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## *Changing Communities: Socio-Demographic Effects of Post-Enlargement Emigration from Latvia on the Staying Population*

***Ajda Pretnar***

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary research and studies on Eastern Europe
MIREES (LM 52)

GRADUATION THESIS
in
Post -Socialist Transition and EU Enlargement Eastwards

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## Abstract

This thesis analyses socio-demographic effects of post-enlargement emigration in Latvia. A substantiate part of Latvian population departed the country since the EU enlargement of 2004 and the national demography is shifting towards constrictive population pyramid. Young people migrate within the EU in search of higher wages, studies or work experiences, contributing also to temporary migration flows among the member states.

Migration has multifarious effects. Departure of young people from Latvia is making the country older in terms of demography. Migration flows are becoming increasingly diverse, as migrants represent both skilled and unskilled part of the work force. Periphery is facing severe depopulation and a decrease in the local workforce, leading to economic deprivation of the countryside and developmental challenges. Additionally, cultural production in these areas is depleted through the departure of artists and youth in general. Cultural diversity is thus dampened by a decrease in cultural consumption and inability to engage in unorthodox activities.

Ethnographic narrative of young Latvian returnees and relatives of migrants enables better understanding of the diverse emigration effects on social structures of the sending country. Finally, statistical data and academic literature provide a broader framework on European migration trends and Latvian national specifics.

## Keywords

Emigration, Latvia, social effects, 2004 EU enlargement, sending country

## Povzetek

Sledeče magistrsko delo analizira socialno-demografski vpliv emigracije na Latvijo po širitvi Evropske Unije. Znaten del latvijske populacije je zapustil državo po širitvi Evropske Unije leta 2004, hkrati pa se nacionalna demografska slika vedno bolj nagiba k zoženi demografski piramidi. Mladi ljudje migrirajo znotraj EU zaradi obeta višjih plač, študija ali delovnih izkušenj, kar občutno prispeva tudi k toku začasnih migracij med državami članicami.

Migracija ima večstranske učinke. Odhod mladih ljudi iz Latvije vpliva na dvig povprečne starosti prebivalstva. Migracijski tokovi postajajo čedalje bolj raznoliki, saj migrant predstavljajo tako izobraženo kot neizobraženo delovno silo. Podeželje se sooča z močno depopulacijo in upadom lokalne delovne sile, kar vodi v ekonomsko deprivacijo in probleme v razvoju podeželja. Nadalje postaja kulturna produkcija vedno bolj osiromašena v tem okolju, saj s podeželja odhajajo tako umetniki kot mladi na splošno. Kulturna raznolikost je posledično zmanjšana zaradi upada kulturne potrošnje in nezmožnosti izvajanja alternativnih dejavnosti (hobijev).

Etnografska narativa mladih latvijskih povratnih migrantov in sorodnikov migrantov omogoča boljše razumevanje raznolikega vpliva emigracije na družbene strukture države izvora. Statistični podatki in strokovna literature pa služita kot osnova za širše razumevanje evropskih migracijskih trendov in latvijskih nacionalnih specifik.

## Ključne besede

Emigracija, Latvija, vpliv na družbo, EU širitev 2004, država izvora



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# Introduction

This thesis was designed as a result of a lack of attention of migration experts to the social side of emigration. While migration studies often stress economic perspective as it deeply connects both individuals and governments, there is a growing tendency to also think about the societal changes and community transformation as a result of emigration.

I argue that emigration transforms sending societies in a deep and complex way. "Effects may simply scratch the surface of society, affecting some economic organizations, role expectations, or norms. On the other hand, they may go deep into the culture, transforming the value system, or into the social structure, transforming the distribution of power." (Portes 2008: 13).

Out-migration touches the very foundation of society, when the core values are re-addressed and the communal habitus[1] is changed. Moreover, I suggest that social and economic effects are intertwined and that both should be considered when talking about emigration. Non-economic factors are important in constraining migration decisions and tend to anchor populations in localities while economic push-pull explanations operate primarily after the decision to migrate has been made. (Irwin et al. 2004: 571) In particular in the context of an open EU labour market, where the ease of movement serves as an incentive for people to migrate, it is important to understand how and why people stay, leave or return. Only when seeing emigration as an economic, social *and* political category, we can fully understand how to address it.

The largest EU enlargement in 2004 had a tremendous impact on the nature of migration flows in Europe and it is a fact that post-accession migration is different from earlier movements in its volume, structure and social impact (Engbergsen et al. 2010: 15). While most experts predicted large migration flows from all of Eastern Europe, it was mostly Poland, the Baltic States and A2[2] that actually began sending large numbers of their population to the old member states. These flows were not directed to the traditional immigration countries, but to the three countries[3] that decided not to introduce transitional regimes, namely the UK, Sweden and Ireland. Finally, there was an increase in return and circular migration, making the traditional one-way flows more complex, diversified and fluid.

I decided to choose Latvia as a case study since this Baltic country experienced high-volume emigration right after the accession to the EU. Since 2000 the Latvian population decreased by 13%, much of it as a result of emigration. Furthermore, Latvia has comparatively

[1] Habitus as interpreted by Pierre Bourdieu in "Structures, Habitus, Power: Basis for a Theory of a Symbolic Power." In *Culture/Power/History: a reader in contemporary social theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pgs. 155-199".

[2] Romania and Bulgaria that joined the EU in 2007.

[3] Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and France for example.

weaker economy in relation to the other EU member states and a small and shrinking population. Membership in the EU influenced the migration trend in two ways: first, the financial difficulties of some socio-demographic categories of Latvian people have deepened; second, Latvian citizens received an opportunity to travel, work, and live freely in Great Britain (Ponomarjovs 2009: 102). Therefore Latvia can serve as a good example of a diverse range of consequences that affect the sending country, especially in the context of EU enlargement.

Firstly, I discuss methodology as this thesis revolves around the anthropological fieldwork, conducted in Latvia between January and March 2014. This serves as the focal point for addressing the issue of social impacts on the source country, as it offers a true insight into the lives of the sending population. Migration impacts the source country in a variety of ways depending upon the magnitudes, composition and nature of migration flows, as well upon the specific context from which migrants are drawn (Markova 2010: 12), therefore ethnographic narratives serve as a legitimate source of information on the nature of changes in the society.

Secondly, I aim to give a structural and political background to post-enlargement emigration with the institutional provisions of the European Union explained. All three stages of migration[4], suggested by Hazans (2013), are explained in the Latvian context for an overview of the general situation in the country.

Thirdly, I discuss three types of effects of emigration – economic, socio-economic and socio-demographic. Economic factors, though they are not the primary focus of this work, support the findings on socio-economic effects and serve as a background for understanding the big picture of Latvian (and potentially global) emigration. Socio-economic effects are the transitory part that connects economy with society, while socio-demographic part explains in depth the very scope of societal changes as a result of large out-migration from the country.

Finally, I support the above mentioned list of socio-demographic effects with an ethnographic narrative of Latvian residents that were mostly return migrants or had a relative-migrant abroad. Individual, personal insights into the problems and transformations contemporary Latvian society is facing, are a stepping stone to the broader understanding of emigration as a particular and overarching phenomenon in the sending country. While emigration is not only a positive or negative phenomenon by itself (Markšaityte 2010: 6), only a multi-disciplinary approach to migration studies enables holistic comprehension and thus suitable policy-making in the future.

[4] Pre-accession, post-accession and post-crisis stages of migration.





# Research design and methodology

## General

For conducting this research I used interdisciplinary approach with mixed method for addressing socio-demographic factors of post-enlargement emigration in Latvia. The aim was to understand a) what was the nature of emigration flows from Latvia after 2004 EU-enlargement, b) how did emigration affect the staying population in terms of lifestyles and community development, c) how do socio-demographic and economic factors shape the current situation in Latvia.

The research contributes to better understanding of emigration effects on the sending country in general, addresses an underexplored topic of social impact of emigration on the staying community, furthers attempts to analyse post-enlargement migration flows and its consequences, and most importantly offers insight into the lives of the Latvian community through ethnographic narrative.

Interviews were conducted with 10 Latvian residents, 7 males and 3 females. The demographic structure of interviewees is broad as the research focused mostly on people who are return migrants or whose family members migrated from Latvia. Research is designed to provide qualitative approach, with semi-structured interviews and ethnographic narrative as methods of analysis. Interviews were part of my 3-month research period in Latvia.

## Research

Research took place in Riga and Daugavpils in Latvia between January and March 2014. At first I established a broader framework of research through selection of scientific literature, official data from Latvian and European authorities and certain media discourses. Secondly, I used some contacts I've made in my previous research in 2012 in Riga, mostly to generate new contacts for the current research. Throughout the three months I've met with participants and conducted interviews with them. All interviews were later transcribed and translated if necessary. Each participant was given a consent form for the materials to be used for the purposes of the thesis. Interviews were analysed together with observations made in the field and supplemented with theoretical background from the available literature.

For the purpose of this research I used theoretical concepts from IOM's Glossary on Migration (IOM 2004), as this publication is considered by most migration specialists as the core document for explaining migration-related concepts. Where new concepts and notions were introduced, I give my own definition to illustrate how the concept was seen in the light of this research. Therefore, in the end of this chapter I explain some theoretical concepts of migration that are inseparably connected with this research.

In the second part I address scientific literature that deals with emigration and the sending country and give an insight into the processes of EU enlargement, migration flows and specific context of Latvia. Expected effects of emigration are discussed in order to later compare them with research outcomes and either confirm or disprove those effects. Third chapter focuses solely on the social effects of emigration. Finally, the core of this research is given in a form of ethnographic narrative through excerpts from interviews with subsequent commentaries.

Methodological approach used for this research aims to be interdisciplinary, trying to use anthropological methods of participant observation and open-ended, semi-structured interviews with local people in order to address certain political and social problems. The qualitative part of the research is based on the whole body of interviews undertaken during my fieldwork in Latvia. Interviews were semi-structured, with topic and some questions selected in advance, but quite flexible and subject to change as the interviews were developing. Interviewees were encouraged to speak freely and questions only served as the outline for the conversation, but were not strictly applied. Before the interview, each participant was informed of the nature of the research and was asked to sign informed consent form and give permission for recording the interview. Anonymity of participants is guaranteed by using only abbreviations throughout the paper. Quantitative element was used through country-level statistic data and demographic reports from Latvian and foreign authorities. Research was slightly supplemented by personally designed additional questionnaire, but this was used mostly for the outline and not strictly applied and analysed during the research. Therefore I have omitted it from the analysis.

## Participants

Interviews took place during my test trip to Riga in November 2013 and during my three-month stay in Latvia between January and March 2014. The three month period was assessed as the minimum time to conduct anthropological fieldwork by international anthropological community and due to the nature of this research (topic-based, self-funded) I decided this timeframe should allow for solid fieldwork. Participants were selected based on having a relative or a close friend abroad or not. Some participants were interviewed to supplement the stories on Latvian emigration without having anyone migrating abroad. Participants were moreover asked to define their ethnic status in order to observe potential differences between members of different sub-groups in Latvia. Other demographic data, such as gender, age, education or employment were taken into consideration, but did not play a role in choosing participants.



Participants were mostly acquired through my previous contacts in Latvia and a small part through different networks of people. Some social networks were also used, such as Facebook[5] and Couchsurfing[6], as they proved to be useful tools for contacting a broad variety of people. Each participant's background and means of contact are available in a personal archive. If possible I met with the participants more than once for a detailed approach on the topic. Participant observation was also an important part of the research, which means spending time with participants outside of scheduled interviews and research activities.

All interviews were conducted at a location suggested by participants to ensure their maximum comfort. Before the beginning of the interviews I exhaustively explained the nature and aim of the research and each participant was given a consent form to sign. Permission for recording was obtained in advance – all the collected materials are stored digitally by the author and are available exclusively upon permission of each of the participants. Each participant was given the opportunity to have the interview in Russian (upon condition he or she was a Russian speaker), but all of them chose English. All interviews were later transcribed and, in places where mistakes were only minor, adjusted to grammatically more correct English. Otherwise the original sentences were kept and presented in grammatically correct form only in the thesis itself. Originals are kept by the author and are available exclusively upon permission of each of the participants.

## Factors potentially influencing the outcome

Participants were recruited with a snowball effect through few initial contacts. This might have led to a pattern of individuals with similar traits as they are effectively friends of my friends (or further friends of my friend's friends, etc.). These people belonged to a similar professional group or social class, sometimes even minority group[7]. Where such patterns were obvious I took it into consideration while analysing results.

Moreover, none of the participants was an English native speaker. Even though a chance to conduct the entire interview in Russian was offered where applicable, none of them expressed this desire. As participants were not native speakers of English this must be taken into account. Sometimes it was difficult for them to express certain thoughts or to be very elaborate. In such cases only short answers were given and often it was difficult to have a lengthy discussion on the topic. However, I always offered participants to add something I might have forgotten or something they considered as very important.

5 https://www.facebook.com/.

6 https://www.couchsurfing.org.

7 Daugavpils was a case of quite narrow demographic pattern of participants, as they were mostly around 30 years old, Russophone and had similar profession.

Finally, as participants chose the location of each interview themselves, it sometimes meant meeting in a bar where participants felt the most comfortable (before the interview we mostly hadn't met before and were thus strangers). Bar setting was at times detracting from the quality of the recording and where the track was simply incomprehensible, I put "(*unclear*)" in the transcript to avoid making up certain parts of the interview. Some data might be missing on that account.

## Analysis

As I focused mainly on a qualitative approach to the problem, I use ethnographic narrative to illustrate social changes and effects migration had on Latvia. I aim to quote participants as veritably as possible to retain scientific integrity, however I do apply standard grammar rules of English to their quotes which inevitably leads to indirect quotations. Where possible all translations were discussed with participants in order to maintain the legitimacy of statements used throughout the thesis.

Quotes are used as evidence of people's sentiments on the topic of emigration. They represent a subjective view of each participant and are thus not meant to represent the majority opinion. However, each participant has his or her own valid point on the topic and their observations (should) matter in terms of observed social transformations. Moreover, these opinions can serve as a starting point for governments to address the needs of the population effectively.

Anonymity of participants is provided by the use of initials instead of full names. As the thesis does not touch sensitive topics (such as illegal activity or explicit political opinion), I decided such measure should suffice to guarantee anonymity. Ethnical aspects were observed throughout the research and continuously discussed with my thesis consultant. All data are kept confidential and are only available with permission of participants.

In continuation, I will explain positive and negative effects on the sending country, but before I venture to do so a short conceptual clarification is needed.

**Circular migration** - The fluid movement of people between countries, including temporary or long-term movement which may be beneficial to all involved, if occurring voluntarily and linked to the labour needs of countries of origin and destination.

**Emigration** - The act of departing or exiting from one State with a view to settling in another.

**Push-pull factors** - Migration is often analysed in terms of the "push-pull model", which looks at the push factors, which drive people to leave their country (such as economic, social, or political problems) and the pull factors attracting them to the country of destination.



**Receiving country** - Country of destination or a third country. In the case of return or repatriation, also the country of origin. Country that has accepted to receive a certain number of refugees and migrants on a yearly basis by presidential, ministerial or parliamentary decision.

**Remittances** - Monies earned or acquired by non-nationals that are transferred back to their country of origin.

(International Migration Organization 2011).

