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Introduction

In the last 15 years Latvia has been in the midst of a major ethnopolitical transformation. Since Mikhail Gorbachev’s *perestroika* in the late 1980s the Latvian nation has been involved in the process of restructuring the ethnopolitical relations. The essence of the struggle between the countries titular nation and its large russophone community is in the restoration of the Latvian state under ethnic Latvians predominance. The ethno-demographic situation of the country was severely altered during the 50 years of Soviet occupation due to the migration of a large number of mostly-Russian population. As a result the share of ethnic Latvians in the whole population fell dramatically. (See table 1.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1935 (%)</th>
<th>1959 (%)</th>
<th>1979 (%)</th>
<th>1989 (%)</th>
<th>1996 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latvian</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
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<td>26.5</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainians</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poles</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanians</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population (thousands)</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>2094</td>
<td>2503</td>
<td>2667</td>
<td>2502</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tabel 1 Ethnic population distribution.¹

The post-war immigrants predominantly settled in the main cities, where the large industrial plants were located. The population of ethnic Latvians in Riga was 36.5%² and 13.0% in the second largest city Daugavpils. The exceptional region is the eastern province Latgale were non-Latvian population was established already historically and reaches 63% in the urban centre of the province Rezekne.³

Although, Latvia can be described as ethnically deeply divided society, the transition of power to ethnic Latvians who only constituted 52% of the countries population in 1989,

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² All data used in this thesis is taken from the works of other researches unless otherwise referred
was peaceful and no violence has occurred since. Ian Lustick describes conflict-free majority-minority relations in deeply divided societies as an “anomaly”.  

The thesis of this paper will be that one of the key reasons for ethnic stability has been an effective control regime established by Latvian political community over its large russophone population. I analyze the development of different policies of Latvian state designed to control the Russophone minority for last 15 years by using Lustick’s model of ethnic control broadened by Pettai and Hallik which will be introduced in the 1st chapter. The model divides control into three different categories – segmentation, dependence and co-optation which in turn will be studied on three levels – structural, institutional and programmatic.

The admission to EU had influenced Latvian government to simplify the naturalization requirements and procedures. Since the beginning of naturalization in 1995 until 31 December 2005, 105.088 persons have been granted Latvian citizenship. In 2002 alone 9.844 persons were naturalized and in 2003 the number was 10.049. In 2004 and 2005 16.064 and 19.169 persons become citizens.  

The question to be answered by this thesis is whether this gradual growing in numbers of non-Latvian citizens is going to have impact on the control policies adapted by Latvian government or is Latvia moving towards the ethnopolitical regime that is more supportive for the equal participation of two major ethnic groups.

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5 Latvian Central Statistics Bureau  www.csb.lv visited on 13.05.06
Terminology

*Latvians* – ethnic Latvians

*Non-Latvians* - includes Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Poles etc.

*Latvian citizens* – all persons who have got Latvian citizenship regardless of their ethnic origin

*Non-citizens* – stateless persons of non-ethnic Latvian origin

*Russophones* – residents whose first language is Russian regardless of their ethnic origin and citizenship: in Latvia this often includes Poles, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Jews, Tatars and other citizens of the former Soviet Union
1. THEORY: INTRODUCING THE MODEL OF ETHNIC CONTROL

Explaining conflict free majority-minority relations in deeply divided societies is very challenging for social scientists. During the last decades internal conflicts are not rare to happen. Social and economic inequalities and restricted freedom of cultural expression as a consequence of the policies imposed by the majority population are increasing the cleavages between majority and minority groups which may often end in conflicts. Pluralistic societies face a challenge how to find a way between growing international pressure to promote democracy from one side and dealing with internal inequality and diversity on the other side. Therefore, countries that succeed in maintaining democracy and avoiding conflicts while having at the same time an ethnically deeply divided population are of special interest for social scientists. Many models have been developed to describe and explain the majority-minority relations in societies where the circumstances may have given the reason for an extreme bloodshed but the conflict is still absent.

The primary goal of my thesis is to describe the development of ethnic relations in the Latvian society since regaining independence in 1991, and to find out whether due to the growing number of non-Latvians becoming citizens Latvia is moving towards a society with equal participation of the two main ethnic groups. For this analysis I use the model of ‘ethnic control’ developed by American social scientist Ian Lustick and broadened and applied to the case of Estonia by Klara Hallik and Vello Pettai.

Lustick developed the model of ‘ethnic control’ originally with the purpose to outline the specific ethnopolitical regime of Israel which could not be described by using other models of peaceful coexistence in deeply divided societies such as consociationalism. Consociationalism is a concept to analyse religiously, ethnically or ideologically divided societies which was developed by Arend Lijphart. It stresses the importance of co-operation between the elites of different segments of society. The most important characteristic to this concept is a proportional representation of all these segments in governmental organisations. The other three basic elements of consociational democracy are according to Lijphart:

"(1) the mutual veto or ‘concurrent majority’ rule, which serves as an additional protection of vital minority interests; (2) proportionality as the
principal standard of political representation, civil service appointments, and allocation of public funds; and (3) a high degree of autonomy for each segment to run its own internal affairs.”

Today mainly Belgium and Switzerland are considered consociational democracies. However, this kind of regime was not useful for Lustick in his study of the Israeli society, because one of the main features here was that there was no real communication and cooperation between two main ethnic groups, Jews and Arabs. Instead, Lustick developed a model to explain the relative stability of the state through describing the mechanisms by which one ethnic group (in this case the Jewish majority) gains and remains in control over another ethnic group (in this case the Arab community). He argues that effective control can be based on a wide range of political and economic mechanisms, institutional arrangements, legal frameworks, and sociocultural circumstances in addition to coercion or the threat of coercion.

Taking Lustick’s model of “ethnic control” further, Pettai and Hallik applied it to Estonia after 1991 and argued that ‘ethnic control’ is not to be seen as a static regime, as Lustick does,

“but [as] a variable condition within any context of unbalanced ethno-political relations. It is a process of maintaining superordinate power over a minority by a majority through any combination of the three main mechanisms of segmentation, dependency and co-optation.”

