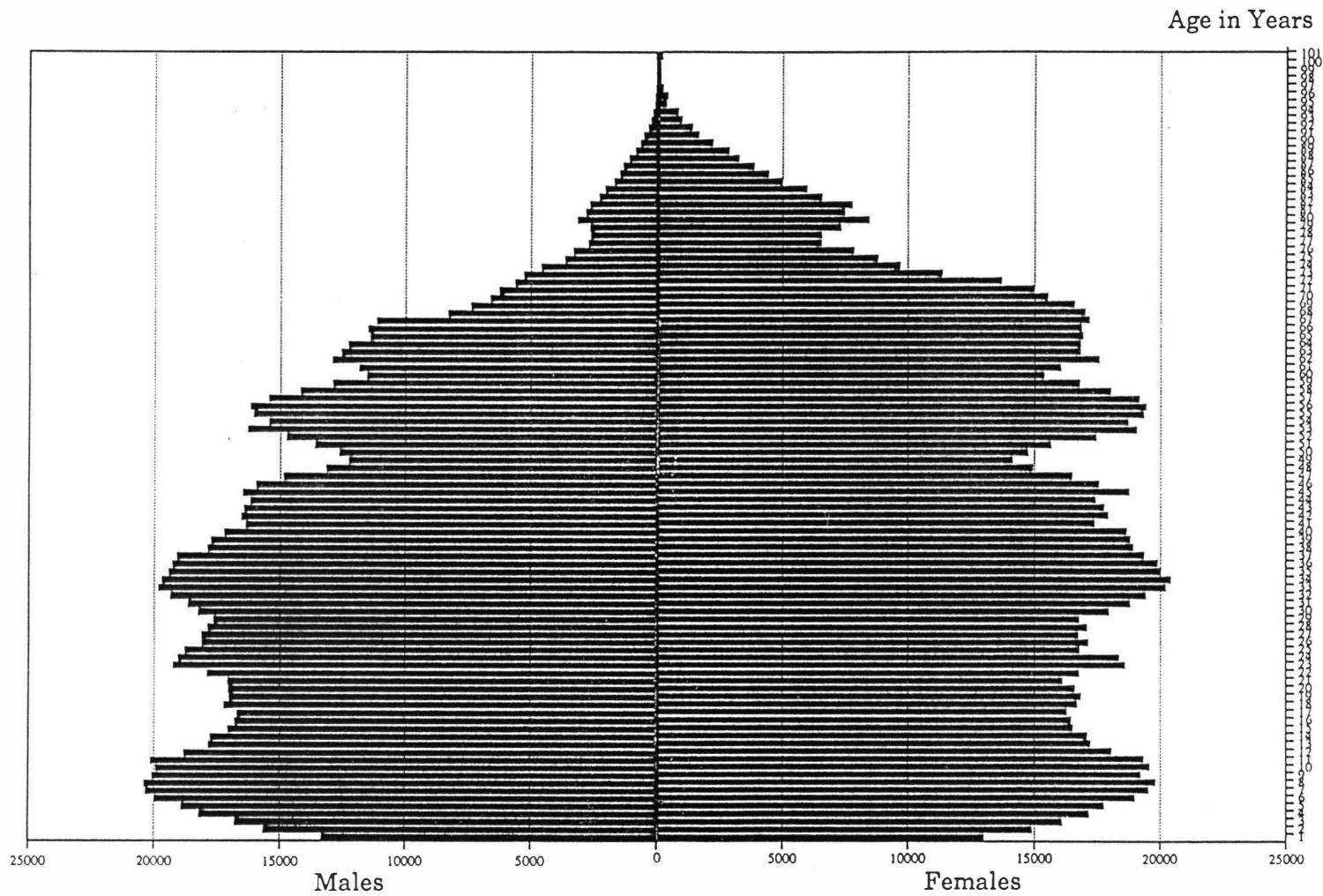


Figure 7. Age Pyramid of Latvia's Population, 1994.

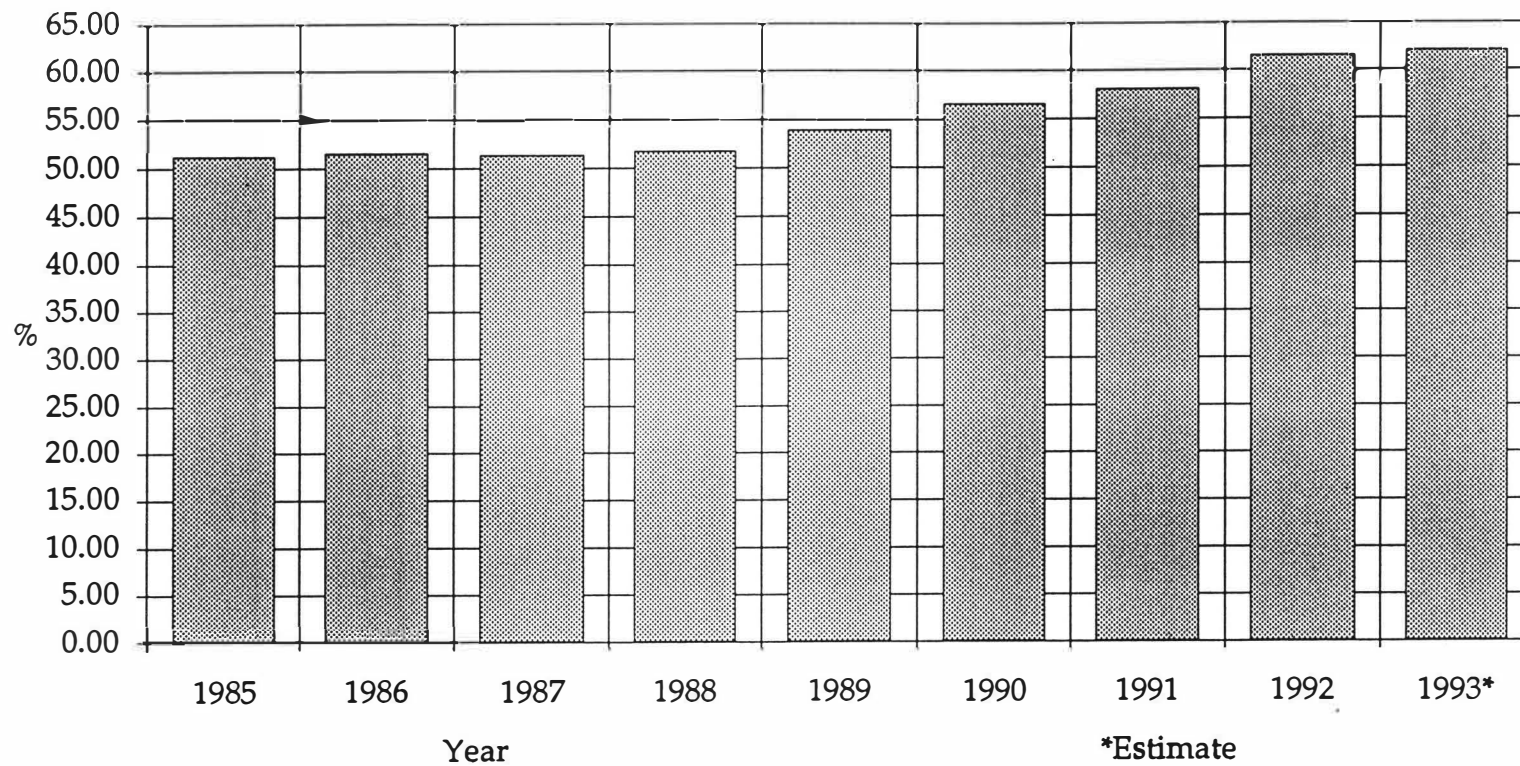


Figure 8. Percentage of Total Newborns to Mothers of Latvian Ethnicity, 1985-1993.

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata. Rīga, 1992.

