

The Latvians, Russians and Poles of Present-Day
Daugavpils: Integration, Acculturation and
Historical Reconciliation

Vladislav Volkov & Jacek Kurczewski

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Some statistical data and the historical background to ethnic diversity in Daugavpils

Daugavpils is the largest city in eastern Latvia (the Latgale region), a city exhibiting colourful ethnic variety. In 2010 the population of this city (103.8 thousand) consisted of Latvians (17.6%), Russians (52.7%), Poles (14.6%), Belarusians (7.8%), Ukrainians (2.1%) and Lithuanians (1.0%) (Daugavpils 2010).

A peculiarity of Daugavpils society is the historical transformation of its ethnic composition. At the end of Polish rule it was still small town of about 3000 people, though politically important as the capital of a voivodship and the seat of the assemblies of the provincial gentry that – in accordance with the aristocratic republican political system of the *Rzeczpospolita* – elected two deputies to the national assembly, the *Sejm*, in Warsaw. In addition, three dignitaries – the local bishop, castellan and *voivod* – were *ex officio* members of the Senate of the *Rzeczpospolita*. While the gentry had its say in local and national matters, the burghers only participated in municipal government in accordance with the Magdeburg Law, which was in force in almost all non-private towns of the *Rzeczpospolita*. As in other parts of the *Rzeczpospolita*, the peasants were under the authority of the monarch, the clergy or the gentry. In Latgale private land ownership was dominant. The knights of the Teutonic Order were rapidly Polonized, and in contrast to Riga and the western part of Latvia, there was no significant German presence in the city or region.

With the advent of Russian rule after the First Partition of the *Rzeczpospolita* in 1772, important changes in the population began. These related to four important events in the history of Daugavpils. The first

was the development, from 1829 onwards, of a large, new fortress in what had now become the Russian-Prussian border area. This brought not only military personnel, but also builders, goods suppliers and people with small businesses. Like other areas formerly belonging to the *Rzeczpospolita*, Daugavpils was within the Pale of Settlement declared in 1791 by Catherine II and by later Russian rulers: the area of free settlement of the Jewish population, which already constituted a massive presence within the Polish-Lithuanian state. Consequently, the Jewish ethnic and religious component in the growing city was also on the increase. The 1860s saw the next important event in the history of the city: it became the main railway junction between Warsaw, Riga and St Petersburg. From this time on, railroad workers from the Russian Kingdom of Poland would arrive in the city.

The first census, in 1897, gave the following figures for Daugavpils: 98,675 inhabitants, of whom 46% were Jews, 28% were Russians, 16% were Poles, 4% were Germans, 2% were Latvians, 2% were Belarusians and 2% belonged to other ethnic groups. It is important to realize that while the proportion of Latvians within the city was negligible, there was a very large population in the surrounding rural area of Latgale. One should also stress that Russians did not appear only with the Russian annexation in 1772, but were present already since the *Raskol* and the emigration of Old Believers into Latgale, where they had enjoyed religious tolerance under the *Rzeczpospolita*.

According to E. Dunsdorfs, in 1897 the Latgale region had a population of 501,623, among whom 50.6% were Latvians, 28.9% were Russians, 12.7% were Jews, 6.2% were Poles and 1.0% were Germans. The ethnic composition of particular social categories differed significantly, as shown below (Table 1).

Even if we regard the various kinds of impoverished nobility and the clergy as belonging to the upper estate, then this estate numbered only 11,027 people, i.e., 2.1% of the total population of Latgale. In ethnic and religious terms, the upper estate was characterized by its overall Christian and Slav majority. 53.8% of the upper strata were Poles, 37.9% were Russians, 5.1% were Germans, 1.2% were Latvians and 1.2% were Jews. The middle business class was composed mostly of Jews (83.6%) and some Russians (12.8%), with few Germans (2.1%), Poles (1.2%) or

Table 1. The ethnic composition of particular social categories in Latgale in 1897.

	Russians	Poles	Latvians	Germans	Jews	Others	Total
Hereditary nobility	2013	5248	69	230	–	36	7596
Personal and official nobility	1500	616	35	130	12	13	2306
Clergy	333	48	20	12	–	13	444
Honorary citizens	334	24	8	190	123	2	681
Traders	286	27	3	46	1865	5	2232
Burghers	20,184	10,023	3080	2540	61,335	345	97,507
Peasants	119,600	14,732	250,323	1557	424	2795	389,431
Others	426	254	254	342	92	59	1426
Total	144,675	30,972	253,792	5047	63,851	3286	501,623

Latvians (0.1%). The lower urban stratum was predominantly Jewish (62.9%), with Russians (20.7%) and Poles (10.3%) as less numerous categories (along with 3.2% Latvians and 2.6% Germans). The lower rural stratum was predominantly Latvian (64.3%), with a less numerous Russian group constituting 30.7% (in addition to which 3.8% of the peasants were Polish, 0.4% were German and 0.1% were Jewish). Interestingly, except for the hereditary nobility, where Jews were absent, the main ethnic groups were present at all levels of social stratification, albeit with marked differences in representation. In contrast to the situation in western and northern Latvia, Poles were still the numerically dominant element in the upper stratum of Latgale towards the end of Russian rule, despite the political dominance of the Russian Empire. Not only the majority of Latvians (98.6%) but also the majority of Russians living in Latgale were peasants (82.7%). However, it seems to have been important for the development of mutual relations after social emancipation was completed with the establishment of Latvia's independence that the Polish 'group' was also strongly divided, with 47.6% of Poles also registered as peasants. The Germans, who formed only 1% of the population in this region, mostly belonged to the lower urban class (50.3%), while the overwhelming majority of Jews (96.0%)

belonged to the lower urban class. The Russians, the ruling people in political terms, were also divided, the majority being economically dependent upon their own gentry; even the Poles were divided in this way, while the Jews formed the urban proletariat and the Latvians were the economically dependent rural class. The social reasons for social conflict were obvious, but at the same time there were no clear dividing lines in ethnic terms. (Barkovska, teimans 2005, pp. 48–50)

The next important event in the history of development of Daugavpils is the establishment of the unified Latvian state after World War I. In Daugavpils this was achieved with the assistance of the Polish Army, which defeated the Red Army. Historical claims to Daugavpils had been officially renounced and the Polish armed forces withdrew. The existence of the Latvian state led to the emancipation of the Latvian population, which would increase to 32% in the period up to World War II, while the Jewish population had fallen to 22% by 1935. Interestingly, the proportion of Russians and Poles in Daugavpils remained almost unchanged under the First Republic. With the advent of the German army in 1941 in what had become part of Soviet Latvia the Jewish Holocaust started, resulting in the almost complete extinction of the historically important Jewish population. After the war, when the Soviet Union regained power in Daugavpils, a new period of industrialization began in the city, involving massive recruitment of a labour force not only from the neighbouring parts of Latgale and the formerly Polish part of Belarus, but from the whole of the Soviet Union. The proportion of Russians in the population was on the rise from the war until 1959, when the census considered the most reliable as regards ethnic data on the USSR was taken, giving a figure of 56%. Since the re-establishment of independent Latvia and dissolution of the USSR the Russian population has started to decrease, but Russians still constitute the largest group.

As this overview of the history of Daugavpils shows, it has undergone dramatic changes in ethnic composition: from the almost complete absence of Latvians and the prevalence of the Jewish population during the 19th century to the prevalence of Latvians under the First Republic to the prevalence of the Russian element since the World War II and the disappearance of the Jews. The only stable element

throughout these years has been the Polish population, whose share remained between 18% and 14%.

The reality of present-day Daugavpils is that the combined population of ethnic minorities exceeds the ethnic Latvian population several times over. Besides this, the ‘presence’ of ethnic minorities, including the Polish population, in the public and cultural life of Daugavpils is not merely a fact of statistics. Poles as well as other ethnic minorities, first and foremost the Russians, have managed to create a social and cultural environment in Daugavpils that functions in the languages of these ethnic groups.

The ethnic communities of Daugavpils have founded their own cultural societies: the Latvians and Latgalian have such societies (the Daugavpils Latvian Society and the Daugavpils Latgalian Society), as do the Lithuanians (the Daugavpils Lithuanian House of the Lithuanian Community in Latvia and the Lithuanian Society *Rasa*), the Russians (the Russian Cultural Centre or M. Kalistratov House, the Russian House, the Daugavpils Russian National Cultural Society, the Daugavpils Branch of the Russian Community in Latvia and the Dvinsk Cultural Society), the Belarusians (the Belarusian Cultural and Educational Society *Uzdim* and the Belarusian Cultural Centre), the Poles (the Daugavpils Polish Cultural Society *Promeņ* and the Polish Cultural Centre), the Jews (the Daugavpils Jewish Community), the Germans (Daugavpils German Society), the Gypsies (the Gypsy Society *Nevo-Drom* and the Gypsy Cultural Society), the Tatars (the Tatar Cultural Society) and the Ukrainians (the Daugavpils Ukrainian Cultural Society *Mrija*).

Daugavpils is a city of many religions and denominations. In the city there are Catholic, Lutheran, Russian Orthodox, Russian Old-Believers’ and Jewish places of worship. Because of the peculiarities of the ethnic structure of the Daugavpils population, out of 24 secondary schools in Daugavpils there are five Latvian and one Polish school, the remainder being Russian schools, and only two of the schools emphasize their ethnic identity in the name: the State Polish Gymnasium and the Russian Secondary School-Lyceum.

Local newspapers are published in Daugavpils: *Latgales laiks* in Latvian and Russian; the newspapers *Seychas*, *Dinaburg vesty*, *Million*,

Nasha gazeta and the magazine *CAPITAL Region* in Russian. Besides the national television channels, the city also has a local cable television channel (*DAUTKOM TV*) as well as local radio stations: *Alise plus*, *EUROPA PLUS* and *Novoye radio*. (Daugavpils 2011)

The idea of diversity is extremely important for understanding life in Daugavpils. The poet and journalist Anna Rancāne points out that the etymology of the name of the River Daugava, which gave the city its name, contains the idea of multiplicity (*Daug-ava*). Metaphors for Daugavpils are rooted in this name: “a multi-water, multi-linguistic, multi-cultural, multi-denominational and multi-destiny city”. (Rancāne 2007, p. 20)

Research tasks and methodology

Public consciousness in modern Latvia does not associate relationships between ethnic groups with the issue of historical reconciliation. There are grounds for this: there have never been any cases of bloody inter-ethnic conflicts in the history of this country. Discussion of the development of inter-ethnic tolerance in Latvian society mainly takes place within the discourse on ‘social integration’. This term in the State Integration Programme (2001) does not relate to the necessity for overcoming any historical inter-ethnic or geopolitical conflict. The integration of Latvian society is understood as a process targeted at the ethnic minority groups, with the aim of forming a united cultural environment of civil society based on the Latvian language (Valsts programma 2001, p. 6).

The issue of reconciliation only partly enters the public scene in Latvia. Apparently, an understanding of the necessity for a qualitative improvement in Latvian-Russian relations at the national level should be interpreted as one of its crucial elements. This necessity is considered in various scientific studies. For instance, it is reflected in the studies on Latvia’s image in the Russian mass media, which, in the opinion of Nils Muižnieks, Director of the Institute for Social and Political Research of the University of Latvia, has negative connotations, appearing as “the enemy image of Latvia” (Muižnieks 2008, p. 5). It has also been viewed on a broader scale as an issue of Latvia’s national security. But we should take into account that Latvia’s national independence was realized as a result of the collapse of the Russian Empire and USSR (Feldmanis 2005, p. 12; Ozoliņa 2006, pp. 52–82). Some Latvian researchers consider that the geopolitical break between Latvia and Russia is to some extent

reflected in relations between the Latvians and the Russian population of the country. It is from this perspective that Professor A. Tabūns views the phenomenon of the desire of a part of the Russian population in Latvia to obtain citizenship of the Russian Federation (Tabūns 2006, p. 73). At the same time the Polish ethnic minority is considered in scholarly research by Latvian and Polish scientists as a ‘historical minority’, and support for the Poles of Latvia from the Polish government and public organizations is welcomed (Kurczewski 2007, pp. 7–29; Kurczewski 2009, pp. 17–59; Jēkabsons 2007, pp. 162, 187).

The understanding of this context of the issue has been formed by the logic of social, cultural and political development of Latvian society since the restoration of independence in 1991, as well as by contemporary discourse in sociological and political literature. In this context a research hypothesis has been created, taking into consideration the ideas of a long discourse among the advocates of multiculturalism and liberalism: H. Arendt (1958), B. Barry (2001), J. Cohen and A. Arato (Cohen, Arato 1994), J. Habermas (Häbermäss 2012), W. Kymlicka (1995), R. Nozick (1974), J. Rawls (1971), P. Ricoeur (1966), N. E. Snow (1990), M. Wieviorka (1995), I. M. Young (1990) and others. In this study the main methodological viewpoint is based on the theory of J. Habermas, according to which the resolution of conflict situations in a society, including decreasing proneness to conflicts of public consciousness, creating circumstances for reconciliation for individual and collective actors, can be formed through mechanisms of public discourse in which its participants recognize each other as responsible actors and do not prejudice their individual and collective identity (Habermas 2001, pp. 332–334).

Thus, positive results of historic reconciliation between ethnic groups can be related to mutual recognition of these groups as full-value actors of multi-ethnic civil society and as the subject of cultural values. The analysis of reconciliation between Poles, Latvians and Russian in Daugavpils as a complex social phenomenon includes description and reflection of:

- identities of ethnic groups (civil, linguistic, elements of traditional culture);
- reproduction of ethnic identity in the family;
- ethnic identities in the public multicultural environment;

- “one’s own” and “alien” in ethnic division;
- attitudes towards the identities of ethnic minorities;
- assessment of ethnic relations in Daugavpils;
- models for a multicultural community in Latgale;
- the political consciousness and political behaviour of Daugavpils residents.

This paper presents a generalization of empirical data gained in the course of a sociological study carried out in the spring-summer of 2010 in Daugavpils, Latvia. The research was done by the Institute for Social Research of Daugavpils University. The project was financed by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education (grant No. NN116230436). The overall project leader was Professor Jacek Kurczewski, Warsaw University.

The research undertaken in Daugavpils was part of a series of studies performed under the terms of the grant in order to assess the state of the historically antagonistic relations between ethnic and denominational groups in Central-Eastern Europe. It included field investigations using ethnographic, anthropological and sociological approaches in localities where groups with different affiliations have had the experience of open conflict, as well as analysis of the official ideologies and actions aimed at relinquishing conflict and bringing forward mutual reconciliation between the parties concerned. The localities represented in the study are areas with Polish-German, Polish-Czech, Polish-Russian, Polish-Ukrainian, Rumanian-Hungarian and Latvian-Russian conflicts. At the same time, the conflict between Roman Catholic and Polish dissident Mariavite Catholicism, as well as between Roman Catholicism/Lutheranism in the west and the Eastern Orthodox Churches, were studied in selected localities. The complexity of the ethnic and confessional dividing lines and loyalties involved in the process of reconciliation necessitated the use of the term “inter-cultural” to cover the two dimensions that sometimes coalesce and sometimes diverge.

The study on “Antagonism and Reconciliation in the Multi-Cultural Areas” has proved that, despite the progress achieved on the way towards reconciliation, the potential for open conflict remains within people’s social emotions. The sense of injustice and harm inflicted by the other remains, despite the passage of time. One of the reasons is

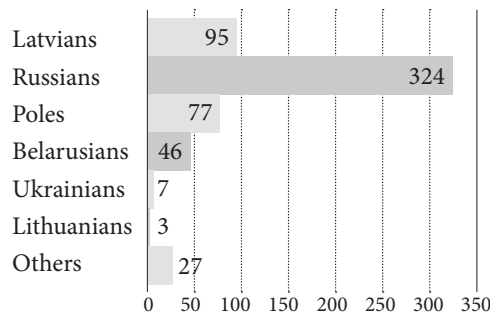
that for decades Communist censorship prevented public presentation of the history of these wrongs, their mutual discussion and the venting of ill feeling. The abolition of censorship that accompanied the collapse of the Communist system opened the public space for the conflicting memories of the past, which suddenly became an element of public discourse half a century after the bloody events actually occurred, instigating a rise of hatred and vengeful feeling. The study on ethnic relations in Daugavpils forms part of this task. It is important to note that, despite all our attempts, it has been performed at one particular point in the history of ever-changing social relations and we must take care when interpolating the results into the future. The sociological theory of reconciliation advanced by John Braithwaite (2000) stresses the need for a legitimate structure of opportunities as the necessary factor, and one should keep in mind that the fragility of recently achieved appeasement may be remedied only if the former opponent will no longer be seen as an impediment to the attainment of life goals in a legitimate manner (Braithwaite, Braithwaite, Cookson, Dunn 2010).

Selection of the participants in the study was based on several criteria: ethnic affiliation, age and gender of the respondents and their place of residence in the urban districts of Daugavpils. A total of 578 people were selected. In terms of ethnic identity, the selection looks as follows:

Table 2. The selection of research participants.¹

Ethnic identity	N	%
Latvians	95	16.4
Russians	324	56.0
Poles	77	13.2
Belarusians	46	7.9
Ukrainians	7	1.3
Lithuanians	3	0.6
Others	27	4.6
Total	578	100.0

Figure 1. The selection of research participants.



Although representativity was secured in terms of area of residence, ethnic affiliation and gender of the respondents, some other important social characteristics could not be controlled at the time of selection of the respondent. We may only hope that representativity has been achieved as a consequence of the initial decision.

Some of the findings of this investigation are supplemented with data collected by a research team from the Institute of Applied Social Sciences of the University of Warsaw, which conducted a survey of Daugavpils Poles in June 2007. A questionnaire in Polish and Russian was prepared, with 114 questions, some open-ended, and students of the University of Warsaw, under the supervision of the academic staff, carried out 258 interviews. 152 interviews were undertaken with all those members of *Promień* – the Daugavpils Chapter of the Association of Poles in Latvia – who were available and willing to answer (out of a full list of 296 addresses) and an additional 106 interviews were undertaken with Poles found by following the snowball method. The results of this study have been published by J. Kurczewski and M. Fuszara in *Polacy nad Dźwiną* (2009).

The last caveat relates to the use of the term “group” throughout our report. It is true that people declaring various ethnic identities tend also to have more social contact with similar people. By no means, however, does it refer to the whole aggregation of those who have declared themselves “Latvians”, “Russians” or “Poles”, or who have given some other ethnic identification in our survey. The term “group” is applied here in its non-sociological sense as the common denominator for an aggregate of respondents with the same ethnic identification, independent of whether these individuals do or do not have social relations with others as a group in a sociological sense.

¹ The authors express their profound gratitude to Dr.oec. Olga Lavriņenko and Mg.oec. Alina Ohotina, researchers at the Institute for Social Research of Daugavpils University, for their work in compiling the selective total of the respondents and processing the statistic material of the study.

Identities of ethnic groups in Daugavpils

Identity acts as a complex of social features acquired by a person. The respondents were asked to choose those features which characterize, to various degrees, their identity. The following social values were offered as markers of identity: Latvian citizenship, Latvia as the place of residence, EU citizenship, ethnic origin, religious background, native culture, Latvian language, the mother tongue and the language of communication within the family. As can be seen, among the suggested markers there are some that help to form and enhance a person's civil and national identity, as well as markers specific to traditional ethnic identity.

The research findings were not surprising; moreover, they confirmed the observations of many years. For people from multi-ethnic Daugavpils, civil values are expressed less vividly in the complex of identity markers than the values of traditional ethnic identity. Thus, for example, language has become the most significant marker of identity for people in Daugavpils. This marker is considered to some extent significant for characterizing their identity by 89.5% of the respondents in Daugavpils. Next comes the marker "the language of communication within the family" (85.2%). But such an important marker of national identity as Latvian citizenship turns out to be significant only for 49.2% of the respondents.

Ethnic communities are striving to preserve their group identity in the process of inter-ethnic interaction by means of actualizing their linguistic identity. When compared to other displays of ethnic identity – ethnic origin, religious background, inherited cultural tradition,

etc. – it is the linguistic identity that can provide a person with the most opportunities in modern and post-modern society: participation in the system of education, socialization, bureaucratic rationalization, control and management, etc.

At the same time, it would be incorrect to think that the majority of Daugavpils residents adhere to a traditionalistic, as opposed to national and civil, orientation of identity. The research data show that a range of markers which characterize civil as well as ethnic identities are equally popular with about two thirds of the respondents. These markers characterize a person's faith in intimate ethnic values as well as in Latvia as the country of residence. These are – "native culture" (which 74.4% of the respondents, to differing degrees, consider important for characterizing their identity), "Latvia as the place of residence" (71.0%), "ethnic origin" (65.3%) and "religious background" (63.4%) (Table 3).