I consider this argument as crucial for my own analysis of ethnic relations in Latvia today, because it shows control as a process rather than a fixed regime, thus enabling me to apply the model of ‘ethnic control’ for explaining the developments and changes of ethnic relations over the past fifteen years. While considering his conceptual approach as comparative, Pettai and Hallik emphasize that in the case of Estonia the level of control is much lower to that of Israel during the 1970s examined by Lustick and that holds with the likelihood true in Latvian case. However, this shows that the model is also useful for indicating the amount of control exercised.

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7 Lustick, I. Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel’s Control of a National Minority., Austin, University Of Texas Press, 1982, p.75
9 Pettai, V. and Hallik, K. 2002, p. 507
Lustick operationalizes ‘control’ by defining the three separate categories of ‘segmentation’, ‘dependence’ and ‘cooptation’. Each of these categories is looked at from three different angles or levels: a structural, an institutional and a programmatic level, which then enables us to gain a complex and most complete understanding of the “social, economic, and political reality” of a given multi-ethnic society. Control derives from the inter-relation between these categories rather than from any of them separately.\(^{10}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Analysis</th>
<th>Components of Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structural</td>
<td>Segmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1. The Control Model* \(^{11}\)

By ‘segmentation’ Lustick had in mind the combination of structural, institutional and programmatic conditions and policies that, on the one hand, cause the functional isolation of the majority from the minority population and, on the other hand, the internal division within the minority population itself. On the structural level of analysis the historical, cultural, and social circumstances are described as well as “deep-seated attitudes” which can be understood as deeply-rooted stereotypes that ethnic groups tend to have about each other. For example, in Israel Jews and Arabs have a long history of living in the same cities, yet no mixed residential areas can be found. Deep-seated attitudes of distaste of Jews about Arabs create obstacles to develop cultural, social or political links between those two groups of citizens. These attitudes like “Every Arab hates Jews”, “It would be better if there were fewer Arabs”, are also mirrored in the children’s literature. For example, one theme that dominates in cartoon books is “[t]he Arabs slaughter Jews for pleasure and the pure Jewish child defeats the

\(^{10}\) Lustick, I. 1982, p.79

\(^{11}\) Ibid., p.78
cowardly pigs".  

The Institutional level gives an overview of legislation and everyday operations of state institutions that strengthen the isolation and internal fragmentation of minority groups. In Israel the government ministries (like Education, Labour, and Housing) are oriented to serve the needs of the Jewish sector only. Special non-budget Arab Departments are created to Ministries that deal with the problems of Arab citizens and which operate case-by-case basis and have no long-range programs. Finally, the programmatic level of analysis, covers special regime policies to strengthen the structural and institutional levels with arrangements that favour the isolation and fragmentation of the minority population. In Israel, for instance, the Israeli Military Administration that governed the three geographical regions where Arab population was concentrated in 1948-1966, discriminated Arabs by limiting their travelling freedom “on security reasons” and this way reinforced their geographical fragmentation. 

Minority’s reliance on majority for jobs, resources and all kinds of permits is to be analysed under the category of ‘dependence’. On the structural level of the analysis, the historical circumstances and special characters of minority lifestyle that have directed them towards dependence on majority will be described. Lustick shows in the case of Israel how the gap in between different levels of development between Jewish and Arab communities already present before the Israeli state was further deepened. Here the institutional level shows how state institutions are involved in undermining the minorities’ economical competitiveness. Restrictions placed on hiring Arabs is an example of such policies in Israel. The analysis of the programmatic level, finally, looks at state policies that are implemented to increase the developmental gap between two segments or the absence of such policies. Israel has, for example, managed to close the gap between Oriental and Ashkenazic Jews, but had done nothing in regard of Arabs.

The last category, ‘cooptation’, describes the way how the majority is picking out members of the elite or probable leaders of the minority by encouraging them to distance themselves from their ethnic group of origin (through giving them privileges, special rights etc.) and thus eliminating political representation and organisation of the minority. On the structural level of this category the analysis may look into historically prevalent social structures of Arab enlarged family communities called *Hamulas* and the influence that their leaders have on this community. Co-opting these leaders has direct

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12 Lustick, I. 1982, p.85
13 *Ibid.*, pp. 82-149
14 *Ibid.*, pp. 150-197
impact on all inhabitants and for example on the elections they all vote the same way. Again, the institutional level of ‘cooptation’ describes the legal bases for enabling minority leaders to special treatment but Lustick states that the co-opting of Arab community leaders in the Israeli case has not been institutionalized. On the programmatic level he describes special policies developed towards the Druse population in order to enable them to take part in the state’s political life.\textsuperscript{15}

On the case of Latvia the model of control will be used as an analytical tool to show the development in the policies Latvian authorities have supported since the regaining of independence as a response to the changing social, cultural and economic conditions to establish control over non-Latvian minority.

\textsuperscript{15} Lustick, I. 1982, pp. 77-231
2. UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESSES OF CONTROL IN LATVIA

As I have outlined above, the main aim of Lustick’s model is to explain the absence of conflict in majority-minority relations where circumstances like, for instance, major ideological dissensions between two ethnic groups living on the same territory would have otherwise predicted a violent outcome. It can be applied in the societies where peaceful development didn’t come about through majority-minority elite negotiations, but rather through the control measures established by the majority population in order to dominate. This was certainly the case in Latvia after 1991. First of all, no violence occurred in despite of the confrontation of two radically different visions within the country’s population of what the future of Latvia should look like. After Gorbachev’s perestroika in 1985 when the first Latvian national movements came into public in the form of environmental protests which subsequently developed into mass movements, ethnic Latvians made up only 52\(^\text{16}\) per cent of the country’s population. Led by the ethnic Latvian intellectual elite, this movement soon aimed at re-establishing the Latvian Republic that existed before the war and was illegally annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940 as a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Thus the struggle for independence was understood strictly as a process of restoring rather than newly founding of national statehood. At the same time the 50 years of Soviet rule had drastically altered the ethno-demographic situation in Latvia due to the industrialisation and russification policies of the Soviet Union. People, mostly ethnically Russians, were used to move from one part of the country to another. The adoption to local circumstances was made easy because of the ‘one-sided- bilingualism’ which means that almost all ethnic Latvians spoke both Latvian and Russian, while the majority of non-Latvians spoke only Russian.\(^\text{17}\) Many of these “Soviet migrants” tried to keep the status quo of the Soviet Republic and fought against any kind of Latvian separatism.