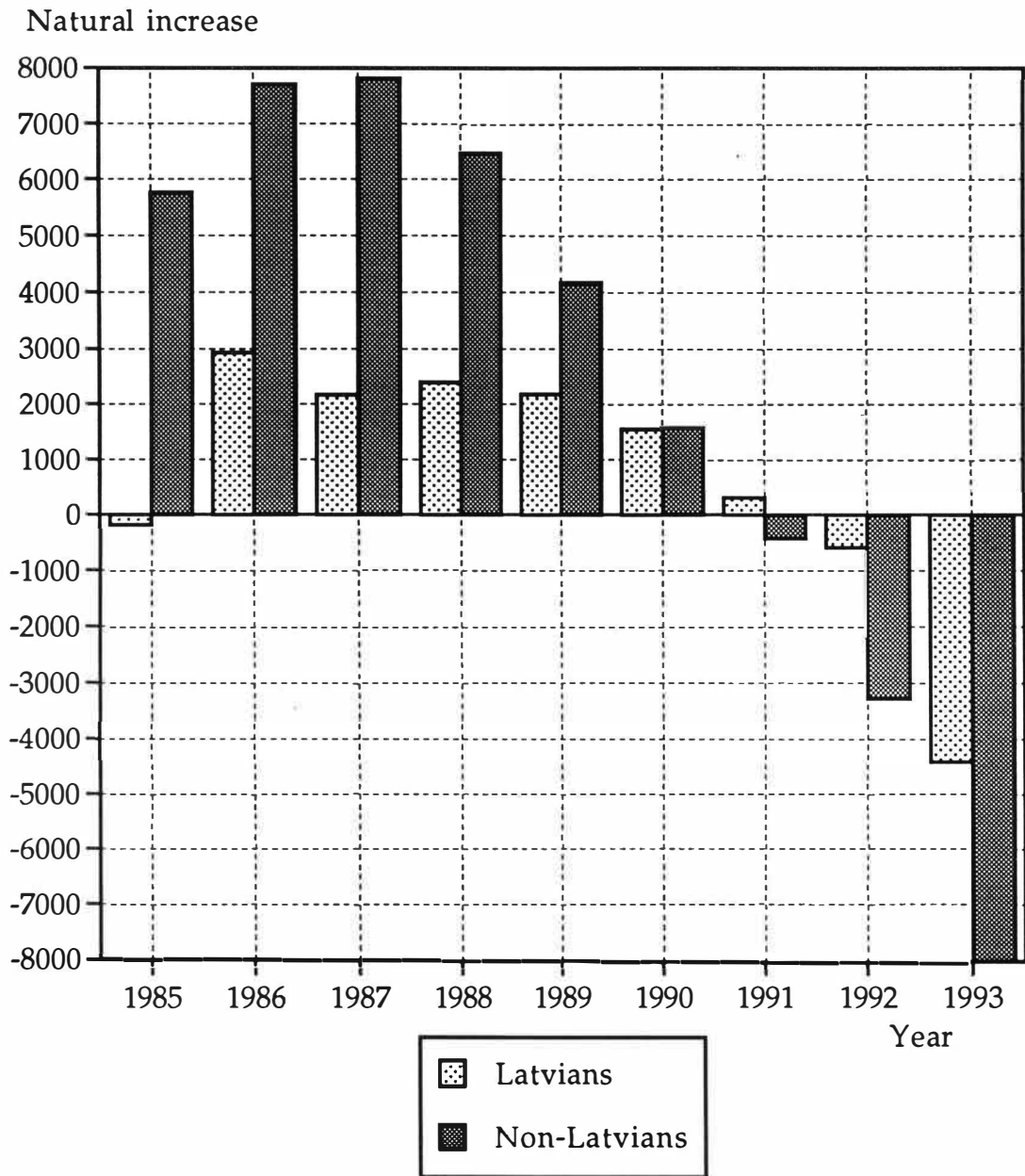


Figure 9. The Natural Increase in Population for Latvian and Non-Latvian Groups, 1985-1993.

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata. Rīga 1993.

and the population of Latvia decreased by 4,721 in three months, because deaths exceeded births (Seņkāne 1994). This might produce an approximate 18,000 decrease in population per year. In 1993, Latvia's birth rate was 10.3 per thousand. The mortality rate was 15.2 per thousand. The difference between birth and mortality, or the natural change rate of the population in 1993 was a negative (-4.9) per thousand (Seņkāne 1994).

In 1992 the birth rate was higher, although there still was negative population change (see Table 8). Since the spatial data by regions from 1993 are not available yet, an analysis of the data from 1992 is used. There are noticeable spatial differences in the birth rate within Latvia. As a rule it is lower in largest cities. The lowest rate is in the capital Rīga, with only 9.5 births per thousand of population (see Table 8). The second lowest is in the port city of Ventspils. In eastern Latvia the birth rate is significantly lower than the average. On the other hand the highest birth rates are in remote rural regions with the exception of eastern Latvia (see Table 8).

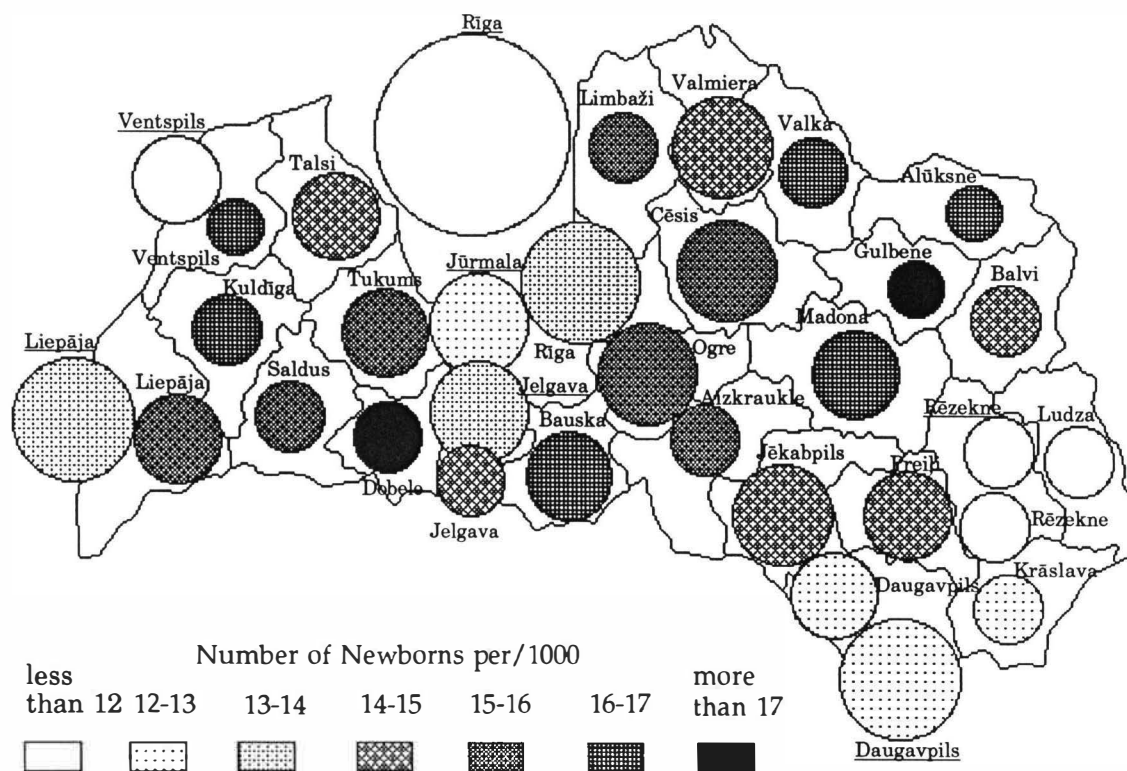
There are also differences in the birth rate by ethnicity. In Latvia, every newborn is registered by the ethnicity of the mother. From all newborns, 61.5 per cent were born to Latvian mothers in 1992, which is higher than the share of Latvians among the total population. Latvians had a higher birth rate (13.9 per thousand), compared to the average of 12.1 per thousand (see Table 8, Figure 10). The four largest ethnic minorities, Russians, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, and Poles, had significantly lower birth rates: 9.5; 10.7; 11.8; and 10.5 per thousand respectively (see Table 8). Only Lithuanians, with a dominate rural population, had a birth rate of 15.2 per thousand. The ethnic group with the highest birth rate was the

Table 8

Birth Rate of Major Ethnic Groups by Regions in Latvia, 1992

Region	Newborns o/oo	Latvians o/oo	Russians o/oo	Ukrainians o/oo	Byelorussians o/oo	Lithuanians o/o	Poles o/oo	Gypsies o/oo	Others o/oo
Aizkraukles	693 15.4	520 15.4	102 14.1	12 19.7	16 13.9	27 20.4	10 18.3		6 20.1
Alūksnes	434 15.4	352 16.0	59 12.4	11 23.5	2 11.8	2 37.0	1 11.9		7 10.6
Balvu	449 13.5	354 14.5	64 8.2	11 32.4	6 22.4	1 30.3	1 10.9	6 56.6	6 22.7
Bauskas	875 15.9	655 16.9	103 13.8	20 13.8	37 15.5	42 12.4	12 14.5	1 12.3	5 7.6
Cēsu	961 15.2	819 15.6	100 13.8	16 23.1	9 8.3	5 17.5	8 12.4	3 41.1	1 2.3
Daugavpils	1957 11.4	413 12.3	1005 10.9	70 15.1	172 12.3	18 10.2	241 11.2	12 21.1	26 9.5
Dobele	716 16.6	516 17.8	84 11.3	23 19.3	36 17.0	38 17.9	6 8.3	2 15.6	11 24.3
Gulbenes	480 16.0	420 17.2	44 10.2	3 8.8	8 21.9	2 21.3	2 9.5	1 14.7	
Jēkabpils	834 13.8	552 14.4	207 13.1	16 14.0	15 7.8	19 19.4	14 11.0	6 37.3	5 6.8
Jelgavas	1449 13.1	827 13.6	368 11.2	51 14.3	106 14.7	33 15.8	29 13.4	13 15.7	22 14.5
Jūrmala	628 10.5	330 12.3	224 8.8	21 10.3	21 7.4	8 14.4	6 6.9	8 23.7	10 7.5
Krāslavas	511 12.6	228 12.8	154 13.8	14 23.4	77 9.9	2 12.4	24 10.0	5 22.9	7 21.8
Kuldīgas	644 15.6	594 16.9	17 5.4	5 6.1	7 13.8	11 14.6	5 20.9	1 4.6	4 12.2
Liepājas	2044 12.7	1261 14.4	477 9.8	109 12.8	66 11.8	92 16.0	16 11.4	1 12.8	22 8.6
Limbažu	642 15.5	561 15.5	31 10.1	9 16.5	7 13.0	12 45.3	6 20.1	8 42.1	8 18.9
Ludzas	463 11.2	265 11.8	167 10.6	8 12.9	19 11.5	1 7.0	1 2.7		2 6.8
Madonas	801 16.1	687 16.4	80 14.2	9 16.7	9 11.9	6 29.7	6 15.0	3 29.1	1 4.4
Ogres	910 13.9	714 15.2	120 9.3	20 15.4	29 13.2	8 15.9	10 11.1	1 20.4	8 14.3
Preiļu	627 14.0	430 14.9	163 12.3	5 11.5	7 9.5		8 9.8	11 60.1	3 11.7
Rēzeknes	994 11.6	453 11.6	478 11.6	19 17.7	23 16.0	0 0.0	11 6.5	4 36.7	6 10.8
Rīga	8265 9.5	3683 11.3	3387 8.1	373 9.3	358 8.8	75 11.3	154 9.7	21 17.3	214 7.6
Rīgas r.	1823 12.2	1209 13.5	418 9.7	56 11.9	69 10.2	24 16.7	19 8.0	1 11.2	27 20.5
Saldus	619 15.4	507 15.4	32 12.3	7 13.1	6 8.6	61 21.6	1 3.6	1 18.9	4 15.6
Talsu	744 14.7	687 14.9	27 11.9	8 18.6	7 13.4		3 8.8	11 20.8	1 3.5
Tukuma	869 14.9	721 15.3	71 10.8	20 18.6	23 15.5	12 18.9	2 3.5	14 30.8	6 15.5
Valkas	538 14.6	463 16.3	49 8.4	6 11.9	7 8.5	2 13.0	3 9.8	1 17.5	7 10.4
Valmieras	849 13.5	722 14.3	79 9.4	9 10.8	16 10.9	4 13.8	7 12.6	5 27.8	7 13.5
Ventspils	750 11.7	475 13.5	182 9.2	37 12.3	22 7.8	7 14.8	6 10.4	16 15.4	5 5.3
Latvia total	31569 12.1	19418 13.9	8292 9.5	968 11.8	1180 10.7	512 15.2	612 10.5	156 21.5	551 11.7

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. *Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata 1992*. Rīga, 1993.