These definitions are taken from International Migration Organization's glossary of terms, since they are the most widely used definitions in migration studies. I also use the term destination country for the receiving country, while the opposite would be either the country of origin or sending country. Circular migration is extremely important for Latvia since a lot of migration from the Baltic States was temporary and it usually encompassed seasonal work abroad. Sometimes circular migration is also referred to as liquid migration as taken by Engbergsen (2010), which is an even further step towards unpredictable, fluid and transnational nature of migrant flows. Engbergsen describes it as: "transitory, legally stratified and temporary patterns of transnational work and settlement" (see ibid. 2010), which is an evident trait in contemporary intra-European migration flows. Finally, certain authors use the term mobility instead of migration, due to the unstable nature of settlement patterns. More on this topic in relation to Latvia will be discussed below.

# Structural and Political Background to Post-Enlargement Emigration

## Latvian transition and political debate on migration

Latvia's migration policy is deeply connected with its historical background and political transition from a Soviet republic to a democratic market-oriented country. Fear from migration stems already from the First Latvian Republic of 1918 and unsurprisingly migration discourse in Latvia remains deeply connected to ethnic issues.

In 1918 Latvia declared independence and made Karlis Ulmanis the head of provisional government. What started as Latvia's first nationhood and with early attempts at democracy the politics soon turned into a proto-nationalistic dictatorship under the previously mentioned Ulmanis. Latvia's brief inter-war experience of political independence was not a particularly successful one in terms of establishing the foundations of an inclusionary concept of democratic citizenship and nationhood (Woolfson 2009: 4). The excessive stress on cultural nationalism didn't serve well the early democracy and certain traces of Ulmanis' rhetoric are still evident in contemporary political discourse.

However, the most significant period for modern-day Latvia was the Soviet occupation in 1940. 50 years of Soviet regime left deep scars on Latvian national consciousness, mostly through memories of forced deportation to Siberia and the big influx of Soviet labour migrants to the country. In only a few decades Latvian ethnic composition turned from majority Latvian to only a bare majority with 52% Latvian population in 1989. Ever since "a fear of demographic extinction and a perceived need to protect the core nation from its unfavourable demographic situation has been a dominant theme in the nationalist discourse" (Aasland and Fløtten 2001: 1028). This was later evident also in the first legislation of the modern Republic of Latvia and contemporary political discourse on migration.

The brief period of ethnic reconciliation came with the formation of the Popular Front that worked against the Soviet regime and where both Latvian and Russian were united in a common struggle. While it is true that many ethnic Russians supported Latvian independence, one of the basic ideas of PF was the defence of the national core. «Protecting the language and culture of the "ethno-national" community in the face of Soviet Russification policies was one of the driving forces of protest. But the cultural concept of the Latvian nation both coexisted and competed with a civic or state-based formulation of nationalism and independence» (Lazda 2009: 519). Unfortunately Popular Front ceased to exist soon after Latvia regained independence and national politics took a rather ethno-nationalist turn.

Apart from establishing a functioning market economy and aligning themselves with the Western countries, nation building was naturally the main goal of the early post-Soviet period, which involved clarifying the right to Latvian citizenship and the official standing of the Latvian language (Aslund and Dombrovskis 2011: 13). This debate is still pertinent in Latvian politics, which is evident in the 2012 language referendum and the persistent bi-polarity of political parties. In 1991 the question of protecting the national core was an even more burning issue. Latvian politicians soon began juxtaposing ethnic Latvians with ethnic Russians, who were vilified as "occupants" and effectively immigrants.

The growing tensions between the Latvian and non-Latvian populations were most polarizing in the drafting of two laws: the citizenship and the language laws (Lazda 2009: 531). These were among the initial laws that the Latvian government elaborated, yet they were both highly criticised by the international community. Mostly they were reprimanded for being exclusionary to the Russian minority, which Latvian politics had a hard time accepting as a de facto minority. Citizenship Law basically excluded all Soviet immigrants who came to Latvia after 1940, which left many people without a proper legal status. Later, Latvia, under pressures from the international community and especially the European Union, increasingly softened the law to include also children born in independent Latvia and to simplify the procedure for naturalization. While the Citizenship Law is becoming more inclusionary, the Language Law is becoming exclusionary. This is evident in the compulsory use of Latvian in administration[8], in mass media[9] and in schools[10].

The main problem here is to establish whether Latvian Russians are indeed a national minority or not. Most traditional European minorities have been resident on the territory of the country for centuries and have thus acquired a status of autochthonous people. Latvian Russians on the other hand migrated to Latvia only recently (that is in the past decades), therefore Latvian government generally refuses to give them a status of a national minority. However, they are a de facto minority on the territory of Latvia and certain minority provisions should doubtlessly apply to them as well. Latvian Russians «were now victims of a double legacy: viewed as representatives of the former occupying power and, at the same time, subject to exclusionary ethno-politics by Latvian nationalist forces.» (Woolfson 2009: 5) Nevertheless, we must take into consideration that the efforts of Latvian Russians as a social group to integrate into Latvian society have recently been on a decline, which in evident in fewer applications for naturalization and unimproved language proficiency.

Already in the early period of Latvian independence many Soviet immigrants decided to leave Latvia and go back to their native republics. The reasons for emigration in the 1990s were varied: political reasons, including the requirement that military personnel of the former Soviet Union and their families should leave Latvia, Jewish minority emigration and

[8] According to State Language Law of 2000 only Latvian is allowed in the public sector. (Source: Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Latvia. Available at: <http://izm.izm.gov.lv/9419.html>).

[9] Electronic Mass Media Law commands the use of Latvian in all public mass media. (Source: National Electronic Mass Media Council, Republic of Latvia. Available at: <http://www.neplpadome.lv/en/assets/documents/anglu/Electronic_Mass_Media_Law[1].pdf >).

[10] The Education Law came into force in 2004. Initially it was designed to implement Latvian-only public secondary schools, but after several protests it permitted 40% use of minority languages in schools. (Source: Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Latvia. Available at: <http://izm.izm.gov.lv/upload_file/en/laws/Education_Law.pdf>).





economically motivated emigration to European countries and the US (Lulle 2009: 292). Thus the departure began already in the '90s when Latvia started losing its population at the expense of both its Russian minority and its co-ethnics that escaped the collapsing economy. Latvia's enthusiastic neo-liberal approach to market economy resulted in a tough transition that saw a big economic downturn and left people wondering about their future in the new Latvia. While the neo-liberals claimed that it is people's responsibility to be free and to exercise their freedom, initially, instead of voicing their resistance, people chose a silent form of resistance or emigration (Kešane 1998: 67).

Additional problem was that the restrictive immigration policies prevented flows into Latvia, which basically means net migration rate was already negative in the post-Soviet period. The fragile ethnic balance that was disturbed by the incoming Soviet migrants, made Latvia accept unwelcoming policies for immigrants and thus restrict any kind of potential immigration.

Much of the anti-immigrant discourse is still present today, despite the fact that the situation in terms of demography is quite worrying. Most governmental bodies are still not ready to take serious measures for addressing the issue of demographic decline and severe outmigration that causes labour crunch. The very celebrated EU provisions of free movement of labour left Latvia depleted of some of its valuable human capital and shortages are becoming a real impediment to economic growth. Latvia is experiencing domestic labour shortages in key sectors, occasioned by outward migration following EU enlargement in 2004, and by demographic imbalances, which, in turn, are creating pressure for recruitment of replacement labour, both from among near-neighbours in the territories of the Former Soviet Union, and from even further afield (Woolfson 2009: 2). However, government is not quite willing to accept large inflows of Third Country Nationals because of the downward pressure of local wages and the negative perception of immigrants both among the politicians as well as among the local population. LBAS (Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia) for example was against a liberal immigration policy of allowing in unqualified labour, arguing that it might cause severe social and ethnic problems in the future (Lulle 2009: 303). Thus ethnic and identity issues are still at the centre of immigration discourse in the country, which is a definite post-Soviet remnant in contemporary politics.

## Policies

Only in the past couple of years has the Latvian government realized the seriousness of the demographic problem. With the worsening of the demographic situation in Latvia, which was proven by the census results in 2011, employment became one of the top issues, and along with that also the related labour market forecasts, which demonstrated that considering the long-term economic development of Latvia, the labour market of Latvia shall be made more accessible to third-country nationals. (EMN 2012: 14). In the spirit of the new found interest in immigration Latvian government decided to draft an Immigration Policy

Plan until 31.7.2013 and indeed Saeima made amendments to the existing Immigration Law in December 2013 to facilitate easier immigration for TCN. Latvia is focusing mostly on attracting high-skilled labour where shortages are the most serious (medical personnel for example), while still permitting low-skilled labour into the country to fill the construction, transport, catering and other sectors.

In addition the government is also paying attention to its émigré communities. The need for a special programme to support the Latvian diasporas – both historic and newly established – was raised as early as 1995, when the Latvian Parliament adopted the national foreign policy concept until 2005 (Foreign Policy Direction 1995). Today the Latvian alignment of foreign policy with the care for diaspora communities is stronger than ever. Several governmental institutions work on promoting investments of diaspora members into their country of origin, in helping them retain their Latvian language proficiency and facilitate their participation in the Latvian society[11].

On the other hand the government aims to attract some of its co-nationals back to Latvia. The Return Migration Action Plan includes proposals to establish an effective monitoring system of emigration and return migration, and for help to returnees seeking to reintegrate into society and the labour market. (Lulle 2009: 296). Effective policy on return migration could facilitate transmission of skills and human capital, increase local investment and support new businesses, something that Latvia desperately needs for economic growth.

An additional incentive is the recent implementation of dual citizenship, which enables diaspora members to acquire Latvian citizenship while still retaining their other citizenship. For the recent emigrants this means easier coordination in instances of mixed marriages and the chance to retain their Latvian passport if only for symbolic reasons. While the dual citizenship is still not permitted for Russian nationals, it is a welcome improvement from a point of view of recently departed Latvians.

All these measures are en evident step towards a better migration policy on both ends – the immigration and emigration. Even though the Latvian government still mostly works on provisions for its nationals abroad and facilitating links with its global diaspora, it is slowly improving and loosening its strict immigration laws to make Latvia a more welcoming country to foreign workforce.

And although [promoting well-managed immigration] is clearly the rational course for the employers, who wish to access cheaper labour, it might not provide a long-term solution, either for migration or for overall economic development in Latvia, given the negative public attitudes towards migrants and the lack of integration mechanisms both to promote tolerance among the general public and to help migrants integrate better into Latvian society. (Lulle 2009: 303). There are still ways to go before Latvia will manage to establish an open society for foreigners and at the same time address the loss of its own workforce properly.

[11] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia signed Memorandum of Cooperation with the World Federation of Free Latvians, Latvian Language Agency is supporting the language learning and «Latvians Abroad – Museum and research centre» functions as the main non-profit organisation for diaspora research.





## EU enlargement and emigration

The 2004 EU enlargement was the biggest enlargement in the history of the EU and as new member states included mostly Eastern European countries, it symbolically meant a break with the communist past and a return to Europe.

However return to Europe was not only mental, but also physical. Most migration experts expected large migration flows from East to West and while looking at the entire East Central Europe, estimates were exaggerated, for Poland, the Baltic States and Slovakia they were actually underestimated. These five countries were the biggest users of free movement provisions and soon after the enlargement a significant labour migration flows occurred from these countries.

As emigration is generally tied to political and economic processes, and even though the initial magnitude may be small, emigration streams almost inevitably grow in time. (Cariño 1987: 408) Therefore we can expect further migration flows from the Baltic States due to their comparatively weaker economies, wage and unemployment disparities and the relative ease with which an individual can migrate within the EU. Kahanec et al. confirm the impact of enlargement and the expectations of further migration flows:

> The latest available evidence shows that immigration from the new member states to the EU15 has risen after enlargement, in particular in Ireland and the UK, and these new networks may in turn trigger future migration. (Kahanec et al. 2009: 19).

As Ireland and the UK, along with Sweden, were the only three countries not to introduce transitional limitations for the new member states, increased flows to those countries do not come as a surprise. The early post-enlargement flows from Latvia and Lithuania[12] to these three destinations were unprecedented and both the UK and Ireland have emerging Baltic diasporas, which is another interesting phenomenon that calls for further research.

While the old member states, also known as the EU15, see immigration from the East as a threat, it is actually saving their labour markets, procuring economic growth and finally helping their poor demography. Demographic picture of the EU is due to low fertility and ever longer life expectancy and consequent ageing of the population quite worrying. (Balažič 2009: 114). Therefore such countries benefit from the influx of young working-age population, while sending countries in the East experience reverse trends – labour market shortages, dampening of economic growth and increasingly older and smaller population.

Luckily, post-accession migration from the EU10[13] countries has been temporary for the most part (Hazans and Philips 2011: 5, also in Pollard et al. 2008: 39-40, European Commission 2008: 121-122) and it took the form of circular or seasonal migration. However, as we will see, the 2008 crisis had a big impact on the nature of emigration flows, which have recently turned from temporary to more permanent (see Hazans 2013).

[12] Estonia on the other hand has a different emigration pattern. Most migratory flows are directed at Finland, which is culturally and geographically the closest country to Estonia. Thus it is quite natural for Estonians to have a very specific migratory preference and a strong inclination to circular migration, as good ferry connections enable regular travels between the two countries.

[13] Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

## The 2004 EU Enlargement

EU enlargement of 2004 was the fourth enlargement of the European Union and the biggest one so far. Based on the Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, which allows membership application to any country that respects EU values, it included 10 new states in the Union (Conditions for membership 2013, Consilium 2013). First a country must comply with the Copenhagen criteria of 1993 that were designed especially for further enlargement. These criteria include in brief a full-fledged democracy, respect for human rights, a functioning market economy and fulfilment of membership obligations.

Latvia worked very hard to comply with these criteria. After gaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 it began a series of economic reforms that aimed at transforming centrally planned economy to a functioning market economy. After the initial shock Latvia soon recovered and began its road towards accession. Throughout the nineties joining the European Union was a priority for Latvian government, so it was not a surprise when in 1997 the country was invited to begin accession negotiations. Finally, in 2004 the country joined the Union with the rest of the EU10.

Before the enlargement experts made many predictions and forecasts concerning the potential for migration from East to West and most of them actually proved to be quite correct, predicting around 3 to 5 per cent of the population migrating (see Brücker et al. 2009). However, the old member states were way more worried about the threat of a "big wave of immigration" and most of them decided to introduce transitional measures to soften the impact of such massive influx of labour migrants. Strangely, this massive wave never happened, but still there were some countries that experienced a significant outflow of population aimed at those three states that decided not to limit potential immigration[14]. The removal of restrictions on labour mobility of those from the new member states by the UK and Ireland in 2004 triggered an almost immediate migration response. (Hazans and Philips 2011: 5).

## Institutional regulations

Free movement of European citizens within the Union is declared to be one of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Union as it purposefully connects all member states into one common territory and market. This right is based on Directive 2004/38/EC that guarantees the «right of citizens of the Union to move and reside freely within the Member States» (Summaries

[14] The UK, Ireland and Sweden.





of EU legislation 2013). This right is furthermore consolidated by the Schengen Agreement that included Latvia within its scope in 2007. Schengen Area eliminated internal border control, introduced common visa policy and encouraged the free movement of people, goods, money and information. However, new member states' citizens were not hesitant to use the right of the free movement right after the enlargement, since it was valid for them as of May 2004.