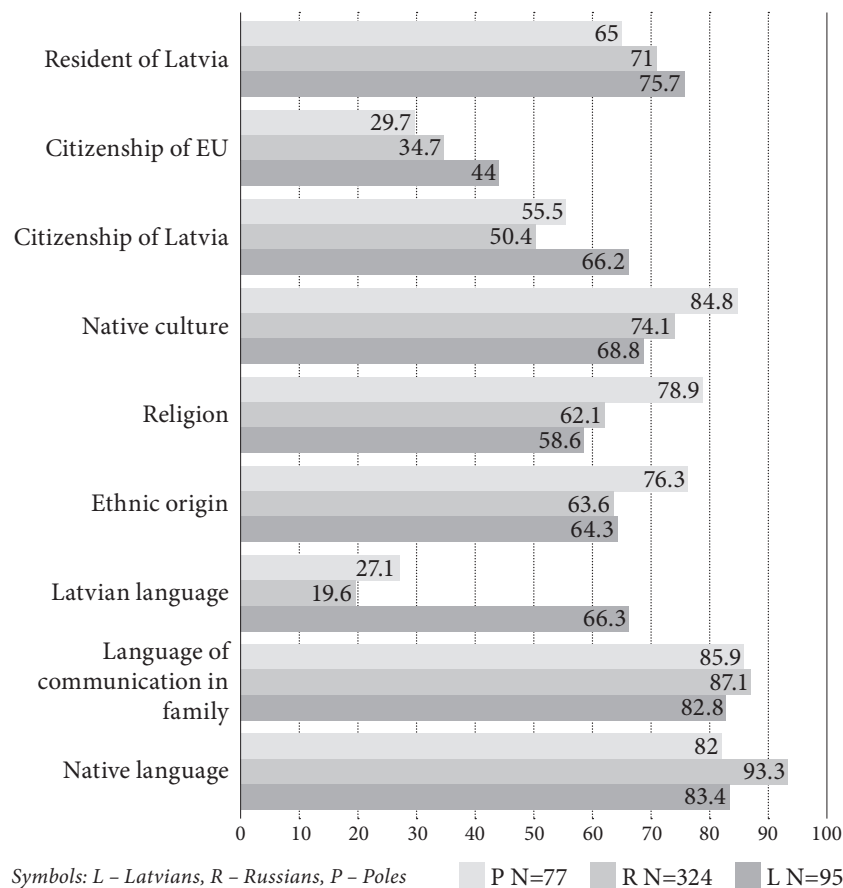
Table 3. Values characterizing the respondents' identity, % (answer: "to a greater or lesser degree").

	AR N=578	L N=95	R N=324	P N=77
Native language	89.5	83.4	93.3	82.0
Language of communication in family	85.2	82.8	87.1	85.9
Latvian language	27.6	66.3	19.6	27.1
Ethnic origin	65.3	64.3	63.6	76.3
Religion	63.4	58.6	62.1	78.9
Native culture	74.4	68.8	74.1	84.8
Citizenship of Latvia	49.2	66.2	50.4	55.5
Citizenship of EU	34.7	44.0	34.7	29.7
Resident of Latvia	71.0	75.7	71.0	65.0

Symbols: AR – all respondents, L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles

The data on the respondents' mother tongue demonstrate that Russian is the mother tongue for 75.2%, Latvian for 12.1% and Polish for 8.2% of the respondents. The share of these three languages as the mother tongue approximately corresponds to the share of Russians, Latvians and Poles in the ethnic structure of the city's population. However, in Daugavpils it is characteristic only of one ethnic group (Russians) that its mother tongue is considered the mother tongue for a significantly

Figure 2. Values characterizing the respondents' identity, % (answer: "to a greater or lesser degree").

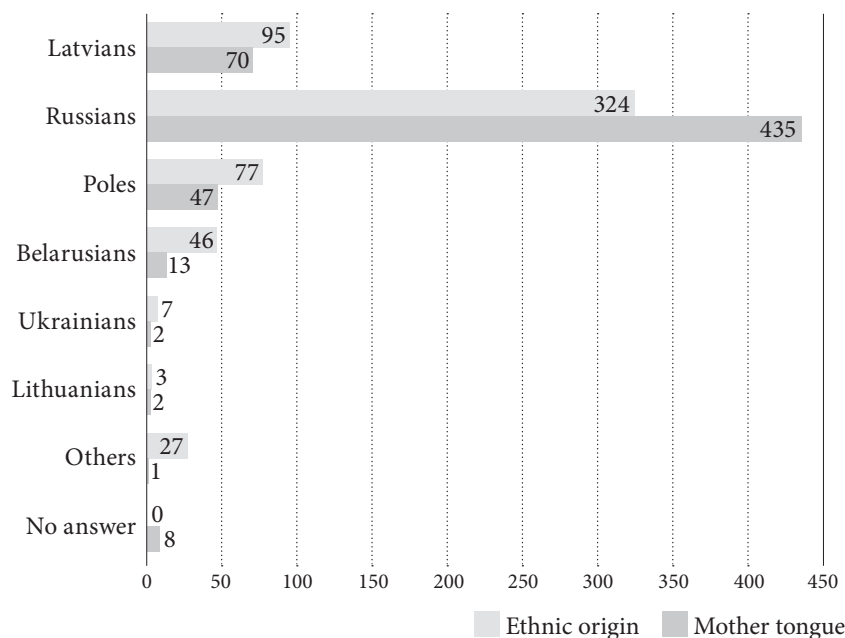


larger group of respondents than its share of the city's population (75.2 and 56.0%, respectively). At the same time, the proportion of other ethnic groups among the Daugavpils population – Belarusians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians and others – exceeds several times the corresponding proportion of Belarusian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian and other languages as the mother tongue. Thus, for example, Belarusians make up 7.9% of the population of Daugavpils, whereas the share of the residents who consider Belarusian as their mother tongue is only 2.2%. (Table 4)

Table 4. Correlation between the respondents' ethnic origin and their mother tongue.

	Ethnic origin		Mother tongue		
	Total	%	total	%	
Latvians	95	16.4	Latvian	70	12.1
Russians	324	56.0	Russian	435	75.2
Poles	77	13.2	Polish	47	8.2
Belarusians	46	7.9	Belarusian	13	2.2
Ukrainians	7	1.3	Ukrainian	2	0.4
Lithuanians	3	0.6	Lithuanian	2	0.3
Others	27	4.6	Other	1	0.1
No answer	-	-	No answer	8	1.5
Total	578	100.0	Total	578	100.0

Figure 3. The respondents' ethnic origin and mother tongue, %.



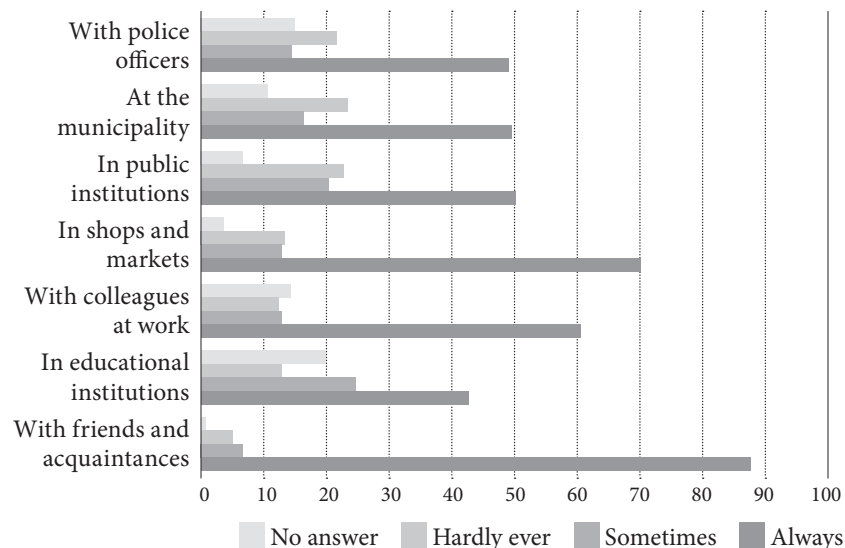
As seen in the Table 5, the respondents' mother tongue performs important communication functions in various spheres of public life in Daugavpils. It is evident that the respondents make extensive use

of their mother tongue in their private lives while communicating with relatives and friends (always or sometimes: 94.3%). But use of the mother tongue while communicating in shops and markets is also frequent (to some extent: 83%), as well as at work (73.4%) in public institutions (70.5%), educational institutions (67.3%), municipal institutions (66.0%), and in communication with the police (63.4%).

Table 5. Frequency of communication in the respondents' mother tongue in various spheres of life, %.

	Always	Sometimes	Hardly ever	No answer	Total
With friends and acquaintances	87.6	6.7	5.0	0.7	100.0
In educational institutions	42.7	24.6	12.9	19.8	100.0
With colleagues at work	60.5	12.9	12.3	14.3	100.0
In shops and markets	70.1	12.9	13.4	3.6	100.0
In public institutions	50.1	20.4	22.8	6.7	100.0
At the municipality	49.6	16.4	23.4	10.6	100.0
With police officers	49.0	14.4	21.6	15.0	100.0

Figure 4. Frequency of communication in the respondents' mother tongue in various spheres of life, %.



It is interesting to observe the differences among members of the various ethnic groups in terms of their regional self-identity. Russians more often than Latvians identified themselves as residents of Daugavpils (53.9% and 44.3%, respectively), and more often found it important to emphasize their ethnic identity (48.6% and 40.0%, respectively) (Table 6). On the other hand, Latvians more frequently than Russian respondents indicated their ties with Latgale (29.2% and 15.0%, respectively) and more frequently considered themselves Europeans (11.6% and 5.0%, respectively). It turned out that Latgale and Europe are much more significant aspects of regional identity for Daugavpils residents of Latvian origin than for Russians.

Table 6. Who the respondents primarily identify themselves with, %.

	AR N=578	L N=95	R N=324	P N=77
Resident of Daugavpils	51.7	44.3	53.9	54.6
Latgale resident	19.5	29.2	15.0	26.0
Latvian	–	40.0	–	–
Russian	–	–	48.6	–
Pole	–	–	–	56.2
Slav	–	–	1.5	15.4
European	7.8	11.6	5.0	14.0

Symbols: AR – all respondents, L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles

Figure 6. Ethnic origin of parents. Latvians, %.

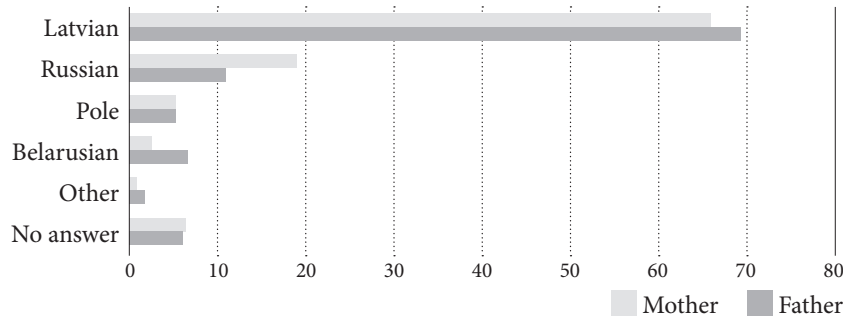


Figure 7. Ethnic origin of parents. Russians, %.

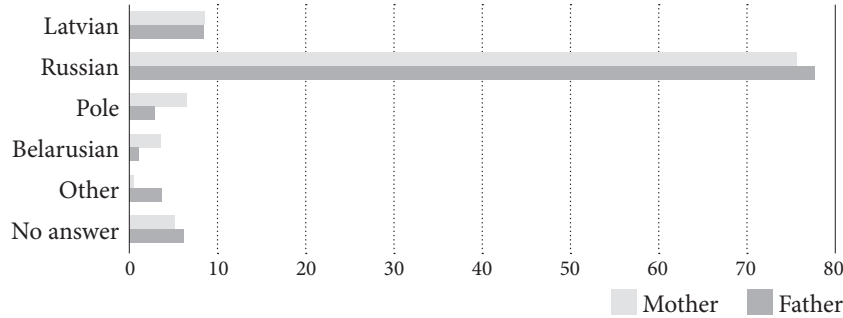
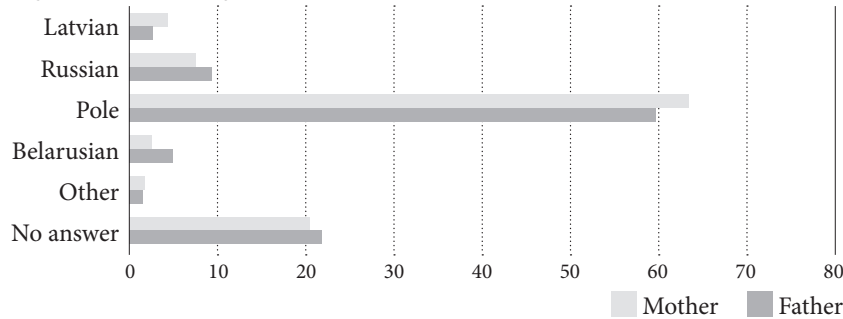


Figure 8. Ethnic origin of parents. Poles, %.



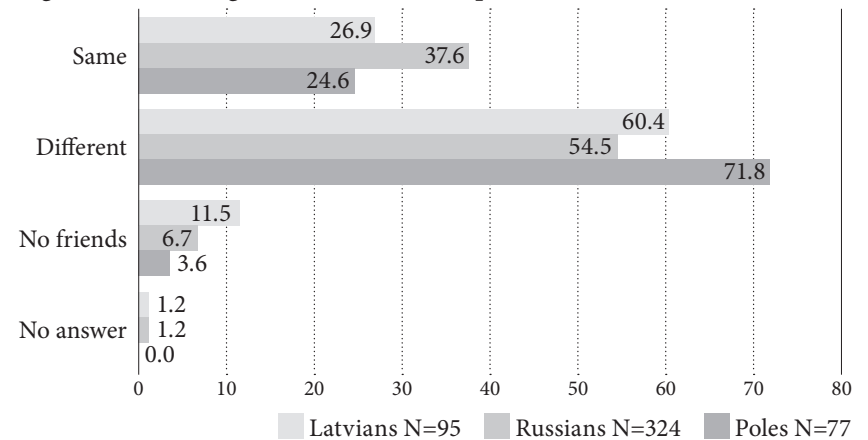
However, the fact of the larger share of ethnically homogenous families among the Russian respondents as compared to the Latvians and Poles can hardly be seen as indicating that the Russians have a more vividly expressed necessity for ethnic reproduction than the Latvians

and Poles. It is more likely that the high proportion of the Russian population in the city itself results from the fact that the Russian residents of the city can more easily find a spouse of Russian origin. This conclusion is indirectly confirmed by the data in Table 8 on the ethnic origin of the respondents' friends. The proportion of the respondents' friends belonging to the same ethnic group turned out to be the highest among the Russian respondents (37.6%). For the Latvians it comprised 26.9%, and for the Poles 24.6%.

Table 8. Ethnic origin of the friends of respondents, %.

	Latvians N=95	Russians N=324	Poles N=77
Same	26.9	37.6	24.6
Different	60.4	54.5	71.8
No friends	11.5	6.7	3.6
No answer	1.2	1.2	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 9. Ethnic origin of the friends of respondents, %.



The need for ethnic reproduction among the Poles and Latvians of Daugavpils turns out to be rather well-developed. The data in Table 9, which characterize the ethnic origin of the respondents' spouse and children, prove this statement. It turns out that the spouses of Russian

respondents are Russian in about half of cases, and half of the children born into Russian families are also Russian. However, the proportion of Latvian and Polish children born into Latvian and Polish families is considerably higher than the proportion of spouses of Latvian and Polish origin, respectively, in these families. For example, while 22.2% of the Latvians have Latvian spouses, the proportion of children of Latvian origin born into families where at least one of the parents is Latvian comprises 45.2%. For the Poles these proportions are 25.9% and 46.1%, respectively.

Table 9. Ethnic origin of spouse and children of respondents, %.

	Latvians N=95		Russians N=324		Poles N=77	
	Spouse	Children	Spouse	Children	Spouse	Children
Latvian	22.2	45.2	8.0	4.7	7.8	2.7
Russian	29.7	4.0	49.5	49.4	25.0	5.3
Polish	4.9	1.4	6.3	2.1	25.9	46.1
Belarusian	2.6	0.0	2.3	0.3	4.5	1.0
Other	1.9	0.5	4.0	1.8	1.4	0.0
Not applicable	18.5	26.9	10.1	19.9	12.5	17.2
No answer	20.2	22.0	19.8	21.8	22.9	27.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 10. Ethnic origin of spouse and children of respondents. Latvians, %.

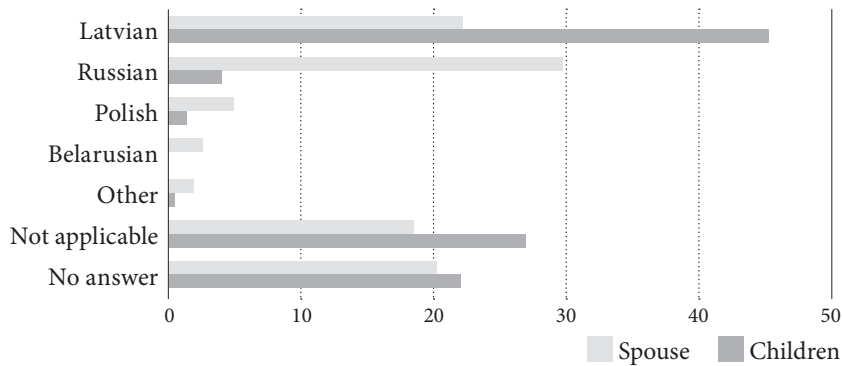


Figure 11. Ethnic origin of spouse and children of respondents. Russians, %.

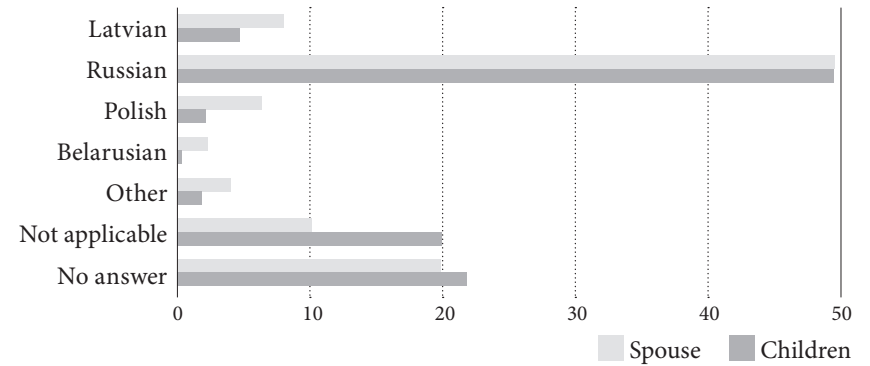
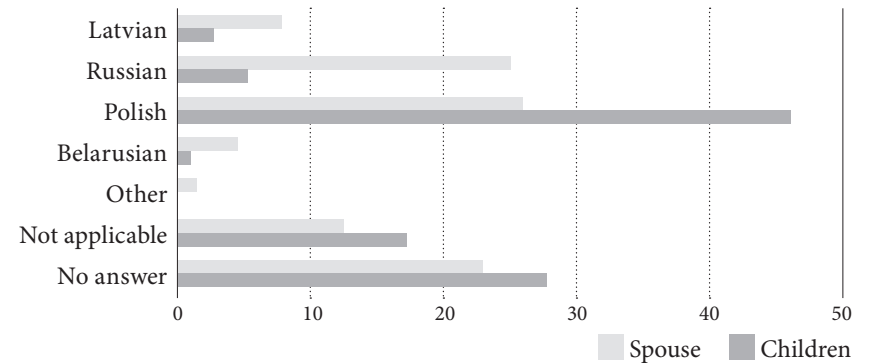


Figure 12. Ethnic origin of spouse and children of respondents. Poles, %.



Besides this, the Poles of Daugavpils demonstrate a rather more sceptical attitude towards ethnically mixed marriages, as compared to the Russians and Latvians (Table 10). Thus, 67.7% of the Latvians and 60.8% of the Russians find the ethnic origin of a spouse unimportant with regard to marriage, but only 45.0% of the Polish respondents share the same opinion.

Table 10. Attitude towards ethnically mixed marriages, %.

	Latvians N=95	Russians N=324	Poles N=77	Daugavpils Poles, (research in 2007) N = 258
People of different ethnic origin should not marry	4.7	3.0	5.8	28.0
It is better if a husband and wife have the same ethnic origin, but not essential	24.7	32.9	43.4	22.0
The ethnic origin of a husband or wife is not important	67.7	60.8	45.0	43.0
No answer	2.9	3.3	5.8	7.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 13. Attitude towards ethnically mixed marriages, % (research in 2010).