Major cities are underlined.

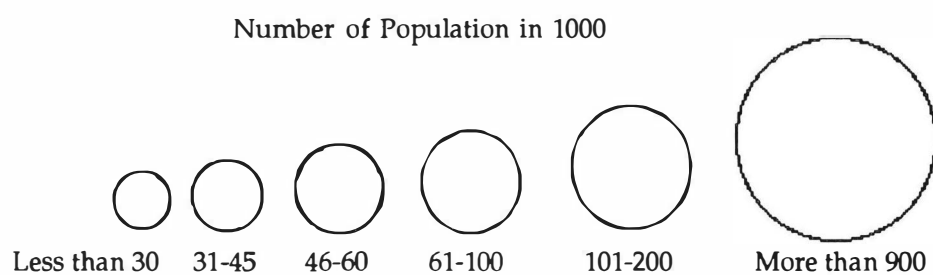


Figure 10. The Birth Rate Among Latvians by Regions and Major Cities, 1992 (per/1000).

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata. Rīga, 1992: 93.

Gypsies (21.5 per thousand in 1992). The minimum birth rate for a minority group was among the Jews (only 4.1 births per thousand in 1992, see Table 8). For the most part, the Jewish population is urban (85% in Rīga), with an age pyramid that is unfavorable to an increased birth rate. The emigration of Jews also reduces the birth rate, since young people tend to emigrate.

The Latvian and Russian ethnic groups can readily be compared spatially by birth rate. Generally the spatial pattern for birth rate is higher among Latvians, and lower among Russians corresponding with residential patterns. One exception is the region of Ventspils. Half of the Russian population in the region is concentrated at military bases. The military personnel consist mostly of young people with a higher fertility rate. In two other regions in eastern Latvia (Rēzekne and Ludza), Russians have a slightly higher birth rate than Latvians (see Table 8). Except for major cities, eastern Latvia has the lowest birth rate, due to the low fertility among the aging population and the movement of population to other regions of Latvia.

Emigration Trends

Already in 1989 new trends were becoming apparent in the changing pattern of migration. First, there was a rapid decline in immigration into the Baltic countries, as opposed to the number of people exiting. Beginning in 1990, there also has been a negative migration balance in all three Baltic countries. Altogether, during the four years 1990-1993, emigration resulted in a decline in the total number of

Table 9

Emigration From Latvia by Ethnicity, 1990-1993

Ethnic group	1990	1991	1992	1993	1990-1993	Number in 1989	Rate'90	Rate'91	Rate'92	Rate'93	Total rate
Latvians	574	419	43	382	1418	1387757	0.04%	0.03%	0.00%	0.03%	0.10%
Russians	-2606	-5394	-27332	-17762	-53094	905515	-0.29%	-0.60%	-3.02%	-1.96%	-5.86%
Byelorussians	-965	-1603	-7070	-3681	-13319	119702	-0.81%	-1.34%	-5.91%	-3.08%	-11.13%
Ukrainians	-1285	-1886	-7531	-3676	-14378	92101	-1.40%	-2.05%	-8.18%	-3.99%	-15.61%
Poles	-57	-95	-848	-448	-1448	60416	-0.09%	-0.16%	-1.40%	-0.74%	-2.40%
Lithuanians	-226	-234	-495	-205	-1160	34630	-0.65%	-0.68%	-1.43%	-0.59%	-3.35%
Jews	-2820	-1528	-1221	-1161	-6730	22897	-12.32%	-6.67%	-5.33%	-5.07%	-29.39%
Germans	*	-265	-315	-236	-816	3783	*	-7.01%	-8.33%	-6.24%	-21.57%
Others	-1321	-210	-2162	-1097	-4790	39766	-3.32%	-0.53%	-5.44%	-2.76%	-12.05%
Total	-8706	-10796	-46931	-27884	-94317	2666567	-0.33%	-0.40%	-1.76%	-1.05%	-3.54%
* - lack of data											

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata. Rīga, 1993.

inhabitants in Baltic states by more than 200,000, or by 2.5 per cent. Of these, about 105,000 left during 1992. Latvia saw the greatest emigration with over 100,000 leaving during the past five years (see Table 9). In 1992 the negative migration balance for Latvia was 47,000. Moreover, this imbalance was increasing in absolute numbers during every month of the year (Jumiķis 1993). In 1993 there was a reduction in the excess of emigrants over immigrants to 27,900 (see Table 9), but still this was more than 1 per cent of the total population, and 2.3 per cent of the non-Latvian population. During the first quarter of 1993 in Estonia, only about 4,000 people emigrated. This was about half of what it was during the same time span in 1992. The projected number for 1993 is about 18,000 emigrants from Estonia.

Recalculating these figures proportionally according to the numbers of non-Baltic peoples in each country, reveals that out-migration in 1992 was most intense from Estonia (5 percent), followed by Latvia (4 percent), and then Lithuania (3 percent). It must be noted that unlike Estonia and Latvia, Lithuania has a sizable autochthonous Polish population, almost all (83%) of whom were born in Lithuania (Centre of National Researches of Lithuania 1992). In comparison, Russians, Byelorussians and Ukrainians of Lithuania mostly were born outside of Lithuania. For this reason, only about half of the non-Lithuanian population could emigrate in order to return to their homeland. More than one third (36%) of all Latvia's minorities were citizens prior to 1940 and have no reason to emigrate (Eglājs 1993).

Spatially, by regions and major cities of Latvia, the highest rate of

Table 10

Intensity of Emigration by Regions in Latvia, 1991-1993

Region	Total population	Non-Latvians	% of Citizens	Non-citizens	Migration in 1993	Migration in 1992	Migration in 1991	Migration Total	Migration/ Total pop.	Migration/ non-Latvians	Migration/ non-citizens
Aizkraukles	44,920	11,238	84	7,187	-222	-368	-88	-678	-1.51	-6.03	-9.43
Alūksnes	28,156	6,199	92	2,252	-155	-610	-141	-906	-3.22	-14.62	-40.22
Balvu	33,284	8,876	93	2,330	-126	-385	-72	-583	-1.75	-6.57	-25.02
Bauskas	55,061	16,262	75	13,765	-201	-728	-190	-1,119	-2.03	-6.88	-8.13
Cēsu	63,022	10,470	88	7,563	-268	-765	-209	-1,242	-1.97	-11.86	-16.42
Daugavpils r.	46,087	29,204	79	9,678	-904	-851	45	-1,710	-3.71	-5.86	-17.67
Daugavpils c.	124,887	108,106	63	46,208	-2,182	-1,881	-372	-4,435	-3.55	-4.10	-9.60
Dobeles	43,161	14,149	76	10,359	-461	-1,939	-254	-2,654	-6.15	-18.76	-25.62
Gulbenes	29,990	5,598	91	2,699	-122	-261	-55	-438	-1.46	-7.82	-16.23
Jēkabpils	60,241	21,975	81	11,446	-1,056	-1,366	-155	-2,577	-4.28	-11.73	-22.51
Jelgavas r.	110,970	50,270	64	39,949	-1,093	-2,130	-478	-5,954	-5.37	-11.84	-7.39
Jūrmala c.	60,091	33,341	61	23,435	-478	-673	-131	-1,282	-2.13	-3.85	-5.47
Krāslavas	40,419	22,631	81	7,680	-246	-659	-231	-1,136	-2.81	-5.02	-14.79
Kuldīgas	41,237	5,996	93	2,887	-39	-147	-60	-246	-0.60	-4.10	-8.52
Liepāja c.	108,256	63,758	51	53,045	-2,781	-5,466	-1,228	-9,475	-8.75	-14.86	-17.86
Liepājas r.	52,391	9,022	88	6,287	-450	-2,157	-217	-2,824	-5.39	-31.30	-44.92
Limbažu	41,495	5,343	90	4,150	-52	-232	-95	-379	-0.91	-7.09	-9.13
Ludzas	41,184	18,819	88	4,942	-138	-481	-103	-722	-1.75	-3.84	-14.61
Madonas	49,838	7,871	92	3,987	-422	-379	-126	-927	-1.86	-11.78	-23.25
Ogres	65,412	18,377	83	11,120	-817	-724	41	-1,500	-2.29	-8.16	-13.49
Preiļu	44,779	15,856	92	3,582	-210	-575	-122	-907	-2.03	-5.72	-25.32
Rēzeknes	85,350	46,274	89	9,389	-211	-658	-173	-1,431	-1.68	-3.09	-8.71
Rīga c.	874,172	548,833	57	375,894	-10,223	-15,850	-5,259	-31,332	-3.58	-5.71	-8.34
Rīgas r.	149,179	59,743	74	38,787	-2,073	-3,216	-523	-5,812	-3.90	-9.73	-14.98
Saldus	40,227	7,262	85	6,034	-138	-216	-69	-423	-1.05	-5.82	-7.01
Talsu	50,758	4,705	95	2,538	-81	-83	-34	-198	-0.39	-4.21	-7.80
Tukuma	58,305	11,173	87	7,580	-886	-918	-151	-1,955	-3.35	-17.50	-25.79
Valkas	36,754	8,314	81	6,983	-136	-640	-174	-950	-2.58	-11.43	-13.60
Valmieras	62,657	12,285	85	9,399	-333	-663	-185	-1,181	-1.88	-9.61	-12.57
Ventspils	63,893	28,710	70	19,168	-1,657	-511	-356	-6,196	-9.70	-21.58	-16.20
Latvia	2,606,176	1,210,660	72	729,729	-28,161	-45,532	-11,165	-91,172	-3.50	-7.53	-12.49

Source: Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata 1992. Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. Rīga, 1993.

emigration is from the port cities of Liepāja (9 percent) and Ventspils (6.5 percent) and their adjacent regions (see Table 10). These cities and regions, as well as the region of Dobele (emigration rate of 6 percent), are the locations from which Russian military forces were withdrawn during the period of 1991-1993. The smallest rate of emigration is from regions where the percentage of Latvians is close to 90%. The exception is eastern Latvia, or the historic region of Latgale. The small emigration from Latgale is explained by the small number of non-citizens. In addition to the Latvians, most of the non-Latvians in Latgale lived there prior to Soviet annexation.