A very important aspect of EU enlargement is also EU's Free Movement of Workers (FMOWs) policy which establishes the right for EU member-state nationals to reside and take up work in any other EU country (EU Commission 2006: 3). This was of even greater importance for Latvians and other NMS[15] citizens, as most of them intended to move and later actually moved in order to pursue work in another EU member state. FMOW merged separate labour markets into one body, regulated by the European Union, as Article 39 of the Treaty establishing the European Community entitles nationals of one EU member state to work in another EU member state under the same conditions as that member state's own citizens (Kahanec et al. 2009: 1). Certain concessions therefore had to be made by individual member states in order to comply with EU regulations concerning labour market. Even though there is a general framework of regulations and institutions in the Union, each member state naturally has its own labour market specifics regarding sectoral development and demand, skill supply, working market coordination and so on.

Exactly due to these specifics many old member states decided to introduce transitional provisions[16] regarding free movement of workers, in order to maintain control over immigration and its labour markets. The only three states that decided to open their labour markets immediately after the accession were the UK, Ireland and Sweden. This curbed migration flows to most countries, as immigration would probably be dispersed among all the old member states or aimed at traditional immigration countries[17], and increased pressure on the three "no-provision" states. Almost 70% of the immigrants from the A8 have been absorbed by the UK and Ireland since 2003 (Kahanec et al. 2009), these two being the most popular also due to the use of English as a state language. Since 2011 transitional provisions ended for the EU10 and now these countries can access freely all labour markets within the European Union. As transitional arrangements work by the 2+3+2[18] principle of loosening the limitations, most countries have been able to work freely for some time before 2011. The loosening of labour migration control is thus evident mostly in increased flows to Germany and Austria, two of the traditional immigration countries: "The end of the transitional arrangements will impact more on Germany and Austria, the two Member States that maintained substantial restrictions on free movement of workers during the entire seven year transitional period.» (EUbusiness 2011). Thus some diversification of migration flows is expected.

[15] New Member State.

[16] «*Transitional arrangements were first introduced during the Mediterranean enlargement of the EU in the 1980s, Greece joined the EU in 1981 and Spain and Portugal followed in 1986. Due to the geographical proximity and large differences in wage levels, old member states feared a massive influx of migrants to their labour markets. Even though these fears proved unjustified, the transitional arrangements were reapplied in the 2004 enlargement of the EU and later on in the 2007 enlargement. They allow for a limited derogation from the principle of free movement of workers for a maximum of seven years*».(Kraleva 2013: 9).

[17] Traditional immigration countries are, based on observed historical migration flows, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Sweden. (Katseli 2004).

[18] Time frames of heavy, looser and loosened provisional measures.

## Push-pull factors

When we talk about the propensity for an individual to emigrate, it is important to observe the returns to migration. This individual will migrate only if he or she expects high return to migration, which would render migration profitable. Costs to migration are the negative aspect of it, which impedes propensity for migration. Costs include "real" expenses in terms of transport to destination country, investment of time and money into finding work and settling down and last but not least a psychological burden of leaving the homeland and the loved ones behind. The distance between sending and receiving country raises the cost of migration (Asch 1994: 2), but since Europe has become well connected in the past decade one can notice a so-called "Ryanair effect" – migration has become easier and more affordable due to the increase of low-cost airlines (see Button and Vega 2008). Another factor that encourages emigration is the existence of established migrant networks in the receiving country (Asch 1994: 2), which lowers the cost of migration as national diaspora can facilitate finding work and offer temporary housing. Information flows between the staying community and the migrant community abroad encourage further migration exactly for the above mentioned reasons. Finally, a big incentive to move is the simplicity of labour migration provided by the European Union legislation, or as Ivlevs argues: «With increased possibilities to work freely in the EU, the option of out-migration becomes more feasible and attractive.» (2008: 4).

The most prominent migration theory that most experts use is the push-pull theory. It implies the existence of the so-called "push" factors, which encourage people to leave the country, and "pull" factors, which attract people to move into a country. Some of the most common "push" factors that concern the sending country are, according to Thaut, lower wages, higher unemployment, and the generally less developed economic conditions (2009: 191), therefore "push" factors are usually measured in respect to the destination country as only the observed wage and unemployment differentials matter and not the generally low income per se. Among the "push" factors one can find also perceived discrimination in the country of origin, lower returns to education, and disillusionment with the political system (perception of a lack of influence on the current politics). On the other side, we have the "pull" factors, which are labour shortages, decline in the working age population, and desire for cheaper labour in Western European countries (Thaut 2009: 191), but here too all these factors must be observed through an interplay with the "push" factors, especially in the context of the European Union. Both factors here encompass the country-level differentials within the EU, as the more economically developed old member states need cheap labour in order to maintain competitive prices in the global (or EU) markets. Even though it might sound pretentious to add the following to the "pull" factors, I argue that the myth of the "good life in the West" is still somewhat present in Eastern Europe, which does to some extent serve as a pull factor for migration. Moreover, the desire to improve one's career or life in general must be taken into account.

Transitional regimes greatly affected migration dynamics within Europe. As mentioned above, migration flows from traditional countries of immigration shifted to those countries that did not introduce transitional provisions right after the enlargement. Largest increase in





the share of EU8 residents since the 2004 enlargement was in Ireland and the UK (Kahanec et al. 2009: 7). Therefore a "pull" factor towards the UK, Ireland and Sweden was quite obvious in the first 7 years since the accession, but now, as the provisions have terminated for the EU10, new (or rather old, traditional) destination countries are emerging.

Referring to the above-mentioned desire for cheap labour in Western Europe, certain sectors have a much higher demand for labour from the East than others. This demand is mostly concentrated in the fields of information technologies, nursing, hotels and restaurants, simple manufacturing, construction, and seasonal work in the agricultural sector (Thaut 2009: 198). While the first two can be counted among the demand for the skilled labour, as IT and medical care require a certain level of education, the rest are predominantly in the low-skilled part of the labour market. Most post-enlargement flows from Eastern Europe were heterogeneous in skill composition, yet there was a slight prevalence of medium- and low-skilled migrants emigrating from Latvia after the accession. In addition this this, a threat of brain waste was on the rise. High-skilled migrants took not only jobs appropriate to their level of education, but also low-skilled jobs to provide for the basic salary. Thus labour shortages are not only beneficial for attracting migrant labour, but can result in brain waste due to labour market pressure on new immigrants.

## Latvian specifics

Most experts tend to talk about Polish emigration due to the fact that Poland had the largest number of emigrants in post-accession Europe. However, the Baltic States were among the most affected by emigration, as they had large proportions of their native populations leaving the country. According to Eurostat (Eurostat 2012) Latvia had the largest relative decrease in population in 2011 (-16/1000) and the second largest negative net migration rate in Europe (-11.2/1000). Experts in general underline the prominent role of post-enlargement migration for the Baltic countries (Hazans and Philips 2011: 3). First part of this subchapter addresses the situation in Latvia before and after the enlargement, with reference to institutional regulations and processes behind migration flows. Second part applies the general findings on economic and social effects of emigration to the Latvian case. Finally a unique position of Latvia is specifically addressed with a dimension of post-crisis migration, which significantly changed the composition of migration flows from Latvia.

When talking about post-enlargement migration flows it is important to take into consideration national specifics. Latvia's history renders certain implications that are reflected also in governmental decisions and individual mobility of people. As a post-Soviet country, Latvia in 1991 faced a declining and rigid economy, damaged national psychology and a unique demographic composition, with a significant share of Russian and Russian-speaking people living for decades on the territory of Latvia. This bares two implications as far as migration is concerned.

Firstly, Latvia is, as many post-industrial countries, facing negative net population growth, low birth rates and an ageing population. Combined with the recent emigration, it is facing an unprecedented demographic catastrophe in the foreseeable future. One logical suggestion for improving the situation could be promoting greater immigration to the country in order to balance the labour market and improve the demographic image of the country. However, collective memory of events from the 1939 forced Soviet annexation onwards is still alive. Firstly, many ethnic Latvians were deported during the Second World War by being accused of collaboration with the Nazis and instigating anti-communist propaganda. In 1941 and during 1945-1949 mass deportations to Siberia removed over 30,000 Latvians from their territory, many of whom died during the transport to gulags in central Russia. Ethnic balance, disturbed by the deportations, was further altered by a massive influx of labour migrants to Latvia from all over the Soviet Union. At a certain point in time[19] Latvians represented only 52% of the population. Both of these factors deeply affected Latvian national consciousness and resulted in strong anti-immigrant feelings among the Latvian population. Immigration is a politically sensitive issue, partly due to the perceived negative experience of massive immigration when Latvia was part of the USSR. (Mežs, Akule, Polatside 2010: 179). The government therefore is not very keen on promoting further immigration into the country and such a stance finds strong support among the citizens. Therefore, there is very little chance for Latvia to establish replacement migration as a solution to its demographic crisis, even though immigration to the country is on the rise in recent years.

Secondly, also as a result of the Soviet occupation, some people in Latvia do not possess Latvian citizenship. Latvia and Estonia were the only two countries that, after the break-up of the Soviet Union, decided not to introduce the "zero option"[20] policy for acquiring citizenship and consequently many people, mostly of Russian, Belorussian and Ukrainian origin, could not get Latvian citizenship. Some of them later took Russian citizenship, which was available to all of them, some went through a process of naturalization and acquired Latvian citizenship and some were left without any legal status – they are the so-called "stateless people". Implications for migration flows are again two-fold. Those people who opted for Russian citizenship (or any other non-EU citizenship) are treated as Third Country Nationals (TCN) and are basically foreigners with residence permits in Latvia. The "stateless" people, or non-citizens, are a particular category. They do not possess citizenship of any country and have a harder time acquiring work and residence permits. Most of them possess Latvian residence permit and some are in the process of naturalization. Nevertheless, "non-citizens are *not* considered as EU citizens. [emphasis in original] They also cannot work freely within the EU." (Ivlevs 2008: 3) They can, however, travel visa-free within the EU, just like Latvian citizens. Both Russian citizens and non-citizens are obviously not covered by free mobility provisions of the European Union and therefore the benefits

[19] Lowest percentage of ethnic Latvians living in Latvia was recorded in 1989 population census. (Всесоюзная перепись населения 1989 года).

[20] The most widely accepted citizenship policy in the former Soviet Union countries was the "zero option" policy, which accorded citizenship to all people residing in a country at the time of the break-up. Latvia and Estonia, however, opted for exclusive citizenship, for Latvia with the 1991 Latvian resolution "*On the renewal of Republic of Latvia citizens' rights and fundamental principles of naturalization*" giving the right to citizenship to people, who were citizens of Latvia before 17.6.1940 and their descendants.





of a common labour market do not apply to them. Such obstacles decrease their propensity to emigrate from Latvia. However, there are still 10% of non-citizens among all emigrants from Latvia and around 10% of citizens of other countries (see Charts 1 and 2). This might mean that third country nationals are going back to their country of origin and that non-citizens are potentially applying for Russian citizenship[21] or it could mean that these people are trying their immigrant luck in other parts of Europe. Either way citizenship only curbs flows to EU member states, but does not generally decrease the propensity to migrate, especially if we consider the likelihood of ethnic tensions between nationals and non-nationals that serve as "push factors" for migration.

Baltic populations are more mobile compared to their Central European counterparts (Hazans and Philips 2011: 4) and are more prone to migration. Latvians, just like Lithuanians, chose to migrate to Ireland and the UK, not only because of the lack of transitional provisions in those countries, but also since many immigrants have studied English at home and valued the opportunity to use, improve or study it in these countries (Anderson et al. 2006). As much as Anglophone countries were attractive for Latvians and Lithuanians, Estonians on the other hand tended to migrate to culturally and linguistically closer Finland. Baltic emigration obviously has regional specifics and cannot be treated as completely homogenous.

The last and probably the most important factor that influenced Latvia was the scope of global financial crisis in the country. Latvia as one of the Eastern European countries showed relatively fast economic growth since 2000. However, since the crisis most severely affected countries within the region were the three Baltic republics with small, highly liberalized, and externally oriented economies, depending on importing capital and energy supplies. (Apsite et al. 2012: 136) Their economies being small and relatively open, the Baltic States were hit severely when exports and foreign capital inflows began to decline and when unemployment started to rise steeply. Latvia was dealt a heavy blow in 2008 and its recovery was slow, but steady. Unemployment rates in the Baltic countries on the eve of 2009 were returning to the pre-accession levels with embarrassing speed (Hazans and Philips 2011: 25), but in the past two years Latvia has shown a big improvement, as it managed to reach positive economic growth and decrease unemployment.

That did however not encourage more people to stay as the recovery is still slow and the prospects for improvement look grim. After 2008 there was a big wave of the so-called "crisis migrants", meaning those people who left as a result of a severe economic situation at home. Many crisis emigrants left because of mortgage payments or inability to pay their monthly payments most often in combination with unemployment or decrease in income level. (Apsite 2012: 134) While some left for targeted earnings, most migrants left Latvia permanently and moved with entire families. This additionally affected the already faltering Latvian economy, yet the country is currently on the road of stabilization and prospects for the future look much better than some years before.

[21] In case of Latvian Russians Russian citizenship can be acquired through the citizenship of parents or through naturalization. Before 2009 special provisions were made for former Soviet residents to apply for Russian citizenship. Now it is still somewhat easier for non-citizens to acquire Russian citizenship due to high potential for naturalisation.

## a. Emigration flows

A superficial view on the Latvian situation might imply people are leaving Latvia because of high unemployment rates and general poverty. Yet a substantial body of literature and empirical data show that the main motive for people to leave Latvia is not the financial desperation and lack of jobs in Latvia but the difference in wages between Latvia and Great Britain. (Ponomarjovs 2009: 86) Such economic discrepancies are the main driving factors behind the increase in recent emigration. The chance to earn better wages and experience life abroad are particularly attractive to many of the country's young people. (Gelzis 2011) They prefer to work abroad than settle for the low wages they would get in Latvia. This additionally drives high unemployment rates as people are not keen to take low-paid jobs. As a result, there are skills shortages not only because of emigration per se, but also due to the very fact that certain jobs are unwanted by the local population.

Emigration from Latvia was quite significant in size, as the country was losing more than 1% of its population annually (McGuinness 2010), a trend that continues to this day. Roughly from 2000 till today, 13% of Latvian population has emigrated, causing a dramatic effect on its demography (see Future of Latvian Community 2013).

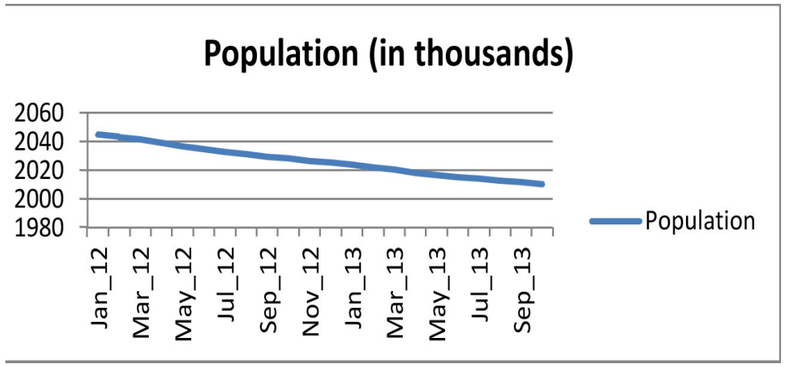



Chart A. Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, November 2013.

Even on the small-scale, month-to-month basis, we can notice a significant decrease in the population of Latvia. The number is slowly approaching the 2 million threshold, which, if passed, would sound off additional demographic alarms within Latvia. Moreover, emigration in the case of Latvia has a direct impact on the labour force (Indans 2010: 3), contributing to upward pressure on wages and a slight decrease in unemployment (Chart 3, years 2008 and 2009 are an exception due to the global economic crisis).