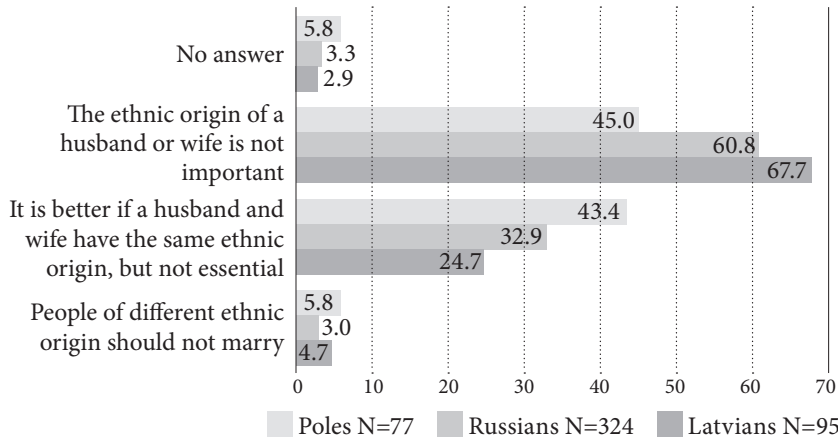
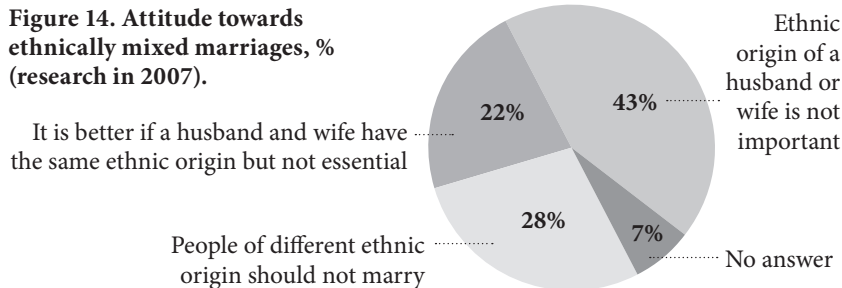


Figure 14. Attitude towards ethnically mixed marriages, % (research in 2007).



Remarkably, this tendency towards endogamy among the Poles was even more clearly manifested in the 2007 study, giving the impression that interview by Poles from Poland created a situation allowing the expression of such attitudes. Let us remark here that the three ethnic groups compared in this study differ in terms of their social status in Latgale: Latvians are a statistical minority in Daugavpils but constitute the majority in the Latvian state; Russians are the statistical majority in Daugavpils but a minority in the Latvian state; only Poles are a minority on both counts. This makes preservation of Polish identity a more precarious task and leads to conscious efforts in this direction.

Traditional culture in the identity of ethnic groups: the case of ethnic cuisine

Ethnic identity is connected with the elements of traditional culture. For Poles in Daugavpils this is vividly revealed in the peculiarities of their cuisine. It includes traditional Polish dishes as well as dishes from Latgalian, Latvian and Russian cuisine. Polish cuisine is represented in the most diverse ways in the diet of the Poles in Daugavpils. When asked if they eat Polish dishes, the majority (52%) answered in the affirmative. The Polish respondents named 32 dishes belonging to Polish cuisine as forming part of their diet. The most frequently mentioned was *bigos*: it was mentioned by 22 respondents as one of the dishes of the Poles in Daugavpils. This is followed by *flaki* (7 mentions), *kielbaski*, *rogalik z twarogiem* and *mazurek* (4 mentions each); “Christmas and Easter dishes” and *zrazy zawijane* (3 mentions); *golonka*, *pomidorówka*, *kluski*, *barszcz* and *makarony z truskawkami* (2 mentions); *boczek*, *żeberka*, *żurek*, *czernina*, *rosół*, *galareta*, *jajecznicza*, *karp smażony*, *chrząstka*, *gołąbki z fasolką*, *jabłko*, *kaszanka*, *pączki*, *zupa mleczna z ciastem*, *łazanki*, *kutia*, *miód pitny*, *tworog z konfiturami*, *wątrobianka* and *pierogi ruskie* (one mention). Polish dishes were often mentioned in the context of traditional Polish Christmas and Easter home festivities, and in fact there is a ritual Polish set of dishes to be served at supper on Christmas Eve (always a fast supper) that may have combined with the Latgalian Catholic tradition.

There are a variety of Russian dishes in the diet of the Poles in Daugavpils, and Russian dishes are eaten more often (67%) by Poles. The respondents named 16 dishes which they consider Russian. Actually, in many cases only generalized names of ‘Russian’ dishes were given:

kasha, “soup”, “cutlets” and “potatoes”. But as regards the real names of dishes from Russian cuisine, the following were mentioned: *pel'meni* (19 mentions), “pancakes” (15 mentions), *stchi* (14 mentions), “borscht” (9 mentions) and “pies” (5 mentions). Less commonly mentioned were *okroshka* (3 mentions), “cabbage rolls” (3 mentions) and “fish soup” (2 mentions). In spite of the fact that the range of Polish dishes outnumbered Russian dishes, we can conclude that Russian dishes constitute the most important part of everyday Polish cuisine in Daugavpils. This is proven by the frequency of mentions of such dishes from Russian cuisine as *pel'meni*, pancakes, *stchi* and borscht. On the other hand, it is difficult to judge from the shorthand names of the dishes whether the borscht mentioned was the proper Polish kind (clear sour beet soup) or the Russian kind, with meat and other vegetables.

Equally widespread among Poles was reported consumption of Latgalian dishes (62%), and the most widespread dish out of the 22 referred to as Latgalian by the respondents is “grey peas” (26 mentions). The second most recognizable as ‘Latgalian’ is “beer” (6 mentions). The rest, in order of popularity, are: cheese (4 mentions); maple and birch juice, bread soup (3 mentions); black pudding and Latgalian salad (2 mentions); oatmeal kissel, fine-ground barley porridge, *bułbešniki*, beans with sour milk, bread, boiled pearl barley, peas with milk, pies with salted pork fat, stewed cabbage, porridge, sour milk, sour broth, potato cutlets and “herring in a fur coat” (known widely in Poland as well) were mentioned once. In general we can conclude that Latgalian dishes are not as usual as Russian dishes for the Poles in Daugavpils.

About 40% of the Russian respondents eat Latvian and Latgalian dishes. Grey peas and dishes cooked with grey peas were frequently mentioned (71 people, or 22% of the Russian respondents). Latgalian cheese was mentioned as a dish consumed by 11 Russian respondents; pies with salted pork fat were mentioned three times; beer 11 times; dishes from potatoes four times, Latgalian bread four times; and stewed cabbage was mentioned by seven respondents. The number of Russian respondents who mentioned Polish dishes in their diet comprised approximately 13%. Four Russian respondents mentioned as Polish food potato flapjacks; three people mentioned *bigos*, *flaki* or *golonka*. Minced collops, ‘zeppelins’, *zrazy*, cottage cheese pancakes, potato pancakes,

dumplings, stewed cabbage, *vareniki*, black pudding, *pirozhenki* and beer were mentioned by one or two Russian respondents. But the vast majority of Russian respondents (about 87%) tended to focus on Russian dishes. The most popular are obviously *blini* pancakes: they were mentioned by 79 Russian respondents (i.e., about a quarter of the Russians interviewed). *Stchi* was mentioned with about the same frequency (76 mentions), while *pel'meni* was mentioned by 73 Russian respondents. Borscht was mentioned by 34 Russian respondents; potatoes and potato dishes, for example, potato flapjacks or 'zeppelins', were mentioned by 19; *kasha* was mentioned by 17; cabbage rolls were mentioned by 12; soups (including *rassolnik*, *okroshka*, *solyanka* and fish soup) were mentioned by 12; cutlets were mentioned by nine and pies by four Russian respondents.

A similarly abundant ethnic variety of dishes characterizes the Latvians of Daugavpils. Two thirds of the Latvians interviewed (about 67%) are oriented towards dishes from Latgalian cuisine. Grey peas were the most frequently mentioned (28 mentions, or approximately 30% of Latvian respondents). Latgalian cheese (with caraway or garlic) was mentioned by 14 respondents. Cottage cheese and dishes made from it were mentioned by two respondents; kidney beans and beans were mentioned by four; beer was mentioned by four; potato dishes were mentioned by seven; sour cabbage dishes were mentioned by eight; and fish/herring dishes were mentioned by four Latvian respondents.

A quarter of the Latvians interviewed said that they also eat dishes from Polish cuisine. *Bigos*, borscht, *vareniki* and carp in Polish style (*karp smażony*) were mentioned (two mentions each), as were cabbage rolls and pies (three mentions each), 'zeppelins', breast in honey, potato pancakes, black pudding and *flaki* (one mention each). The Latvian respondents in Daugavpils more often consume Russian dishes than Latgalian dishes (72% of respondents). The most popular Russian dish among the Latvians is *pel'meni* (26 mentions). Borscht was mentioned by seven Latvian respondents, *stchi* had 11 mentions, pancakes had seven, and dishes from potatoes and various soups were mentioned by six respondents each.

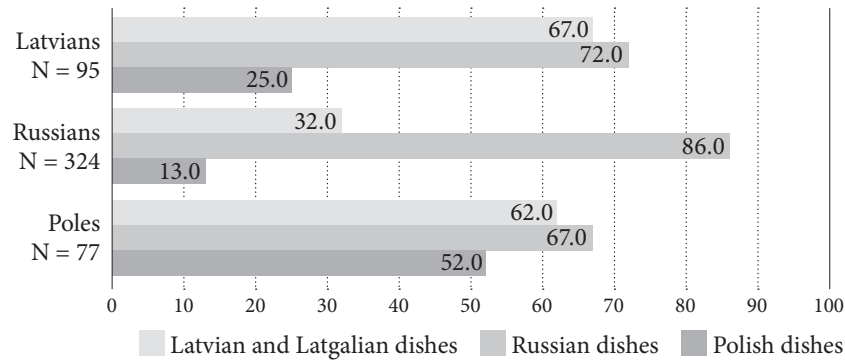
Here we see the controversy over the 'true' ethnic significance of particular dishes. Anybody who has cooking experience knows that even

a difference in procedures may result in differently 'ethnicized' dishes. We have already mentioned the controversy over 'borscht': in Poland people differentiate between (Polish) 'borscht' and 'Ukrainian borscht' (with meat and various vegetables), but the latter is considered inaccurate by Ukrainians, who individualize their recipes and make the dish according to a different procedure from Poles. Also, Polish cookbooks always mention 'Lithuanian cold soup', which is nowadays practically the same as Lithuanian *šaltibarščiai*, although historically it meant a more luxurious version with crayfish and other ingredients. Poles, Lithuanians, Belarusians, Russians and Ukrainians each have their own brands of *pirozhenki* contending for ethnic identity. In this context the traditional Latgalian food should be considered as simple peasants' food, as described by Baron Manteuffel: "bread, wheat, vegetables, milk, salt, less often butter, eggs and meat", accompanied by kvass; "bread, mushrooms, wheat, rarely herrings and dried fish consumed during numerous fasts"; "smoked cheese, apples, mead and beer" as festive dishes, along with *plocień*, i.e., "a cake baked from wheat, buckwheat and barley flour" (Manteuffel 1879, p. 58). The simple Latgalian food (differing from food along the Baltic seacoast) was later enriched mostly with meat, but the symbolic dish remains 'grey peas'. Russian *pel'meni* in its industrial version became the mass food for everybody, but 'grey peas' remains the Latgalian component, as to a lesser degree does *bigos*, the Polish culinary ethnic marker in inter-ethnic culinary encounters. Statistically, our remark on the doubly marginal position of the Polish group is upheld by these findings, as the following table shows.

Table 11. Ethnic food as eaten by ethnic groups in Daugavpils, %.

Consumption of	Latvians N = 95	Russians N = 324	Poles N = 77
Latvian and Latgalian dishes	67.0	32.0	62.0
Russian dishes	72.0	86.0	67.0
Polish dishes	25.0	13.0	52.0

Figure 15. Ethnic food as eaten by ethnic groups in Daugavpils, %.



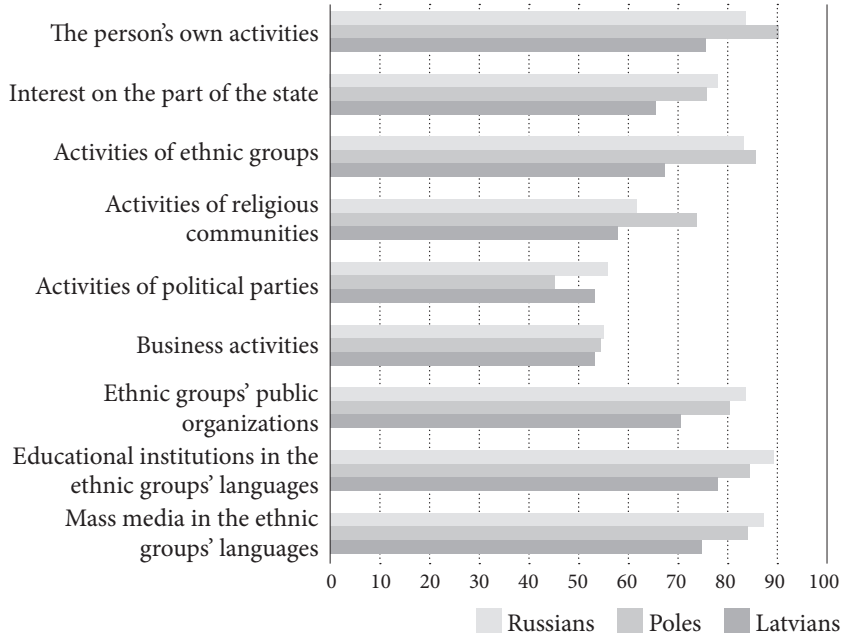
Russian cuisine dominates the food of each of the three ethnic groups compared. Polish food is most often the food of the Polish group, although this group exhibits the largest degree of culinary acculturation. Interestingly, Poles share with Latvians the culinary taste for Latvian and Latgalian food, which is not the case for Russians. Russians dominate the culinary culture in Daugavpils and are to a large degree self-sufficient, while Poles are most open culturally and may serve as the bridge between Latvians and Russians in this respect.

Ethnic identity and the multicultural environment

The task of the study was to identify the respondents' attitude towards various factors that significantly influence preservation of the identity of ethnic groups in Latgale. The findings of the survey demonstrate that more than two thirds of the respondents (64–76%) included the following among these factors: “A person’s own activities”, “Educational institutions in the ethnic groups’ languages”, “Ethnic groups’ public organizations”, “Mass media in the ethnic groups’ languages”, “Activities of ethnic groups” and “Interest on the part of the state” (Table 12). At the same time, the importance of such factors as “Activities of religious communities”, “Activities of political parties” and “Business activities” were viewed by 30–40% of respondents as contributing to the process of enhancement of ethnic identity. For Daugavpils citizens enhancing ethnic identity turns out to be a task for the person him- or herself, the whole state and the cultural and educational infrastructure that has been created, but not really a political or entrepreneurial project.

Table 12. Dependence of preservation of the ethnic groups' language and culture in Latgale on various factors, % (answer: "Depends to some extent").

	All respondents	Latvians	Poles	Russians
Mass media in the ethnic groups' languages	84.8	74.7	84.0	87.3
Educational institutions in the ethnic groups' languages	86.5	77.9	84.5	89.2
Ethnic groups' public organizations	80.4	70.5	80.4	83.6
Business activities	56.9	53.2	54.5	55.1
Activities of political parties	56.7	53.2	45.1	55.9
Activities of religious communities	63.5	57.9	73.8	61.6
Activities of ethnic groups	81.5	67.4	85.7	83.3
Interest on the part of the state	76.8	65.6	75.8	78.1
The person's own activities	84.6	75.5	90.2	83.6

Figure 16. Dependence of preservation of the ethnic groups' language and culture in Latgale on various factors, % (answer: "Depends to some extent").

Daugavpils is a multicultural city, as confirmed not only by the multi-ethnic character of its population, but also by the fact that its citizens find it important to receive information in different languages. Tables 13–14 present data on reading newspapers, listening to the radio and watching television programmes in the Latvian, Russian and Polish languages, as well as data on the availability of books in these languages in the respondents' home libraries. Having compared these data with the respondents' ethnic structure, it is seen that the share of respondents who receive information in two languages – Latvian and Russian – is higher than the share of ethnic Latvians and Russians among the respondents. The availability of books in the Polish language in home libraries represents a kind of exception: this proportion is a little higher than the proportion of ethnic Poles among the respondents (15.1% and 13.2%, respectively). These data demonstrate that in Daugavpils there are two strongly pronounced flows of information: in Latvian and in Russian. But at the same time, the share of respondents receiving information in the Latvian language in Daugavpils is actually quite small.

Table 13. Language use, % (N=578)

	Read newspapers in the language	Listen to the radio in the language	Watch television programmes in the language	Books in the language in home libraries
Latvian	28.4	24.4	45.4	50.3
Russian	82.0	74.7	89.1	91.4
Polish	7.6	5.6	10.2	15.1

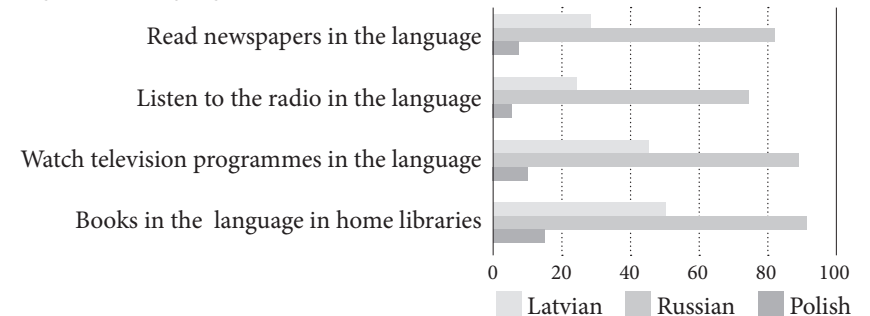
Figure 17. Language use, %.

Table 14. Language use: Latvians, Russians and Poles, %.

	Read newspapers in the language			Listen to the radio in the language			Watch television programmes in the language			Books in the languages in home libraries		
	L	R	P	L	R	P	L	R	P	L	R	P
Latvian	68.5	19.2	42.9	54.1	16.1	35.5	81.2	37.4	63.0	86.5	41.2	60.4
Russian	69.3	83.6	84.5	61.4	74.5	74.4	77.2	91.1	87.0	74.5	94.1	91.6
Polish	3.0	2.0	41.6	2.3	0.9	35.7	4.4	1.6	53.9	12.9	5.6	70.6

Symbols: L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles.

Figure 18. Language use: Latvians, Russians and Poles, % (read newspapers in various languages).

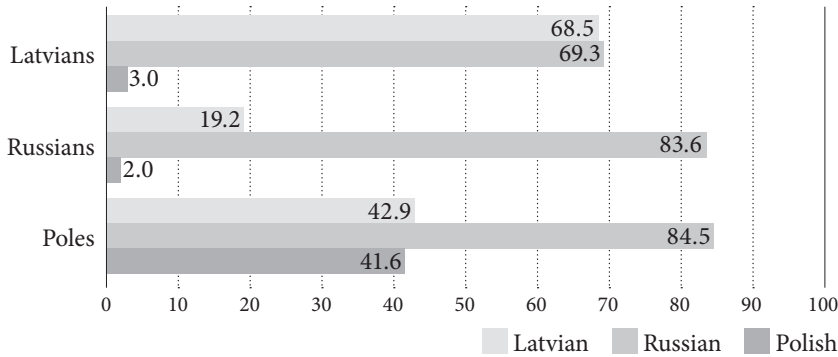


Figure 19. Language use: Latvians, Russians and Poles, % (listen to the radio in various languages).

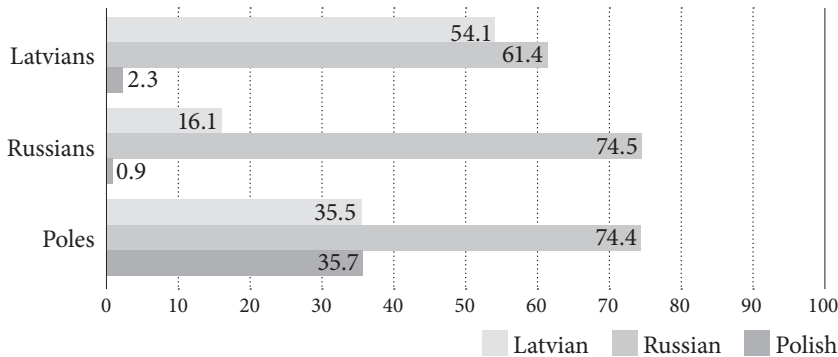


Figure 20. Language use: Latvians, Russians and Poles, % (watch television programmes in various languages).

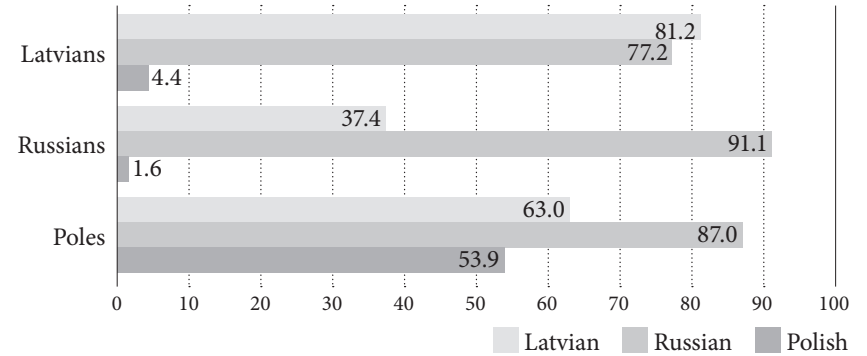
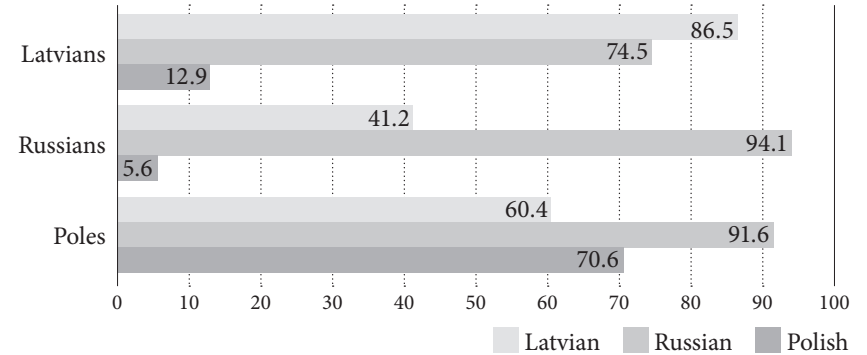


Figure 21. Language use: Latvians, Russians and Poles, % (books in various languages in home libraries).