Latvians are the only ethnic group with a positive migration balance (see Table 9). More Latvians are arriving to settle in Latvia than are leaving. Without exception, every major ethnic minority is decreasing in population due to emigration. The largest emigration rate is among the Jews. Nearly one-third of the Jewish population has left since independence in 1989. Many of those Jews had settled in Latvia during the Soviet period, and only since the independence of Latvia, have Jews, as well as others obtained the freedom to emigrate. Jews are leaving Latvia for the reason most Jews arrive in Israel. The desire to live in the Jewish state.

The same is true for Germans, who are leaving at an even higher rate (see Table 9). During the Soviet period, Germans from the entire USSR used the Baltic republics as a "bridge" for their trip to Germany. Probably less than a third of Latvia's German population had ancestors who lived in Latvia. The majority of Germans arrived in Latvia from

Central Asian republics, and Siberia where they were deported by Stalin.

The slowest rate of emigration is among Poles and Lithuanians, being 2 percent and 3 percent respectively (see Table 9). Most Latvian Poles and Lithuanians in Latvia are citizens of Latvia, and there are fewer reasons for them to emigrate. Russians have a higher rate of emigration, with almost 6 percent of Latvia's Russian population having left in the four year following independence. Russians make up the largest emigrating group, 56% from those who left Latvia in 1990-1993 (see Table 9). Byelorussians and Ukrainians have even higher emigration rates than Russians, being 11 percent and 16 percent respectively (see Table 9). Most other ethnic groups leaving Latvia are recent immigrants from the USSR, such as Tatars, Moldavs, Transcaucasians and Central Asians, and their numbers are smaller.

In general, migrants are leaving all three Baltic states at about the same rate. Generally these are individuals who made no effort to assimilate into the Baltic peoples and cultures, and who were surprised by the changes in politics during the period 1988-1992. For them, Baltics independence was an unpleasant surprise. It was often viewed as a mistake allowed by the Russian leadership, and that could be put to rights again (Ringa 1994). Since most emigrants are returning to their ethnic homelands, or their own independent countries, the motivation is, at least in part, nationalistic (Vēbers 1993).

It must also be pointed out that emigration from the Baltic states is occurring spontaneously without overt pressure from local governments. It should not be compared to Tadzhikistan, where in just a few years

approximately 80% of the 387,000 ethnic Russian residents were forced to leave (Marnie 1993). The parliament of Latvia enacted laws to provide financial assistance to prospective emigrants by paying compensation for state owned flats, which they would leave (Latvijas Republikas Saeima 1994).

Although the rate of emigration will probably continue to fall, it is possible that in the next five years between 80,000 to 120,000 persons may emigrate from Latvia. This will occur primarily if the countries involved reach an understanding, and agree to establish mutually supported programs to ensure living conditions for those who wish to emigrate. Thus, in Estonia there are large number Russians who have sought information about repatriating, although they have made no decision to do so (Pettai 1992). The recently concluded agreement between the Estonian and Russian migration departments assisting emigrants to establish families and jobs in Russia suggests future developments.

Changes in Proportion of Students and Schools by Ethnicity

Languages of instruction in school are a strong indicator of ethnic processes in a country. Language schooling is a complicated issue in Latvia. During the 1993-1994 school year 56.9% of all school children were taught in Latvian (Ministry of Education 1994, see Table 11). The period 1989-1994 has seen a steady increase in the number of school children whose instructional language is Latvian. The lowest number was 51.4% in 1988. The number rebounded to 52.4% by 1990, and there were indications of steady growth (Latvijas Izglītības Ministrija 1993). At this rate of

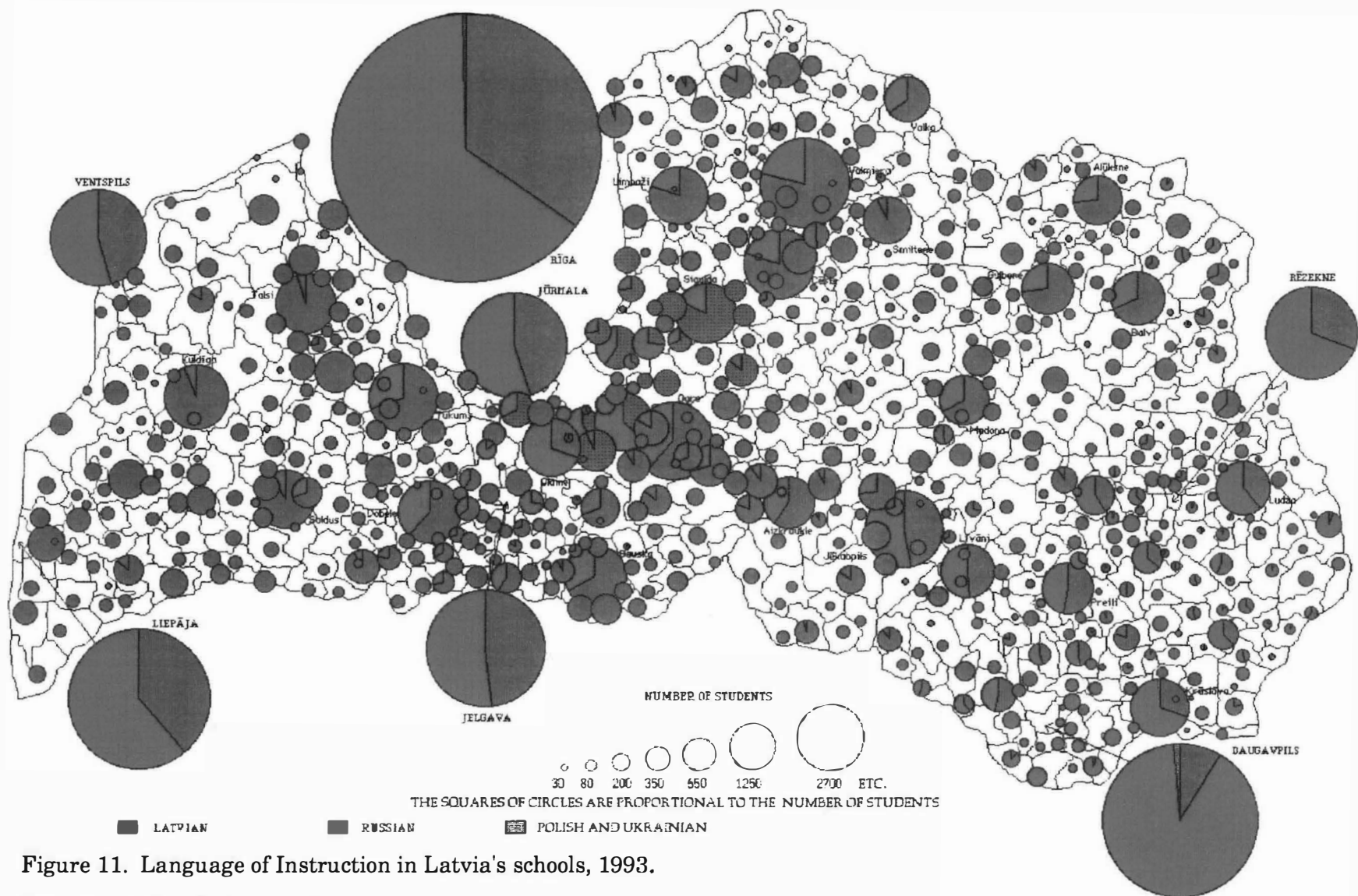


Figure 11. Language of Instruction in Latvia's schools, 1993.

Source: Latvijas Izglītības Ministrija. Unpublished Materials, 1994.

change, the proportion of school children instructed in Latvian would exceed 60% of total enrollment after about three years, or in 1997. Such growth may be predicted, since the proportion of school children being taught in Latvian is higher in the grades one through four, especially in the first grade, than in the later grades. In 1993, school children with Latvian as their instruction language constituted 61% among the grades one through four (Latvijas Izglītības Ministrija 1993, see Table 11). The birth rate among Latvians also supports the projected increase. During the early and mid-eighties, when today's beginning school children were born, Latvian mothers gave birth to between 50% and 52% of all newborns in Latvia (see Figure 8). By contrast, during the period 1990-1993, the figure was between 58% and 62% (Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1992, see Figure 8). It is likely, therefore that when children born this year begin their schooling the percentage of pupils with Latvian as their instructing language will be 65% or greater.