Incidence of tertiary education among Baltic migrants is lower than among stayers (Hazans and Philips 2011: 10), which could potentially mean that returns to education in Latvia are higher than abroad and that it pays off for an educated Latvian to stay rather than to migrate. This is supported by the work of Badescu, D'Hombres and Villalba, who argue that the highest wage premia in Europe can actually be found in Eastern Europe (2011: 27).



It is therefore not entirely true for Latvia that the educated part of the population in more prone to migration in terms of push-pull factors, however the incidence of high skilled emigration was on the rise after the global economic crisis and it even exceeded the proportion of the staying population.

That said, Latvia receives 300 million each year in remittances, contributing to a substantial part of financial inflows. Despite the fact that these remittances are spent on consumer goods in Latvia (just as well as elsewhere in the world), local economy can be strengthened through these financial flows, as proven later in the subchapter 5.a.iv. Chain migration was quite strong not only in Latvia, but in the Baltic States in general as the overall flows to the UK and Ireland from the Baltic countries roughly doubled in 2005 (Hazans and Philips 2011: 6). This can be attributed to both the well-established migrant networks abroad as well as to the sole fact of EU enlargement and its free movement provisions. The longer a country has been sending its inhabitants abroad, the easier it is for the subsequent migrants to move. Diaspora thus stimulates or at least simplifies migration, which is definitely the case with Latvia's strong émigré communities abroad. Such chain migration, however, can significantly affect only certain regions within the country and for Latvia rural depopulation is quite severe, making some villages similar to ghost towns since most of their population is gone. This is further addressed in the subchapter 5.c.vii.

Latvian emigrants did have a strong tendency towards circular migration, as most of Latvia's migrant flows were either repeated (circular per se) or seasonal. Authors like Engbergsen et al. argue that migration is not even circulatory anymore, but is becoming liquid. Liquid migration is described as complex, transitory and temporary patterns of transnational work and settlement. (Engbergsen et al. 2010: 12) This implies migrants are almost in a permanent state of migration (or even mobility) as they adopt a transnational and fluid lifestyle. European Union provisions of free movement of workers and the ease of modern travel additionally stimulate the new nature of migrant flows, encouraging migrants to circulate instead of settle.

Circular and liquid migration relieves the emigration pressure and brings benefits to the sending country. Such flows are particularly popular since the enlargement, but they cause also some administrative and statistic confusion. While undocumented migration, especially after 2004, is not a problem for Latvians, inconsistent administration procedures and definitional problems of migration are, therefore statistics offer only a schematic picture of migration flows between Latvia and other EEA members. Not every temporary migration is always temporary as certain individuals simply did not deregister in their homeland and are thus officially still residents of Latvia and counted in the national statistics. Moreover, children born to Latvian nationals abroad will still hold Latvian passports despite never even being in Latvia. It is thus difficult to draw the big picture of Latvian emigration solely based on statistics, yet some overarching trends are doubtlessly evident.

## b. Pre- and Post-Enlargement

There is no doubt EU enlargement had a significant influence on migration processes in Latvia. Since joining the EU in May 2004, Latvians have been citizens of the poorest country in the Union. (Indans 2010: 3) Being in such an unfortunate relative position, it would be a surprise if no Latvian used the right of free movement of workers. What happened is the exact opposite - many people did use this right and right after the enlargement there was a steep rise in emigration. The two most popular destinations were naturally the UK and Ireland, since they opted for a free labour market right after accession and Latvia became the 2nd country by size of migration to those two destinations (Poland being the first). Diasporas emerged soon afterwards and Latvians are among the five most represented foreign nationals in the two countires. Enlargement also changed the skill composition of migrants: before enlargement, Latvian migrants were more educated on average than stayers. Post-accession migrants, however, are significantly less educated than stayers. (Hazans and Philips 2011: 10).

The data suggest that immediately before the enlargement, flows from the Baltic countries to the continental part of the "old" Europe were larger than flows to the UK and Ireland. (Hazans and Philips 2011: 7) This change is not surprising as the UK and Ireland along with Sweden were the only three countries that did not introduce transitional measures as a containment strategy of expected migration flows after the accession of A10. The two countries quickly became popular destinations due to lack of migration quotas and ease of acquiring residence permit, while the common knowledge of the English language contributed to choosing Anglophone countries over Sweden. Moreover, before the enlargement also the former Soviet Union was a popular migration destination and it attracted on the average more skilled migrants than Western Europe.

Right after the accession, Latvia was actually in a favourable economic position. Overall real GDP growth during 2004-2007 was 48% (Hazans and Philips 2011: 3, see also Chart 4) and the situation seemed prosperous. However, in 2005 emigration from the Baltic countries was a record high[22]. There was also very little homogeneity in the composition of these flows, as migrants were mixed gender-wise (in slight favour of women as mentioned before) and demographically diverse. The only evident trend was that post-enlargement migrants were significantly less educated than stayers, making the medium-educated workers most likely to move (Hazans and Philips 2011: 2). Consequently, a share of manual workers rose and there was a high share of agricultural employment, evidently implying the increase of low-skilled labour migrants. It is somewhat surprising that human capital has become less pro-migration after accession (Hazans and Philips 2011: 11), but people were probably optimistic about the future returns to education, since accession was combined with an economic upturn.

A sharp increase in the over-qualification rate of the highly educated migrants after EU accession is evident for Latvia. (Hazans and Philips 2011: 14) About 47% of highly educated workers took a job that was under their skill level, a phenomenon called "brain waste". Such downward mobility is especially significant for Latvians among the Baltic migrants, as they are prepared to make bigger concessions for getting or retaining a job. It is not only about migrants' lack of interest in highly skilled jobs, as we must consider also problems in

[22] Referring to the timeframe from 2004 to 2007.





obtaining recognition of foreign education. In order to avoid complicated and costly bureaucratic procedures, migrants often take the job that is instantly available to them. Over-qualification depreciates human capital and pushes valuable workers in a less favourable position, which is to the detriment of the receiving country as well.

If the first years after the enlargement a steep rise in emigration occurred, while the situation became more stable in 2007 (Chart 5 and Chart 6). This emigration wave was marked mostly by short-term emigration, with many people willing mostly to test the new provisions and earn extra money abroad. Post-accession workers were mostly interested in undertaking short-term mobility in order to acquire higher financial capital (Fihel and Krišjane 2008). However, global financial crisis in 2008 changed the picture dramatically. Interest in out-migration because of the crisis was even higher than just after accession to the EU (Apsite et al. 2012: 134), so a further analysis must be made of pre and post-crisis migration.

## c. Pre- and Post-Crisis

The composition of migrant flows changed quite a bit after the crisis. Firstly, propensity to migrate became much higher as unemployment in Latvia and other new member states grew. Secondly, among those who migrated there were more males compared to the previous years, more young people and also more people over the age of 45, who had a hard time getting a job. This last category is particularly worrying as the most fragile part of the work force is almost pushed into migration due to the dire economic situation they're in. Thirdly, a share of entire migrant families rose. If before the crisis only one person from the household left for work abroad then after the crisis, many have left with their families and have settled for permanent stay. (Apsite et al. 2012: 137) This argument is further confirmed by Berzina, who finds a 4% increase in the number of emigrants under the age of 19, which means that families choose to emigrate together more frequently, and not just individual family members, as it was previously [sic] (Berzina 2011: 11).

Moreover, this emigration has turned slightly from temporary to permanent migration, while the inclination to return is getting lower by the time spent abroad. The percentage of migrants who would like to return to Latvia is decreasing since 2010 (Apsite 2010; Krišjane and Bauls 2011) and the numbers are going down each year. Permanent out-migration can significantly alter the demographic structure of sending societies, as the entire regions are depopulated. Permanent migrants can also have a stronger influence on sending regions by weakening local productive systems, and changing the culture in the direction of out-migration as the sole normative path to upward mobility (Lungo 1999; Delgado-Wise 2007; Portes 2008). Thus it is important to look into the nature of migration flows and how they change with time, as each period brings different effects for the country of origin. For Latvia, this means that the length of stay of certain migrants and the severity of economic crisis stipulated permanent emigration rather than circular mobility.

Region-wise there was a change in composition of migrants according to their region of origin. There were more migrants coming from Vidzeme and Latgale region before the

crisis, while after it there were more people migrating from Riga and Riga suburbs (see Apsite et al. 2012: 137, Chart 7). Rural depopulation has evidently shifted to more urban or even general depopulation. Furthermore, in the pre-crisis period more people used official recruitment agencies, while from 2008 to 2010 people turned to informal channels for help with their mobility (see Apsite et al. 2012: 137). Finally, Germany is becoming a new migrant destination, since it had to remove transition limitations in 2011. With all those limitations lifted, migrant flows will probably diversify in the future.



## Effects of emigration

I roughly define two general fields of effects, namely economic and social. These two distinctions are very general and they are often interrelated, so some overlapping and intertwining cannot be avoided. Therefore I also included a transitional part in this chapter where socio-economic effects are discussed in order to understand the connection between the two fields. Another very important observation has been made by Cariño, who argues that the effects of emigration can be measured at various levels: the individual, the household, the community, and the country as a whole (1987: 407). I mostly refer to the individual and country level, but sometimes cross-level comparisons and observations are necessary. In Latvia in particular, we need to observe intra-regional differences as internal migration proved to be of great importance. The country has a mono-centric settlement structure with concentration of all types of resources in the metropolitan region of the capital city of Riga, and the effects of migration on the population are particularly important here (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 8), yet it is not only the capital that matters. This is why I observe the general regional level to understand whether emigration has specific regional effects and how this is related to rural and regional development.

Emigration as a process can have both a positive or negative effect on the country: «The demographic, social, and economic effects of emigration are complex, and they can be both beneficial and detrimental to the sending nation.» (Cariño 1987: 420) Often this depends on the level at which we observe the phenomenon. Individual migrants usually will not migrate unless the net migration benefits are larger than net migration costs. Therefore emigration is generally positive for the migrant as he or she can expect higher wages, improve his or her social status, acquire new skills, and spread its social network across country borders. As far as the state is concerned, emigration bares both negative and positive consequences, but unfortunately governments are mostly focused on economic effects rather than on social and tend to neglect negative social consequences that can have an impact on the entire population in the long run. Asch for example, states that emigration generally has a positive effect on the country of origin (1994: 205), but I tend to be more sceptic towards such statements, mostly because social impacts are highly underexplored and underestimated. Finally, when it comes to national governments, social effects of emigration and the improvement of demographic situation are rarely on the agenda as they provide only long-term results that are of little interest to bodies elected for a 4-year mandate. Thus this work aims to stress the importance of these effects and their interconnectedness with other social and economic processes which shape the nation's future.

## Economic effects

Economic effects are significantly better analysed than the social ones. In the last years there were many studies on the topic of remittances and the effects of emigration on labour markets. Mihails Hazans (2013) has recently published a thorough overview of the situation in Latvia with his own estimates of emigration statistics, since the official data are often not representing the phenomenon correctly.

Economic implications of emigration concern predominantly the state and much less the individual. Emigration can have a wide variety of economic effects on the source country, ranging from changes in the wage and employment levels of the non-migrants to increased production and economic growth. (Asch 1994: 1) Most of these effects are ambiguous, since they depend on whether we consider them in the short-term or the long-term. They also depend on the general length of emigration flows from the country. On the positive side migration has contributed to a decline in unemployment and real wage growth in general, as well as to improvement in the labour market position of ethnic minorities and the low-skilled. (Hazans and Philips 2011: 3) However, decline in unemployment and real wage growth can in the long run have an upward pressure on wages that makes labour expensive and the country's economy uncompetitive. Further it can decrease labour productivity as the labour market has shrunk and employers don't have a lot of workforce to choose from. On the individual and household economic level, migration is positive, as it offers higher wages abroad, higher returns to education, new skills for the individual and serves as a risk-sharing strategy of a household (Kahanec et al. 2009: 3). The main debate remains how to coordinate governmental policies in order to convince people to stay in the country, with the most common solution being the implementation of favourable economic policies such as tax reliefs and active employment programmes.

### a. Labour market

The greatest economic impact of emigration concerns the labour market of the sending country. Again, consequences can vary greatly and are often ambiguous. The first evident consequence of emigration is naturally the loss of workers for the country of origin. Lithuania, Latvia and Poland lost the highest share of their workers (Elsner 2013: 5), so the impact on their workforce is also the most dramatic. After the enlargement and the liberalisation of worker movements, many decided to emigrate in search of better employment opportunities abroad. Net emigration represents a fall in the source country's population and /.../ a fall in the country's supply of labour. (Asch 1994: 8) In addition, emigration of the young, educated professionals for Latvia means losing its best labour force. (Ponomarjovs 2009: 119) First consequence of large-scale emigration is mostly demographic and will be described in the following subchapters, but the second one directly concerns the labour market.





Latvia has experienced a worrying decline of the working population from 1.5 million to 1.4 million since independence (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 3). As labour supply falls, employers have a much smaller pool of workers to choose from. This naturally leads to lower unemployment rates, but the problem that emerges is whether the remaining workforce can suitably substitute those who have left. Not every staying worker can replace every emigrant worker, especially if emigrants are highly skilled. The lack of possibility to substitute workers correspondingly and inevitably leads to decrease in productivity.

Higher labour force participation of the staying community does not necessarily mean better or even the same quality of production. The sending country's production falls due to emigration and the resulting fall in labour supply (Asch 1994: 10), usually because migrants are more skilled or educated than the average population and if a less productive part of the population remains then productivity and product quality will fall. Tight labour markets already forced employers to lower hiring standards (Hazans and Philips 2011: 19), so similar consequences can be expected not only in Latvia, but in all the countries affected by emigration. Such migration-induced labour shortages are big obstacles to growth and thus can be considered as definitely negative. However in the past few years the problem of Latvia is different. Recent emigrants are less skilled than the stayers, so productivity shouldn't fall dramatically as a result of that. The problem lies elsewhere – people refuse to work for low wages and rather not take the badly-paid positions. Thus, employers are having a hard time getting suitable employees and those that they hire are usually in the most precarious positions, forced to take a low-paid job and are easily replaceable.

The question of sectors is another important issue. Not only do in general the more skilled, highly educated and more productive people tend to migrate, but also certain professions are more prone to migration. Western European countries are in search of specific professions that their labour markets lack and consequently people employed in those sectors migrate more. Such sectors are retail, catering, construction and health, the last one being particularly detrimental to the sending country as it implies a loss of its qualified medical personnel. In Latvia for example service sector suffers a lot and vacancy rate in construction sectors increased as well. Such labour shortages lead to higher consumer prices in labour-intensive sectors, since labour is hard to find, which results in upward wage pressure, which even further renders labour costly and prices have to increase. This again, as Karnite (2006) argues, affects the economic success of a country: «In rapid economic growth conditions following EU accession, employers claimed that labour skills shortage had hampered business growth.» With some speculation included, one could argue that Latvia would experience much higher economic growth than it did, had it not experienced such intense level of emigration. To address the rising pressure stemming from labour shortages, employers are turning to the option described above – immigration. In sectors such as construction, IT, transport, and communications [employers] were concerned about labour shortages, and were attracting or planning to attract migrant workers from Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries. (Kazaks et al. 2006) Much to the dismay of the locals, such measures are inevitable to sustain Latvia's economic growth. Alternative to this is only requalification of the existing labour supply: «Employers may encounter a labour market lacking in necessary skills, and, subsequently, may be required to invest much time and money into training new labour.» (Thaut 2009: 211) Such

measures are less efficient since they cannot address labour shortages immediately and are often costly both for the government and/or the employer.