These data permit a modification of existing ideas, also represented in some scientific studies, that the most significant boundary of values in the identity of a modern person lies between the original (ethnically inherited) values and the values constructed by a modern society (national). Such opposition between original and constructed values is typical of people's identity in those societies which are just going through the transition from a traditional, feudal society to a modern type of society, capitalism. For present-day Latvia this transition is certainly in the remote past. But what is important for society in Latvia is the existence of large ethnic communities which are, to a certain degree, competing.

For this multicultural society, many values, most significantly a person's mother tongue, are not exclusively elements of ethnicity inherited from one's ancestors.

In a world of inter-cultural communication characterized by extensive information exchange in private as well as public lives, language is the most significant mode of socialization and facilitates full inclusion in public structures. Hence it is not surprising that language is imbued with such value that in a multi-ethnic and multicultural society its use (or refusal to use it) comes to represent a world-view and ideological choice. The paramount importance that respondents attach to their mother tongue as a marker of their identity does not signify at all their commitment to a traditional way of life. A vividly expressed linguistic identity acts as a special form of manifestation and consolidation of a civil identity, which determines the mode of behaviour of the speakers in a modern multicultural society.

This idea has been revealed in various guises in the sociological, political and philosophical tradition of the last decades. J. Habermas, for example, considers that there has been an evident turn in scientific thought as well as common consciousness from a Cartesian "subject-orientated consciousness" to "social communicative action" in which the central place is allocated to a language (Habermas 1987). Linguistic identity largely symbolizes ethnic identity not only as a manifestation of inter-group boundaries, but also as one of the most important sources of a person's social capital in modern and post-modern society. The orientation of ethnic groups to cultivation of their linguistic identity is the result of the fact that social systems have adopted the character of communication systems. (Foucault 1970; Bourdieu 1977; Luhmann 1995; Habermas 1990; Giddens 1979; Wallerstein 1974).

That is why, in order to effectively adapt to life in such communicative systems, ethnic groups develop their linguistic identity. In Etienne Balibar's opinion, the role of a language in constructing ethnic identity is impossible to overestimate. It is language (along with race) that ties a person to ethnicity sources which can be actualized at any time. Balibar rightly underlines that such power of language in constructing a person's ethnic identity is not solely related to the legacy of a traditional society but is formed in the conditions of capitalism with its specific

system of education, bureaucratic administration, mass media and institution of democratic political participation. But the role of language as the main structural component of ethnic identity in the conditions of capitalism assigns it a specific flexibility, owing to which it becomes open to new members and their languages, and consequently, to ethnic assimilation (Balibar & Wallerstein 1991, pp. 96–100).

However, whereas E. Balibar has spoken about the establishment of an ethnic identity in the form of a linguistic identity in the conditions of capitalism in relation to all nations, the findings of our study and other research in Latvia demonstrate that this process involves ethnic minorities, too. And it is not important whether these ethnic minorities possess a well-developed social and cultural infrastructure (mass media, educational establishments at various levels, political parties, etc.) or cultivate their mother tongue mainly in the sphere of private communication: the aspiration to maintain the linguistic identity is a universal phenomenon.

“One’s own” and “alien” in ethnic division

One of the tasks of the study was to identify the level of tolerance towards people of other ethnic affiliation or religious background, and bearers of other cultural traditions. Thus, the respondents were asked to express their associations with the terms “one’s own” and “alien”.

The vast majority of respondents relate the term “one’s own” to those exhibiting similar moral and psychological qualities (54.6% of respondents), and to the accustomed milieu and relatives (35.1% of respondents). In general, the respondents relate the term “one’s own” to those belonging to the habitual social and cultural environment, and to moral values in 89.7% of cases. And only an absolute minority of respondents (0.8% of respondents) find it important to relate the term “one’s own” to the respondents’ ethnic or national origin, their mother tongue, etc. For example, seven ethnic Latvian respondents related the term “one’s own” to such concepts as “kindred people”, “Daugavpils”, “Motherland”, “my beloved Latgalian land” or “my ethnic origin”. Two ethnic Russian respondents related the term to the concepts “a resident of our country” and “an ethnic group”. Five respondents of Polish nationality associated it with the concepts “Latvians, Poles and Latgalian”, “residents of my city”, “people who live in Poland”, “one’s own people, country, language and culture”.

The term “alien” involves a variety of meanings. It can include cultural values which are left outside the usual framework of a person’s socialization and the content of his/her cultural capital. The same term can be applied when describing intolerable moral behaviour. According to the research findings, the residents of Daugavpils associate the term “alien”

mainly with those who are “unknown”, “unfamiliar” or “strange”, “the ones you do not feel like communicating with”. The term “alien” also characterizes people who are “aggressive” or “morally intolerable”. People who do not comply with the psychological and moral criteria of successful socialization and self-activation of life, as understood by the respondents, are referred to by the term “alien”. At the same time, a small number of respondents connected people with other ethnic or religious backgrounds with the term “alien”. Thus, for example, among 95 ethnic Latvian respondents there were eight people who applied the concept “alien” to “a person who lives in Latvia but does not love their country”, “a person who has come from another country”, “an alien language, culture”, “Jews, Arabs, Chinese”, “psychological features of the inhabitants of Africa”. Among 324 ethnic Russian respondents, only three expressed the view that “alien” was “a person of different ethnic background” or “a Latvian”. Among 77 Polish respondents there were only two people who applied this term to “alien people or language”, “and a proportion of Russians, Belarusians and Muslims”.

The data from the study show that ethnic origin does not form the key value at all for the residents of Daugavpils. In the multicultural environment of Daugavpils the members of various ethnic groups are more used to orienting themselves to the adopted universal moral values, family traditions and psychological affections in daily inter-ethnic contacts than to the markers of ethnic identity of their communication counterparts.

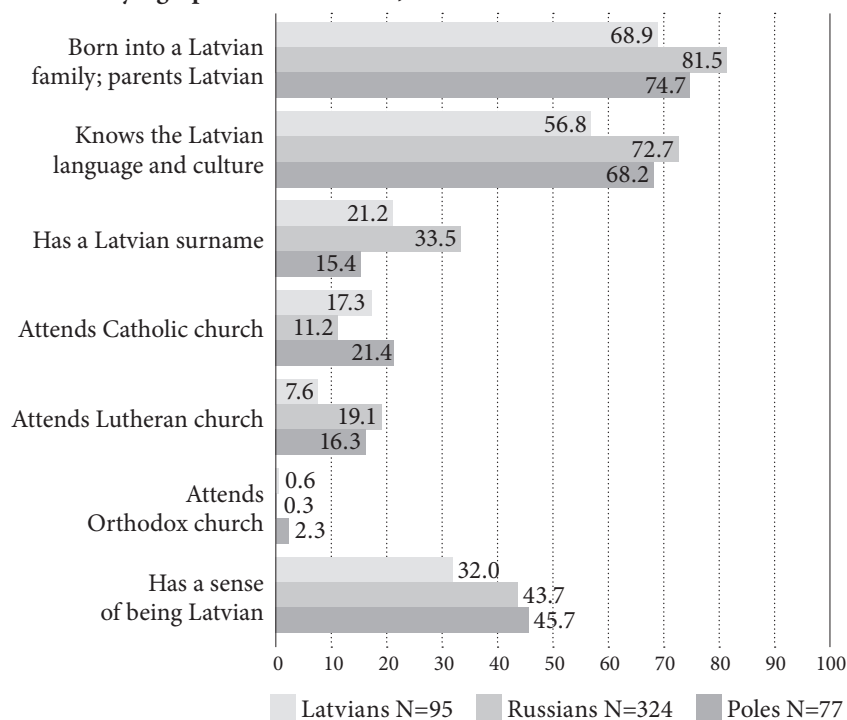
Within the frame of the study the respondents were asked: “What, in your opinion, is most important for identifying a person as a Latvian?” All the respondents, irrespective of their ethnic origin, were asked this question. And, as expected, the stereotypes (heterostereotypes) in the perception of Latvians by members of ethnic minorities were expressed more frequently in the answers to this question. For example, Russian respondents much more frequently than Latvians themselves thought that Latvian identity was related to the fact of birth in a Latvian family, knowledge of the Latvian language and culture, and having a Latvian surname, as well as to the fact that the person him- or herself felt Latvian. Moreover, the Russian respondents did not quite take into consideration the specific character of Latgale: they mainly connected Lutheran but not Catholic identity with Latvians (Table 15).

Table 15. Factors which in the respondents' opinion are the most significant for identifying a person as a Latvian, %.

	AR N=578	L N=95	R N=324	P N=77
Born into a Latvian family; parents Latvian	76.5	68.9	81.5	74.7
Knows the Latvian language and culture	67.8	56.8	72.7	68.2
Has a Latvian surname	28.7	21.2	33.5	15.4
Attends Catholic church	13.3	17.3	11.2	21.4
Attends Lutheran church	15.0	7.6	19.1	16.3
Attends Orthodox church	0.7	0.6	0.3	2.3
Has a sense of being Latvian	41.8	32.0	43.7	45.7

Symbols: AR – all respondents, L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles

Figure 22. Factors which in the respondents' opinion are the most significant for identifying a person as a Latvian, %.



Attitude towards the identities of ethnic minorities

Ethnic minorities give cultural life in Daugavpils an unusual character, seen not only in the private sphere, but also in the public environment of the city and the whole of Latgale. The presence of ethnic minorities in the public sphere is revealed in the socio-cultural infrastructure: mass media and educational institutions which function in the languages of these ethnic groups, as well as non-governmental organizations and political parties created by these ethnic minorities to express their specific interests. The task of this study was to ascertain the attitude of the Daugavpils population towards this unusual feature of the city's public life. The character of the attitude towards these forms of manifestation and development of the ethnic minorities' socio-cultural and political life shows to what extent the society perceives these groups as fully-fledged collective actors of public life. The respondents were presented with several possible kinds of attitude towards the mass media and educational institutions functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages, as well as the public organizations of ethnic minorities and political parties that express ethnic minority interests.

These are:

- Latvia's historical tradition;
- evidence of the weak position of the Latvian language (for assessing mass media and educational institutions in the ethnic minorities' languages);
- evidence of a weak government policy of ethnic integration (for assessing non-government organizations and political parties which express ethnic minority interests);

- a legacy from the Soviet period (for assessing mass media and educational institutions in the ethnic minorities' languages);
- the ethnic minorities' aspiration to preserve their culture and language;
- the ethnic minorities' aspiration to form a multi-community state;
- minorities' rights stimulated by the legislation of Latvia;
- a type of entrepreneurship (for assessing mass media and educational institutions in the ethnic minorities' languages);
- a way of influencing state policy (for assessing non-government organizations);
- a way in which entrepreneurs influence authority (for assessing political parties);
- the influence of foreign countries.

Out of all the suggested possibilities for assessing the activity of ethnic minorities in the public environment (mass media, educational institutions, non-government organizations and political parties), the most frequently chosen option was: "the ethnic minorities' aspiration to preserve their culture and language" (73.4–82.7% of respondents). This is evidence that the values of civil society as a whole include extensive manifestation of the ethnic minorities' activity in the public sphere of society in the consciousness of the Daugavpils population.

It is significant that the respondents do not think that the socio-cultural infrastructure of society in Latvia that either functions in the ethnic minorities' languages or reflects the specific interests of these groups signifies the weak position of the Latvian language as a state language or of the state policy of integration. (About one third to two fifths of all respondents agreed with these statements.) Most respondents did not agree with such a negative interpretation of various forms of public display of ethnic minority activities as "a legacy from the Soviet period", "a type of entrepreneurship", "a way of influencing state policy", "a way in which entrepreneurs influence authority" or "influence from foreign countries". However, the research data demonstrate that more than half of the respondents think that the types of public activities by ethnic minorities mentioned above act as a means of formation of a multi-community state (Tables 16–20). At the same time,

the data from the present study do not permit any definite conclusion regarding how the majority of the interviewed Daugavpils residents regard the idea of a multi-community Latvian state. In order to clarify the attitude of Daugavpils residents towards this fundamental issue of the development of integrated civil society in Latvia it would be necessary to carry out additional research.

Table 16. Suggested possible attitudes towards the mass media and educational institutions in the ethnic minorities' languages, as well as towards the ethnic minorities' public organizations and political parties expressing ethnic minority interests, %. All respondents (answer: "More or less evident").

	Mass media	Educational institutions	NGOs	Political parties
Latvia's historical tradition	46.2	51.8	57.6	42.0
Evidence of the weak position of the Latvian language	34.6	33.4	–	–
Evidence of a weak government policy of ethnic integration	–	–	37.4	43.4
A legacy from the Soviet period	42.3	44.9	–	–
The ethnic minorities' aspiration to preserve their culture and language	81.6	82.7	77.7	73.4
The ethnic minorities' aspiration to form a multi-community state	54.3	54.7	56.7	52.4
Minorities' rights stimulated by the legislation of Latvia	56.5	54.3	51.8	49.2
A type of entrepreneurship	43.5	34.7	–	–
A way of influencing state policy	–	–	48.6	–
A way in which entrepreneurs influence authority	–	–	–	44.2
Influence of foreign countries	27.8	30.7	29.5	25.7

Figure 23. Options of attitude towards mass media and educational institutions in the ethnic minorities' languages, %. All respondents. (Answer: "more or less evident")

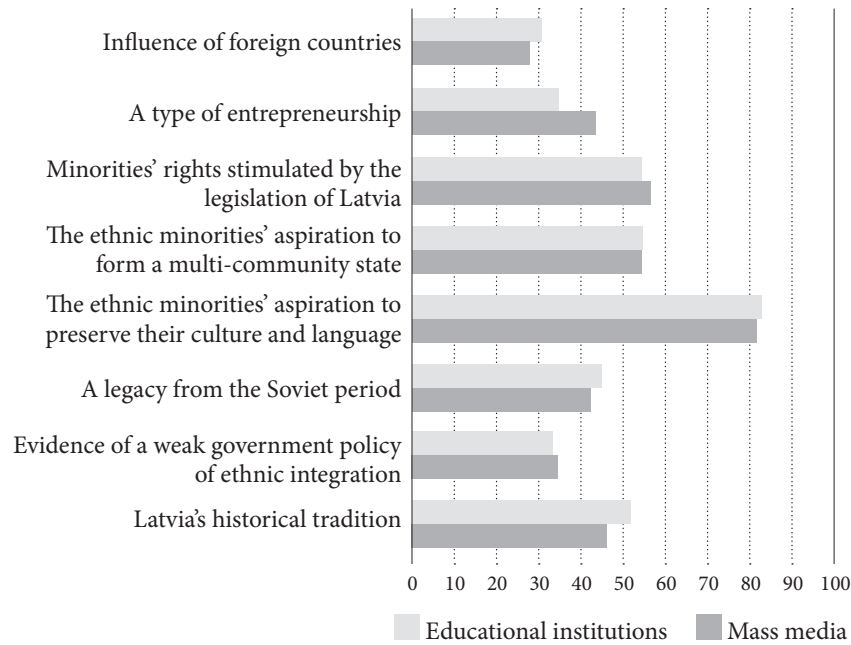


Figure 24. Suggested possible attitudes towards the ethnic minorities' public organizations and political parties expressing ethnic minority interests, %. All respondents (answer: "More or less evident").

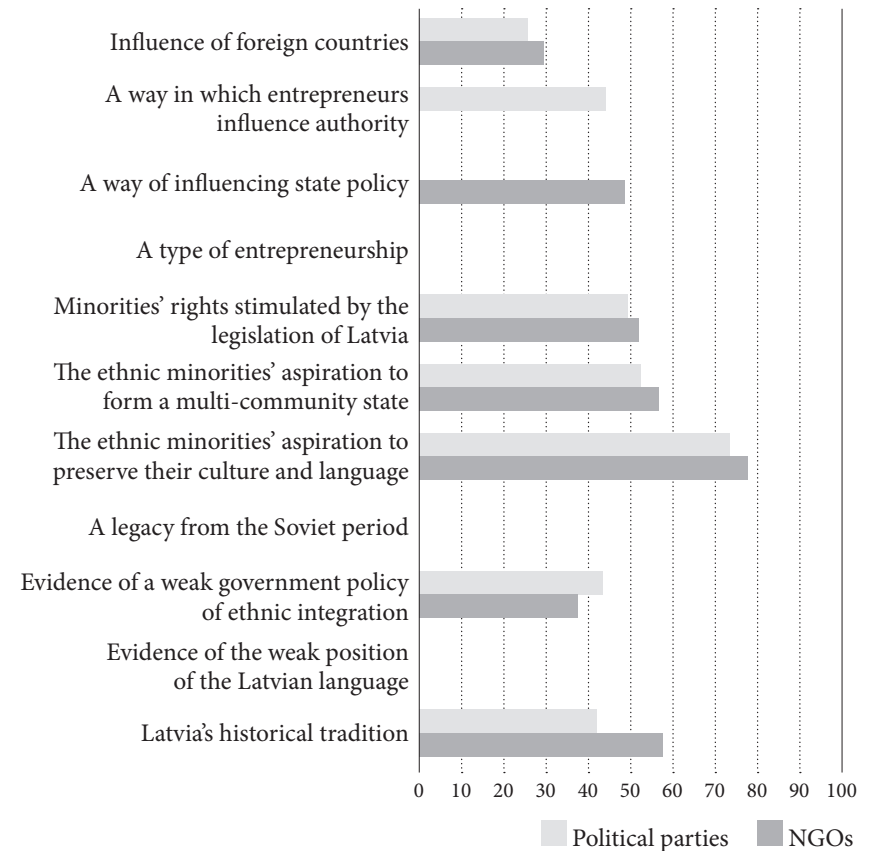


Table 17. Suggested possible attitudes towards the mass media among Latvians (N=95), Russians (N=324) and Poles (N=77), % (answer: “More or less evident”).

	AR	L	R	P	MW-LR	MW-LP
Latvia’s historical tradition	46.2	55.5	41.9	56.8	0.334	0.517
Evidence of the weak position of the Latvian language	34.6	31.5	34.2	26.0	0.544	0.431
A legacy from the Soviet period	42.3	46.3	41.3	27.5	0.948	0.020
The ethnic minorities’ aspiration to preserve their culture and language	81.6	73.3	83.5	83.3	0.000	0.004
The ethnic minorities’ aspiration to form a multi-community state	54.3	49.5	50.4	57.9	0.210	0.083
Minorities’ rights stimulated by the legislation of Latvia	56.5	60.7	58.5	60.9	0.297	0.405
A type of entrepreneurship	43.5	40.6	46.3	32.8	0.152	0.737
Influence of foreign countries	27.8	33.8	26.9	30.9	0.459	0.954

Symbols: AR – all respondents, L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles, MW-LR – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Russians), MW-LP – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Poles).

Figure 25. Suggested possible attitudes towards the mass media among Latvians (N=95), Russians (N=324) and Poles (N=77), % (answer: “More or less evident”).

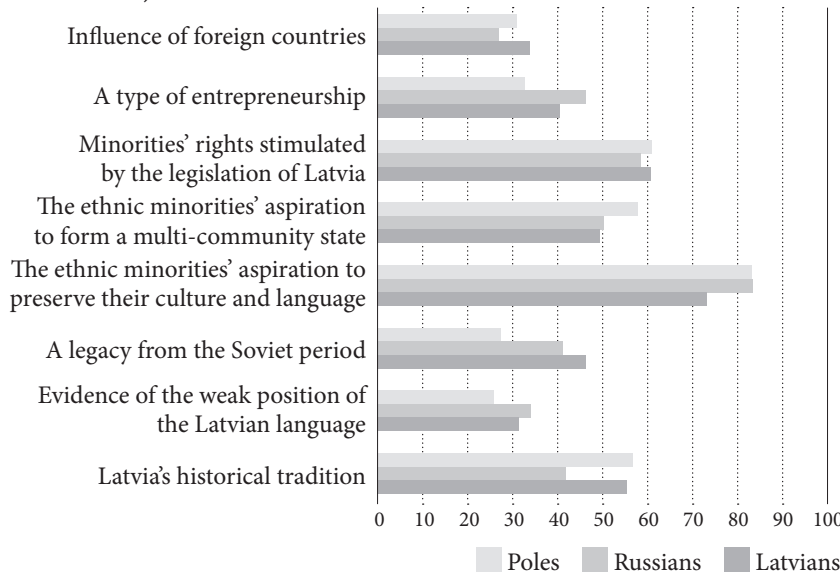


Table 18. Suggested possible attitudes towards educational institutions in the ethnic minorities’ languages among Latvians (N=95), Russians (N=324) and Poles (N=77), % (answer: “More or less evident”).