During the Soviet period urban planners projected more Russian language schools than were necessary. Therefore, they are only partially used and are willing to enroll non-Russian pupils. For example, the historical district of Āgenskalns in Rīga, where until 1994 there were three Russian and only one Latvian school (Andersons 1994). The ethnic structure of this part of city is approximately 42% Latvian, 44% Russian, and 14% other minorities (Mežs 1992). The only Latvian school was overcrowded, but three Russian schools were only partially full, therefore the local government decided to give the building of secondary school #26 (Russian language of instruction) to a school with Latvian language of

Table 11

Instruction Language of Latvia's Schools by Region in 1993

Region	1st-4th Graders			5th-9th Graders			1st-12th Graders		
	Total	Latvian	%	Total	Latvian	%	Total	Latvian	%
Aizkraukles	2728	2340	85.8	3041	2414	79.4	6383	5240	82.1
Alūksnes	1677	1467	87.5	1775	1506	84.8	3810	3276	86.0
Balvu	1783	1461	81.9	2016	1519	75.3	4246	3337	78.6
Bauskas	3563	3009	84.5	3818	3057	80.1	7886	6491	82.3
Cēsu	4003	3662	91.5	4299	3801	88.4	9002	8067	89.6
Daugavpils r.	2054	841	40.9	2313	765	33.1	4797	1763	36.8
Dobeles	2588	1991	76.9	2962	2212	74.7	6027	4562	75.7
Gulbenes	1667	1496	89.7	1851	1625	87.8	3820	3376	88.4
Jelgavas r.	2316	1834	79.2	2512	1800	71.7	5001	3766	75.3
Jēkabpils	3148	2210	70.2	3742	2526	67.5	7486	5176	69.1
Krāslavas	1912	802	41.9	2336	651	27.9	4730	1590	33.6
Kuldīgas	2425	2292	94.5	2817	2556	90.7	5725	5263	91.9
Liepājas r.	2991	2966	99.2	3286	3238	98.5	6698	6617	98.8
Limbažu	2481	2332	94.0	2786	2544	91.3	5775	5333	92.3
Ludzas	1844	917	49.7	2328	1062	45.6	4650	2182	46.9
Madonas	2806	2561	91.3	3239	2865	88.5	6685	5981	89.5
Ogres	3637	2905	79.9	4474	3330	74.4	8803	6813	77.4
Preiļu	2376	1658	69.8	2823	1684	59.7	5821	3765	64.7
Rēzeknes r.	2060	1041	50.5	2619	1185	45.2	5094	2465	48.4
Rīgas r.	7416	4959	66.9	8880	5638	63.5	17788	11694	65.7
Saldus	2539	2388	94.1	2838	2643	93.1	5954	5563	93.4
Talsu	3055	3004	98.3	3419	3329	97.4	7191	7018	97.6
Tukuma	3479	3172	91.2	3950	3507	88.8	8158	7299	89.5
Valkas	2045	1765	86.3	2376	1914	80.6	4788	3954	82.6
Valmieras	3722	3279	88.1	4228	3552	84.0	8918	7631	85.6
Ventspils r.	1009	951	94.3	1128	1029	91.2	2225	2068	92.9
Daugavpils c.	5518	641	11.6	7438	430	5.8	14465	1240	8.6
Jelgava c.	3359	1620	48.2	4097	1822	44.5	8457	4091	48.4
Jūrmala c.	2639	1287	48.8	3346	1381	41.3	6718	2997	44.6
Liepāja c.	4918	2023	41.1	6106	2146	35.1	12315	4757	38.6
Rēzekne c.	2225	733	32.9	2914	777	26.7	5855	1788	30.5
Ventspils c.	2287	1097	48.0	2869	1210	42.2	5685	2584	45.5
Rīga c.	36032	13394	37.2	49253	15323	31.1	98240	33759	34.4
Latvia total	128302	78098	60.9	157879	85041	53.9	319196	181506	56.9

Source: Latvia's Ministry of Education (unpublished materials), 1993.

instruction (Andersons 1994). There was a Latvian language school in this building before it was given to the Russians after Soviet annexation in 1940. Some of the students of former secondary school #26 continued to study in a Latvian language school, others were provided with the possibility of studying in Russian language school #53, just a few blocks away (Andersons 1994).

There are schools for Russian students in all districts, but many have only a small number of students. There has been a tendency to attach these to schools instructing in Latvian language, thus adding to the population of students learning in Latvian. At present, Latvian schools are more overcrowded in the largest cities, especially in Rīga, so that children of minorities are not readily admitted to them (Andersons 1994).

Another trend in recent years has been for more non-Latvians, including Russians, to send their children to Latvian schools. A particularly interesting case is in the Indra Middle School in the district of Krāslava. With only nine percent of the inhabitants of Latvian origin, it is one of the most Russified in Latvia. In 1993, 42 (33%) pupils became Latvian speakers, even though few of the parents speak Latvian (Ministry of Education 1993). In a neighboring locality, Skuķi Latvian school was organized in 1992 (Kirsanova 1994). All the children learning in Latvian are from Russian and Byelorussian families. The parents are satisfied that their children have the opportunity to study in Latvian, and are very enthusiastic to help the school's operation (Kirsanova 1994). It signifies a commitment to assimilation in the Latvian nation by non-Latvians.

In 1993, in eastern Latvia, there were nine municipalities with no

Latvian schools (see Figure 11). There was no teaching in Latvian in mixed schools, even though Latvians constituted more than 20 percent of the population. Moreover, one of the parishes, Cirma (between the cities of Rēzekne and Ludza), had no instruction in Latvian even though it did have a population made up of 48% Latvians. There are only Russian schools in these nine municipalities, and additional thirteen municipalities with even smaller Latvian populations (see Figure 11). Some decades ago it was possible to study in Latvian, but no longer. Latvian children are denied schooling in their mother tongue and are discriminated against both in school and in adult life. Together with the economic backwardness of the region, Latvians are inclined to migrate westward, and are replaced by Russians and Byelorussians, who do not assimilate the Latvian language and culture.

Even after the restoration of independence, education in Latvia's schools was better provided to Russians in their native language than to Latvians in Latvian. Sixty percent of the school children were of Latvian ethnicity in 1993, but the number of students studying in Latvian was 57% (see Table 12). The percentage of students studying in Russian did not reach the proportion of Russians among the total population in only four of thirty three municipalities. In the remaining twenty nine municipalities, taught a significantly higher percentage of students in Russian than the proportion among the total population (see Table 12). In many cases, this difference was twice as large. In contrast, the percentage of students learning in Latvian in twenty two municipalities was significantly lower than the percentage of Latvians among the total

Table 12

Student Enrollment in Latvia's Schools by Ethnicity, 1993

Region	Total Students	Study in		Latvian		Russian		Belorussian		Ukrainian		Polish		Lithuanian	Jewish	Estonian	Gypsies	Other
		Latvian	%	Students	%	students	%	students	%	students	%	students	%	students	stud.	students	students	stud.
Aizkraukles	6,383	5,240	82.1	5,334	81.9	904	13.9	95	1.5	54	0.8	29	0.4	49	4	1	13	30
Alūksnes	3,810	3,276	86.0	3,339	86.3	459	11.9	5	0.1	31	0.8	4	0.1	4	4	13	4	5
Balvu	4,246	3,337	78.6	3,531	81.2	719	16.5	27	0.6	38	0.9	6	0.1	2	4		8	12
Bauskas	7,886	6,491	82.3	6,578	80.8	887	10.9	205	2.5	173	2.1	40	0.5	191		1	7	58
Cēsu	9,002	8,067	89.6	8,305	90.0	745	8.1	71	0.8	48	0.5	20	0.2	11	4	2	8	15
Daugavpils r.	4,797	1,763	36.8	2,198	44.3	1,920	38.7	183	3.7	74	1.5	498	10.0	36		1	29	23
Dobeles	6,027	4,562	75.7	4,619	76.1	893	14.7	168	2.8	146	2.4	35	0.6	164		1	6	39
Gulbenes	3,820	3,376	88.4	3,429	88.1	375	9.6	22	0.6	30	0.8	9	0.2	8		1	11	7
Jelgavas	13,458	7,857	58.4	8,560	61.4	3,999	28.7	594	4.3	342	2.5	148	1.1	130	16	4	42	103
Jēkabpils	7,486	5,176	69.1	5,405	70.9	1,820	23.9	128	1.7	75	1.0	77	1.0	40	12	3	14	53
Krāslavas	4,730	1,590	33.6	2,172	45.5	1,513	31.7	714	15.0	68	1.4	258	5.4	15	1	1	11	20
Kuldīgas	5,725	5,263	91.9	5,494	91.3	358	5.9	21	0.3	57	0.9	6	0.1	49		2	18	15
Liepājas r.	6,698	6,617	98.8	6,450	93.9	97	1.4	20	0.3	35	0.5	6	0.1	245		3	4	6
Limbažu	5,775	5,333	92.3	5,422	91.7	306	5.2	27	0.5	61	1.0	16	0.3	7		3	33	35
Ludzas	4,650	2,182	46.9	2,678	56.5	1,777	37.5	157	3.3	54	1.1	26	0.5	14	5	5	5	19
Madonas	6,685	5,981	89.5	6,092	89.7	542	8.0	41	0.6	56	0.8	21	0.3	5		2	13	21
Ogres	8,803	6,813	77.4	6,910	77.9	1,552	17.5	170	1.9	104	1.2	37	0.4	13	7	2	6	70
Preiļu	5,821	3,765	64.7	3,918	66.5	1,738	29.5	70	1.2	48	0.8	65	1.1	14			22	17
Rēzeknes	10,949	4,253	38.8	5,259	46.9	5,591	49.8	87	0.8	78	0.7	133	1.2	22	11	2	8	29
Rīgas r.	17,788	11,694	65.7	12,241	68.2	4,536	25.3	505	2.8	325	1.8	126	0.7	70	12	9	3	130
Saldus	5,954	5,563	93.4	5,496	89.9	250	4.1	38	0.6	63	1.0	7	0.1	246			2	13
Talsu	7,191	7,018	97.6	7,026	95.7	189	2.6	15	0.2	36	0.5	7	0.1	12	1		50	6
Tukuma	8,158	7,288	89.3	7,308	87.2	767	9.2	116	1.4	58	0.7	16	0.2	26	14	5	47	21
Valkas	4,788	3,954	82.6	4,092	83.0	638	12.9	63	1.3	73	1.5	5	0.1	7		11	6	37
Ventspils	7,910	4,652	58.8	4,933	61.4	2,457	30.6	205	2.5	245	3.0	22	0.3	24	0	2	93	59
Valmiera	8,918	7,631	85.6	7,907	85.9	977	10.6	104	1.1	111	1.2	32	0.3	17	1	3	25	29
Daugavpils c.	14,465	1,240	8.6	2,433	16.3	8,896	59.6	876	5.9	347	2.3	2092	14.0	121	51	1	20	80
Jūrmala c.	6,718	2,997	44.6	3,396	50.0	2,863	42.1	201	3.0	117	1.7	50	0.7	42	15	6	37	70
Liepāja c.	12,315	4,757	38.6	5,294	42.2	5,531	44.1	455	3.6	777	6.2	66	0.5	207	28	7		179
Rīga c.	98,240	33,759	34.4	39,640	39.4	49,029	48.8	3571	3.6	3643	3.6	986	1.0	615	1639	103	65	1216
Latvia	319,196	181,506	56.9	195,459	59.9	102,328	31.3	8954	2.7	7367	2.3	4843	1.5	2406	1829	194	610	2730

Source: Latvia's Ministry of Education (unpublished materials), 1993.

population (see Table 12). For example, in the second largest city of Latvia, Daugavpils, there are 2,433 students of Latvian ethnicity, but in the Latvian schools there are only 1,240 students (or 51%, see Table 12). The attendance pattern data suggests that some Latvian students attend non-Latvian schools, especially in urban areas.