Secondly, as a result of the restorationist paradigm that gained dominance over the course of the late 1980s, there were no measures of equal rights or representation for all ethnic groups introduced that would have eventually constituted the basis for some kind


of consociational form of government. Quite the opposite, through the citizenship law and other policies all political power was transferred into the hands of ethnic Latvians and the representatives of the Russian elite were “squeezed out” of the national politics. As Anton Steen has described the situation right after regaining the independence and before 1991: “Russian elites are almost absent, especially in important state institutions. [...] Including Russians into the elite structures is seen as a real threat to national culture and independence”. 18

In order to understand how this process of taking over power and establishing control mechanisms took place and how it has changed over time, I am using the Lustick’s model of ‘ethnic control’ discussed above by and thus demonstrate and analyse ‘control’ in the three following categories: segmentation, dependence and co-optation.

2.1. Segmentation

The aim of the segmentation component of control is to show that on each level of analysis- structural, institutional and programmatic - are elements that favour the isolation of non-Latvians from Latvians and the internal fragmentation of non-Latvians. Segmentation alone does not always eventuate in control. Without the institutional and programmatic elements and other two components- dependence and co-optation - the isolation of non-Latvians from Latvians may even make the control impossible.19

2.1.1. Segmentation on the structural level

Looking at the category of segmentation from the structural point of view, social, cultural and historical conditions as well as “deep seated attitudes” come into focus that concern not only Latvian-non-Latvian relations, but also relations within the non-Latvian community.20

From a historical perspective the russophone population has been internally fragmented into at least two distinct communities. The first community consists of Russophones, who lived in the Republic of Latvia already before the World War II and of their descendants. Today they are living predominantly in the south-eastern region of Latgale.

18 Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B.1999, p.106
19 Lustick, I.1982, pp. 82,149
20 Ibid., p.82
and their roots can be traced back for centuries living the same area. Compared to post-war “Soviet” immigrants, they are often less educated, live mostly in the countryside and their average income is far below the average medium. Although being mostly Russian speakers their roots may be Latvian, Polish, Byelorussian, Lithuanian and Jewish.  

Post-war “Soviet” migrants form the second fragment of the non-Latvian community, yet not a homogeneous one either. Over the course of 40 years of Soviet migration policy, the percentage of ethnic Latvians on the territory of the former Republic of Latvia decreased from 77% in 1935 to 52% in 1989. The reason for several major migration waves was the intensive industrialization carried out on Latvian territory, which caused a shortage of labour force among the local population. Thus labour and manager migration form the social basis for this subgroup of the “migrant community”. Another subgroup is demobilized Red Army military personnel and their families who came during the Soviet period and further increased the number of non-Latvians. Third subgroup consists of Communist Party, KGB and Interior Ministry personnel who came to Latvia in order to guarantee the trustworthiness of Union Republic. Characteristic for this particular post-war segment of non-Latvians is their place of settlement – mainly in urban centres. As a consequence the russophones had become majority in Daugavpils and plurality in Riga and Rezekne. The migration during the Soviet period was one of the most intensive in Europe.

Another structural cause for segmentation can be found in the different effect of the totalitarian and post-totalitarian regime between 1940-1986 on Latvians and non-Latvians. Although the totalitarian Soviet regime would not allow any kind of the civil society development and activities, the Latvians still succeeded in keeping their national culture alive, for example by creating networks of social communication in the form of folk music festivals, heritage and dance societies. Non-Latvians on the other hand had rather fragmented organizations because they never felt the need to engage in local community building and were often more oriented towards the centre (Moscow). The

consequence of this rather atomized structure of the russophones today is that they have difficulties in organizing themselves both socially and politically.

Although “Western” media had no different influence on Latvia’s two main language communities during the Soviet times in contrary to the situation in Estonia where the Finnish Television was available and understandable for Estonians living in the northern parts of the country and opened a window to some of ‘the western influence”, it has affected them after the independence. Russian language and Latvian language media are two different worlds. Russian language media’s main source is the Russian TV and that makes this part of population part of the Russian information space, thus further isolating them from Latvians.

“Deep seated attitudes” are also important in causing segmentation among Latvia’s population. From historical-political aspect the Latvians and non-Latvians constitute two parallel or even totally opposing communities. In Latvia the interpretation of history has concentrated to the period of Stalinism and the Latvian historians favour showing Latvians as “victims” and russophones as “offenders”. Latvians, especially the radical wing of nationalists, like to name the post-war Russophones “occupants and colonists” and “the very word ‘migrant’ became loaded with negative, pejorative content.” Thus, the difference between Latvians and non-Latvians of how they regard the Soviet regime has not vanished. The non-Latvians in turn tend to believe that belonging into the Soviet Union advanced Latvian economy and culture in many ways, among others raised enormously the living standard of Latvians. Latvians on the other hand often intentionally mix the very meaning of the words “soviet” and “Russian” and, for example, refer to the Soviet period as “Russian times”. Latvians tend more to divide the residents of Latvia into two groups along ethnic lines and in their opinion “ethnic Latvians embody ‘the Western trend’, Russian-speakers are identified with ‘the East’.”

25 Onken, E.-C. „Läti ajalugu demokratiseerumisprotsessis“ in Vikerkaar, No.4-5, 2006, p.165
26 Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B.1999, p.74
28 Onken, E.-C. 2006, p.165
The most important segmentation - among the political lines - started to develop during the independence process in 1989-1991. At the wake of independence the Russophone part of population of 1.28 million people was divided into three political groups: the ones that supported radical pro-communist and anti-independence movements like the Interfront, the pro-democratic mostly intellectual elites who favoured Latvian People’s Front, and the most numerable middle group that had no particular standing on the future of the country.  

In 1990, at the elections to the Latvian Supreme Soviet, all the population residing in Latvia at that point was allowed to participate, including members of the Soviet Army personnel. The Latvian People’s Front won the elections overwhelmingly. The one reason behind their victory was the election program that supported ‘zero-option’ of citizenship and thereby received support from many Russophone voters. However, the clear result of these first and only “full” elections in Latvia have also been interpreted as a sign that non-Latvians in large numbers actually supported the country’s independence – a potentially loyal group that was too easily dismissed by the Latvian elite within the Popular Front and in later political parties. How this segmentation was later institutionalized will be discussed in the following paragraph.