	AR	L	R	P	MW-LR	MW-LP
Latvia’s historical tradition	51.8	64.7	47.3	68.8	0.163	0.226
Evidence of the weak position of the Latvian language	33.4	34.1	34.1	29.5	0.391	0.708
A legacy from the Soviet period	44.9	59.2	45.7	28.9	0.102	0.001
The ethnic minorities’ aspiration to preserve their culture and language	82.7	70.9	85.5	82.6	0.000	0.000
The ethnic minorities’ aspiration to form a multi-community state	54.7	46.3	54.3	58.8	0.031	0.040
Minorities’ rights stimulated by the legislation of Latvia	54.3	53.3	60.4	54.7	0.028	0.356
A type of entrepreneurship	34.7	32.6	37.1	26.0	0.058	0.524
Influence of foreign countries	30.7	31.4	32.1	35.5	0.076	0.190

Symbols: AR – all respondents, L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles, MW-LR – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Russians), MW-LP – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Poles).

Figure 26. Suggested possible attitudes towards educational institutions in the ethnic minorities’ languages among Latvians (N=95), Russians (N=324) and Poles (N=77), % (answer: “more or less evident”).



Table 19. Suggested possible attitudes towards the ethnic minorities' public organizations among Latvians (N=95), Russians (N=324) and Poles (N=77), % (answer: "More or less evident").

	AR	L	R	P	MW-LR	MW-LP
Latvia's historical tradition	57.6	51.3	58.5	66.7	0.028	0.021
Evidence of a weak government policy of ethnic integration	37.4	33.0	39.0	30.9	0.631	0.838
The ethnic minorities' aspiration to preserve their culture and language	77.7	62.2	80.0	78.4	0.000	0.000
The ethnic minorities' aspiration to form a multi-community state	56.7	60.8	53.0	59.5	0.683	0.256
Minorities' rights stimulated by the legislation of Latvia	51.8	45.1	56.4	59.5	0.011	0.003
A way of influencing state policy	48.6	41.3	51.0	47.7	0.008	0.066
Influence of foreign countries	29.5	27.7	29.9	34.5	0.213	0.177

Symbols: AR – all respondents, L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles, MW-LR – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Russians), MW-LP – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Poles).

Figure 27. Suggested possible attitudes towards the ethnic minorities' public organizations among Latvians (N=95), Russians (N=324) and Poles (N=77), % (answer: "More or less evident").

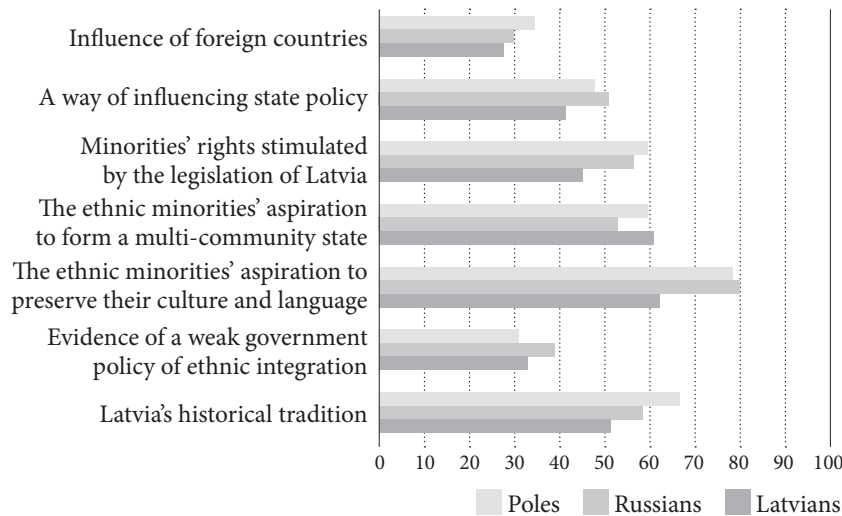


Table 20. Suggested possible attitudes towards the ethnic minorities' political parties expressing ethnic minority interests among Latvians (N=95), Russians (N=324) and Poles (N=77), % (answer: "more or less evident").

	AR	L	R	P	MW-LR	MW-LP
Latvia's historical tradition	42.0	46.6	41.4	37.8	0.349	0.192
Evidence of a weak government policy of ethnic integration	43.4	45.3	43.6	31.4	0.994	0.075
The ethnic minorities' aspiration to preserve their culture and language	73.4	63.5	76.3	59.5	0.001	0.787
The ethnic minorities' aspiration to form a multi-community state	52.4	46.5	55.1	48.2	0.726	0.706
Minorities' rights stimulated by the legislation of Latvia	49.2	49.3	53.7	49.4	0.350	0.753
A way in which entrepreneurs influence authority	44.2	42.6	42.3	48.2	0.885	0.812
Influence of foreign countries	25.7	31.5	24.1	27.2	0.590	0.938

Symbols: AR – all respondents, L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles, MW-LR – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Russians), MW-LP – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Poles).

Figure 28. Suggested possible attitudes towards the ethnic minorities' political parties expressing ethnic minority interests among Latvians (N=95), Russians (N=324) and Poles (N=77), % (answer: "More or less evident").



Preservation of the ethnic minorities' language and culture is understood by all groups of respondents as a task which requires active involvement by a great number of different actors. These include mass media and educational institutions in the ethnic minorities' languages, ethnic minority non-governmental organizations, as well as activities by businesses, political parties, religious and ethnic communities, and by the person him- or herself, in addition to interest on the part of the state. As can be seen, the overwhelming majority of Latvians, Russians and Poles consider themselves as playing the most important role in maintaining the ethnic groups' language and culture. The greatest hopes are placed on mass media and educational institutions in the ethnic groups' languages (84.8% and 86.5%, respectively, of all respondents), as well as on individual activity (84.4%). The least significant role in this process is attributed to the activity of businesses and political parties (56.9% and 56.7%, respectively).

The following interpretation of these data might be given. Preservation of the ethnic groups' language and culture in a modern society is impossible outside the system of modern education financially backed by the state and, on the whole, without the interest of the state itself in maintaining the ethnic diversity of a civil society. The most significant role is attributed to mass media in the ethnic groups' languages, which supports the multicultural information environment on an everyday basis and serves as the most important manifestation of the citizens' ethnic identity in the public sphere. Crucially significant is the respondents' opinion that the mother tongue and preservation of culture also depend on a person's individual stance. This fact denotes the strong actualization of liberal values as a factor in ethnic identity maintenance among Daugavpils residents.

However, such institutions of a civil society and market economy as political parties and businesses have not yet acquired real authority in public consciousness as forces able to solve efficiently important social and cultural issues faced by society in Latvia. Latvian researchers have repeatedly pointed out the low authority of political parties in society, an attitude connected primarily with the parties' strong dependence on entrepreneurial structures, which, in its turn, means that political parties mainly realize private rather than national interests. Besides this,

the citizens of Latvia do not have well-developed skills of political participation, social solidarity, etc. As a result, political parties in Latvia, as in Poland, are numerically small political organizations. According to researchers, the present structure of Latvian political parties does not stimulate the process of political participation among the citizens of Latvia.

Preserving the mother tongue and culture is a significant task for members of all ethnic groups in Latgale, Latvians and ethnic minorities alike. It should be pointed out that the proportion of respondents from ethnic minorities (Russians and Poles) attributing the greatest significance in preserving a language and culture to such factors as mass media and educational institutions in the ethnic groups' languages, minority public institutions, activities of religious and ethnic communities, people's individual activities and interest on the part of the state turned out to be larger than the proportion of ethnic Latvian respondents holding such views. Apparently, these data indicate that, compared to Latvians, the members of ethnic minorities perceive a greater threat to the preservation of their mother tongue and culture.

The importance of studying the language identity of people in Latgale, along with ethnic and national identities, is particularly appreciated by researchers working in this region. This was demonstrated, for example, by a comprehensive study in 2006–2009 "Study of the ethno-linguistic situation in Latgale in the period 2006–2009". The authors of the study consider that adequate examination of ethnic diversity in Latgale and in Latvia as a whole is possible only if the residents' national identity is examined, including the identities of ethnic groups: "A peculiarity of Latvia as well as Latgale is in the fact that there is a national identity along with the Latvian ethnicity, besides which this national identity in Latvia consists of two parts: a tie between Latvian identity and the state, and the presence of people of other nationalities. Every ethnos living in Latvia is original and unique." It is important that the research methodology is not based on a concept of normative subordination of languages and linguistic identities in Latgale. For example, the findings of the present study in Daugavpils have shown that 33.2% of respondents wish to improve their skills in speaking, reading and writing in Latvian, with corresponding figures of 31.5% for

Russian and 28.8% for Latgalian. The share of the respondents who believe that it is impossible to live a normal life in Daugavpils without knowing the Latvian language is 57.3%, with corresponding figures of 78.5% for Russian and 20.8% for Latgalian. The proportion of respondents who find it important to use the Latvian language in administrative institutions is 55.3%, with a figure of 41.9% for the Latgalian and Russian languages (Šuplinska, Lazdiņa 2009).

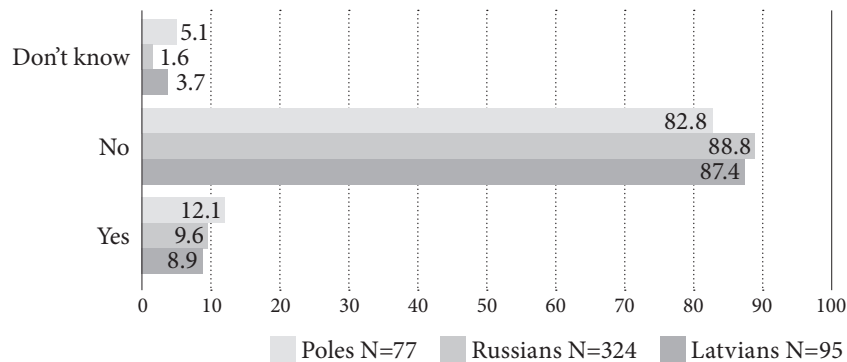
Assessment of ethnic relations in Daugavpils

Members of the largest ethnic groups in Daugavpils, namely Russians, Latvians and Poles, who consider that there have been conflicts on the grounds of people's ethnic origin or religious background in Daugavpils mentioned inter-ethnic conflicts between Russians and Latvians (Table 21). Latvians mentioned conflicts caused by the choice of the language of communication as well as conflicts relating to the historical past. Russian and Polish respondents mentioned such causes of conflict as the choice of the language of communication, school reform, and the attitude to Russia and the ethnic policy of the USSR.

Table 21. Do the respondents consider that there have been conflicts on the grounds of people's ethnic origin or religious background in Daugavpils, %.

	All respondents N=578	Latvians N=95	Russians N=324	Poles N=77
Yes	9.2	8.9	9.6	12.1
No	88.0	87.4	88.8	82.8
Don't know	2.8	3.7	1.6	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 29. Do the respondents consider that there have been conflicts on the grounds of people's ethnic origin or religious background in Daugavpils, %.



In order to improve international relations between Latvia and Poland, in the opinion of Latvians, Poland needs to co-operate more in the economic sphere (including provision of direct economic aid), culture, science, education and student exchange. A large number of Latvian respondents are quite satisfied with the level of international relations and do not think that Poland needs to do anything in order to improve them. It is important for Latvia to be oriented towards fruitful economic and cultural cooperation with Poland. At the same time, a number of respondents believe that Latvia needs to pay more attention to its ethnic minorities.

Three quarters of the Russian respondents suggested improving Latvian-Russian relations. Russian respondents consider that, in order to improve relations, Russia has to be open to dialogue, greater tolerance, compromise, development of economic cooperation (including provision of direct economic aid) and support for the Russian population. Moreover, a significant number of Russian respondents believe that it is the Latvian side that has to improve international relations. Five Russian respondents consider that Russia should apologize for the persecution under Stalin. 85% of the Russian respondents found it necessary to express their suggestions for Latvia. They suggested the following: "Latvia should develop cooperation with Russia, be open to dialogue, be "simpler", relinquish ambitions, demonstrate a friendly attitude, be more tolerant towards the Russian population, grant

citizenship to non-citizens, forget the past in international relations, remove nationalists from the government, waive visas for the citizens of Russian and reconsider its policy in relations with Russia."

About 40% of the Latvian respondents formulated their vision of the ways to improve Polish-Latvian international relations, and 65% of the Latvian respondents expressed their views on the ways to improve Russian-Latvian international relations. These suggestions are related to institutional changes (return the Abrene Region, introduce visa-free regulations with Latvia). There are also suggestions that Russia should change its negative moral and political position towards Latvia (for example, "to become more honest", to press for "a change of the negative attitude towards Latvians in the Russian mass media", "not to interfere in Latvia's internal affairs"). The suggestions for normal economic and cultural cooperation between the countries, increasing the volume of investment in the Latvian economy and striving for compromise with Latvia on various issues, were mentioned most frequently. At the same time, about 65% of the Latvian respondents expressed specific recommendations for Latvia. Thus, Latvians expressed their opinions about the necessity for institutional changes in Latvian national policy (for example, to grant citizenship to non-citizens, "to simplify visa regulations") as well as suggestions for improving the moral and political position of the country ("to be friendlier, more tolerant", "to recall the past less frequently", "to meet more frequently", "not to discriminate against the Russian population"). The vast majority of the respondents expect from the government of Latvia the establishment of extensive economic and cultural co-operation, up to the acceptance of economic aid from Russia. Some respondents believe that Latvia is doing a lot in order to establish normal Latvian-Russian relations.

In the opinion of 60% of the Russian respondents, in order to improve inter-ethnic Latvian-Russian relations, Latvians could do the following: be friendlier and more tolerant towards all ethnic groups, give equal rights to both Latvians and Russians, grant citizenship to people who wish to obtain it, abandon the policy of a single state language in Latvia, cease to impose a negative attitude towards the USSR on the Russians in Latvia and forget the bad events in the past. As can be seen from the above, a larger proportion of Russian respondents relate the

improvement of inter-ethnic relations in Latvia primarily to institutional changes in the ethnic policy of the Latvian state, and to a refusal to recognize the status of the Latvian language as the only state language. Russians suggested that Latvians should “correct their historical memory” regarding the period when Latvia was in the USSR.

Only 40% of Latvian respondents found it necessary to express their suggestions on the changes they expect from Russians in order to improve inter-ethnic relations. If we compare this proportion with the 65% of respondents who expressed their suggestions to Russia and Latvia for promoting international relations, it is fair to assert that Latvian-Russian international relations involve more complicated issues than Latvian-Russian inter-ethnic relations in the consciousness of the Latvian residents of the city of Daugavpils. Latvians suggested that the Russian people should contribute more to Latvia and its culture, be more active and friendly, should not impose their ideas regarding the national structure of Latvia and should co-operate more with Latvians.

Among Polish respondents, 60% found it important to present their opinion about the possibility of improving Latvian-Polish international relations from the Polish side. They consider that Poland needs to co-operate more with Latvia, compromise in resolving complicated issues, organize trips for people from Latvia to Poland and politically support the Latvian government and the Polish ethnic minority. A significant number of Polish respondents believe that Poland is already doing a lot in developing co-operation with Latvia. In relation to Latvia, about 60% of the Polish respondents think that it is important to develop various types of co-operation, as well as giving more attention to the Polish minority, providing financial support to Polish schools and communities in Latvia, granting certain privileges to Polish entrepreneurs and granting citizenship to Poles born in Latvia.

About half of the Polish respondents expressed their suggestions and expectations for improving Latvian-Polish inter-ethnic relations. They consider that Latvians should be more tolerant towards ethnic minorities and grant citizenship to all the people living in Latvia. Some Poles attach importance to granting the Russian language the status of a second state language.

The low degree of activation of the ethnic components of identity in the consciousness and behaviour of Daugavpils residents is connected with the fact that they perceive the city’s multi-ethnic environment as friendly. Only 9.2% of the respondents believe that there have been ethnically or religiously motivated conflicts in Daugavpils during the last few years. The respondents who consider that there have been such conflicts in the city more often mention confrontation between Latvians and Russians (about the issues of using the Latvian language in public life, in the labour market or in the system of education; about the standard of knowledge of Latvian as the state language among the Russian population; about the status of Russians in Latvia; about issues relating to Latvian history; and everyday conflicts connected with ethnic origin).

Since the respondents singled out Latvian-Russian relations among all possible complicated or conflict-prone inter-ethnic relations, it seems reasonable to characterize them. The peculiarity of this latent or real conflict lies in the fact that people are conscious of complicated, even problematic characteristics of international relations between Latvia and Russia. Tables 22–23 present the assessment of these relations by two sub-groups of respondents: Latvians and Russians.

Table 22. The character of inter-ethnic relations in Daugavpils, %.

	Latvian-Polish inter-ethnic relations		Latvian-Russian inter-ethnic relations	
	Latvians N=95	Poles N=77	Latvians N=95	Russians N=324
Very good	27.6	31.6	16.4	5.5
Fairly good	37.9	50.1	39.9	44.6
Average	12.4	12.0	25.6	34.6
Bad	–	–	8.1	10.0
Very bad	–	–	1.9	1.5
No answer	22.2	6.3	8.1	3.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 30. The character of Latvian-Polish inter-ethnic relations in Daugavpils, %.

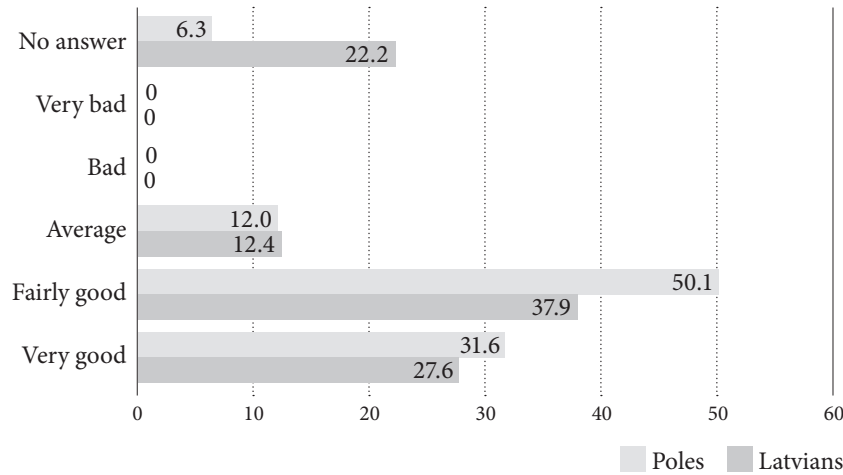


Figure 31. The character of Latvian-Russian inter-ethnic relations in Daugavpils, %.

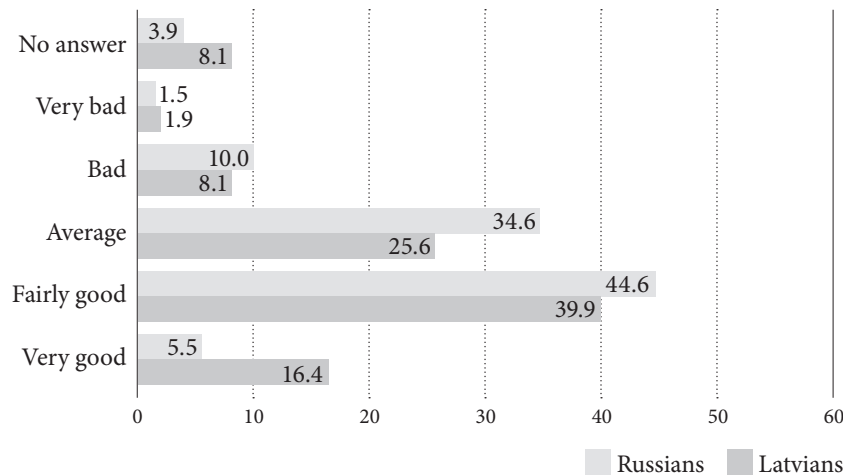


Table 23. The character of international relations between Latvia and Poland, and between Latvia and Russia, %.

	International relations between Latvia and Poland		International relations between Latvia and Russia	
	Latvians N=95	Poles N=77	Latvians N=95	Russians N=324
Very good	25.0	18.8	13.0	2.0
Fairly good	38.8	58.5	20.8	7.8
Average	14.3	15.6	36.9	35.1
Bad	1.2	1.3	22.0	37.6
Very bad	-	0.7	0.7	13.2
No answer	20.7	5.1	6.7	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 32. The character of international relations between Latvia and Poland, %.