The case of the town of Zilupe illustrates the impact of school shortage on the rate of assimilation into the Russian cultural realm. A little more than 2,000 people inhabit this eastern-most town, of whom, 21 percent were Latvians in 1989. The Latvian school was closed in the 1940s. In 1979 Latvian had ceased to be the primary language for 27 percent of the Latvian residents. A decade later the number having lost the language exceeded 40 percent (Latvijas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1991). Today only one quarter of Zilupe's Latvian children and youths under age 20 speak Latvian; among the 20 to 59 years age group, about half are fluent in the language; and of those over 60 years of age, nearly all claim Latvian as their mother tongue (Latvijas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja 1991).

Slowly this trend is being reversed in eastern Latvia, often by individual initiatives. Local governments with their non-Latvian base, sometimes oppose these initiatives (Kirsanova 1994). Nevertheless, classes in Latvian recently have been reestablished in 18 municipalities. They are usually small, and rarely is the number of students proportional to the number of Latvians in the population. An example is the Primary School of Svairiņi in the District of Krāslava. Even though Latvians are in the majority, until 1990 all instruction was in Russian. By 1991, nine first graders (half of the entering class) were studying in the newly opened

Latvian section. If more aid were forthcoming from the central government, then instruction in Latvian would become available in the remaining 22 municipalities not yet served (see Figure 11). Only 20% of Russians residing in Latvia resist sending their children to Latvian schools (Pabrigs 1994).

In higher education the situation is similar. There are institutions, such as the Institute of Civil Aviation, in which it is impossible for a Latvian speaker to get a degree. In Latvia's universities and colleges, the number of students who take their instruction in Latvian slightly exceeds the proportion of Latvians in the total population. This number has been growing during the last few years (Tomašūns 1993). Several institutions, namely the University of Latvia and the Academy of Agriculture, have decided to end the use of two language streams for education. The Academy of Agriculture decided in 1992 to enroll students only in the Latvian language stream. In part this was because Russians largely shunned agriculture, and the Russian share among students was less than 6 percent (Tomašūns 1993). The Medical Academy continues to admit a limited number of students in the Russian stream of instruction, but mainly from eastern Latvia with the proviso that these students learn Latvian. This reverses the situation that existed in 1992 when many of the medical specialists who were ready to graduate did not receive diplomas, because they were unable to speak Latvian with their Latvian patients. There were no difficulties in obtaining a diploma from the Latvian Medical Academy, and securing a position in a hospital even without rudimentary knowledge of the Latvian language prior to 1992.

Moscow did not entrust Latvians with positions of responsibility in industry during the entire period of Soviet rule. It was common for Latvian youth to shun studies in technical fields, especially those most directly linked to manufacturing. Non-Latvians were the majority of workers and administrators in nearly all large manufacturing concerns. To choose to study a technical field meant working in a Russian collective, something that Latvian youth avoided even before entering the university. Latvians continue to comprise less than half of the student body in 1993, at Rīga Technical University. Latvians also make up less than half of the enrollment in commercial study fields. However, Latvians are a majority in the humanities, the arts and in all fields associated with agriculture and forestry.

In Estonia, as in Latvia, there are slightly more students in Estonian than in other language schools. The proportion was 64 percent in 1989. This is somewhat larger than the proportion of Estonians in the population. However, as in Latvia, there is a great contrast between the cities and the countryside. In cities only 54 percent of urban children study in the Estonian language, whereas in the countryside 95 percent are in Estonian language schools. In northeastern Estonia, as in southeastern Latvia, there are few Estonian language students. The smallest proportion is one to two percent in Narva and Sillamae, due to the influx of former Soviet residents who immigrated there from other republics.

The greatest number of students to receive instruction in the language of the land within the Baltic region is in Lithuania. This totals about 85 percent (Gaučas 1981). There are no other language schools in the

majority of Lithuanian districts. Only in the Vilnius area are there parallels with eastern Latvia in the proportion of Russian speakers. Lithuanians began to actively reestablish instruction in Lithuanian at the end of the 1980s in small first grades in Polish and Russian dominated areas. There are few Lithuanian students in the Salčininkai and Vilnius districts. The most rapid transition here has been from Russian to Polish as the language of instruction in schools during the past few years.

CHAPTER IV

SYNTHESIS OF THE DATA

Since independence from Soviet political domination in 1990, several factors have tended to change the ethnic processes in Latvia. First, the birth rate of Latvians decreased slightly, while for Russians and most of the other minorities the decrease was dramatic. The birth rate among non-Latvians dropped from 16 per thousand to below 10 per thousand. These demographic changes quickly altered the structure of natural increase in the population. Latvians had a low level of natural population increase in prior decades and in many years there were more deaths recorded than newborns. The second half of the 1980s saw Latvians begin enlarging their numbers through natural increase (see Figure 9). Latvians dominated the natural increase of the population starting in 1990. The overall natural change of the population declined mainly because Russians and other ethnic minorities had a rapidly declining fertility rate (see Table 8). With these developments Latvians now have a rather favorable demographic status compared to other ethnic groups (see Figure 9). Nevertheless, in 1993 there was the largest natural decrease in fertility that Latvia ever recorded during a non-war period.

Some of the possible reasons for the difference in the decline of the fertility rate for Latvians and minorities are a larger proportion of rural dwellers among Latvians, where families tend to be larger (Eglite 1994). Non-Latvians, conversely, had lower expectations of the ideal number of

children in a family than Latvians in 1979, and the regained independence increased this difference (Eglīte 1994). The emigration from Latvia also leaves an imprint on the fertility rate in Latvia. Almost all emigrants are non-Latvians, and most of them are relatively young (Vēbers 1993). Therefore the non-Latvian population age structure contains new gaps, which reduces their fertility rate.

The second important turn in the ethnic processes of Latvia was migration control. Prior to independence in 1990, there were no border controls, and therefore close to 1,000,000 immigrants settled in Latvia. The number of persons entering the country has been reduced to about 10 percent of the former rate. At the same time, persons leaving Latvia remained in the same range, resulting in a net out-migration. An unusually large outflow was in 1992, when a large number of Russian military personnel departed and twice as many emigrants left the country. Over recent years, the population change from migration has reversed from a positive number (about 9,000 per year since the 1950s) to a negative number (approximately 25,000 per year since 1990) (see Tables 9-10). Latvians are the only ethnic group who have shown an increase in immigration. All other ethnic minorities recorded decreases in population from immigration, but at different rates.

The total population of Latvia reached its highest level in 1990, when it was 2,674,000 (see Table 13). The effects of natural and migration changes in the population resulted in a population of 2,566,000, by 1994, or a decrease of 4 percent. It is likely that the decrease in the total population will continue for the next three to five years. The natural decrease of

population probably will reach its maximum in 1994 with an absolute decline in population of approximately 18,000. By the end of the decade the birth rate might increase slightly, more for Latvians than for minorities (Zvidriņš 1994). The migration rate will also remain negative for the decade.

The demographic and migration changes in Latvia suggest the changes in the ethnic structure of the population. The ethnic Latvian population trends of the last five decades were reversed in 1989 when the proportion of Latvians to other ethnic groups reached a minimum of 52.0% (see Table 13). By 1994, the proportion of Latvians was estimated to be 54.2% - 54.5% (Seņkāne 1994, Zvidriņš 1994). This increase of 2.2-2.5 percent, or half percent per year is due primarily to emigration (see Table 13).

During the period 1989-1994 the proportion for all major ethnic groups decreased. For Russians, their share in the total population decreased from 34.0% to 33.1% (see Table 13). Similar rates of decrease are observed for Byelorussians and Ukrainians, changing from 4.5% and 3.5% to 4.1% and 3.1% respectively (see Table 13). The percentage for two other major minority groups, Poles and Lithuanians, remained nearly the same. Another ethnic minority, Jews, reduced their number from 22,900 in 1989, to 13,100 in 1994, or 57% of the 1989 population (see Table 13). The explanation for the major decrease in Jewish population in Latvia is emigration to Israel and the USA. The percentage of Jews among the total population decreased from 0.9% in 1989 to 0.5% in 1994. Among the other ethnic minorities, only Gypsies record an increase in their numbers due to