### 2.1.2. Segmentation on the institutional level

The institutional factors of segmentation help to maintain and reinforce the structural ones. The key factors analyzed in this chapter are citizenship and language policies but also the election law and the school system will be under discussion. Special attention is paid to describe the deliberate passivity of Latvian officials in including the minorities into decision making and advisory boards further broadening the distance between “us” and “them”.

The isolation of Russophones from Latvians and the internal fragmentation of Russophone community started to culminate with the restoration of the Latvian independence in May 1990 (declaration of independence). In the situation of extreme uncertainty (the presence of Soviet armed forces that followed still orders from

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30 Dreifelds, J. 1996, p.69  
31 Tsilevich, B. 1997, p. 88  
Moscow, disagreements in between the Latvian elites, international communities’ hesitation to recognize the re-established Latvian state, no laws concerning citizenship issue were passed. The Latvian nationalists argued that a law on citizenship could only be passed by the Saeima elected by citizens and not by the Latvian Supreme Council elected by all residents including Soviet army personnel of Latvia. Thus, although Latvia’s statehood was formally re-established after the failed coup d’etat in Moscow in August 1991, the citizenship issue was seriously taken on the agenda only after the first elections to the Saeima in 1993. However, as a consequence of the concept of legal restorationism paradigm on which Latvian statehood was re-established, only those persons who were citizens of Latvia before the Soviet annexation and their descendants were considered citizens and could therefore participate in those elections. Thus, before any legal regulations of citizenship were formally passed, the ethnic Latvian majority had secured an absolute majority in all decision making organs of the new state. In 1994, Latvians made up 78% of citizens but 52% of the entire population and in the 5th Saeima of 1993, 88 MP out of 100 were ethnic Latvians. By this, way almost one third of the population of Latvia was cleverly excluded from decision making.

The Law on Citizenship itself was passed on 21 June 1994 and left 740.000 persons without citizenship. The citizenship was granted to those who could satisfy the following conditions: five years of residence in Latvia; command of the Latvian language; knowledge of basic principles of the Latvian constitution, national anthem and the history of Latvia; prove of sufficient legal income source in Latvia; taking an oath of loyalty to Latvia, and renouncing their previous citizenship. In addition, the ‘window mechanism’ for naturalisation was introduced which divided the non-citizens into groups based on age and place of birth. This meant that in 1996, applications for naturalization were considered from those persons who were born in Latvia and were between 16-20 years. In the following year, those born in Latvia and not older than 25 could apply and so on. A number of people were altogether excluded from naturalization, this including the former military personnel of the Soviet Army and persons that had worked in the Soviet secret police apparatus. When the naturalization

process opened up in 1995, little activity was recorded and by 1997 only 4,161 citizen rights were granted.\textsuperscript{35} This came as a surprise for the Latvian elite, because of some opinion polls that had shown that the interest among non-Latvians to become citizen at any costs was high.\textsuperscript{36} The probable explanation lies first in the disappointment and feeling of injustice among russophones, as many of them voted for the independence and supported the Latvian Popular Front in hope that the ‘zero-option’ for citizenship is established. Another reason might have been the highly exaggerated rumours about the difficult language exams created by the Russian language media.\textsuperscript{37} These developments as well as the international community and Russian politics showing clear signs of discontent with the existing citizenship law, brought the Latvian political elite in 1997 to discuss amendments to the naturalization law. The liberalized law on naturalization was finally passed in November 1998. The most significant difference was the abolishment of the window system. Another amendment adopted in January 1999 gave the right to citizenship for the children of non-citizens born after 21 August 1991. These changes caused a significant increase in the number of applications for citizenship in the subsequent years.

Until 1995, the status of persons who did not qualify for citizenship remained unclear. During the long legal vacuum in defining their status, many laws and regulations limiting their social and economic rights were passed which put them into the unequal position compared to citizens. Finally, in April 1995, a law on ‘the status of former citizens of the USSR who are not citizens of Latvia or another state’ was adopted. This law granted them among other rights the right to travel freely which was complicated due to the slow processing of ‘non-citizen passports’.\textsuperscript{38}

The Law on Citizenship has played a significant role in fragmenting the russophone community internally. For the first time during the 50 years it diversified between pre-war Russophones and post-war immigrants. The established window system caused segmentation among the post-war russophone community along age lines but also slowed down the process of political organization of russophone population and fortified the position of Latvians,\textsuperscript{39} thus further strengthening control.

\textsuperscript{35} Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B. 1999, p. 98
\textsuperscript{36} Södergren, H. 2000, p. 293
\textsuperscript{37} Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B. 1999, p. 99
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., p.103
\textsuperscript{39} Onken, E.-C. 2003, p. 86
One fundamental function of the state, clearly stated in the Latvian constitution, is to protect the Latvian culture and language. It is easy to understand the importance of language protection to Latvians in the context of russification during the occupation years and the domination of Russian language especially in the administrative field at the end of the 1980s. The first legislative act in this connection was adopted already in 1988 by the Supreme Council of the Soviet Latvian Republic and it gave the Latvian language the status of a state language. Soon after that, in 1989, with the adoption of a new language law, Latvian became the only state language. Still, the same law gave guarantees for the continuing usage of the Russian language. However, in 1992 several amendments were made and “as a result, Russian for all practical purposes became a foreign language in Latvia”.\textsuperscript{40} Until 2002 according to the electoral law only citizens of Latvia with the proficiency of language in the third (highest) level could run in local or parliamentary elections or apply for positions in state institutions. Through these language regulations the Latvian state has created a successful mechanism to restrict the non-Latvians to participate in public and political life and separated them from the Latvians. Although, the requirement for deputy candidates to present the certification of Latvian language proficiency on highest level has been dropped after the year 2002, it is still required from candidates to evaluate their language knowledge by themselves. Another mechanism of replacing this former language requirement is the amendment to the Constitution in 2002 (Article 18) which requires the MP to take an oath in Latvian language to swear “to be loyal to Latvia, to strengthen its sovereignty and the Latvian language as the only official language, to defend Latvia as an independent state and democratic state”.\textsuperscript{41}

Unlike Estonia, Latvia has not softened the language requirements in regions where the Russophone population is in absolute majority.\textsuperscript{42} This has also immense consequences when it comes to issues of dependency, which will be discussed later.