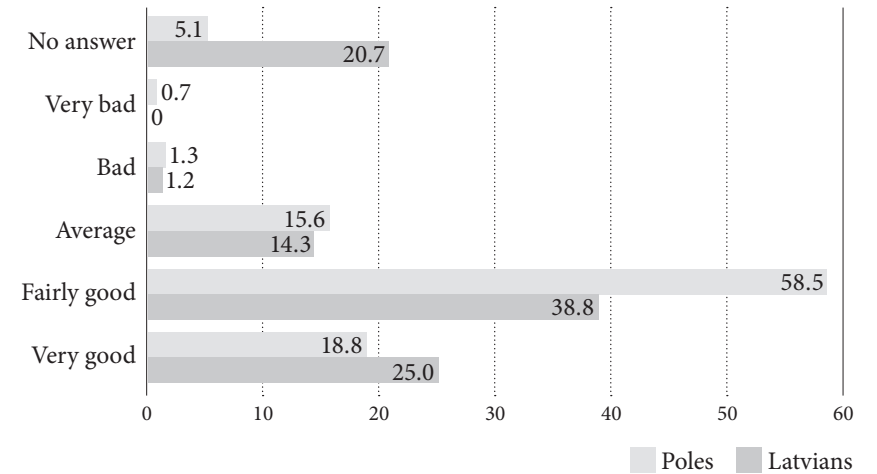
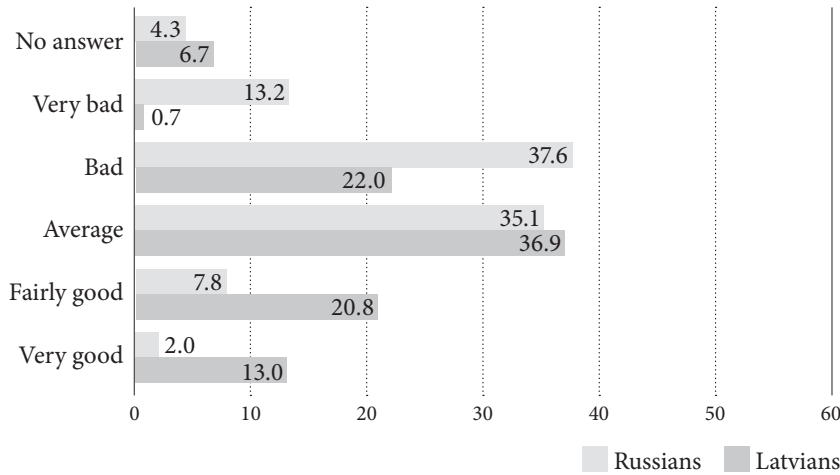


Figure 33. The character of international relations between Latvia and Russia, %.



The characteristics of inter-ethnic relations in Daugavpils as well as in Latvia as a whole are rooted in history. The respondents were asked how to react to the negative chapters in the history of relations among the three largest ethnic groups of the city – the Latvians, Russians and Poles. The following options were offered: it is better to forget the past and to begin building good neighbourly relations once again; the past cannot be forgotten, but it shouldn't be discussed publicly; in order to achieve good inter-ethnic relations it is necessary for the ethnic groups to directly discuss the past; the past should be discussed aloud, telling the truth. (Table 24)

Table 24. Suggested possibilities for inter-ethnic Latvian-Russian relations, Polish-Latvian relations and Polish-Russian relations, %.

	Latvian-Russian relations		Polish-Latvian relations		Polish-Russian relations	
	L	R	L	P	R	P
It is better to forget what happened and begin to build up good neighbourly relations once again	55.7	64.9	50.5	48.6	66.7	42.9
It is impossible to forget the past, but it should not be discussed publicly	15.2	13.8	12.0	14.7	9.5	13.4
In order to achieve good relations, each ethnic group should discuss the past openly with the other	11.3	6.5	6.4	11.3	7.5	17.1
The past must be discussed aloud and truthfully, since the truth is more important than shameful mutual understanding	9.7	6.8	10.3	6.8	4.8	7.2
Other	3.2	3.7	3.3	5.7	1.7	1.6
No answer	4.9	4.3	17.5	12.9	9.8	17.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Symbols: L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles

Figure 34. Suggested possibilities for inter-ethnic Latvian-Russian relations, %.

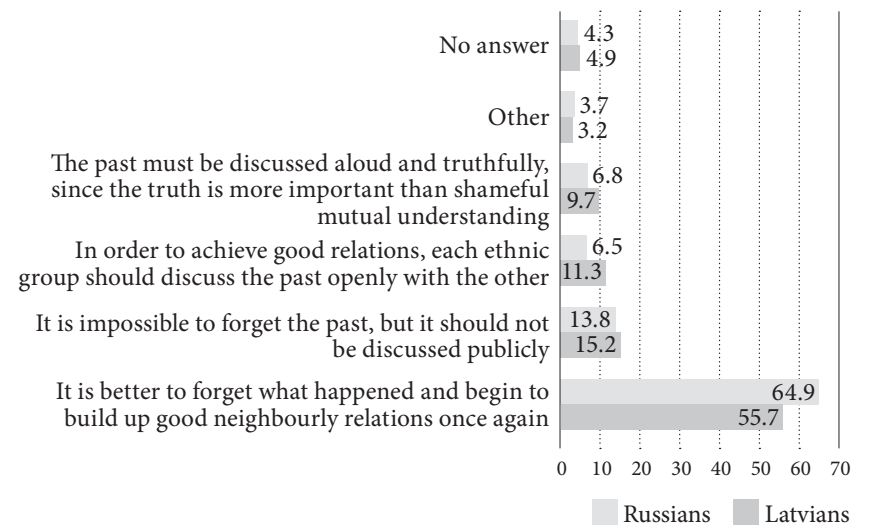


Figure 35. Suggested possibilities for interethnic Polish-Latvian relations, %.

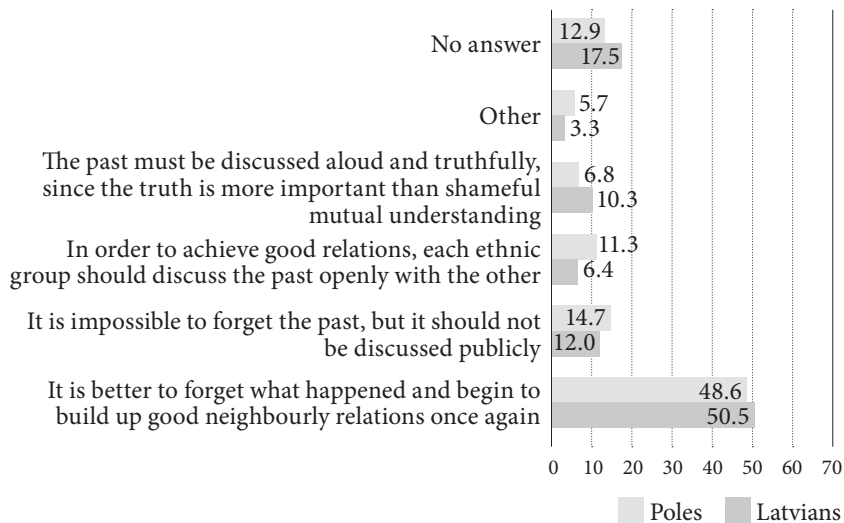
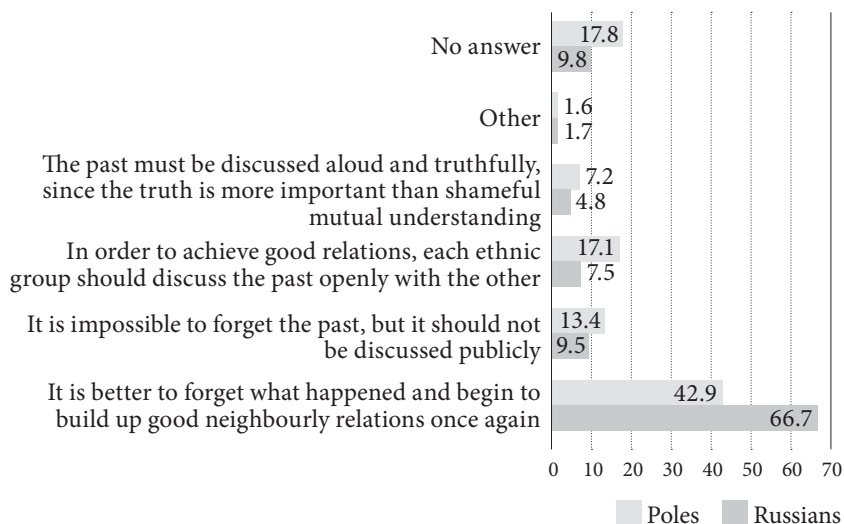


Figure 36. Options for resolving inter-ethnic Polish-Russian relations, %.



As can be seen from the data in Table 24, the vast majority of respondents consider that the negative chapters in the history of relations among Latvians, Poles and Russians are better forgotten (52.8–63.0% of respondents). And if we add those who consider that these events cannot be forgotten but should preferably not to be discussed in public, this means that almost three quarters of the respondents believe that the negative chapters of inter-ethnic history should best not to be discussed in the Latvian public space (63.4–76.1% of respondents).

It is clear that these data require a comprehensive assessment. Inter-ethnic concord in such a city, where large ethnic communities have interacted historically, is a real value, and the prevailing aspiration of the respondents to preserve this peace should be welcomed. Society proves to be rather indifferent to the calls of politicians, scholars, journalists and activists of non-governmental organizations to develop a public discourse on complicated issues of Latvia's public life and history. But in the information society it is impossible to remain isolated from history, and from knowledge, assessment and emotions relating to history. The residents of Daugavpils probably relate the public discourse on ethnic issues to the aspirations of certain political forces for ethnic mobilization of their supporters. This seems a feasible explanation: as a rule, ethnic issues are much more strongly expressed in the discourse of conservative than liberal political forces in Latvian political life.

The restoration of Latvia's independence led to the institutionalization of a selective citizenship policy, creating a large, albeit steadily decreasing, category of permanent residents who do not have Latvian citizenship. In our study of three main ethnic groups, only one Latvian was not a citizen of the country, while there were 11 non-citizens (14%) among Poles and 51 (15.8%) among Russians. On the other hand, this special category was not numerous enough among the Poles to be put under systematic quantitative scrutiny. This led us to compare Russian non-citizens with Polish non-citizens from an earlier survey of Daugavpils Poles conducted by J. Kurczewski and M. Fuszara in 2007 (Kurczewski 2009). In that survey Poles not having Latvian citizenship more often opted for a European identity than Poles having Latvian citizenship (41% as compared with 29% of the latter) and less often indicated a Latvian identity (25% and 41%, respectively). Another

perceptible difference was when comparing the replies to questions on the sense of public influence. 78% of Polish non-citizens and 48% of Polish citizens of Latvia assessed their influence on Latvian politics as very small or small. Also, the distribution of attitudes towards the Soviet past differed between these two categories: 34% of non-citizens and 17% of citizens regarded the Soviet past favourably as compared to present-day democracy. One concludes that among the Poles not having Latvian passports the sense of alienation is much more widespread and the bond with the all-Latvian polity less frequent.

It was interesting to see whether the same difference might be found when comparing Russian citizens of Latvia with non-citizens. Similarly to the case of Poles, Russians not holding Latvian citizenship less often chose to identify themselves with Latvia (60% as compared with 83% among Russians citizens) and more often identified with Europe (72% and 62%, respectively). In contrast to Poles, however, Russians with or without Latvian citizenship do not differ in terms of their perceived political influence or in their attitude towards the Soviet past.

That the political status of residents has some relationship to their political attitudes and opinions seems a plausible hypothesis. As seen above, this hypothesis was not confirmed in two cases where we might expect it. Neither were there any differences between citizens and non-citizens when asked about their perceived knowledge of municipal politics. When looking closer at this matter, we have found such a relationship in another area.

Table 25. Assessment of Latvian-Russian relations by Russians citizens of Latvia and non-citizens living in Daugavpils. All respondents, %.

	In Daugavpils		In Latvia	
	Citizens	Non-citizens	Citizens	Non-citizens
Very good	4.8	9.9	1.8	3.6
Rather good	46.8	28.9	8.6	5.3
Not good, not bad	35.7	33.4	36.1	28.9
Rather bad	7.0	26.1	36.9	40.7
Very bad	1.5	1.8	12.2	21.5

Figure 37. Assessment of Latvian-Russian relations by Russian citizens of Latvia and non-citizens living in Daugavpils. Relations in Daugavpils, %.

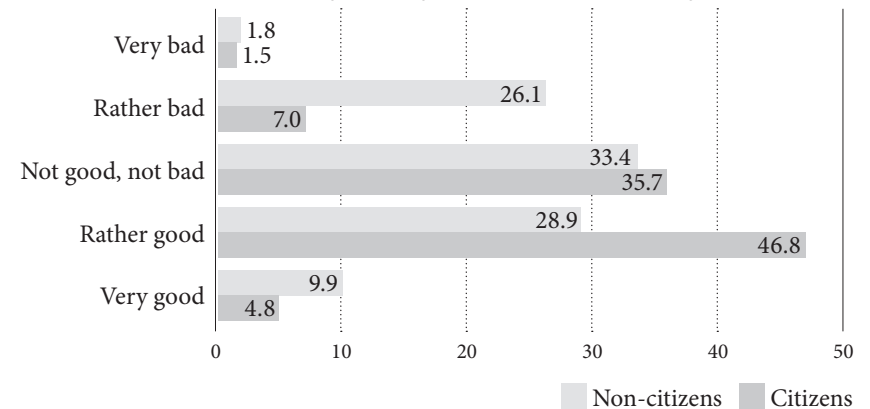
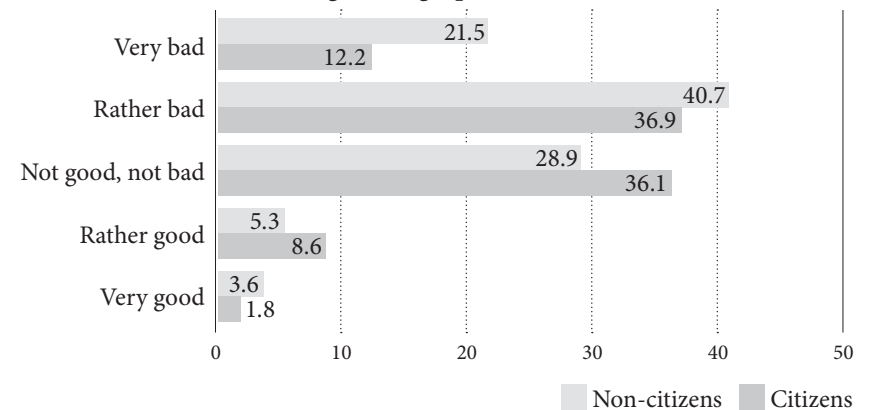


Figure 38. Assessment of Latvian-Russian relations by Russian citizens of Latvia and non-citizens living in Daugavpils. Relations in Latvia, %.



The picture that emerges from the above table is clear. The majority of Russians with Latvian passports (51.6%) give a positive assessment of Russian-Latvian relations in Daugavpils, while this is the case with little more than one third (38.8%) of Russians without a Latvian passport. On the other hand, while only 8.5% of the citizens in the city give a negative assessment of these relations, this is the opinion held by as many as 27.9% of non-citizens living in Daugavpils. Both categories share

a predominantly negative assessment of Russian-Latvian relations at the national level, but again there is a difference in the frequency of such opinions: 49.1% among citizens and 62.2% among non-citizens. We cannot decide on the causal relationship, but non-citizenship is certainly linked with a negative perception of inter-ethnic relations even at the local level (Table 25).

What has surprised us is the lack of difference between citizens and non-citizens when asked about the models of ethnic relations and the role of ethnic institutions in public life in Latgale. This underlines the communality of experience and permits the suggestion that not having a Latvian passport is itself only one element in a set of aspects of inter-ethnic relations. The frequency with which this aspect is raised when speaking about official policies among citizens also points to the fact that the problem is not isolated, though it colours the perspective of the non-citizens more strongly. Even when it comes to declared public activity, citizens do not differ from non-citizens, except – of course – for participation in elections. The lack of citizenship is a negative experience, but everyday life in Daugavpils is no different for those holding and those not holding a Latvian passport.

Models for a multicultural community in Latgale

The ethnic identity of various groups (members of the titular nation and ethnic minorities) in modern society is always related to universal civil values. The practices of European national states with a multi-ethnic population abound in examples where ethnic values have either harmoniously co-existed with universal common civil values and human rights, or have been ranked higher than the latter, or have been sacrificed to the latter. The present study also sought the answer to the question: “What is the most acceptable model of correlation between ethnic identity, human rights and common civil values in the consciousness of the respondents in Daugavpils?”

If we abstract ourselves from the specific situation of Latgale, this issue is being analysed in the scientific literature on ethno-sociology and ethno-political science within the context of discussions among the adherents of liberalism and multiculturalism, who build optimal models for multi-ethnic and multicultural societies in different ways. The proponents of liberal thinking insist that ethnic differences in such societies can be manifested mainly in people’s private lives and in human rights; common civil values, which express the culture of the titular nation, should dominate in the public environment. Ethnic minorities’ identity should not lead to self-segregation of these groups in civil society, and should not be opposed to the values of society as a whole or those of the titular nation (Barry 2001; Nozick 1974; Rawls 1971 and others). The proponents of numerous trends of multiculturalism believe that ethnic minorities in modern multi-ethnic societies possess the right to develop their own cultural life (Parekh 2002; Kymlicka 1995; Häbermäss 2012).

In the course of our research we offered respondents the opportunity to construct the most acceptable model of a civil society with regard to Latgale on the assumption of the following basic values:

- civil values come before the values of ethnic groups;
- civil values are formed by the values of ethnic groups;
- Latvian values should prevail in Latgale;
- Latvian and Latgalian values should prevail in Latgale;
- Latgalian values should prevail in Latgale;
- human values rather than the values of ethnic groups should prevail in society.

The findings of the study revealed a very interesting peculiarity when constructing the optimal model for a multicultural community in Latgale. It turned out that in the respondents' consciousness the values of ethnic groups, common civil values and human rights do not conflict as the basic principles for constructing an optimal model of the society: in each case, more than half of the respondents supported the dominance of human rights in a civil society, the idea of a civil society as the realization of the values of ethnic groups which this society consists of, and the idea of common civil values being more significant than the values of ethnic groups (Table 26). To some extent, the research data cast doubt on the established stereotypes created by the apriorism of liberalism as well as multiculturalism. Indeed, in modern multi-ethnic society common civil values, the values of ethnic groups and human rights should not be opposed.

Figure 39. The optimal model for a multicultural community in Latgale, %. All respondents (answer: "More or less optimal").

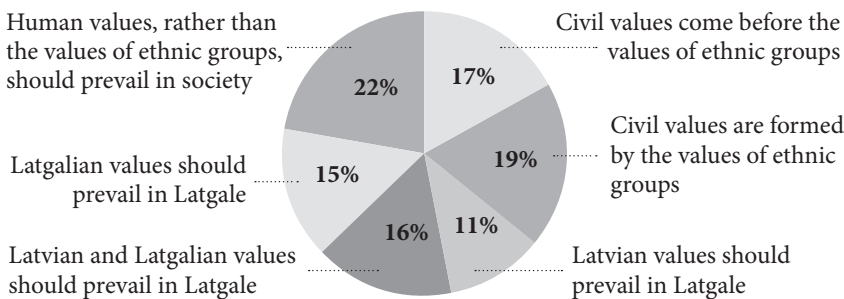
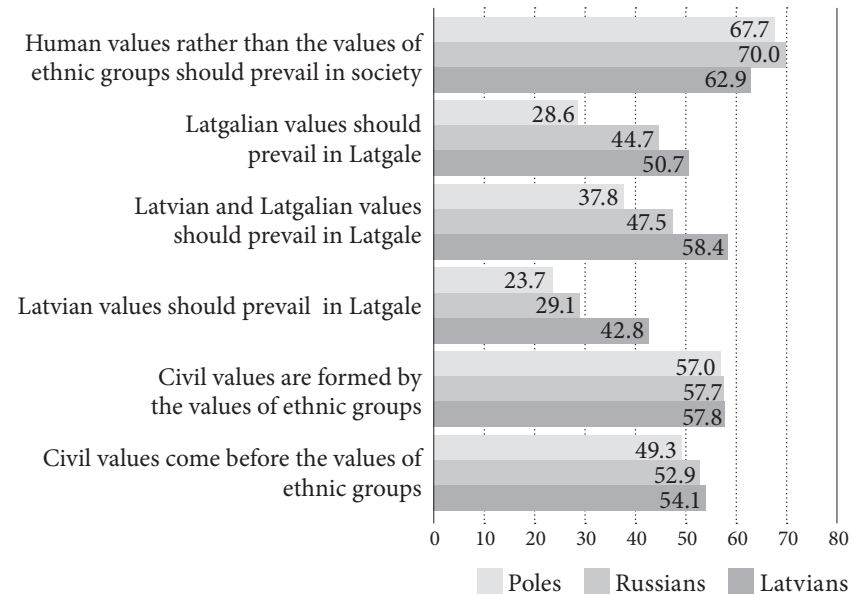


Table 26. The optimal model for a multicultural community in Latgale, % (answer: "More or less optimal").