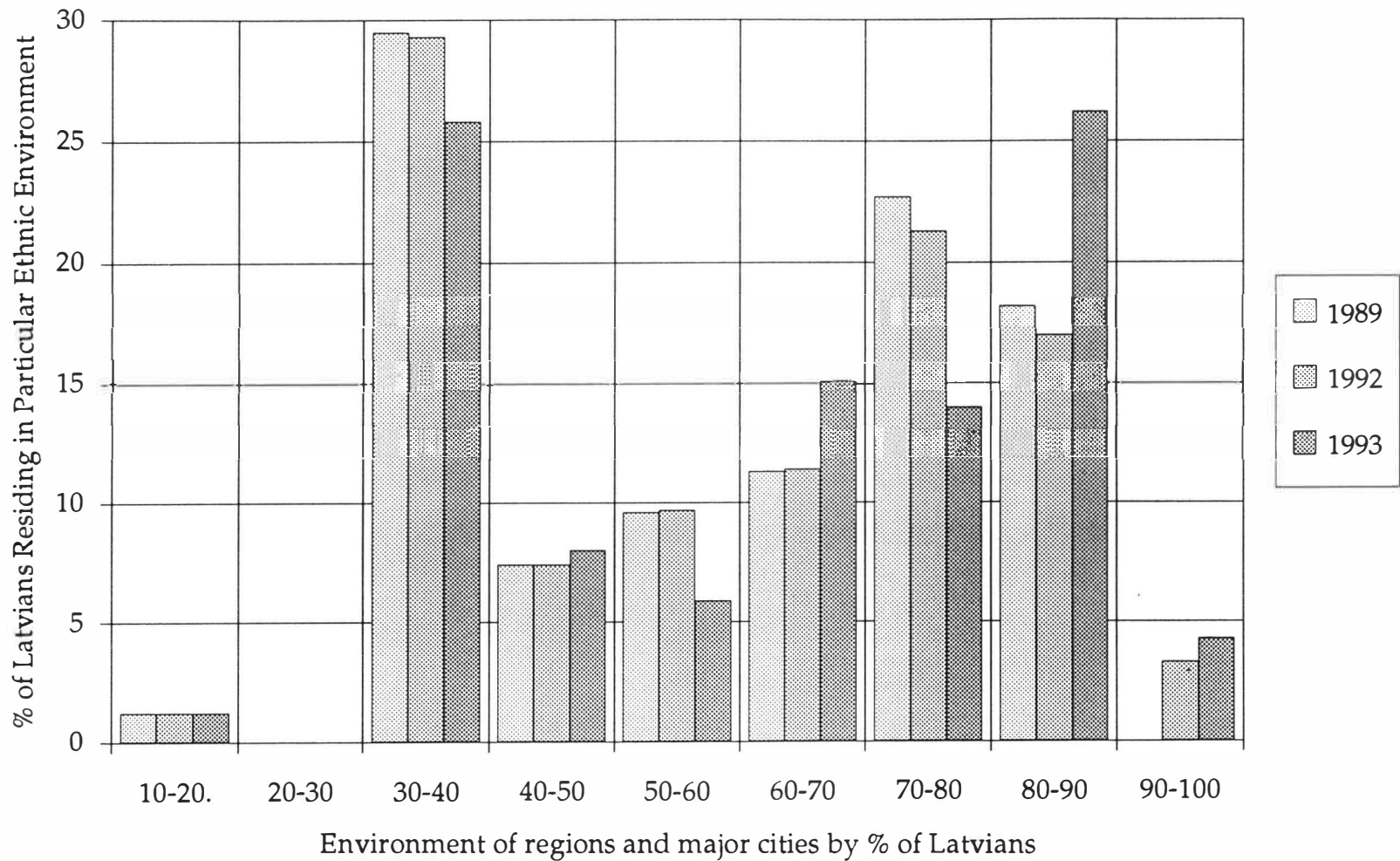


Figure 12. Ethnic Homogeneity of Latvians by Regions in Latvia, 1989, 1992, and 1993.

Source: Latvijas Republikas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja. Latvijas Demogrāfijas Gadagrāmata. Rīga, 1993.

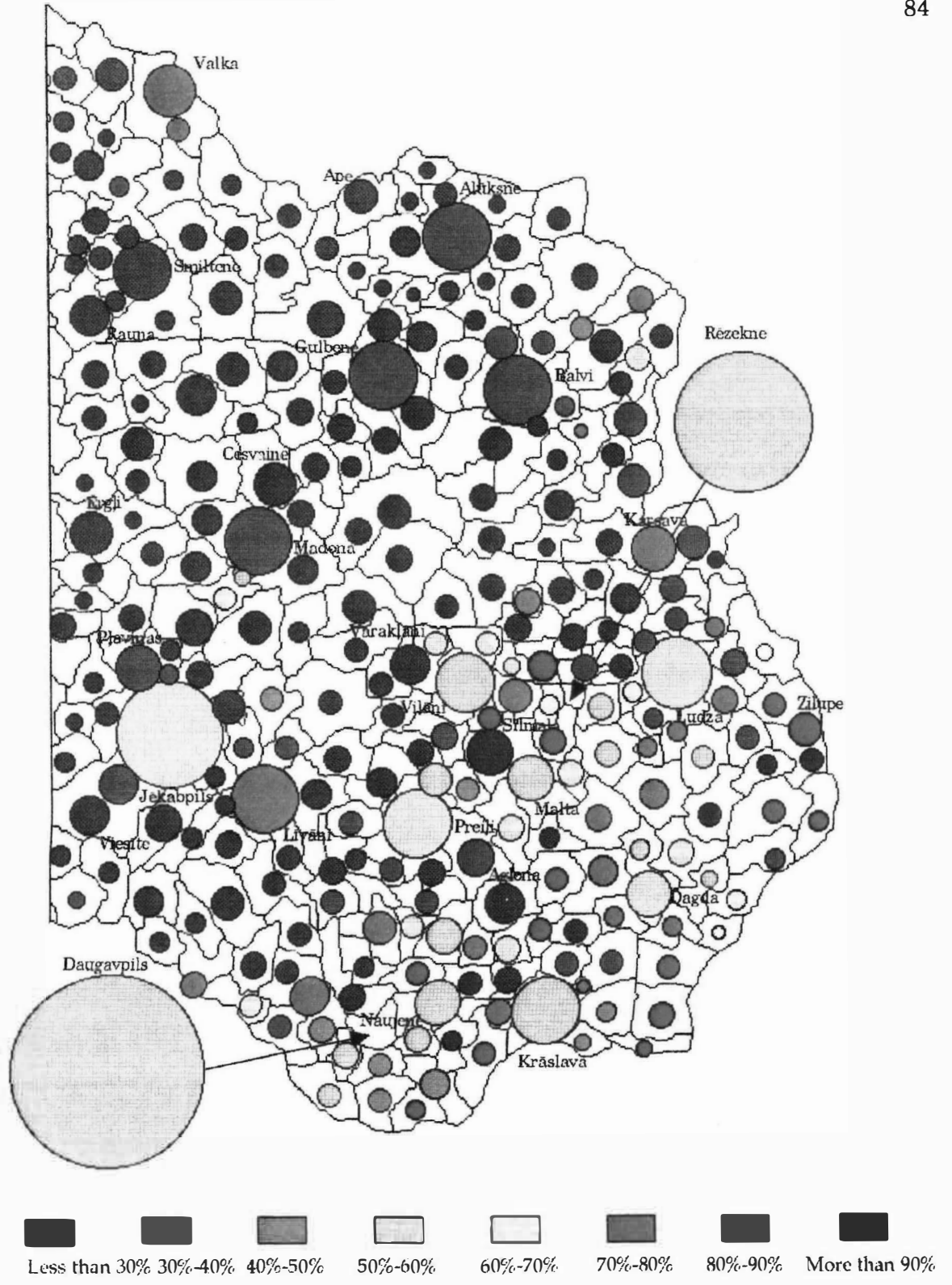


Figure 13. Proportion of Residents Voted for Latvia's Independence in Eastern Latvia, 1991.

a high fertility rate.

There is a relationship between the proportion of Latvians and the level of Russification among them. The region of Krāslava might serve as a good example, since it has pagasts with almost all population being Latvians, as well as pagasts with almost no Latvians. In five pagasts, where the Latvians are less than one quarter (Indra, Piedruja, Kaplava, Robežnieki, Kalnieši), most of local Latvians recognize Russian as their native language (see Table 14). In comparison, in five pagasts with the Latvian proportion over two thirds (Auleja, Izvalta, Skaista, Šķaune, Kombuļi) only 6% of Latvians chose Russian as their native tongue. The absence of Latvian schools was a direct cause for Latvians losing their native language. In localities where the Latvian schools were closed about three to four decades ago, a large share of Latvians changed their native language to Russian. However, where Latvian schools were preserved, very few Latvians lost their native language. The Soviet school policy was an effective tool to Russify the local population of eastern Latvia.

The recent changes in ethnic structure in Latvia are favorable for the ethnic homogeneity of Latvians. In 1989, 38% of Latvians resided in localities where they were in a minority. By 1993 the number had decreased to 35% (see Figure 12). Only 18% of Latvians lived in cities and regions in 1989 where there was a strong dominance of Latvians (greater than 80%). By 1993 this number had increased to 31% (see Figure 12). In 1989, there were no regions or major cities with an entirely Latvian domination (Latvians over 90%), and by 1993 there were two such regions in western Latvia, the Talsu and Ventspils regions.

Table 13

Changes in Ethnic Structure of Latvia, 1989-1994

Year	Total	Latvians	Russians	Belorus.	Ukr.	Poles	Lith.	Jews	Others
1989	2666567	1387757	905515	119702	92101	60416	34630	22897	43549
%	100.00%	52.04%	33.96%	4.49%	3.45%	2.27%	1.30%	0.86%	1.63%
Newborns	38922	20964	11698	2037	1679	907	635	132	870
Deaths	32584	18784	9239	1425	760	1008	554	454	360
Nat. Increase	6338	2180	2459	612	919	-101	81	-322	510
Migration	1362	3686	2230	-757	-1686	62	-130	-1243	-800
1990	2674267	1393623	910204	119557	91334	60377	34581	21332	43259
%	100.00%	52.11%	34.04%	4.47%	3.42%	2.26%	1.29%	0.80%	1.62%
Newborns	37918	21438	10910	1840	1443	827	601	108	751
Deaths	34812	19892	10033	1564	756	1111	587	440	429
Nat. Increase	3106	1546	877	276	687	-284	14	-332	322
Migration	-8706	574	-2606	-965	-1285	-57	-226	-2820	-1321
1991	2668667	1395743	908475	118868	90736	60036	34369	18180	42260
%	100.00%	52.30%	34.04%	4.45%	3.40%	2.25%	1.29%	0.68%	1.58%
Newborns	34633	20107	9716	1537	1254	736	583	73	627
Deaths	34749	19797	10261	1583	762	971	567	404	404
Nat. Increase	-116	310	-545	-46	492	-235	16	-331	223
Migration	-10796	419	-5394	-1603	-1886	-95	-234	-1528	-475
1992	2657755	1396472	902536	117219	89342	59706	34151	16321	42008
%	100.00%	52.54%	33.96%	4.41%	3.36%	2.25%	1.28%	0.61%	1.58%
Newborns	31569	19418	8292	1180	968	612	512	60	527
Deaths	35420	20002	10825	1503	694	1069	560	367	400
Nat. Increase	-3851	-584	-2533	-323	274	-457	-48	-307	127
Migration	-46931	43	-27332	-7070	-7531	-848	-495	-1221	-2477
1993	2606176	1395516	872406	109787	82065	58373	33601	14791	39637
%	100.00%	53.55%	33.47%	4.21%	3.15%	2.24%	1.29%	0.57%	1.52%
Nat. Increase	-12400	-4400	-6000	-600	0	-600	-100	-500	-200
Migration	-27884	382	-17762	-3681	-3676	-448	-205	-1161	-1333
1994	2565892	1391498	848644	105506	78389	57325	33296	13130	38104
% *Estimate	100.00%	54.23%	33.07%	4.11%	3.06%	2.23%	1.30%	0.51%	1.49%
Nat. Increase	-18000	-6500	-8500	-900	0	-700	-200	-800	-400
Migration	-14300	400	-9000	-1900	-1900	-200	-100	-900	-700
1995	2533592	1385398	831144	102706	76489	56425	32996	11430	37004
% *Estimate	100.00%	54.68%	32.80%	4.05%	3.02%	2.23%	1.30%	0.45%	1.46%