I would also like to point out number of concrete cases of how some activity and also non-activity of Latvian state officials has resulted in freezing the isolation of Russophone community. In 1991 according to the Latvian Supreme Council statute a

\textsuperscript{40} Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B.1999, p.115  
\textsuperscript{41} Diatchkova, S.2005, p. 109  
\textsuperscript{42} Diatchkova, S. 2005, p. 95 and Antane, A and Tsilevich, B.1999, p. 120
Consultative Council of Nationalities had to be established. The purpose of this Council was intended to be to “provide for the participation of representatives of all national and ethnic groups in the legislative process in order to secure their equal rights in economic, social, political and cultural matters”. Every minority group had a right to assign three representatives. Most importantly the Council was given the right to present draft laws. The trick was that the nomination of members to the council must have been confirmed by the Parliament. After the efforts of various minority societies to present an acceptable list of candidates, MPs voted against it. Therefore, the council was never established. Similar is the case with the law on cultural autonomy, adopted in 1995. At first it operates with a certain hierarchy of ethnic groups in Latvia. Article 4 in the law underlines the special responsibility of the state to preserve the national identity and the cultural and historical environment of the ancient indigenous nationality, the Livs. And secondly, critics accuse this law of being mainly declarative, because no mechanisms for the implementation are introduced and also the definition of ethnic and national groups remains fuzzy. In recent years the impact of international influences has resulted in the revising of several legal acts concerning ethnic policy. I want to stress here that state officials had been actively involved in the dialogue with foreign experts (EU, OSCE etc.) but the minority representatives were never included which again isolates that community from ethnic Latvians. Svetlana Diatchkova concludes that “[t]he Latvian mechanisms for dialogue with minorities are weak and poorly institutionalized”.

The difference in rights between Russophone citizens and non-citizens still exist in the contexts of the electoral law. Latvian non-citizens do not qualify for voting in parliamentary and municipal elections (contrary to Estonia where they have rights to participate in local elections). Non-citizens are allowed to join the political parties. Although the election law prohibits persons who remained active in the Communist Party or various other pro-Soviet organizations after January 1991, or who worked for such institutions as the former Soviet Committee for State Security, from seeking elected office. Russophone citizens on the other hand enjoy the same rights as Latvians.

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43 Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B.1999, p.80
44 Diatchkova, S. 2005, p. 87
46 Diatchkova, S. 2005, p. 98
47 Tsilevich, B.1997, p. 91
to vote or to stand for parliamentary or local election candidates. They are also allowed to form political parties and to become members of them but there must be at least 200 citizens in the party, and at least half of the total membership must be citizens. Anyway, it does not mean that this right has been actively used. The majority of political parties had in the middle of 90s practically no Russophones among their active members even if they had quite liberal ethnopolitical programs. Also no influential minority parties organized on ethnic principle can be mentioned.\textsuperscript{48} This can be considered as a proof of efficiency of the isolation and fragmentation policies. Although, some growing activity have been noticed recently. For example in 2003 the largest minority friendly and ethnically diverse political force “For Human Rights in The United Latvia” received 25 seats in the Saeima and 12 of the 60 seats in Riga City Council.\textsuperscript{49}

Further institutionalizing of isolation can be accounted to the Latvian school system. Latvia came through the transition period with two parallel school systems established during the Soviet occupation. “[T]hese schools differed not only in their language of instruction but also in curricula, value systems, and teaching staff.” \textsuperscript{50} The content study of textbooks discovered that Latvian language and Russian language textbooks create a different understanding of the reality that does not coincide. For example the Latvian language textbooks show the state as monolingual and Russian language textbooks describe reality in the Russian state context and from time to time touching Latvia but without a hint to the existing Latvian population. In Latvian language textbooks the characters showing civil participation and loyalty to state are “strictly reserved for ethnic Latvians”.\textsuperscript{51} The new educational reform is designed to among other problems in educational system, eliminate these differences but that will be discussed broader in the cooptation part to follow under the integration programme.

\textbf{2.1.3. Segmentation on the programmatic level}

Several “national programs” that concern inter-ethnic relations in Latvia have been adopted over the course of the past years – the most important if which is being the integration program “Integration of society in Latvia”. This particular program was

\textsuperscript{48} Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B. 1999, p.107
\textsuperscript{49} Diatchkova, S. 2005, p. 90
\textsuperscript{50} Silova, I. From Sites of Occupation to Symbols of Multiculturalism. Reconceptualizing Minority Education in Post-Soviet Latvia., United States of America, Information Age Publishing Inc, 2006, p.2
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., p.158
passed in 1999 of course in order to reduce segmentation in society rather than increase it. The preamble of the integration program states that “[a]n integrated civic society is one where non-Latvians have a command of Latvian language, having overcome alienation from Latvian cultural values, and are involved in realising the common goals of Latvian society.”52. But can it be possible by separating the rights and roles of ethnic Latvians from minority rights and by stressing the preservation of Latvian ethnic identity as a desirable trend in Latvian state?

In the framework of this analysis, however, I would see the integration program more as a way of penetrating the non-Latvian community in order to establish or maintain some kind of control over them. Putting it into Lustick’s model it would thus be best analysed in the category of co-optation as Pettai and Hallik53 have done as well on their study on Estonia.

The national program “Culture” has been introduced for the period of 2000-2010 which among other issues stresses the need “to protect Latvia as a small culture and language area” and “to strengthen national identity and self-respect of Latvians and Livs”. The program gives the priority to Latvian language in the context of preservation culture and language54 while again fostering segmentation.

At the beginning of 90s some political groups came out with the idea of “repatriation” of ethnic Russians to mainland Russia. In their arguments the survival of Latvian nation was only possible when they had to make up at least 75% of the population. So the idea of “repatriation” or a large scale emigration of the non-Latvian who came to the country after World War II came into public discussion. This idea was even presented in many party programs (The Movement for National independence and Farmers Union of Latvia) until 1993. Also official opinions of Latvian state institutions followed the same line. For example the press secretary of Immigration and Citizenship Department officially announced in regard to the post-war immigrants that “[a]t all times the Department has emphasized and we want to reiterate that sooner or later all of these 700 000 inhabitants will have to leave Latvia.”55 Although these ideas were never put

52 The Integration of Society in Latvia: a Framework Document, www.latvia-usa.org, visited on 15.05.2006
53 Pettai, V. and Hallik, K. 2002, p. 520
54 Diatchkova, S. 2005, p.88
55 Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B. 1999, p. 75
into official government programs or legislation they give us the idea of the discussion that was going on among the Latvian political elite.