I address the issue of remittances later, but at this point an important aspect of this type of money flows must be mentioned. When remittances flow back to the sending country, this raises the aggregate demand, since a large share of remittances is invested in consumer goods. With an increase in aggregate demand a chain effect is triggered that leads to an indirect increase in intermediary output. This means that greater demand results not only in more output of the final product, but also in more output of intermediary products (semi-finished products). Since the economy is interlinked every change will lead to a wide web of effects.

A potentially positive consequence of international migration is that it can relieve pressure on the labour market of the sending country in the short term by reducing competition and increasing employment opportunities for those who remain in the country. (Thaut 2009: 211) Wages and unemployment of the staying population will be addressed in the following two subchapters.

## b. Wages

With changes in the labour market come also changes of wages. Emigration is a negative labour supply shock that leads to labour shortages, which results in upward pressure for real wages. (Elsner 2013: 5) That is essentially good for the staying population as the wage gap decreases and people get higher returns for the work they do, but if wages rise too fast, this can increase labour costs too much and make labour costly. Employer will consequently not hire more people, as he tries to cut down the production costs, but will instead invest in introducing newer technologies that can replace workers. Since certain professions cannot be replaced, because the remaining workers do not possess the adequate skills, this can again lead to the replacement of workers with technology or in the worst case shutting down the firm. Interestingly enough, for the case of Lithuania, Elsner finds significant positive effect on the wages of men who stayed in the country, but no such effect for women (2013: 1). Speculating why that is, is rather futile, but perhaps women are less represented in the missing sectors, they can have fewer returns to unobserved characteristics, or there can simply be discrimination against women in the labour market. Gender differences apart, Baltic labour markets are definitely affected by post-enlargement emigration. Hazans and Philips (2011) find a higher number of vacancies after 2004, lower unemployment and a higher wage growth for all three Baltic States.

## c. Unemployment

There has been much said about the effects of emigration on unemployment in the subchapter on the labour market as these two fields are highly intertwined. However, there are some aspects to it that need to be further investigated.





Work abroad has been an important coping strategy for the Baltic unemployed (Hazans and Philips 2011: 9), however not only unemployed people migrated. It is important to examine whether migrant flows are those from unemployment at home to employment abroad or they are job-to-job, meaning that people migrate from employment in Latvia to employment abroad. Evidence shows that a big share of migrants from Latvia had been employed before departure (see Asch 1994: 25, Hazans 2013: 97) and therefore their emigration did not help to directly relieve the burden of unemployment. On the other hand an indirect effect of job-to-job flows is conditioned by occupational mobility. This means that not all of the staying population can fill the posts left behind by migrants and sectoral labour deficit can easily occur. Therefore relieving unemployment depends on employment status of emigrants at the time of departure and the labour absorptive capacity of the sending country's economy (Lucas 1981). One additional point has to be mentioned – emigration of the unemployed can relieve the burden of social benefits, thus providing more social funds to be spent elsewhere. Even though Latvia did not experience such significant unemployment relief, there was still a proportion of unemployed that did migrate and this must be taken into account, especially after the 2008 crisis.

During 2004 - 2007 unemployment rate declined by four and a half points in Latvia. (Hazans and Philips 2011: 19) However, we must not assume that migration was the only reason for this decline. Much can be attributed to the EU accession itself as it eased access to the European markets and consequently boosted Latvian trade, enabled access to the European structural funds and finally increased foreign investment in Latvia. However in 2008 Latvia experienced a big economic downturn due to global crisis and this led to decrease in exports in FDI and an increase in emigration. The total employment rate in Latvia fell from 62.6 per cent in 2008 to 55.2 per cent in 2009 (Central Statistical Office), meaning this was a big push factor for Latvians, as the crisis affected other European countries to a lesser extent than Latvia.

In general, taking into account the net effects, emigration is not a powerful tool to relieve unemployment (Straubhaar 1987), yet it is a coping strategy for the struggling households. This is conditioned by the complex labour market structures that are intertwined and simple one-to-one calculations in this sense don't really work. As mentioned before, emigration might be a very useful tool for the individuals to escape unemployment and poverty, but it cannot be a primary tool for governments to relieve unemployment overall.

## d. Remittances

Remittances are the financial and material gains of a staying family stemming from migration of a family member. Remittances are seen as a positive thing in general, but they bare different implication on the economy as a whole.

Such money flows firstly mean financial gain for the sending country. Secondly, increase in household income means higher consumer demand as those households are able to afford more and also more savings that can strengthen the local financial sector. In addition, more income can lead to lower labour participation of those who receive remittances.

If emigration increased vacancies in the labour market and led to higher labour force participation, this is not true for the entire population based on the role of remittances. For women the negative effect of remittances on labour force participation dominates the positive effect of emigration on participation. (Asch 1994: 41) Women evidently decide more frequently to get out of the labour force and stay at home, since remittances provide a stable income for the family. However, it is also culturally related whether women prefer to stay at home once they begin receiving remittances or go to work despite the new source of income.

In a different situation, remittances offset the family's lost income due to the emigration of the family member (Asch 1994: 13). It is often the case that a family invests heavily into its family member's migration. This can come in the form of investment in the education or helping with the cost of mobility and housing in the first months of migration. Initial investment is therefore only balanced out by remittance flows of a migrant to his or her family.

Repatriated earnings represent tangible gains to the household involved. The impact of these earnings beyond the household, however, depends on the manner in which they pass into the local economy. (Cariño 1987: 416) Household can spend its remittance income on either consumption or investment / savings. This implies a two-level analysis. On the level of a single household, remittances are positive additions to income that can alleviate poverty or increase the quality of life for the staying family. However, this does not directly mean investment into the economy and is not usually seen as a productive way of spending the money (for example if remittances are spent only on consumer goods). If on the other hand remittances are invested in opening or improving local business, this would be considered productive.

Remittances are usually spent directly, that is on consumer goods and education. Investment is rare, especially in the early years of migration, since staying households aim to repay the debts (even those emanating from migration) and improve their standard of living by investing in house renovation or better equipment. That does not mean however that remittances do not contribute to the economic growth of the country. It is true that consumption of consumer goods is not an investment per se and does not contribute directly to economic growth, but it raises local aggregate demand and indirectly contributes to investment of local entrepreneurs in improving their businesses. In addition, such remittance flows strengthen local financial sector, increase money supply and contribute to easier availability of credit. Going even further, remittances can also be spent on education of the staying population and this is surely an investment, as a better educated workforce can boost economic growth in the future. It is proven that the percentage of children enrolled in schools is higher in the households that receive remittances than in those emigrant households that do not. (Asch 1994: 38).

Income stemming from migration can in general reduce absolute poverty levels, this being one of the most positive aspects of such financial flows. However, remittances rise on average with the migrant's education (Asch 1994: 36), meaning an educated, skilled migrant can send home more remittances than an unskilled, uneducated one. Furthermore, educated people are more likely to migrate, since they can expect higher returns to education in the destination country. Consequently, if migrants come predominantly from the upper income groups, remittances actually increase inequality as they do not serve social mobility, but dampen it. Such effects are mostly country-specific and need to be analysed as such to avoid too many generalisations.





Finally, there is one factor that could potentially influence remittance flows specifically in Latvia. In January 2014 Latvia adopted the euro currency. It can be expected that the introduction of euro to Latvia will result in easier transfer of remittances (in the case of Ireland for example) and perhaps even stimulate further migration. Making Latvia a part of the Eurozone can definitely ease emigration to a certain extent, but only time will tell what kind of consequences will the new currency bring.

However, it has to be remarked that remittances do not seem to have strong effects on investment and entrepreneurship in the EU-10 economies as well as in Latvia. (Kaczmarczyk and Okolski 2008; Dietz 2009; Eglite and Krišjane 2009) In conclusion, it can be argued that remittances, in an overall perspective, bare ambiguous impact on the sending country. Mostly, they are beneficial on an individual level, negative or positive for migrant's community, depending on the circumstances, and mostly neutral for the sending country's government.

### e. Taxes paid at home

The loss of labour force due to emigration does not only imply the impact on the labour market, but also on the state budget. Effect depends on the type of migration. If migration is temporary and the migrant does not deregister his or her permanent residence at home, then the migrant is still paying his taxes in the sending country, which strengthens the state budget and has a positive effect on the local economy. But if migration is permanent and migrant applies for the permanent residence in the destination country, then he or she will be paying taxes abroad and this will lead to the loss of potential tax revenue for the state. With the loss of the active labour force and ageing population in Latvia, there is the possibility that contributions into the social insurance budget will not cover budget spending in the future (Latvian government 2013, see also McGuinness 2010) and will not be able to provide a sufficient pension fund for the future generations. Fiscal pressure proved to be increasing in the recent years as reports Latvian Institute (Latvia in Review 2013): "[In 2012] share of expenditure on elderly population comprised more than a half (53.5%) of the total social protection expenditure." This implies a large pool of elderly population that requires state-financed pension funds. Interestingly enough in comparison with 2011, the most significant expenditure drop in 2012 was related to smaller support to unemployed persons (decrease of 21.6%) (ibid.), which is connected to a drop in unemployment due to emigration and economic growth, or a drop in unemployment benefits. Here the effect of changing demography on budget deficit is evident.

### f. Loss of investment on education

Every country spends a certain amount of its budget on education – predominantly on primary and secondary one, but in the case of state universities also on tertiary education.

This means that for every educated emigrant the sending state lost some of its investment on education. These people [young Latvians] represent the future human capital of Latvia and their departure impacts the development of Latvia in a negative way. (Ponomarjovs 2009: 56) Loss is counted both in subsidy in education (free tuitions, scholarships, student subsidies) and the value of the forgone income, which was discussed above in the tax section. Remittances somewhat balance this loss, but not in its entirety.

The scope of a loss is related again to the type of migration – long or short term, high-skilled or low-skilled and the level of analysis. From a migrant's point of view emigration may have positive results (Cariño 1987: 411), since he or she can get higher returns to education abroad. With migrants being generally more educated than the sending country's population, it means losses for the country might be greater in the same proportion as the gains for the migrants rise. People are also more likely to leave if they expect a higher return to education (or human capital) than in their home country. Differentials in the level of returns to education among countries are among the most important factors for highly educated migrants and sending countries could pursue certain steps to increase local returns to education in the forms of scholarships and favourable laws.

Effects also depend on the length of stay of the migrant abroad. The source country loses any return on its investment in the human capital (Asch 1994: 12) in the case of long-term or permanent migration, while if migration is cyclical human capital is only enhanced by work experiences gained abroad. This means return migrants bring back valuable experiences and the prestige of working in another country, which can benefit both the sending country and the worker. In addition, emigration can raise the expected return on education in the case of short-term migration, it can induce additional investment in education, and result in a net brain gain that increases a sending country's welfare and overall development (Thaut 2009: 207). Even low-skilled migrants that gain a valuable new skill abroad can improve their employment potential at home. Short-term emigration is thus a desired phenomenon, while the long-term one is considered only a loss.

Finally, there is a danger that the youth simply stops even considering the life at home. Country's youths become geared to out-migration, to the neglect of education and the search for occupational opportunities in their own society. (Portes 2008: 26) The prevalence of migration over staying might drain even those human resources that in general have good opportunities also in their country of origin. Having active employment policies, promoting local job market and most importantly reducing youth unemployment might therefore be of great benefit to the sending country in terms of preserving valuable human capital.

## g. Brain gain, brain waste

While the loss of investment on education is linked more to the investment of a sending country in the human capital of a migrant, brain waste and brain gain are more connected to the migrant's working life and his or her potential for contributing to innovation and economic growth of a country. There is much talk about the loss for the country when educated people start to migrate, but this brutally objectifies an individual and even the two terms, "brain gain" and "brain waste", are somewhat inappropriate to use while referring to human beings. I use them, however, as the two established concepts, even though the terms "the loss of educated population" or "gain on human capital" would be much preferred.



I have mentioned before that circular migration is considered a positive phenomenon. If workers start returning to their home countries and circular migration emerges, the human capital they acquired while abroad would constitute brain gain for the source countries. (Kahanec et al. 2009: 5) Returnees usually acquire greater human capital abroad and when returning they contribute to an increase in net human capital of the sending country. However, as Cariño argues, emigrants who have acquired additional skills may be the ones least likely to return (1987: 418). Such emigrants usually establish careers abroad and as new skills generate better wages in the destination country return to a worse-off source country is quite unlikely. Brain gain, therefore, is more of an exception than a rule.

But even those who emigrate permanently contribute to a sending country's welfare. Especially in the case of the Baltic States well-connected diasporas have formed and in the spirit of a diaspora they maintain contacts with their country of origin. Migrants often act as agents of knowledge transfer and international trade, and pools of skilled immigrants may attract high-tech investment. (Bonin et al. 2008) There is a potential for permanent migrants to invest in local businesses at home, to establish trade links with their home countries (Cariño 1987: 419), or simply to facilitate easier circular migration that can benefit the sending country.

On the other hand, there is a very negative phenomenon that is particularly evident among the Baltic migrants. I am talking about "brain waste", when a highly skilled and educated migrant takes up a job that is below his or her skill level. Such downgrading is a result of a dire state of the sending country's economy, when a migrant is so desperate for a job that he or she would agree to "worse" jobs only to be employed. In other cases, downgrading is a result of higher relative wages for low-paid jobs abroad compared to well-paid jobs in Latvia. In other words, this means that a migrant will prefer to work as an unskilled worker for a better pay abroad than as a poorly paid skilled worker in Latvia.

In most host countries the skill level of NMS migrants is higher than that of other migrants and/or the respective nationals. However, they tend to work in jobs for which they are overqualified. (Brücker et al. 2009: 168) Migrants from the new member states are more likely to be overrepresented in low and medium-skilled sectors and occupations in spite of the majority having a medium educational attainment and almost a quarter of EU8 immigrants possessing high education. (Kahanec et al. 2009: 17) Not only do these migrants take low-level jobs, but they also agree to lower wages, longer working hours and worse working conditions, with Latvians being especially notorious for their compliance with any kind of conditions employer wants. This has made them a desired workforce, but such downgrading negatively affects the potential brain gain of temporary migrants and is one of the worst incidents of a post-enlargement migration.

## Social effects related to economy

### a. General

As I have shown, there is a wide variety of economic effects of emigration that have been relatively well researched in the past few years (especially if we take into consideration the broad governmental and EU interest in addressing the recent economic crisis). Yet apart from the economic effects of emigration there is also a broad variety of equally important social effects. They range from changes in family relations and structure to the overall demography of a sending country. As they deeply relate to the economic ones, at this stage I will only address the very obvious connections between both. I will specifically describe the wide range of social effects in the following chapter.

Economy and society are naturally intertwined. People create economy and every economic change leads to changes in societal structure. The first very obvious link between economy and society in terms of emigration is the issue of an ageing population. The socio-economic development of Latvia has been, to a considerable extent, influenced by demographic changes caused by low birth rates and ageing of the population. (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 3) Large pool of pensioners bares very important implications not only for the nation in general, but also for the national governments. There is a growing concern that the large-scale emigration and imminent passage of the "baby-boom" cohorts into old age will result in rising numbers of old people affected by poverty and social exclusion (Hoff 2008: 6). If the majority of society is old and especially out of the active working age, there won't be sufficient governmental resources to provide pensions. This results in lower pensions of the retirees, which leads to impoverishment of seniors, which even further leads to shrinking of the purchasing power, pressure on resources and additional costs for the government for providing health care (see Hoff 2008). Moreover, constrictive population pyramid means an increased pressure on the youth and working population to provide for the ever-growing pool of pensioners. Such pressure might cause the mental generational gap with the working population stigmatising pensioners as a social burden, especially if combined with raising the retirement age. Social stratification and exclusion of the elderly is therefore a serious and very possible result of the ageing population and emigration if not balanced with appropriate governmental and EU measures.