	AR	L	R	P	MW-LR	MW-LP
Civil values come before the values of ethnic groups	51.4	54.1	52.9	49.3	0.866	0.104
Civil values are formed by the values of ethnic groups	58.6	57.8	57.7	57.0	0.181	0.154
Latvian values should prevail in Latgale	31.8	42.8	29.1	23.7	0.213	0.021
Latvian and Latgalian values should prevail in Latgale	48.6	58.4	47.5	37.8	0.204	0.019
Latgalian values should prevail in Latgale	44.4	50.7	44.7	28.6	0.510	0.014
Human values rather than the values of ethnic groups should prevail in society	67.4	62.9	70.0	67.7	0.397	0.510

Symbols: AR – all respondents, L – Latvians, R – Russians, P – Poles, MW-LR – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Russians), MW-LP – Mann-Whitney U Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (comparing Latvians and Poles).

Figure 40. The optimal model for a multicultural community in Latgale, %. Latvians, Russians and Poles (answer: "More or less optimal").



The present study confirms the ideas of those sociologists who believe that in modern societies it cannot be expected that people will lose interest in their ethnic identity. Moreover, a particular ethnic group perceives its identity not only as a boundary separating it from other ethnic groups. Ethnic identity involves values that a person and ethnic community accept as the most significant resource for integration into complex bureaucratized modern societies. A perception of ethnic identity as the most significant resource for social aspiration is characteristic already of the work of M. Weber, who believed that ethnicity enables a group of people to achieve and retain political power (Weber 1996, p. 35). Clifford Geertz, in his turn, emphasized the role of ethnicity in the formation of the social content of an individual, as well as its specific role in enhancing social solidarity in those societies where “traditions of civil politics” are still very weak (Geertz 1996, p. 41–42). It is demonstrated in the scholarly literature that activation of ethnic identity is important for strengthening the social solidarity of a group which has to compete for resources and influence in a multicultural society where the ethnic manifestation of social stratification is strongly revealed (Schermerhorn 1996, p. 17; Eriksen 1996, p. 28). Daniel Bell believed that in a modern bureaucratized society to strive for the revival of ethnicity was a need for small communities which could be controlled by common people (Bell 1996, p. 145). It is the ethnic groups’ understanding of their own identity in Daugavpils that is being reconstructed in processing the data gained during the present study.

Certain propositions of Fredrik Barth’s theory, such as the idea that in a situation of inter-cultural communication the identity of ethnic groups is not an immobile composition, identical to some system of cultural values, have been confirmed by the research. The ethnic identity is a boundary formed by the members of an ethnic group articulating those values which are crucial for this group’s existence in the multicultural environment. That is why, along with the values of “one’s own” ethnic culture and language, the values of other ethnic groups with which there is intensive interaction also constitute the group’s identity and, what is more important, shape the characteristics of its behaviour (Barth 1996, p. 76–82).

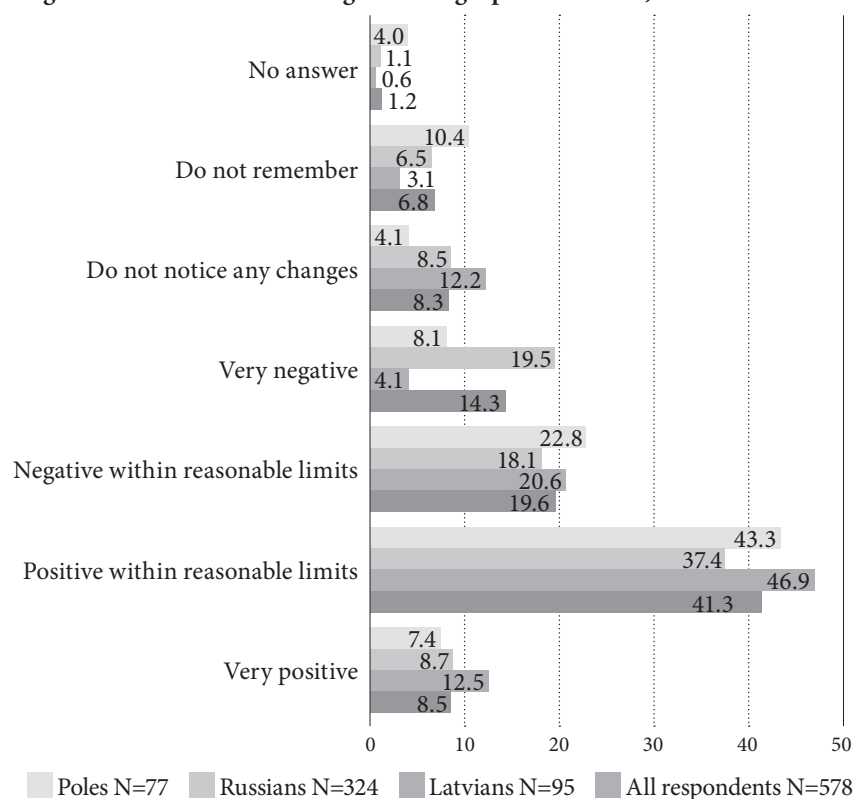
Political consciousness and political behaviour of Daugavpils residents

The research findings enable us to conclude that the residents of Daugavpils comprehend their ethnic identity within the context of the general socio-cultural, economic and political conditions of the life of the city and the whole country. The fact that the residents of the city do not tend to attach very much importance to ethnic identity in communication with other people is related to a relatively optimistic assessment of the changes which have been happening in the city during the last 20 years. Thus, 49.8% of respondents noted that “very positive” changes or changes that are “positive within reasonable limits” have happened in the city since 1991. At the same time, respondents who assessed these changes as “negative within reasonable limits” or “very negative” accounted for 33.9%. However, there are some differences between members of ethnic groups (Latvians, Poles and Russians) in the perception of these changes. Thus, the proportion of Latvians who consider that the changes in the city since the time Latvia restored its independence in 1991 are “very positive” and “positive within reasonable limits” was 59.4%; the figure for Poles is 50.7%; and the figure for Russians is 56.1% (Table 27). This difference in views among members of different ethnic groups regarding changes in the city after 1991 is most likely connected with the general assessment of the historical period when the restoration of Latvian statehood occurred. In our society, there are ethnic minorities which express a lack of faith in the possibility of creating a Latvian national state in a multi-ethnic society.

Table 27. Assessment of changes in Daugavpils since 1991, %.

	All respondents N=578	Latvians N=95	Russians N=324	Poles N=77
Very positive	8.5	12.5	8.7	7.4
Positive within reasonable limits	41.3	46.9	37.4	43.3
Negative within reasonable limits	19.6	20.6	18.1	22.8
Very negative	14.3	4.1	19.5	8.1
Do not notice any changes	8.3	12.2	8.5	4.1
Do not remember	6.8	3.1	6.5	10.4
No answer	1.2	0.6	1.1	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 41. Assessment of changes in Daugavpils since 1991, %.



However, it should be taken into consideration that the respondents' assessment of the changes in public life in Daugavpils and in Latvia as a whole after 1991 is connected with the whole set of perceptual and behavioural attitudes. As the research findings show, the respondents' attitude towards political events and institutions of the Republic of Latvia is largely defined by their insufficient influence on the life of society and the state, according to their own assessment, as well as by the weak development of popular participation in the country's public and political life. Thus, the research findings state that 76.2% of respondents find their influence in Daugavpils "very small" or "small", and this proportion turns out to be very high among all ethnic groups of respondents (70.8% among Latvians, 77.9% among Russians and 65.7% among Poles). Moreover, the low self-assessment of influence on life in Latvia as a whole turns out to be even more pronounced: 86.2% (Table 28).

Table 28. Self-assessment of influence in Daugavpils and in Latvia, %.

	All respondents N=578		Latvians N=95		Russians N=324		Poles N=77	
	D	LR	D	LR	D	LR	D	LR
Very big	1.4	1.1	3.8	3.2	0.6	0.3	2.4	1.8
Big	4.4	2.0	5.5	2.6	4.5	2.7	4.1	0.7
Moderate	17.9	10.1	19.3	12.6	16.9	8.9	27.7	18.0
Small	31.9	25.2	38.5	24.3	33.4	27.2	29.6	24.3
Very small	44.3	61.0	32.3	56.2	44.5	60.2	36.1	54.6
No answer	0.1	0.6	0.6	1.1	–	0.7	–	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Symbols: D –Daugavpils, LR – Latvia

Figure 42. Self-assessment of influence in Daugavpils and in Latvia. All respondents, %.

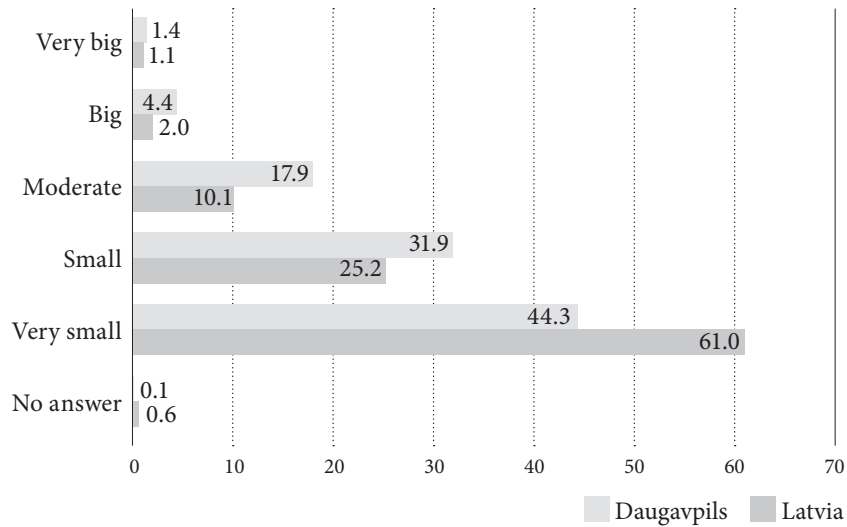


Figure 43. Self-assessment of influence in Daugavpils and in Latvia. Latvians, %.

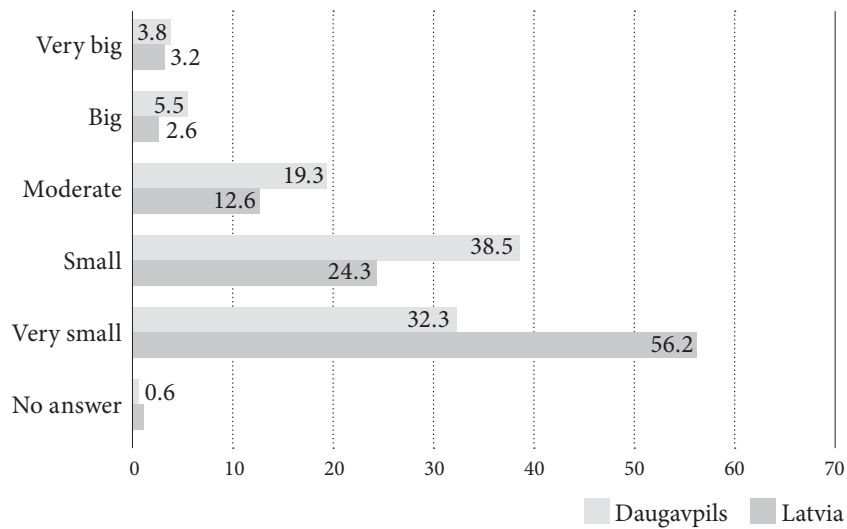


Figure 44. Self-assessment of influence in Daugavpils and in Latvia. Russians, %.

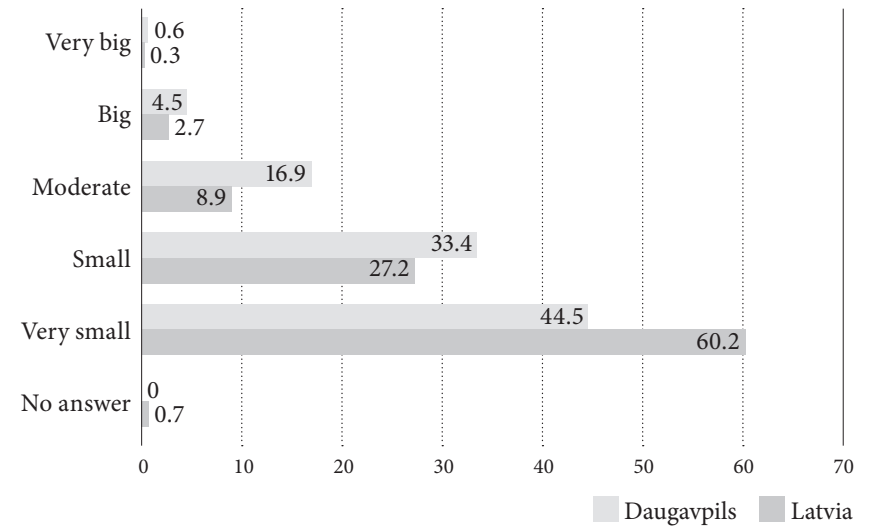
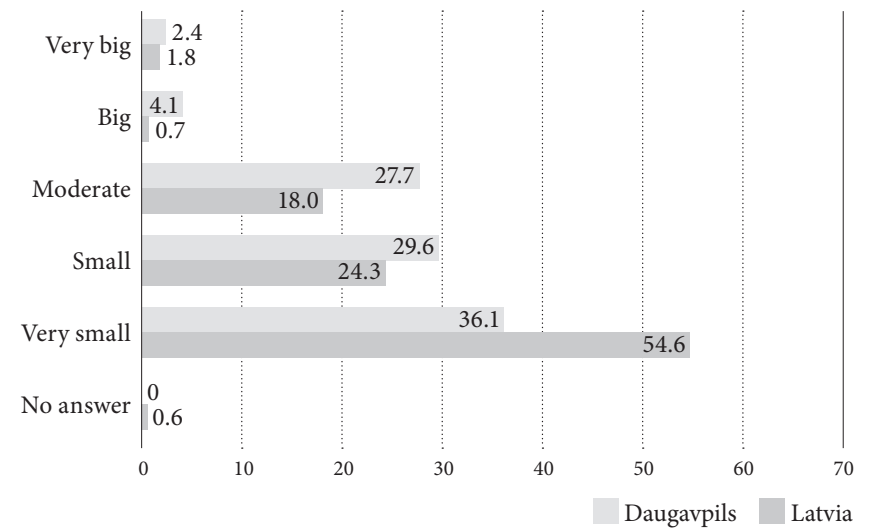


Figure 45. Self-assessment of influence in Daugavpils and in Latvia. Poles, %.



To some extent, the low proportion of respondents in Daugavpils who find it important to publicly discuss the negative chapters in the history of relations between Latvians, Poles and Russians can be explained by the low level of general development of the residents' civil participation in the life of the city and of Latvia as a whole (Table 29).

Table 29. Personal activity during the last 12 months, % (answer: "yes").

	All respondents N=578	Latvians N=95	Russians N=324	Poles N=77
Spoke publicly, e.g. at meetings	25.2	32.1	23.3	32.8
Published something or participated in a radio or television broadcast	12.1	11.2	9.9	16.2
Went on a strike or participated in a strike committee	9.3	6.4	8.4	6.1
Participated in a demonstration, protest, etc.	12.0	12.1	11.4	13.1
Brought a problem to the attention of a member of parliament or the mayor	15.7	11.7	15.3	19.4
Was nominated for a governing board	2.2	3.5	1.6	2.8
Ever worked in a governing board or was nominated for such work	5.6	2.4	5.3	11.3
Took part in the last election	57.3	73.1	57.6	70.9

Figure 46. Personal activity during the last 12 months. All respondents, % (answer: "yes").

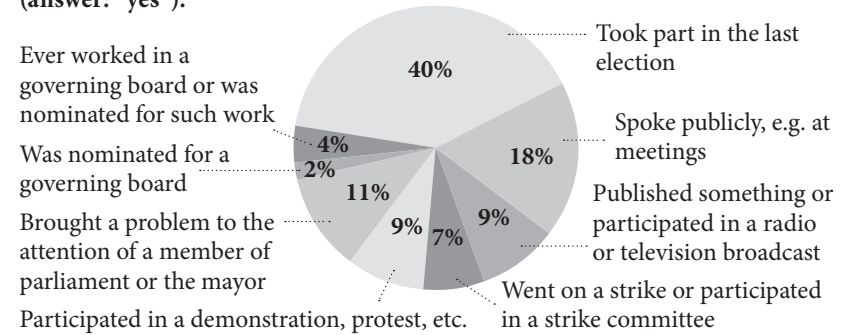
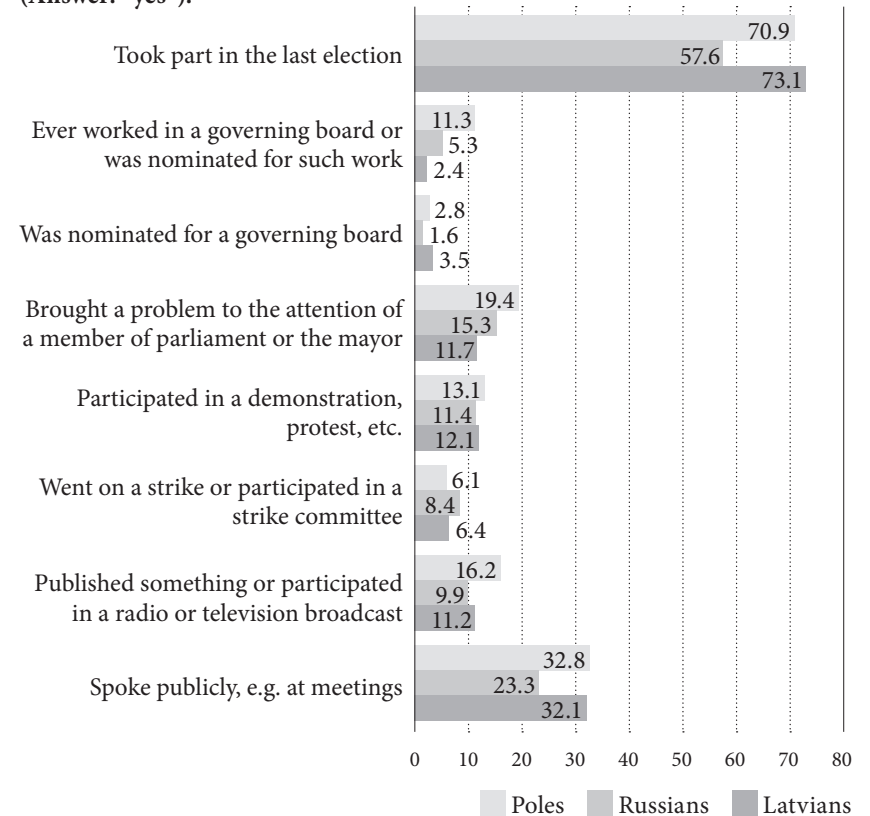


Figure 47. Personal activity during the last 12 months. All respondents, % (Answer: "yes").

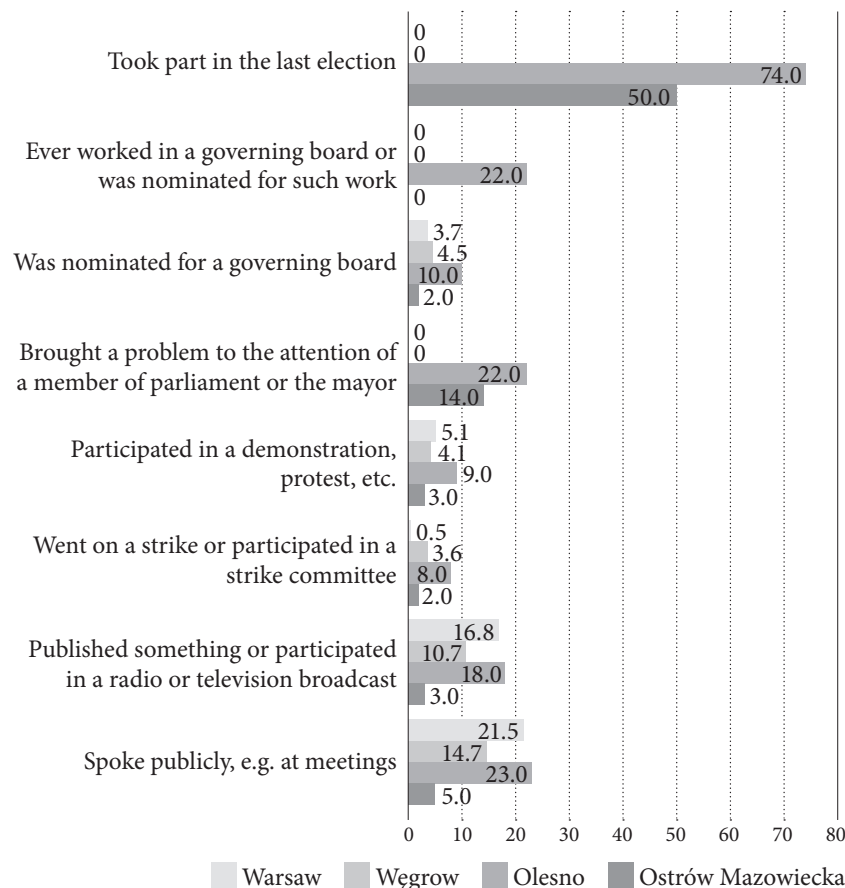


These figures do not make sense unless they are compared with similar data gathered in other post-communist societies. Let us take some results of research conducted by J. Kurczewski in selected Polish localities: Ostrów Mazowiecka, Olesno, Węgrow and Warsaw (Table 30).