The function of the segmentation in establishing control was to prevent non-Latvians from united political action by isolating them from the possibility to influencing political power and also fragmenting them internally to make that even harder to brake through to decision making. As said above, segmentation alone is not resulting in control because it does not give the majority the capability of surveillance over non-Latvians nor does it put them in dependence from ruling majority.

2.2. Dependence

Under the control category of “‘dependence’ the overall reliance of [non-Latvians on the Latvian] sector for jobs, permits, status, and other economic, social, and political resources” will be analyzed. This will be done on the structural and institutional level because no programmatic initiatives favouring Latvians were available for me at the time of writing this thesis.

2.2.1. Structural dependence

Under this section the structural factors that gave reinforced the minority dependence are studied. Among others the ethnically divided labour market and limited benefits are described.

The pre-war economy in the Latvian state can be characterized as having been mainly based on agriculture, whereas at the end of the Soviet period industry accounted for almost 50 percent of the countries output. Like in other Soviet republics the Latvian industry was part of the centralized economic system of COMECON which was led from Moscow. Most of the raw materials came from all over the Soviet Union and the end products were distributed all over the country. In comparison to Western companies a Latvian industrial plant had more workers. Due to the devastating effects of World War II and Soviet deportations the population of Latvia decreased enormously and therefore the factories built during the Soviet occupation relied on the “imported

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56 Lustick, I. 1982, p. 150
57 Dobson, J. and Jones, G. 1998, p. 35
Russian-speaking labour”. Latvians made up only 38 percent in this sector. In the mid-eighties ethnic Latvians dominated in the agricultural sector (71.9%), in culture and arts (62.2%) and also in health services and educational institutions. Even today non-Latvians (both citizens and non-citizens) are more often employed in manufacturing, transportation, communication, trade and the army and police. In the future the possibility of non-Latvians still constituting a majority in transportation sector is possible, because here mostly minority specialists are trained.

Some studies have pointed out that the Latvian labour market is characterised by ethnic segmentation. Yet, according to John Dobson and Graham Jones this is highly overstated. Instead they argue that Russians may have enjoyed some advantages during the Soviet era, but no particular ethnic group predominated in higher paying, higher status jobs. These advantages consisted mainly of social benefits which favoured according to the Soviet ideology industrial sector workers. After the independence there has been a shift in this distribution of benefits and the privileged status of this sector has vanished.

Membership in the Communist Party used to be an important factor for gaining access to some prestigious jobs. Ethnic Latvians were with 40% in the minority among the members of Communist Party. Due to this Latvian were also underrepresented in the nomenclature, the higher management positions of Soviet enterprises and in the state apparatus.

Researchers have suggested that after regaining independence about 80 percent of privately held business in Latvia was in the hands of non-Latvians. The reasons for the dominance of non-Latvians in the private business may be following: first, while non-Latvian live mostly in towns were industrial plants are situated and have been involved

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58 Dreifelds, J. 1996, pp.112-128
59 Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B. 1999, p.138
61 Dobson, J. and Jones, G. 1998, p.35
62 Pettai, V. and Hallik, K. 2002, p. 516
63 Dobson, J. and Jones, G. 1998, p. 35
64 Estonians in comparison were 73% in the membership of the Communist Party, see Pettai, V. and Hallik, K.2002, p. 516
65 Karklins, Rasma „Breaking the Shackles: Latvia After the USSR“ www.demokratizatsiya.org, visited 15.05.2006, p.159
in their management more often during the Soviet occupation, they had some advantages in taking over these plants, because of the relations with the old Party nomenklatura they had in Russia. Secondly, thanks to the good relations with Russian businessmen they could more easily start private enterprises. Thirdly, the ethnic Latvians have usually filled the public administrative positions since business was not regarded as prestigious among Latvians.\textsuperscript{66}

Before looking at the ethnic structure in the public sector it needs to be once more pointed out that only citizens can be elected to local governments. Non-citizens, however, are allowed to work in administrative jobs. According to a research study by Artis Pabriks, Latvians are in the absolute majority in Latvia’s district councils and administrations. The reason can be seen in the lack of citizenship and language skills. Non-Latvians favour working in the Prison administration and the police. Prison administration is favoured among non-Latvians because of the social guarantees they offer. Latvians consider this sector unprestigious. Under the Soviet power working for the police was similarly popular among the non-Latvians (in 1980 only 35% of Latvian militia were ethnic Latvians). In the last ten years some change occurred in this sector, mainly because of the establishment of a Police Academy, where instructions are in Latvian language and only citizens are allowed to apply.\textsuperscript{67}

As non-Latvians tended to work more on all over Soviet Union enterprises which the market economy hit first, they were in a situation of loosing their jobs and benefits more often than Latvians. The same is true for the Communist Party administration posts, which were mostly held by non-Latvians.

\textbf{2.2.2. Institutional dependence}

In this part the mostly the impact of citizenship and language law on the labour market division on inter-ethnic relations will be studied.

Citizenship law has had an impact on employment market. Various laws prohibit the employment of non-citizens in the following occupations:

\textsuperscript{66} Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B.,1999, p.139, Dreifelds  p.127
\textsuperscript{67} Pabriks, A. 2002, pp. 17-30
senior public servants, the civil service; diplomatic and consular Service; customs officers; national militia services (army); border guard force; state security officers; police service; fire service; crew members of the Latvian National Airlines; and crewmen on Latvian ships. Also pharmacists, veterinary pharmacists, civil airline pilots, land surveyors, afforestation inspectors, private detectives, armed private security guards, lecturers and researchers in the Latvian Medical Academy and lawyers (barristers and assistant barristers, judges, public prosecutors) have to be citizens of the Republic of Latvia.\textsuperscript{68} In the next years some of the restrictions were abolished and the non citizens can be employed as fireman and pharmacists.\textsuperscript{69} Above mentioned jobs are not given to non-citizens on security reasons. Many of those restricted workplaces are in big urban centres were non-citizen population is highest and according to the statistics in 1995 29.4\% of population were theoretically barred according to the laws from jobs on those posts. In reality those laws are not strictly followed but that still gives some insecurity for those non-citizens involved. The number on non-citizens on some of these jobs is very high and dismissing them would probably paralyze the whole service.\textsuperscript{70} It can only be predicted that the gradual displacing of non-citizens will follow.