Circular migration was particularly strong in Latvia right after the accession. This might serve as a good safety valve for the household in the form of diversification of sources of income and it is potentially beneficial for introducing new knowledge and experiences to the country. Entrenched elites may foster circular migration as a way of alleviating domestic inequalities and poverty, thus helping consolidate the status quo (Portes 2008: 24) mostly in the form of sending away the most dissatisfied people. In Latvia, however, this works in a slightly different way. Economic elites are just as attracted by the chance of higher earnings abroad as are the middle and lower class citizens. Moreover, as Latvian migration is becoming more permanent, economic elites are losing cheap labour force and are threatened by labour shortages for specific sectors. Those who might actually profit are political elites as political pressure is diminished by out-migration of the most unsatisfied Latvian residents.





As far as the brain drain goes, it is still not quite clear what kind of consequences it bares for the sending country. It is identified that the short-run impact of brain drain on resident human capital is extremely crucial, because it not only determines the number of high-skilled workers available to domestic production, but it also affects economy's capacity to innovate or to adopt modern technologies, which acts to determine the production efficiency and greatly influences the volume of capital in- and out-flows (Marchiori et al. 2012: 1597). Therefore, if many high-skilled workers emigrate, many local businesses have a hard time hiring educated local workforce, which affects societal and economic capability for innovating and updating society's approach to tackling everyday or business tasks. It could even be said that if extreme emigration and drop in young population occur, society comes to a stalemate. This is not to say elderly people cannot contribute anything to the society, however a good balance between the young and the old is needed in every community to successfully rejuvenate itself.

In addition, social expenditure in Latvia is rising. In 2012 the government spent 2.2 billion lats (approx. 3.9 billion euros) on social protection. This is more than it spent on social protection in 2011. Biggest expenditure rise was recorded in health care (4.2%), however a share of expenditure on elderly population comprised more than a half (53.5%) of the total social protection expenditure (Latvian Institute 2013). This is to prove pensioners are representing a large share of government expenditures and this share is effectively growing.

Finally, the impact of remittances on the staying population is big. As many argue, the predominant and overall impact of remittances is a positive one (Bettin et al. 2014, Mansoor and Quillin 2007). Normally, they augment household income of the migrant's family, which reduces poverty rates and increases local development. However, as Hazans rightfully argues (ibid. 2013), remittances are not always positive. They can potentially not compensate for the lost tax income or investment on education, especially if migration becomes permanent. Moreover, there is a chance of social stratification, as some households receive remittances and others don't. Households of skilled migrants normally receive higher remittances, which dampens social mobility and increases social stratification, especially on a local scale.

### b. Return migration: Increased human and social capital

A very important aspect of emigration is the time frame. Migration can be either permanent or temporary, the latter one also implying return migration as one of the most desired end products of migration. Latvia has basically three stages of emigration: pre-enlargement, post-enlargement and post-crisis. The second, post-enlargement period, was particularly known for higher return rates, thus raising the question whether we should call this form of human movement mobility rather than migration. An important aspect of this migration, both into and out of the country, has been the fact that rather than permanent one-way migration (the dominant pattern until recently) there has been a predominance of short-term, circulatory movements backwards and forwards across borders. This would be better termed mobility than migration. (Wallace 2002: 604) Migration normally denotes one-way

flows, while mobility is linked to fluid, repetitive and multi-directional types of movements. However, I prefer to use the term migration, mostly for better clarity and because the nature of migration flows is shifting so rapidly in Latvia that it is difficult to use a very specific term to cover the entire phenomenon of Latvia emigration.

Certain authors, such as Engbergsen, Snel and De Boom (2013: 115) talk about liquid migration, which parallels Bauman's[23] work on "liquid modernity", thus denoting movements that are deeply connected to the modern lifestyle. These migration movements are of temporary, fluid and uncertain nature (ibid. 2013: 137), making hard to draw definite conclusions on their nature, apart from the very fact that they are unpredictable. On a similar note Okolski talks about "incomplete migration" – a temporary migration abroad, of varying degrees of legality, without any settlement that is mostly connected to work in a secondary segment of the labour market in a foreign country (Okolski 2001, see also Engbergsen et al. 2013).

In Latvia, this would apply mostly to the second period of migration, the post-accession one. If we follow the work of Hazans, then the second period was mostly marked by temporary movements abroad for short-term financial gain. As argues Ponomarjovs, in 2009 Latvian emigration trend to Great Britain had all the conditions to be considered a transnational trend (ibid. 2009: 77). The soft intra-European borders and increase in low-cost airlines triggered the so-called "Ryanair effect", where migrants can effectively return home on a regular basis. This lowers the cost of migration and makes moving a lot easier financially and emotionally. Return migration is seen as quite beneficial for the sending country as migrants bring back higher human and social capital.

However, recent studies (such as the one from Hazans 2014) show that the trend is shifting and migrants tend to stay abroad more often. Also the length of the stay is crucial in predicting potential for return. Most post-accession migrants have now been living abroad for a long time and some have created families there, therefore their potential for return migration is very low. Migrants who invest heavily in migration and settlement in the country of destination are not likely to return to their countries of origin but to stay. (Apsite et al. 2012: 136) This does not come as a surprise, since a higher investment in migration decreases the chance of return. Also if migration is a result of family reunification, return is less likely. Gender-wise, men are less likely to return. Referring back to the fact that more women tend to migrate then men one could predict that women are predominantly temporary migrants, while men are inclined to a permanent migration. Finally, some people migrate in order to reach target savings – to buy a car, afford education tuition or house improvement, thus making these migrants effectively very prone to return migration.

Patterns of emigration change with the amount of time a country has been sending migrants abroad (Asch 1994: 24) – longevity of migration renders chain migration more likely. If there are established and functioning diaspora communities in destination countries, then emigration becomes increasingly easier and people are encouraged to emigrate. Moreover, return migrants have a high "migration-specific capital" (Vertovec 2007: 5), which entails knowledge of migratory process, acquisition of job and housing in the receiving country, bureaucracy, etc. This facilitates further migration, be it circulatory or permanent. By having more migratory experience further migration become easier and more accessible as the risk reduces.

[23] Zygmunt Bauman, 2000, *Liquid Modernity*.





Another issue is the reabsorption potential of returnees – can return migrants find a job upon their return? If the likelihood of finding a job in the country of origin is very low, then migrants will not return, but will continue to work abroad. However, if the disparity of sending and destination country's economy is big, then people might return to spend their pension at home, since it could offer better value for their savings.

Migrants will also return to the country of origin if they can expect better returns to their observed and unobserved characteristics, which would result in a higher wage. The earnings gain of the average return migrant is shown to be entirely caused by foreign experience (Hazans and Philips 2011: 18, see also Asch 1994: 45), thus making emigration very favourable for improving the human capital of an individual. Return migrants are generally more educated than their non-returning counterparts, meaning they expect a high return on their characteristics upon arrival.

Non-economic motives can play an important role in return migration (Hazans and Philips 2011: 16). Based on several reports that can be found online and based on my fieldwork in Latvia, Latvian migrants in particular have a wish to return home – their attachment to the homeland is quite strong. But patriotic feelings are probably not the only reason for return. Migrants return mostly for reuniting with their families and friends, for being in a familiar environment and being able to speak their native language. Actually, in post-enlargement period more than half of Latvian movers returned to their home country within a year (Hazans and Philips 2011: 17), making return migration a very common phenomenon in Latvia. Yet this trend changed sharply due to the longevity of migration flows and severe post-crisis economic downturn. There are more migrants that decide to stay than to move only for a short time, a feature particularly important for the post-crisis emigration wave.

## Social effects

With the ton of literature on economic effects of emigration on the sending country, there is still little written about the social effects. The main focus of this thesis is to analyse the full spectrum of the social effects of emigration as well as possible within the scope of this work.

It is not all about the economy and labour market pressures when it comes to migration. If people start leaving the country on a large scale, social structure of the staying population inevitably changes. Hence it should be very obvious there is an abundance of consequences when a significant share of the population leaves the country. At this stage it doesn't even matter if those who leave are the best and the brightest or unskilled workers. The bare scale of the phenomenon leads to the reconfiguration of society, change in its overall human and social capital and the transformation of social networks on many levels. The range of social effects of emigration is surprisingly much broader than one might expect. Effects go from demographic changes and its consequences through more psychological and individual problems to social and community issues.

To estimate the scale of the phenomenon it would be useful to look into officially available statistics on migration. However, accurate predictions are often futile due to the lack of reliable data. As most migrants from the Baltic countries did not withdraw from population registers in their home countries (Hazans and Philips 2011: 5), a complete and elaborate statistical analysis is impossible. The only alternative is to accept officially available numerical frameworks, add estimated surplus and work within those frames or observe general trends. This goes particularly for demographic changes, as statistics is an insufficient source for explaining overall social impacts. Nevertheless if we observe the data we see a high proportion of female, young and educated migrants in the general European migration flows, a fact that doubtlessly impacts the sending society. Moreover, incidents of delayed marriage, lower nuptiality, and a high incidence of celibacy (Cariño 1987: 409) are becoming more common, yet this is probably related to the general European-wide trends of late family formation. In addition, we need to mention the psychological impact on both the migrant and the family at home. Such perspective is largely understudied, so the following data are gathered mostly from the available scraps of literature and will be further analysed in the following chapters focusing on empirical data from fieldwork in Latvia.

## a. Demography

Firstly I want to address a very hot topic in current media discourse in Latvia – demography. Ever since Latvia regained independence the country's population is shrinking. In the '90s it was because of a large outflow of Soviet-era migrants that went back to their native republics. In the early 2000s there was an increase in labour migration due to Latvia's economic problems (see Hazans 2013: 75-76). However, only with the accession to the EU Latvia really experienced an efflux in population. This is combined with an ageing population, where the birth rate is lower than the death rate leading to a persistent negative population growth (Chart 8).

Negative demographic shock was very painful for the Baltic republics. (Hazans and Philips 2011: 3) While most of the developed world is facing severe demographic pressure from the ageing population, usually they compensate this with an increase in immigration. Latvia, along with other Baltic republics, is not a desired immigration country in the first place and secondly, it does not provide favourable incentives for even instigating immigration. Therefore emigration had a profound effect on the size, structure and growth patterns of populations (Macpherson 2000: 18).

If in the previous decades European population pyramids were expansive, with large(r) proportions of young people, now a general trend is towards a constrictive population pyramid with large middle-aged and increasingly older population. This is particularly evident in Western European post-modern societies, however Latvia and other Eastern European countries with large emigration flows experience similar changes. The continuation of the [migration] process over time may remove the very demographic basis for development as fewer and fewer able-bodied adults are left behind. (Portes 2008: 24) Skewing population pyramids is





not only an interesting statistical fact represented in nice graphs – it is a serious sign of societal changes as a result of the new migration trends, which affects society on many levels.

Latvia's population is decreasing (see Chart 9). If there were 2,377,383 people living in Latvia in 2000[24], there were only 2,070,371 people left in 2011[25]. This means a staggering 13% decrease in total population in only 11 years. Prospects for the future are grim, since birth rates are lower than death rates, resulting in a negative population growth in the past decade. Even on the small-scale, month-to-month basis, we can notice a significant decrease in the population of Latvia. The central question is whether this decline is due to emigration or negative population growth. Zukula (2013) argues that since 2008 net migration comprises more than two thirds (77%) of the total population decrease (see also Chart 10). Therefore emigration is the very factor most responsible for shrinking and ageing population and it is only supplemented by the negative birth rate. Migration further affects the age structure of any society, including Latvian one: «The predominance of the mortality rate over the birth rate and the migration deficit creates changes in the age structure of the Latvian population.» (Berzina 2011: 13) Population turns from proportionately younger to older population, which is evident from the changing population pyramids that go from expansive to constrictive. Such demographic transition is typical of the Western countries with falling birth rates and longer life expectancy and Latvia is no exception.

What additionally influences negative demographic trends is the structure of migration flows. In Latvia recent emigrants have been disproportionately young – 70% between the ages of 18 and 34 – and more educated than those who have remained (OECD 2013). What this effectively means is that predominantly young people emigrate and considering emigration has a big impact on Latvian population, as I have shown, such trends have long lasting consequences for national demography.

**Table 1: Total number of emigrants by age group**

| | 0-19 | 20-34 | 35-64 | 65+ | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2008** | 4,447 | 12,478 | 9,114 | 1,006 | **27,045** |
| **2009** | 7,001 | 19,488 | 10,838 | 881 | **38,208** |
| **2010** | 8,327 | 19,150 | 11,367 | 807 | **39,651** |
| **2011** | 5,527 | 13,103 | 10,666 | 1,015 | **30,311** |
| **2012** | 4,494 | 10,666 | 9,124 | 879 | **25,136** |

Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, see also Chart 11

This emigration trend is also evident from the Table 1 – most emigrants are young people between the age of 20 and 34, followed shortly by the age group from 35 to 64, which is a general working population. This results in a loss of an active labour force and shift towards the old demographic structure, which further means a loss of income tax for the country and increase in pension and health care demand. An additional problem concerning the

[24] 2000 Population Census, Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia.

[25] 2011 Population Census, Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia.

ageing of the population is the lowering of the number of children. In 2012 3,364 Latvian children were born abroad. Not all of them will probably stay abroad, but such a consequence worries both the government, who strives for a younger society and future active citizens, and the general population that perceives this as a threat to ethnic balances and a detriment to the national pride. However, these children quite often retain their Latvian citizenship as they are born to their Latvian parents. Most of them are thus still a part of national statistics, despite never actually living in Latvia.

Ageing population leads to the perennial question as to who will contribute to the pension fund for the future pensioners. With the loss of the active labour force and ageing population in Latvia, there is the possibility that contributions into the social insurance budget will not cover budget spending in the future (Latvian government 2013, see also McGuinness 2010) and will not be able to provide a sufficient pension fund for the future generations. Pressure on the national pension fund is evident in the continual prolonging of the working age, which means older and older people will have to work in order to provide for the pension fund. The remaining working-age population is additionally burdened with providing pension funds for the country's increasing pool of pensioners, which in the long run is becoming almost unviable. Despite an increasingly more efficient health care and longer life expectancy the elderly suffer more from stress at a workplace, they have a harder time following the current technology, and they are particularly vulnerable to occupational accident. Of course, all these factors depend on the sector where the elderly are employed and often times this part of the population can contribute valuable experience, yet it is still fairly inconvenient for older people to work past their expected retirement age. On the other hand pensions in the future (and in Latvia even now for certain professions) could be so low that pensioners will be forced to take additional employment in order to supplement their meagre income, which is additionally stressful for them.

The loss of its youngest working force also leads, on a societal level, to the lack of innovation that this generation could bring. Creativity thus becomes pinned to the staying community that with its older and mature population can hardly replace the lack of its most prosperous people. This topic is further discussed in the subchapter 5.c.iv.