Table 30. Personal activity during the last 12 months in Polish localities: Ostrów Mazowiecka, Olesno, Węgrow and Warsaw, % (answer: “yes”).

	Ostrów Mazowiecka	Olesno	Węgrow	Warsaw
Spoke publicly, e.g. at meetings	5.0	23.0	14.7	21.5
Published something or participated in a radio or television broadcast	3.0	18.0	10.7	16.8
Went on a strike or participated in a strike committee	2.0	8.0	3.6	0.5
Participated in a demonstration, protest, etc.	3.0	9.0	4.1	5.1
Brought a problem to the attention of a deputy or the mayor	14.0	22.0	–	–
Was nominated for a governing board	2.0	10.0	4.5	3.7
Ever worked in a governing board or was nominated for such work	–	22.0	–	–
Took part in the last election	50.0	74.0	–	–

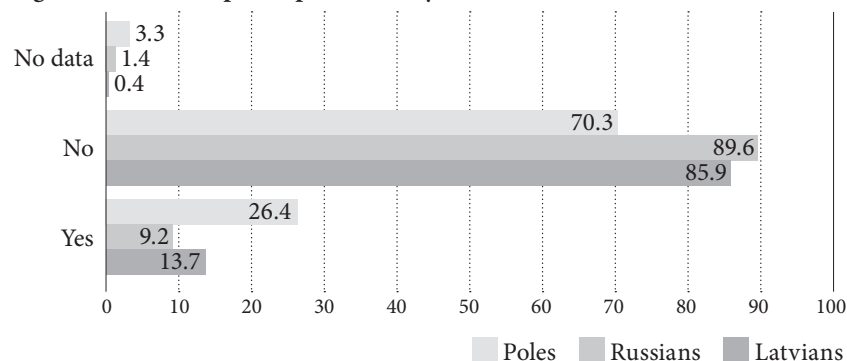
Figure 48. Personal activity during the last 12 months in selected Polish localities: Ostrów Mazowiecka, Olesno, Węgrow and Warsaw, % (answer: “yes”).



With the exception of Warsaw, the Polish cities studied were significantly smaller than Daugavpils, and this may explain that the reported level of civic participation looks higher in the Latgalian capital. However, the picture changes if the question asked refers to direct participation in common social action of any sort. This question seems to indicate the volume of social capital in local society.

Table 31. Personal participation in any collective social action, %.

	Latvians	Russians	Poles
Yes	13.7	9.2	26.4
No	85.9	89.6	70.3
No data	0.4	1.4	3.3

Figure 49. Personal participation in any collective social action, %.

The Poles of Daugavpils declare such experience more frequently. When asked in detail about the sort of activity that was undertaken, respondents point to various types of activity. Poles do not point to any characteristic type of activity that would differentiate them from other groups. Of course, sometimes participation in a Polish cultural association is mentioned.

It should be mentioned that the respondents' opinions do, in fact, divide them equally into adherents of the democratic model for the structure of a political system and the model which used to exist during the time of the Soviet Union (51.3% and 46.8%, respectively; 1.9% do not give any opinion). At the same time the vast majority of respondents (82.1%) are sure that the present political system has led to a situation where there are powers that manipulate the electorate in their own interests. The residents of Daugavpils possess a vividly expressed desire to see a strong political leader who will be able to resolve the country's political problems (84.5 % of respondents) (Table 27). Thus, there exists an unspoken aspiration among the respondents to develop public

discourse on the complicated issues of inter-ethnic relations, together with an insufficiently strong belief in the Latvian model of liberal democracy and a rather low degree of civil participation.

Table 32. Value orientation in politics, % (answer: "agree with the statement").

	All respondents N=578	Latvians N=95	Russians N=324	Poles N=77
The interests of the general public, region or nation are more important than the interests of the local community.	42.6	45.4	45.3	39.5
It is not important how matters are settled; it is important whether they are settled in the public interest.	63.9	58.7	68.5	58.0
All important decisions of the authorities should be reconciled with public opinion by means of a referendum.	74.8	77.4	74.2	69.7
The law must be respected, even if, in our opinion, it is not correct.	55.2	53.3	50.9	53.5
We need a strong leader whom the majority of people would follow.	84.5	80.4	86.1	90.0
For the sake of achieving the desired results it is sometimes necessary to make a coalition even with the devil.	24.9	31.3	24.9	23.8
The best way of solving problems in politics is a compromise between opposing views.	82.5	78.9	84.2	82.2
Democracy has its drawbacks but, in general, it is better than what we used to have in the Soviet Union.	51.3	64.6	50.0	59.9
The majority of powers just want to use us.	82.1	86.3	82.2	79.2

Figure 50. Value orientation in politics. All respondents, % (answer: “agree with the statement”).

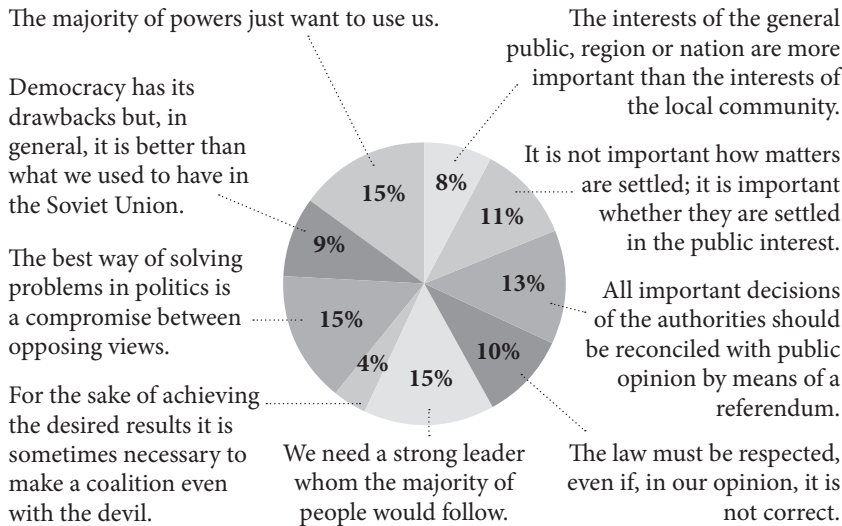
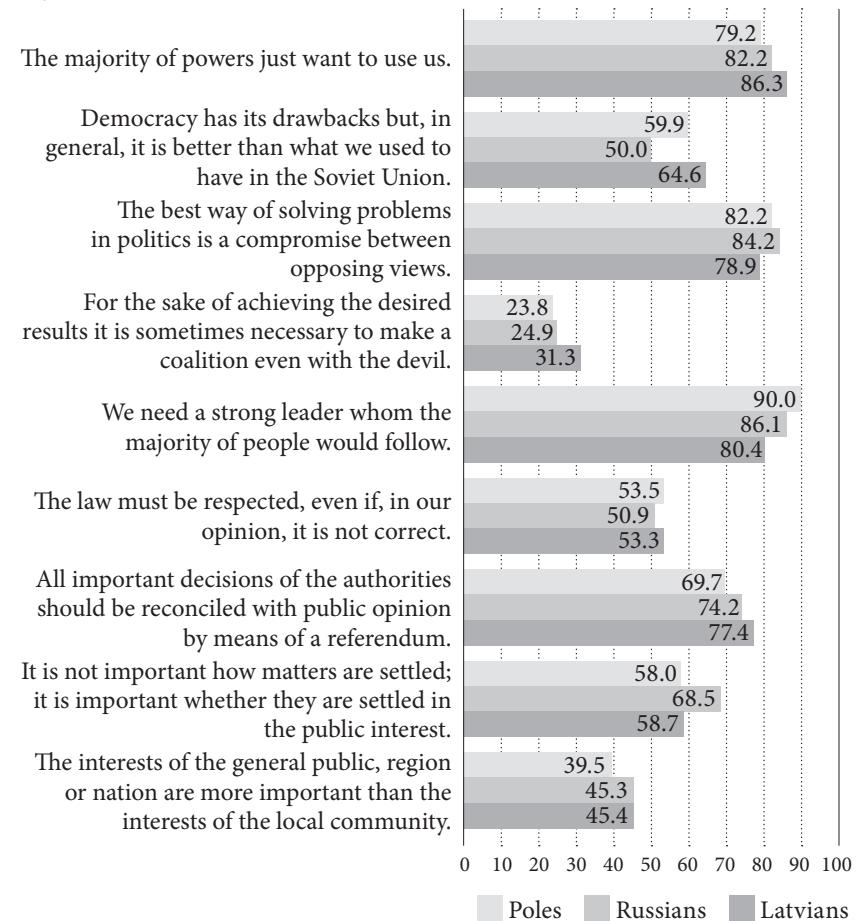


Figure 51. Value orientation in politics. Latvians, Russians, Poles, % (answer: “agree with the statement”).



Researchers actively studying Latvian political culture have observed a rather minor display of the values of political participation, while expectations of paternalism on the part of the state, political parties and charismatic leaders are revealed in full (Brants 2009; Golubeva 2009). This general assessment of the peculiarities of Latvian political culture is quite appropriate as a characterization of value orientation in politics among residents of Daugavpils. As can be seen from Table 32, the most

significant values, supported by more than 80% of respondents, are the following: “We need a strong leader whom the majority of people would follow”; “The best way of solving problems in politics is a compromise between opposing views”; “The majority of powers just want to use us”. At the same time, the opinion “Democracy has its drawbacks but, in general, it is better than what we used to have in the Soviet Union” is supported by 51.3% of the respondents. The opinion “The law should be observed even if, in our opinion, it is not correct” is shared by 55.2% of the respondents.

The last point needs more comment. This question was asked for the first time in 1964 by A. Podgórecki in a survey of Polish public opinion on “The prestige of law”. Polish sociologists have presented a unique longitudinal sequence of representative national public opinion poll results using the same methodology (the first in OBOP, the second in CBOS): it starts with 45% of legalists in 1964, then falls, first to 36% in *Solidarność* year, 1981, and even further to 27% in 1988, i.e., towards the end of the overtly militarized Communist dictatorship of General Jaruzelski, rising again to 28% in 1990, 33% in 1993, 43% in 1994, 49% in 1995 and 42% in 1996 (Kurczewski 2010, p. 169). The Daugavpils data point to higher level of legalism than the Polish results. An international study in 1994 using somewhat different wording of the question indicated a proportion of 90.1% legalists in the US sample, 69.3% in Hungary, 58.1% in Poland, 55.0% in Russia, 54.4% in Bulgaria, 53.2% in France and 49.4% in Spain (Jakubowska-Branicka 2000, p. 212). Obviously, there is a dividing line between the USA and Europe, while within Europe differences cannot be attributed simply to the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law, since both “Catholic” and “Orthodox” countries display similarity, irrespective of a Communist past or lack of it.

In this context it is important that there are almost no differences between the ethnic sub-groups of Daugavpils residents. In this case, as well as almost on all other points, the overall political outlook seems independent of the ethnic background. The only exception seems to be the attitude towards the Soviet past, which is more often affirmative among Russians than Latvians and slightly more often than among Poles (Kurczewski, Fuszara 2004, pp. 14–16).

Another set of questions relating to democratic politics concerns the concept of proper conduct by a city councillor and the rules under which the local elective government should function.

Table 33. Rights of citizens in relation to local government, %.

	Latvians	Russians	Poles	Poles Olesno	Poles Wejherowo
To know the income and property of the city councillors	63.3	65.9	53.5	81.0	52.0
To know the income and property of the mayor	51.9	59.1	45.6	85.0	83.0
To be present during meetings of the city council	40.7	31.3	39.7	87.0	85.0
To vote at meetings of the city council	28.2	28.7	28.1	79.0	78.0
To recall councillors	42.3	41.1	44.8	87.0	85.0
To recall the mayor	37.1	41.8	39.3	87.0	76.0
To oblige the councillors to introduce motions	54.8	63.0	52.1	67.0	74.0

In the first place, we see that the residents of Daugavpils are less demanding of their representatives at local level than the residents of small Polish towns. Second, there is an overall similarity in the distribution of opinion across all three ethnic groups of respondents. The majority approve of public transparency of the financial position of city-level representatives and the mayor and consider that it should be the duty of city councillors to introduce motions expected by the citizens. On the other hand, contrary to the Polish cases, only a minority acknowledge the right of citizens to recall councillors and the mayor as well as the right to vote, which is the extreme case of direct participation in local politics on our list, as well as the right to be present at sessions of the municipal assembly. The only major inter-ethnic difference is the lower propensity of Polish residents of Daugavpils to acknowledge public transparency and the higher propensity of Russians to oblige the councillors to introduce motions in the municipal assembly. We suspect that these differences relate more to differences in

the proportion of higher-education graduates between the Russians and other ethnic groups.

Ethnic groups do not differ in terms of their sense of being informed about what is going on within municipal politics.

Table 34. Perception of informedness about city council activities, %.

	Latvians	Russians	Poles
Well informed	1.5/3.0	2.2/2.7	2.3/3.6
Rather well informed	13.6/10.0	8.9/10.0	17.4/15.8
Rather poorly informed	31.0/31.7	36.2/36.9	39.9/41.1
Poorly informed	32.5/33.7	38.7/38.1	26.4/30.2
Don't know	21.4/20.9	12.9/10.9	10.8/4.5

Figure 52. Sense of informedness about the city council, %.

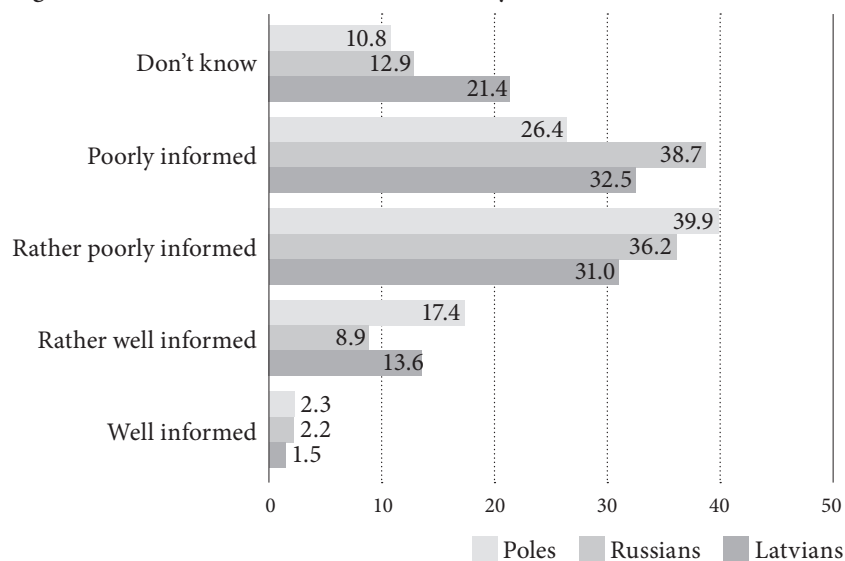
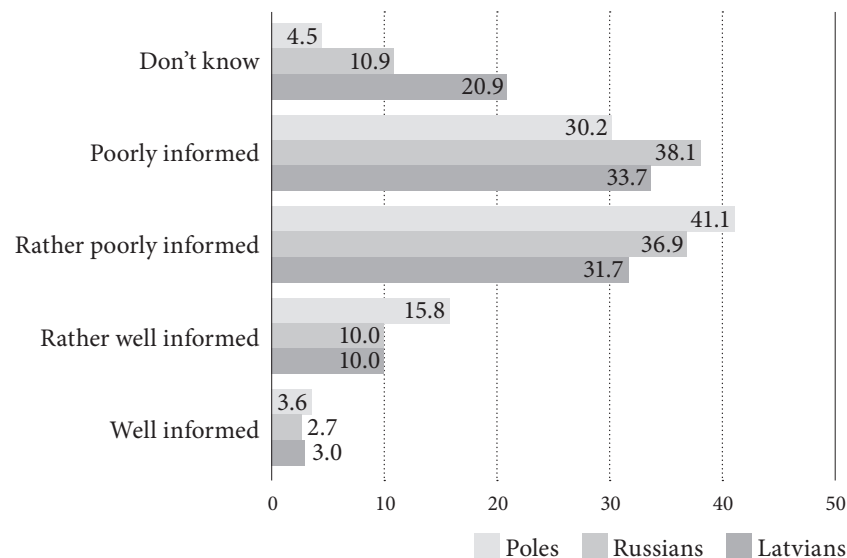


Figure 53. Sense of informedness about the activities of the mayor, %.

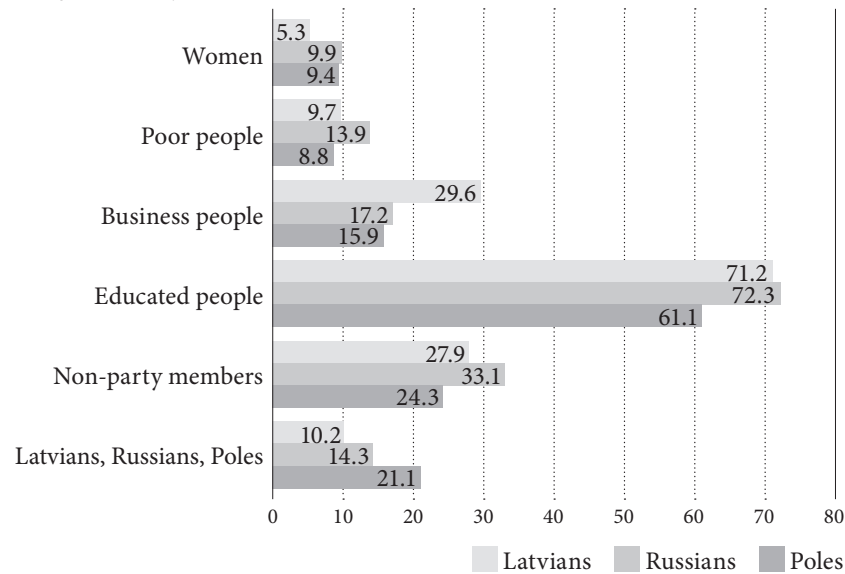


Across all the ethnic groups of citizens being compared there is a dominant view that they are poorly informed about municipal politics. This is bad; fortunately, however, none of the important groups feel better informed than the others. The only difference regarding municipal politics is to be found when respondents were asked about underrepresentation in Daugavpils City Council (Tables 33–34).

Table 35. Respondents' opinion about social groups underrepresented in Daugavpils City Council, %.

	Latvians	Russians	Poles
Women	5.3	9.9	9.4
Poor people	9.7	13.9	8.8
Business people	29.6	17.2	15.9
Educated people	71.2	72.3	61.1
Non-party members	27.9	33.1	24.3
Latvians, Russians, Poles	10.2	14.3	21.1

Figure 54. Respondents' opinion about social groups underrepresented in Daugavpils City Council, %.



Poles are slightly less inclined to indicate the low number of educated people in the council and – on the other hand – are more concerned than Latvians about ethnic representation. This might point to a stronger fear of political marginalization among the Poles of Daugavpils (Table 35).

* * *

The content of contemporary sociological and political science literature in Latvia in relation to the concept of ‘social integration’ in the sphere of inter-ethnic relations derives, to a greater or lesser extent, from the idea that the cultural identity of members of ethnic minorities can be integrated into the society of Latvia. The right to such cultural integration is guaranteed by Latvian law. Members of ethnic minorities have the right to use their mother tongue in public life, and there are possibilities for obtaining secondary education funded by the state in the languages of ethnic minorities. The ethnic minorities have the right to the institutionalization of private higher education, mass media, scientific research, and to the activities of cultural institutions, non-

governmental organizations, etc. in their mother tongue. In general, this type of integration of ethnic minorities can be characterized as expressing the dominance of the values of the nation state (first and foremost, the Latvian language as the only official language), with a guarantee of ethnic minorities’ rights to preserve their cultural identity mainly within the structures of the private sphere of civil society. Current public, social and scholarly discourse in Latvia usually considers the relationships between ethnic groups, namely Latvians and ethnic minorities, on the basis of liberal values. On this basis, the sociological study presented here contains a lot of evidence that Daugavpils citizens of various ethnic backgrounds are able to relate the preservation of their own ethnic identity to the recognition of the cultural distinctiveness of other ethnic groups, as well as the value of ethnic diversity of the public environment of social life. Present sociological research contains a lot of evidence that the Daugavpils citizens of various ethnic backgrounds are able to relate the preservation of their own ethnic identity to the recognition of cultural peculiarity of other ethnic groups, as well as the value of ethnic diversity of the public environment of social life. A deep penetration of multi-cultural ideas into the consciousness and public practices of the Daugavpils citizens lowers the interest to the issue of historic reconciliation. If this interest is displayed, it focuses on the assessment of international relations, mainly between the Russian Federation and Latvia, rather than the relationships between the ethnic groups in Daugavpils. At the same time, the ideas of Jürgen Habermas, who believed in the necessity of recognizing a collective identity of ethnic minorities in a multi-ethnic society, could become an important intellectual resource for research into social integration in Latvia. The research material demonstrates the possibility of combining the liberal concept of social integration in Latvia with recognition of the value of ethnic minorities’ collective identity.

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