In April 1995 the legal status of permanent residents of Latvia who have not been recognized as citizens was first defined. Until that, number of their social and economical rights (property rights, the right to work on some positions, to receive social benefits, to travel freely or to registrate marriage etc.) was restricted by laws, regulations and administrative decisions adopted. Antane and Tsilevich state in their research that officials and local administrators have used this legal vacuum to act arbitrarily. They describe the work of the Immigration and Citizenship Department officials in violating the rights of non-citizens by denying their entry into the Register of Residents. This resulted in barring legal employment, social benefits and marriage registration for non-citizens.\textsuperscript{71}

Latvian language law, adopted in 1992 restricted occupations according to the grade received passing the language examination. An elementary level is required for the low-level positions like building workers on public buildings or guards, intermediary level

\textsuperscript{68} Dobson, J. and Jones, G. 1998, p. 40
\textsuperscript{69} Tsilevich, B. 1997, p. 91
\textsuperscript{70} Dobson, J. and Jones, G. 1998, p. 40
\textsuperscript{71} Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B.,1999, p.103
for postal workers, nurses and highest level for officials in responsible positions like judges, doctors etc. 72 A state Language Inspection Board has been established to monitor these regulations. As Dobson/Jones remark that this had alarmed Russophone population because it allows employers to dismiss workers due to insufficient knowledge of Latvian language and at the same time restrict the employment opportunities which are legally available to the Russian speaking population. 73 Language Law has also impact on young non-Latvians who are disadvantaged in entering Universities and after that labour market.

2.3. Co-optation

Lustick describes co-optation in Israel’s context as the “bribing” of members of the Arab elites or potential elites through money payments or getting them better jobs or positions in society.74 Pettai/Hallik in their analysis of the Estonian case show that this sort of “bribing” has also happened in Estonia until 1993, when the government granted extraordinary citizenship for ‘special services’ to the Estonian state to many sportsmen, media figures or moderate politicians on the basis of the Citizenship Act of 1992. 75 The Latvian citizenship law also enables the authorities to grant citizenship for “special meritorious service for the benefit of Latvia” according to the paragraph 13 76 and the number of persons who have received citizenship for special services is 123 since 1995 (after 1999 only 4). 77 Several businessmen, sportsmen and cultural leaders have been granted Latvian citizenship by Saeima. The official award given by the President of Latvia to Marija Naumova, a naturalized ethnic Russian may be classified as a case of co-optation. 78 Pettai/Hallik take an approach to the category of co-optation more as a concept and use the Lustick’s explanation of co-optation on the institutional level (the penetration made by majority government into the minority community79) as to encourage participation “in significant socialization processes leading to conformity with or commitment to [a] particular set of political norms”. In this meaning they discuss the Estonian State

72 Karklins, R. 1994, p.154
73 Dobson, J. and Jones, G. 1998, p.42
74 Lustick, I. 1982, p. 77
75 Pettai, V. and Hallik, K. 2002, p.520
77 Personal inquiry with the Nationalization Board of Latvia on 12.05.06
78 Diatchkova, S. 2005, p.101
79 Lustick, I. 1982, p.200
Integration Programme at the institutional level of co-optation, because the goal of the programme “is meant to adapt non-Estonians to a pre-set Estonian world, not to alter that world.”\textsuperscript{80}

Following this argument the programme “Integration of Society in Latvia” can be looked at from similar point of view. Given the states gradually increasing support for naturalisation and the increase in numbers of naturalised citizens have provoked concerns among Latvians. Concerns of Latvians over its nation’s survival and the possible threat of loosing its dominant position in republics political and ethnical leadership, also the concerns about the disloyalty of non-Latvians have led them to introducing the Integration Programme.

The purpose of the Integration Programme in Latvia that was finally adopted in 1999 (expanded version incorporating specific priority projects was adopted in 2001) is to promote basic shared values like the independent democratic state and loyalty to the state. The basis for integration is the culture and language of ethnic Latvians. In this way the programme bears on the whole society and not only non-Latvian minorities. Fortification of national identity is according to the Programme done through the educational reform, popularisation of Latvian language learning and naturalisation. But, still the prevailing idea is to counter the threats perceived by ethnic Latvians and to keep the minorities (both citizens and non-citizens) in the influence sphere of Latvia by, for instance, limiting the usage of school textbooks produced in Russia or reducing the influence of Russian mass media.\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{80} Pettai, V. and Hallik, K. 2002, p.520
\textsuperscript{81} Diatchkova, S. 2005, pp. 105,106
Analysing the results and concluding remarks

Latvia together with Estonia has often been brought up as examples for its peaceful struggle for independence at the beginning of 1990s and for maintaining stability in a relatively complicated ethno demographic situation where ethnic Latvians constituted only 52% of the total population. I argue that the success of Latvian political power to neutralize the potential political power of the large Russophone community lies in an effective control regime established through citizenship, language law and other legislations in the first period of independence from 1990-1996. Since applying for membership in the EU, Latvia has been put under significant international pressure to reduce the barriers it has built between ethnic Latvians and non-Latvians. Hence, the aim of my thesis was to describe the development of ethnic relations in Latvia since the early 1990s and to find out whether due to the growing number of non-Latvians becoming citizens Latvia is moving towards a society with equal participation of the two main ethnic groups, Russians and Latvians.

Taking Ian Lustick’s model of “control regimes” as the conceptual point of departure I nevertheless followed the approach developed by Pettai and Hallik seeing “ethnic control” first and foremost as a range of various and varying programs, laws and policies that change over time, thus as a process rather than a static regime of majority-minority relations in deeply divided, democratic societies.

For my analyse I adopted Lustick’s model to operationalize control by distinguishing three inter-related categories: segmentation, dependence and co-optation, which I in turn studied on three different levels: structural, institutional and programmatic.

So far the analysis has focused on the various factors of ethnic relations in Latvia categorizing them into the different fields of the model. As following I am going to analyse the interdependence of three categories.