Along with the age structure, gender balances change just the same. Interestingly enough, women migrate more[26]. A popular perception of a migrant is that of a young male individual, but statistics show that women are in the slight majority among migrants (see Mežs, Akule, Polatside 2010: 187, figure 4, refer also to Chart 12). Perhaps this is because women have a harder time getting employed at home, or they can get a job easily abroad (low-skilled vs. high-skilled, returns to education), or they migrate for marriage or family reunion. On the topic of marriages and female migration an interesting problem emerged in Ireland in the recent years. There is an increase in fictitious marriages of Latvian women with third-country nationals. These women get paid for a provisional marriage, so men from non-EU countries can come to Ireland and work there. It can occur that the actual marriage does not even happen, since a Third Country national is entitled to stay and work in Ireland during the time of engagement and arrangement of the papers, which can last up to a year (Sham marriage 2013). This is a serious problem for Latvian and foreign authorities as these

[26] Here I am referring specifically to Latvia and not to migration trends in general.





women are put in a very precarious situation, as fictitious marriages quite often lead to more serious forms of human trafficking and intra-marital violence.

Still under the issues of demography, there is also a threat of delayed married and generally lower nuptiality as a result of migration. One must, of course, keep in mind that delayed marriage is a general post-modern trend and decrease in nuptiality might come as a result of a different lifestyle and decision not to register the marriage. However, as most migrants are young, there is an increased chance that those very migrants prefer to stay single for better mobility and have loose amorous relationships instead of a traditional focused ones (see Charts 13a and 13b).

Finally, it is possible that more people from certain regions migrate more than from the other, which results in depopulation of entire villages. Rural depopulation will be additionally discussed later. Interestingly enough, Latvia continues to allot the smallest amount of funds for demographic needs in the EU (Mežs in Demographer 2013), despite being heavily affected by the declining population.

## b. Family separation

A very common pattern, found across the Baltic States, is that of an individual from a family migrating, leaving behind either his/her partner with children or only his/her children with their grandparents. Family separation can last for a couple of months to several years, depending on the individual migrant. In case of only one parent or spouse migrating, there can be severe strains on marriage, possibly resulting even in divorce. According to research findings (SKDS 2005), 29% of the population believe that emigration is the cause for the breakdown of families; children are forced to grow up alone without one or both parents. (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 19) These children become effectively parentless and experience severe psychological pressure from the society.

There are also changes in the division of labour in the staying family, as the whole burden of taking care of the family is now on only one parent or on grandparents. If only one parent is left behind with the children, this can result in a double burden of work for this parent, combining both work and child rearing as a de facto single parent. Because of migration, the nuclear family is no longer as common a household pattern in many parts of the world; split and extended households are becoming increasingly common (Cariño 1987: 410), which inevitably leads to psychological impact on the staying family.

Again one must be careful with observations made in 1987 as nuclear family in the 21st century is even in general no longer a standard. Nevertheless, such «emigrant children» experience alienation from their parents and begin seeking attention in many ways, which often results in aggressive behaviour and worsening of school performance. But these are only superficial effects, since the real psychological damage is much deeper. Social workers express their concern that long separation from parents may have a negative impact on the socialisation of children in the family and the development of an adverse notion about the family model as well as obstruct the acquisition of the social role of the father or the mother in the future. (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 21).

Moreover, medical experts and foster home specialists report that abandoned children are increasingly found to have behaviour disorders and other serious problems. (Thaut 2009: 213) This is a strain not only on the parents and an individual household, but also on the country as a whole, since such disorders in population lead to fall in production in the future, or simply as a cost of medical treatment of psychological diseases. Moreover, an increase in child abduction is being reported, which means one parent takes the child abroad with him or her without consulting with the spouse / partner. Officially this is an international abduction and must be treated in accordance with the law. Naturally, this takes a toll on partner relations and costs the state to find the missing child, and that is even before the case goes to court.

However, for the sake of portraying both sides of the coin, psychological cost of moving is much lower now than five years ago. (Hazans and Philips 2011: 26) There are many facilities that enable easy contact with the staying population. One such ubiquitous utility is Skype and other internet communication tools that provide daily cheap contact with one's family. I have previously mentioned also a "Ryanair effect", which means migrants can come back at low prices for most important holidays and longer vacation, providing a valuable time spent with one's family.

Finally, we must keep in mind that family separation was more characteristic of the second, post-accession period of migration (see Hazans 2013). After the 2008 crisis, it was more common for families to migrate together.

### c. Geriatrification of upbringing and effect on the children

Before the crisis, it was not uncommon for both parents to emigrate and leave the child at home with his or her grandparents. In the event of migration of one of the parents the majority of children stay with the mother, less frequently – with grandparents and a comparatively small proportion of children stay with more distant relatives, friends or acquaintances (Karičerta 2006; Broka 2009). This was a practical solution for migrant parents who wanted to raise children in Latvia and retain them in their cultural environment. Most migrant parents also intended to migrate only temporarily, therefore having children in their parents' care seemed as a perfect solution. These are the so-called custodial grandparents - "adults who are caring for their grandchildren on a full-time basis" (Hayslip and Kaminski 2005: 262). However, a phenomenon called the geriatrification[27] of upbringing is known among experts to be a fairly negative one.

Markova, for example, warns of the changes in family composition and child outcomes in terms of health and education (2010: 15). Emigration puts a burden of upbringing on the older generation, which leads to many psychological and social changes. Studies show that becoming a custodial grandparent can have many negative personal, interpersonal, and economic consequences, including poorer physical and mental health (Kaminski and Hayslip 2004), role overload and role confusion (Emick and Hayslip 1999), and more isolation from age peers and noncustodial grandchildren (Jendrek 1994). It is important to keep in mind

[27] Geriatrification means "taken over by older generation".





that these results are gathered from studies aimed at proper custodial grandparents, meaning those children either don't have living parents anymore or the parents were drug addicts, violent or incarcerated. In our case, these children still have living parents with normal life conditions, except for the fact they are living in a different country. Still, results might be fairly similar also for children of emigrant parents. Authorities have recognized that the authority of parents is breaking down in some, but not all cases, leading to emerging psychosocial and social problems within the family (Broka 2009: 40). As Krišjane and Lace note in their report, children encounter such problems as absence from school or failure to attend school, the deterioration of their academic success, behaviour problems, offences, and the development of addictions or their aggravation due to lack of attention (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 32). Firstly, this is a severe strain on internal family relations and on society at large by having to cope with psychologically damaged children. Secondly, this means higher expenditure for the state by providing health care and social services to those children.

In 2006 the Ministry of Welfare of Republic of Latvia prepared an encouraging document called «*The Plan for the improvement of the situation of those children whose parents have gone abroad*». In theory, this was a quality document with several provisions for the left-behind children, such as support for staying families and ensuring education for children. Sadly, this plan was not implemented due to poor cooperation between agencies and most importantly as a result of financial difficulties Latvia was facing in 2008. Yet it can serve as a guideline for future governmental policies for children of emigrant parents.

Finally, we must look at one more thing. Historically and culturally, geriatrification of upbringing is not a novelty, as older people often took care of the children while parents were working in the field or elsewhere. I would not even argue this is an entirely negative phenomenon. Older generation serves as a channel for transmission of valuable life experience to the younger generation. However, being effectively parentless in a modern society puts a heavy social pressure on children. These children are sometimes called "the Irish kids" in Latvia (Hazans and Philips 2011: 22), a social stigma that can result in a regressive behaviour of children, demanding attention, eating problems, panic attacks, worsening of grades and aggression.

### d. The elderly

As the Latvian population is getting older the pool of pensioners and state-dependent people is growing. Both internal and external migration have very direct effects on the elderly.

The first and most important problem these people encounter is the abandonment by the family. Elderly people are significantly less mobile than their young counterparts, therefore they are more likely to stay in Latvia. What happens is that their relatives and immediate family migrate abroad, leaving the aged in care of themselves. Sometimes families leave independently and other times the elderly simply do not wish to change their environment, thus resulting in elderly people living without support by their emigrated children (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 21).

Such abandonment often results in deterioration of health of the elderly, as nobody can take care of them in situ, and an additional workload for municipal social services. Often pensioners in the rural areas live in fairly distant places, thus having difficult access to health services and to their imminent social circles. It is not only their physical health that suffers, but also their mental health as alienation and loneliness are often taking the highest toll on these people.

Finally, there is a problem of local services. As social assistance provided by local governments is directly dependent on the available resources – the more affluent local governments – mostly the large cities in Latvia (in particular the capital – Riga) – provide a more extensive and diverse range of social services to groups of the population exposed to the social exclusion risk. (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 19, sic) Therefore if the elderly are residing in less affluent regions of Latvia or living in one of its rural areas, then the services available are scarce and quite limited. Due to budgetary constraints municipal provisions for the elderly are narrowed down to the very basic ones – mostly they aim to preserve the life and its bare minimum than improve on the situation. Elderly people with relatives that emigrated are thus marginalised and at high risk of social exclusion, deteriorating health, poverty and psychological problems.

## e. Social remittances

Return migration is deeply connected to a phenomenon called social remittances, which merge in the transformed habitus of the migrant. Peggy Levitt was the first one to properly analyse the role of social remittances. She defined them as "ideas, behaviours, identities, and social capital that flow from receiving to sending country communities" (Levitt 1998: 928). Social remittances are of four types – norms, practices, identities and social capital, each of them implying a specific transformation of the receiving community and the habitus of the migrant. There is a certain level of the general diffusion of culture through the process of globalisation, yet social remittances – a local-level, migration-driven form of cultural diffusion (Levitt 1998: 926) – play a vital role in the transformation of the sending country's society. And even though Latvia is, globally speaking, considered a part of the Western world, there are enough cultural differences between Eastern and Western Europe to consider the role of social remittances as vital. Latvian migrants therefore adopt certain practices abroad that they later transmit back to Latvia.

This process is relatively complex. Firstly, migrants filter ideas and behaviours of the receiving country through their own cultural lens and transmit only those ideas that they believe can improve their lives. Yet the impact of social remittances is both positive and negative as there is nothing to guarantee that what is learned in the host society is constructive or that it will have a positive effect on communities of origin. (Levitt 1998: 944) Secondly, social remittances do not travel only in one way. They normally circulate as migrants bring their know-how and certain successful practices to the receiving country. A very banal, but illustrative case is the popularity of curry in the UK that achieved almost the status of a national dish. Thirdly, remittances are both individual and collective. Migrants can transmit structure of family organisation, consumer patterns or household practices to their families, relatives and friends at home. However, if a migrant is involved in community institutions (cultural societies, committees, etc.) they can transmit practices on a community level. These kind of remittances can particularly influence political processes. «Emigration and return provide important means for introducing new ideas, beliefs, and organizations into the body politic.» (Moses 2011: 49) Thus through circular migration and flow of social remittances voting patterns, political participation and civil initiatives can be (trans)formed or enhanced.

Sustained contact with sending countries only facilitates the transmission of ideas, especially with the ease of modern-day communication. [Social remittances] can also be transmitted when non-migrants visit migrants in receiving countries or through exchanges of letters, videos, e-mails, and phone or internet calls. (Levitt 2001) Therefore social remittances circulate daily and bare increasing importance for both receiving and sending country.

In Latvia, one can see the emergence of transnationalism. Many behavioural patterns are influenced by return migrants or relatives and friends residing abroad. The culture of sending regions and even the entire nation may be thoroughly transnationalised. This implies that the value system and the pattern of normative expectations become increasingly affected by "imports", in particular those from expatriate communities. (Portes 2008: 25) Latvians are thus adopting certain patterns of behaviour and value systems that are introduced from abroad. Especially large metropolises like London serve as centres of culture dispersion with their multitude of behavioural patterns and seemingly modern lifestyles. As mentioned, not anything goes, but only those values and modes of behaviour that Latvians see as improvements from their own are accepted and passed into Latvia. Most typical example is the introduction of new business models, entrepreneurial skills and techniques of innovation. Through this people are also accepting new patterns of consumption, as they are closely tied with local businesses and their marketing efforts. Cultural and social remittances are thus a fairly neutral result of transmission of ideas, as they go through a strict national and collective sieve.

## f. Ethnic balances

When talking about Latvia in particular, one cannot get past the obvious ethnic divide in the country. According to the 2011 Population Census there were 1,285,136 (62%) of ethnic Latvians living in Latvia in the respective year. Ethnic Russians accounted for 557,119 people (27%) and overall there were 671,119 (32%) Russian-speaking people living in Latvia in 2011.

Ethnic make-up of Latvia is an issue since the country regained independence in 1991, when Latvia ended up with a large Russophone minority after decades of the Soviet labour transfers regime. This pushed the government to adopt a fairly ethno-centric policy[28] and base the future Latvian state on the ethnic Latvian core nation. Nationalistic policies are re-

[28] Ethno-centrism denotes governmental policies that are favourable first and foremost to the core ethnic nation. Such policies draw explicit parallels between an ethnic group (Latvians in this case) and the state as a political body. (see Lazda 2009, Dreifelds 1996).

flected in the legal frameworks for acquisition of citizenship, state education, language and employment policy, etc. Strict measures for citizenship acquisition after the independence left quite many Latvian residents without proper legal status and made them non-citizens[29], which divided the society along ethnic lines. Furthermore, the argument over language policy is still unresolved as many Latvian residents are Russophones[30] and have a hard time getting education in their own language.

The cumulative result of such policies was the perceived sense of alienation from the state among ethnic Russians and societal marginalisation through employment practices and bureaucratic procedures. Thus the inclusion of Latvia within the framework of the European Union offered ethnic Russians in Latvia the chance to move and work abroad and escape the perceived discrimination. The possibility to work freely within the EU has certainly benefited the most disadvantaged individuals of the "new" member states or those people who for any reason feel discriminated in their home country (Ivlevs 2008). On the other hand Latvia improved its economic performance, which could be an important factor in keeping the Russophones in the country. One would reasonably assume that the rapid growth of the economies of Estonia and Latvia (5.8% and 8.5% respectively in 2004), and the prospect of continued growth as new EU member states, with falling unemployment and rising living standards, would be an incentive for Russophones to remain *in situ*. (Hughes 2005: 12)

However Latvian Russophones did not hesitate to take the chance European Union was offering. The "exit" option has been actually given a new impetus by the accession of Latvia to membership of the EU. (Hughes 2005: 1) In addition, Artjoms Ivlevs shows that Russian speakers are indeed more likely to emigrate than Latvians (Ivlevs 2008: 1), thus indicating the conclusion that Russian speakers are not as (emotionally) tied to Latvia as ethnic Latvians and that the societal and institutional marginalisation provided the incentive to leave. However, one should not forget the non-citizen Russophones who, unlike their "nationalized" counterparts, cannot freely access EU labour market. Non-citizens are not considered as EU citizens and thus cannot work freely within the EU (Ivlevs 2008: 3). All those attractive benefits of being part of the EU do not apply to non-citizens, which marginalises them even further. Yet there is one thing that improved not long ago – since 2007 non-citizens can travel visa-free within the Schengen Area. This provision of course does not apply to free access to common labour market, which inevitably means non-citizens have a harder time migrating. Overall, this does not mean non-citizens do no migrate at all - in 2012, for example, 10% of all the emigrants were non-citizens (see Charts 1a and 1b).

What is interesting to see here are the proportions of Russian speakers in the pool of emigrants and in the general population. If we look at only the raw data from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, we see that in 2012 35% of all emigrants were ethnic Russians, while 44% were ethnic Latvian (Charts 14a and 14b). These numbers aren't so dramatic, unless one sees the big picture. If we consider the proportion of ethnic Russian emigrants to the entire population, we see that Russians on average migrate twice as much as Latvians. In 2012 2% of the entire ethnic Russian population of Latvia emigrated abroad while ethnic

[29] There are 290,660 (14.2%) non-citizens living in Latvia according to the 2011 Population Census.