Source: Mežs, Ilmārs. *Latvieši Latvijā: Etnodemogrāfisks Apskats*. Kalamazoo: LSC Apgāds, 1992.

Table 14

Latvian Language Status in Education in Krāslavas Region

Pagasts	Total	Latvians	%	Latvians with Russian as first language	%	% with Latvian as first language	Schools in 1989	Latvian language students, 1994 (%)
Indras	1879	166	8.7%	88	53%	4%	Russian	21%
Piedrujas	825	93	11.5%	76	82%	2%	Russian	0%
Kaplavas	937	165	17.2%	110	67%	6%	Russian	0%
Robežnieku	1280	237	18.4%	144	61%	7%	Russian	12%
Kalniešu	1178	287	24.6%	173	60%	10%	Russian	0%
Kastuļinas	1352	406	29.3%	117	29%	21%	Russian	0%
Grāveru	850	292	33.8%	151	52%	17%	Russian	7%
Andzeļu	821	358	41.6%	72	20%	35%	Russian	14%
Ezernieku	1475	687	45.2%	110	16%	39%	Mixed	38%
Škeltovas	1031	509	47.5%	99	19%	40%	Russian	17%
Ūdrišu	1786	901	50.4%	134	15%	43%	None	No schools
Svariņu	714	377	50.9%	100	27%	39%	Russian	20%
Andrupenes	1705	897	51.7%	95	11%	47%	Mixed	36%
Krāslavas	617	328	52.2%	35	11%	47%	None	100%
Konstantinovas	959	525	52.7%	63	12%	48%	None	53%
Bērziņu	838	458	53.5%	154	34%	36%	Russian	9%
Asūnes	743	432	55.9%	56	13%	51%	Mixed	44%
Dagdas	932	558	56.7%	87	16%	51%	Mixed	37%
Ķepovas	490	288	57.1%	86	30%	41%	None	61%
Kombuļu	1252	852	66.7%	39	5%	65%	Latvian	100%
Škaunes	927	662	69.8%	72	11%	64%	Mixed	59%
Skaistas	1028	783	74.2%	105	13%	66%	Latvian	100%
Izvaltas	1014	813	77.1%	14	2%	79%	Latvian	100%
Aulejas	922	862	91.9%	6	1%	93%	Latvian	100%
Krāslavas region	25555	11936	46.7%	2186	18%	38%	Mixed	34%

Source: Latvijas Valsts Statistikas Komiteja, 1991; Latvijas Izglītības Ministrija, 1993 (unpublished materials).

The situation developed where Latvians are almost all bilingual, but most Russians are unilingual. Since the Russian language is still present and even dominant in television, cinemas, press, and radio, the knowledge of Russian among Latvians will remain high. As the older generation of Latvians without fluency in Russian disappears, the slight changes in schools towards the Russian language will still be effective, to increase the number of Latvians fluent in Russian. The Russian population of Latvia is increasing the numbers being fluent in Latvian language. This is especially true for school children and students, among them the level of fluency in Latvian is growing significantly. It might take a minimum of decades for the Russian community to obtain the same level of fluency in Latvian, as Latvians have in Russian.

There is a noticeable correlation among the proportion of Latvians, and support for Latvia's independence. Localities with the smallest support for independence have no Latvian schools. In pagasts, where less than one-third of the population voted for independent Latvia in 1991, there is a lack of education available in Latvian (see Figures 11, 13). There are some pagasts with a non-Latvian majority, but with strong support for Latvia's independence. A large proportion among non-Latvians in these pagasts are Poles. It appears that pagasts with a majority of Russian Old-believers are less loyal to the Latvian state, than Catholic and Orthodox minorities (Poles, Belorussians and Russians).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Moscow's policy of Russification of Latvia had some success. The migration of Russians and Russified non-Russians to Latvia was successful, and numerically Latvians almost became a minority in Latvia. On the other hand, it appears that Latvian resistance to Russification was underestimated by Moscow. In spite of deportations and repressions, Latvians were able to preserve their native language as their primary language in education. In contrast to Byelorussians, Ukrainians, and many ethnic groups inside Russia, a majority of whom did not preserve their native language in education, Latvians demonstrated stronger resistance towards linguistic assimilation. Nevertheless, almost all Latvians become fluent speakers of Russian. This factor may not help the Russians in Latvia quickly acquire Latvian language since there might be a tendency to continue to use the Russian language in social and business exchanges when one speaker is not fluent in Latvian.

Some assimilation has started among Latvians in the eastern regions of the country. Latvian language lost its dominating role in education in some regions and cities, even among Latvians themselves. The massive change of native language started in some mainly Russified localities. If the status quo had remained for a few more decades, the assimilation of Latvians would be much wider and stronger. Just one or two more decades of Soviet rule might have resulted in the Latvian

language becoming a minority language among total population living in Latvia. In this case, the renewal of independent and ethnic based Latvia would be questionable. The political scene and the distribution of power might have been different had Russification been allowed to function for another two decades.

The first signs of Latvian demographic status improving were noticeable in the middle 1980s, when the birth rate of Latvians was growing and approached that of the minorities. The proportion of babies born to Latvian mothers started to grow. In 1989 the proportion of Latvians began to increase, but so did the proportion of Russians in Latvia. The major turning point of Latvia's ethnic processes was in 1990, when for the first time in post-war history, more people left Latvia, than arrived. The proportion of Russians began declining in 1991. The restoration of independence in Latvia inspired the native population and the political changes affected them in a positive manner compared to the majority of non-Latvians, many of whom opposed the political changes. As a consequence, the minorities, especially Russians began to emigrate.

If emigration continues at predicted rates, the ethnic makeup of Latvia will slowly become more homogenous. Future growth in the Latvian share of the population is reason for much optimism relative to ethnic identity. Projections suggest that if in 1989 only 52.0% of the population were Latvians, and by 1994 this had risen to 54.3%, then by the year 2000 ethnic Latvians could make up 57% to 58% of the nation's population. In fifteen to twenty years, the proportion could be nearby two thirds. Similar growth rates can be projected also for Estonia. By the turn

of the century, Estonians could be 65% of the total and approaching two thirds. For Lithuanians, the projected proportion among the total population would be between 83-85%.

Nevertheless, large minority populations will remain in Latvia, as well as Estonia. Latvia and Estonia will have to integrate minorities and bring them to citizenship status. Helping them learn the official language of the state and rudimentary knowledge of its political structure will be a key task, especially in Latvia. Latvians are insisting that they no longer suffer the humiliation of having to speak a foreign language in their own home when dealing with officialdom.

The governments and societies of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania hope to not only avoid ethnic strife, but to regain their pre-war cosmopolitan and harmonious ethnic milieu. Latvians, along with both their Baltic neighbors, must realize that the legacy of Soviet rule, no matter how brutal and unjust, cannot be reversed; that violent attempts to regain the pre-war ethnic status will mire them down in the past and deny them a harmonious democratic future.

There is a need for new research in ethnodemography of Latvia. The register of population might serve as an excellent source for such studies. The major problem with the population register is that it needs to be updated, and a system of automatic updating should be established. The detailed research on the changes in ethnic structure of the population, distribution of Latvia's ethnic groups by age, education, occupation, and income are important for democracy in the country. Sociologic studies on population preferences to live in more or less homogenous areas, and

detailed studies of the homogenization processes might lead to public policies for development. Geolinguistic studies on the status and usage of the major languages in different cities and regions, might result in changes in the language policy in the country.

Appendix A
Questions From the 1989 Census of Population

Questions From the 1989 Census of Population

1. Family relation to the person written in as the first.
2. Sex.
3. Temporally out.
4. Temporally here.
5. Data of birth (day, month, and year).
6. Birth place.
7. Marital status.
8. Ethnicity (for foreigners also *citizenship).
9. Native language (also second language of the USSR's peoples)
10. Education.
11. Do You have a degree of secondary technical education?
12. Type of educational institution in which You are currently enrolled.
13. Sources of livelihood.

Next five questions only for every fourth person:

14. Place of work.
15. Occupation there.
16. Social class (*worker, *collective farmer, *employee(intelligent), *person with an individual employment, *religious employee).
17. Duration of non-interrupted residing in this locality.
18. For women, the number of children born, and still alive.

Next questions are only for a household:

19. Period of house building.
20. Materials of the outside wall of the house.
21. House ownership.
22. Type of a household.
23. Conveniences, accommodations (*electricity, *central heating, *water, *sewer, *hot water, *gas, *electrical-stove, *bath or shower, *nothing above mentioned).
24. Number of occupied living rooms.
25. Size of total and living space (in square meters).

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