The decision of Latvian political elite to restrict the citizenship to the post-war Russophone community in 1991 was the first step to institutionalize the structural segmentation i.e. isolate it from the core-nation, the Latvians. The 1994 Citizenship Law further increased the separation of the Russophone community as the naturalisation
process was regulated and limited through the establishment of the so-called “window system.” As a result only a small part of the russophone community that had settled in Latvia after WW II could apply for Latvian citizenship leaving a large number of them in an insecure status of “statelessness”. Before the law was adopted on “the status of former citizens of the USSR who are not citizens of Latvia or another state” in 1995 many regulations and legal acts (privatization, land reform, right to work on some professions) have been passed that limited the economic rights of a large part of this russophone community and by this way increased their dependence on the majority population. In addition, a large number of these non-Latvians were employed by the big industrial plants which were first hit by the newly introduced rules of market-economy, which forced many into unemployment. This as well increased their dependence on the titular nation – the Latvians.

The Language Law adopted in 1992 had similar effect restricting the participation of the citizen part of the russophone community in political life (by putting the knowledge of Latvian language on the highest level as precondition for running as candidates in local as well as national elections) and put them in disadvantage in the labour market. It was even in discussion to amend the existing Language law by tightening the state language regulations in the private sector, although that never passed the legislation. Thus, it may be concluded that the control was strongest in these years.

As mentioned above, the categories of control are interdependent which also means that changes in one category affect the other two which can undermine the effectiveness of control. In the Latvian case the most interesting development is concerned with the fact that the russophone population (both citizens and non-citizens) relatively quickly recovered from the economic shock of the transition to market economy and established itself in business. This is fortified by important structural factors in the dependence category, namely the fact that being employed in public administration sector has never been prestigious for this segment of the population, relatively low wages and language requirements further adding to this. Moreover, non-Latvian managers in the industry or transportation sectors had always had good relations with Russia and were now in a better position to use old contacts to start private business, which in turn made jobs available for other non-Latvians. To some degree this development has led to a situation for the Russophones in Latvia which may be called “a Jewish model”: Russophones,
being deprived from rights to take part in political life and be employed by state apparatus choose the traditional “Jewish response” and find a niche in business, trade and finance.

“Problems are solved not through elaboration of effective social mechanisms but ‘via one’s personal moneybag’ – for example, instead of struggling for state-funded Russian-language education, children attend private schools or study abroad.”\(^{82}\)

From the standpoint of control we have now a situation when dependency of minority from majority has weakened, but at the same time isolation from them has increased which makes the control more difficult to maintain. Maintaining effective control is further complicated through the pressure from international organizations such as OSCE and EU to foster the naturalization process which has been extremely slow. The Citizenship Law was liberalized in 1998 with the abolishment of the “window system”, which was one crucial element in maintaining control. Furthermore, children born to stateless parents in Latvia after the 21 August 1991 are granted automatic citizenship, thus abolishing for this growing group of “new citizens” any language control. In short, since 1999 the number of non-Latvians naturalizing is gradually increasing. (The citizenry has increased since 2000 for 5% in regard to all residents, overwhelmingly due to the naturalization of non-Latvians).

At this point I would like to bring in the main question of my thesis and to find out whether due to the growing number of naturalisations of non-Latvians, Latvia is going to include them to the political decision making an whether that may alter the ethno-political regime of Latvia as well.

Lustick says that segmentation alone does not necessarily result in control. On the contrary the isolation of the minority might make it more difficult to establish control. Only in combination with the other two components- dependence and co-optation-segmentation is a powerful mechanism of executing control.\(^{83}\) Building on this chain of thought I argue that segmentation of non-Latvians can not be reduced by liberalizing the citizenship or language policies, at the same time when dependence and co-optation are not supporting it anymore, for example because the minority has gained economic

\(^{82}\) Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B., 1999, p.157
\(^{83}\) Lustick, I. 1982, p. 149
independence. Although there may be an increase in the numbers of non-Latvians applying for naturalisation, a remarkable number of people have still decided to keep the status of non-citizens. Tsilevich has remarked that

“[m]any non-citizens consider the conditions for receiving citizenship as unjust and degrading. Also, they do not trust that the state will ‘play fair’ and abide by its own rules. The authorities have already deceived them once, by reneging on the promise of the ‘zero option’.”

Similarly Diatchkova stresses the alienation of non-Latvians from the state. Latvian authorities have realized the problem they are facing and in response have launched the integration program, (which I discussed in chapter 2.3. on “co-optation”) to overcome as was shown above the deep division that has developed between Latvians and non-Latvians. However, the program can also be regarded as yet another attempt by government to maintain control and adapt control mechanisms to the newly emerged circumstances.

Any Latvian government to come will be faced by three main challenges: First, the possibility that structural factors that fragment the Russophone community may diminish over time, secondly, which may result in a strong feeling of unity among the russophone community. Third, this may increase a feeling of discontent and opposition to the government that can be better mobilized and organized. For example 50,000 signatures were collected in few weeks to protest against the adoption of the amendments to the language law in 1998 – which was very rare case of mass activity by Latvia’s russophones. Also recent events may indicate the emergence of politically more active non-Latvians that organize strong political protest actions, for example against the education reform, as was the case in 2004.

While showing with the help of the framework of Lustick’s control model the different policies adapted by Latvian government and the responses of non-Latvians to them, the following tendency can be noted. Participation in local level governments, political parties, and governmental administrative posts is low. Alternative ways of protests, for instance, impulsive demonstrations and refusing from citizenship are commonly spread.

84 Antane, A. and Tsilevich, B., 1999, p. 00
85 Diatchkova, S. 2005, p. 86
86 Lustick, I. 1982, p.237
87 Tsilevich, B. 1997, p. 93
The government’s response with the launch of an integration program indicates that control exercised by Latvian government has not vanished and that might give us a perception that the ethnopolitics of Latvia may move towards heavily ethnically biased regime where the Latvians are still in control.
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Resümee


Et viimastel aastatel on tõusnud venekeelse tuge nime arv Läti kodanikkonnas tänu liberaliseerunud kodakondsuspoliitikale, siis püüdi anda hinnangut, kas „kontroll“ kui selline on vähememas ja kas see võib viidata uue rahvuspoliitise režiimi tekkele, mis toob endaga kaasa võimalus rahvusgrupi võrdse esindatuse riigi poliitika kujundamisel.