[30] In February 2012 Latvia held a referendum on whether Russian language should become the second state language. The initiative failed by result being 75% of votes against the proposal.





Latvians stayed at only 1% (see Chart 15). If we then consider also ethnic Belarusians and ethnic Ukrainians who are also predominantly Russian speakers and belong to the Latvian Russophone minority, the pool of minority emigrants grows even bigger (however, the cumulative percentage of minority emigrants remains at 2%).

The numbers show that Russians speakers in Latvia are more prone to migration than ethnic Latvians, which clearly leads to shifting ethnic balances. If more Russian speakers migrate from Latvia, less minority members will remain in Latvia. Thus the core ethnic Latvian population is strengthened at the expense of a minority group. The percentage of ethnic Latvians in the entire country will grow, while the percentage of minority population will fall. This of course is a rough illustration of events, as population fluctuations are not ever dependent only on the net migration rate (as we have seen), but also on birth and death rate and in ethnic terms on the level of naturalisation and integration of minority members into the core society. Nevertheless, ethnic balances are shifting[31], which is evident from the official statistics illustrating the relative growth of the pool of ethnic Latvians since the regaining of independence.

I have made a little experiment by opening a Facebook conversation with Russian speaking mums in London[32]. I asked the ladies whether any of them are from Latvia and if they plan or would like to come back. This is not a major material for analysis and the experiment was mostly incidental, but I wish to mention some finding as the response was really surprising. I got 37 responses to my question from 19 ladies. A big majority of them refused any option of ever going back to Latvia and some of them exposed the issue of discrimination and language policy:

Women 1: *I already left 9 years ago. I was often thinking of (trying to) return. The country of idiots (figuratively everybody). I am not thinking of it anymore. Also why would I force my child to speak super Latvian, without which he cannot do in school?*

However, the biggest reason why they would not come back is the perceived higher quality of life in the UK (in particular health care and education). Moreover, most ladies are married and all of them have children. The length of their stay abroad, marital status, children and individual integration are also among the most important factors why those ladies do not consider coming back, even if some of them would like to.

## g. Rural depopulation

A combination of internal and external migration is detrimental to preserving the life of the country, in particular in its rural areas. Internal migration is essentially a one-way movement, originating mainly from peripheral regions traditionally characterized by low population density towards heavily populated zones (Bernard 1968). The most characteristic form

[31] According to the CSB's Population Census there was 52% of ethnic Latvians in Latvia in 1989, 58% in 2000, 60% in 2011 and 61% in 2012 and 2013. (see Chart 19).

[32] This conversation was conducted in a Facebook group "Russian moms in London", which is dedicated to Russian-speaking mothers living in the broad London area. Conversation was held in Russian on the 30th of March 2014, translation was provided by the author herself.

of internal migration of the past century is the rural-urban migration. With the rise of large industrial centres urbanization became the predominant form of contemporary settlement patterns. Rural areas experienced intense outflows as people were attracted away by job opportunities in new economic activities, which were preferentially located in the cities. This entailed either low demographic growth in country districts or, in many cases, significant depopulation resulting in a decline in demographic numbers in absolute terms. (Pinilla et al. 2008: 19) And even though recently also urban-rural migration has become popular and the suburbanization is on the rise, cities are still the focal point of modern migration flows.

If urbanization is becoming the predominant form of current human settlement, this inevitably leads to certain shifts in the relationship between the rural and the urban areas. The later stages of urbanization have been accompanied by an absolute decline in the agricultural production (Williams and Griffin 1978: 29), where farmers quit their profession for a chance to work in the city. This is evident also for Latvia. Since 1935 when the majority of the population (62%) lived in rural areas, the population has continuously moved to cities, and only 32% lived in rural areas in the beginning of 2012 (Central Statistical Bureau in Bulderberga and Pilvere 2012: 182). Latvia as initially a fairly rural country felt the impact of internal emigration very seriously. Farms are either being abandoned or sold to the large farming corporations. While abandoned farms are a sad sign of rural exodus, large-scale farming that is being encouraged mostly by international investors is destroying the traditional farming patterns of Latvia. Remaining rural settlers are dissatisfied with the changes they are experiencing for the past few years and they are desperately trying to preserve the countryside as they know it (see Dzenovska 2011).

Rural depopulation may be also understood as a process affecting regions where the rural exodus outstripped natural growth, thereby reducing the total number of inhabitants to a critical level, particularly in terms of population density and aging of demographic structures. (Pinilla et al. 2008: 2). Demographic shift is evident as mostly older population is staying in the countryside while young people go to urban centres to study and later stay there to work. This is particularly clear in Chart 16 showing economically active statistical units by statistical region[33], where Riga is outperforming any other statistical region by a 100%.

Spatial redistribution has evidently shifted from the rural areas mostly to the metropolitan capital. In Latvia, approximately 40% of internal migration flows involve the city of Riga. Riga's size and economic dominance over a wide territory have a strong influence on the development of settlements, population density, migration, and economically functional interactions, both directly and indirectly. (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 9) Wage disparities between Riga and other regions encourage people to migrate to the capital where they can expect much higher wages. In terms of average earnings per city, the two best performers are Riga and Ventspils, which are the only two cities above the national average (see Chart 17). Unsurprisingly, the worst performing cities are Rezekne and Daugavpils, both of which are part of the economically worst performing region of Latvia, Latgale. The registered unemployment rate in the Latgale region by the State Employment Agency is two times higher than the national average and was 21.8% on 31 January 2010. (Krišjane and Lace 2012:

[33] Number of self-employed persons, individual merchants, commercial companies, farms, funds, associations, state budgetary institutions and local government budgetary institutions.





17) Therefore one can expect for people to migrate more from Latgale region and for people in general to migrate more into the city of Riga and its surroundings. However, the city of Riga has a high negative net migration rate, while it is true that the Riga district (Pieriga) is the only one constantly experiencing positive net migration rate (Chart 7). The reason for this probably lies in the fact that Riga serves as an intermediate station for international migrants. People are coming to the capital to try their luck first in their own country and if still dissatisfied they move onwards to international destinations.

Despite the large efflux from Riga, depopulation has affected rural areas almost exclusively and it may unquestionably be regarded as the most severe threat to local economies, not only because it limits growth opportunities, causes important environmental problems and complicates the provision of public services, but because it may jeopardize the very existence of small towns and villages as inhabited settlements (Marini and Mooney 2006: 94). People are leaving their villages and small towns in search of higher wages and more culturally diverse lifestyle. One of the main motivations to change the place of residence is the ability to find a better job in the capital city. This means that district centres lose fairly well qualified professionals (Krišjane and Lace 2012: 9), thus even further exacerbating the dire economic and social problems of migration loss regions.

Finally, migration loss regions face particular problems in maintaining the level of living. There is a tendency for the most affected regions to simply stop trying to develop as there are too few inhabitants to make use of the municipal provisions. Therefore, these regions aim to only maintain the status quo, yet in the worst cases some downsizing is required. With schools having less and less children, many educational institutions are forced to merge together and restructure, while the most unlucky have to simply stop operating. This means also the loss of jobs for teachers and additional stress for those remaining parents to send their children to more distant schools.

On another note, Dace Dzenovska talks about a rural emptiness as a problem of migration and a problem of demography (Dzenovska 2011: 229), which really affected Latvia and will be evident from the ethnographic narratives in the following section. At this stage it is important to emphasize that internal migration, like international migration, does not mean only changes in economic performance of the country (or its regions), but also changes in overall population structure of the country and the perception of rural life. Rural emptiness is crucial for understanding the potential for rural development in Latvia, as the people who stay aim only to preserve the bare existence of a country life and are disillusioned with the prospect of future development. Without the presence and contributions of young, educated and versatile people, rural development efforts will be abortive (Twumasi-Ankrah 1995: 20), mostly because there will be no one there to support the development and to carry the initiative from the start to its implementation.

## Ethnography

I conducted interviews with 10 individuals – 3 women and 7 men of Latvian nationality. All of them were between 18 and 35 years old. Mostly these people had either relatives abroad or have been abroad themselves, but not exclusively. Interviews were taken over a three month period in Riga and Daugavpils. All participants signed informed consent agreement and were offered an interview either in English or Russian. As all of them chose English, however, their ability to express themselves might be limited and this was taken into consideration throughout the research. Interviews were semi-structured with certain key questions that everybody was asked. I try to quote people directly where possible; however some grammatical touch-up had to be done for better clarity.

In order to really understand the current situation in Latvia I asked participants to explain why they or their relatives / friends had left the country. Most of them underscored the problem of wage discrepancies between Latvia and other European countries (mostly the UK).

J. B.: [My friend] told me they [the government] are unable to find new employees. If someone comes in for an interview he asks too much. And the government is not paying them as much as potential employees would like to.
M. L.: So I went to work in the shop and the funny thing is that they couldn't find a person to work. I had a friend who wanted to work and I said: "Here, I'm giving you the job, I'm leaving". You know what he said? "Too low salary".
S. S.: I see that a lot of my friends have gone out to try to find work and a life better than in Latvia. They want to have more than they have here. Because we have low salaries here. Very low.

Effectively, this is a structural problem relating to global economic power. As in the UK you can earn a comparatively much better wage than in Latvia, especially as a non-skilled workforce, this is a definite pull factor for most Latvian migrants. Enlargement made this difference even more evident and striking with the common market, where comparison was much easier to draw. In Latvia even highly-skilled workforce receives low wages, while in London you can afford a decent living already by working as an unskilled worker. Easiest economic indice to draw from is the PPP[34], where the UK's purchasing power on a global scale is 2,290[35] (in billion dollars), while Latvia's is only 35.37 – a staggering 65x lower than the UK's.

Others, mostly from Latgale region, emphasised a feeling of being left behind by the government. As I've mentioned before, Latgale is economically and socially most unprivileged region in Latvia and its inhabitants don't have a feeling that the situation is about to improve or that the government is doing anything about it.

[34] Purchasing Pover Parity.

[35] Index Mundi, 2012.





I. S.: It's the worst problem of Daugavpils, the first problem, because people would like to earn more money. But the other problem is that here in Daugavpils it doesn't feel that somebody cares about them. Why here in Daugavpils things are like from the Soviet Union?

Finally, people leave because they cannot realize their career aspirations and pursue their particular interests. Most residents of smaller towns or rural areas experienced difficulties when faced with the declining purchasing power of their region. It is important to emphasize again that this in most cases doesn't apply to Riga.

I. S.: My mother migrated for personal reasons and the will to earn much more money and to be more socially protected. She spent one and a half years getting education in floristic, but here in Daugavpils nobody needs that.
J. K.: When we were in crisis, [my sister-in-law] just couldn't get as many clients as she expected. So even though she's a good lawyer and even though she had her office in the very centre of the town, she couldn't manage to raise money for the office and living.

This does not of course mean people see life in Latvia as bad. Most of them are proud of their country and optimistic about the future. Respondents did point out that such economic disparities are expected and that life in Latvia still offers opportunities and good quality of life.

M. K.: There are opportunities also in Latvia, you just need to put in some effort and do some work. You can pack your bags, buy the tickets to the plane and leave. But that's the easiest way. I don't want that.
M. K.: It's not hard to live in Latvia. It's hard to get a good job with a good salary. Jobs are around every corner and you have the opportunity to work.
V. K.: For me personally the quality of living is good, there is no doubt. Because I like hiking, nature and I like spending time with my friends and some other stuff. I can do this here.
A. I.: I have always felt a strong sense of duty towards my country, I plan to return and establish a business in Latvia after my studies.

In this place it is evident that "the beauty is in the eyes of the beholder". Latvia is definitely much more prosperous than some migrants try to portray, especially looking at the persistent economic growth despite the big downturn in 2008. A lot of foreign companies saw this as an opportunity to come to Latvia and established their business, which opened a few new job vacancies in the country. However, Eurofond's Quality of Life Survey still shows that Latvia ranks quite low in the overall satisfaction with life among European countries. While Latvia scored 6.2 points on a scale from 1 to 10 in 2012 (still a slight increase from 2007), the UK scored 7.3 points (Eurofond 2012: 31). These shows that migration tendencies have a real base in the life people decide to live.

Interestingly enough, many people are returning to Latvia. Some return temporarily, some permanently, but all have in common a very specific reason for return – social networks.

J. B.: I really enjoyed living [in the UK], I enjoyed the life there, but the one thing I didn't like was that it was hard for me to find friends.
J. K.: The most important reason was that I was like detached from my social surroundings. I had some friends in there, I had some people I met, but here I really feel that I have help from my friends.
M. K.: My friend came back because of friends. Because he's alone in the UK. He has some friends from other countries like Lithuania and so on, but you're alone over there.
M. L.: [My friend] went [to America] for studies and then she came back. I was extremely surprised, I didn't know why actually. She told me that she was very lonely there, because the culture is very different.

These were very common answers among my participants, which point to the importance of social networks and human relationships in life. While the economy might be a pull factor to leave, society is a pull factor to come back. All of my interviewees that migrated abroad came back because of a sense of loneliness and because they couldn't establish meaningful relationships abroad. Consequently what brings people back to Latvia is the people who stay, sometimes in combination with patriotic feelings towards the country.

However, some are not so hesitant to migrate (again). Studies indicate that there is an increasing probability of making repeat moves the more an individual has already moved (Vertovec 2007: 5). Others are simply curious to see what migrant experience holds for them and also to improve their human capital.

J. B.: It's a good decision to go back and get more experience, work experience.
D. G.: I would like to try to leave for some months, to go abroad, just for experience.
J. B.: Yeah, one more reason why I'm going back, why I don't have any second thoughts about it is that I have some friends that are still living in the UK and he's moving to London as well so we are planning to live together. This will be a big plus for me, to make my life there a lot easier.
J. K.: It would be easier to emigrate again. At least I will have a community, I have some support, so if I don't have a job at least I know where to stay. And it's not just one place, I can name like three or four places where I can stay.

## Transfer of human capital

When these people came back, mostly they found it easy to cash in their foreign experience and get a job. The human capital they've gained abroad came in very handy when looking for a job in Latvia and, interestingly, there were also instances of social remittances and skill transfer.

A. M.: When I came to the employment centre, they were looking at me like I'm God. "Oh my god, British education, wow, you could do this, you could do that".
J. K.: I had my experience, I had my education and when I needed a job I just called few people I know, I just asked for a job and they hired me and that's it.
J. B.: When I came back to Latvia I knew that my new experience will allow me to get a bigger salary.
J. B.: It was a really good experience for me. In that way I managed to get more experience on new technologies. Because the companies can afford that and they do implement them in their work environment.

In the highly-skilled return migration skill transfer is quite common as people bring back the knowledge they've gained abroad. This loosely relates to social remittances, which are basically behavioural patterns that migrants transfer to the country of origin. On social remittances J. B. reports:

> I improved my customer service. I feel the difference, how Latvians do it and how I do it. As I've learnt being polite to your clients will you get better feedback. Moreover, I got more used to paying for someone's service rather than doing it myself. If I would think about my mum, she's doing everything, everything.





Social remittances are thus a big part of circular migration that is currently prevalent in Latvia. As mentioned before, social remittances are complex processes that involve both sending and receiving country. Migrants bring certain lifestyles and experiences with them to the receiving country, while upon return, they bring some of the culture of the host country back to their country of origin. J. B. described well how his personal experiences at work helped to improve their business in the UK, yet this is an isolated example. Because London is so multicultural it is difficult to transfer parts of Latvian culture into the national culture and what happens mostly is the migrant taking back certain favourable[36] life practices of the UK back to Latvia. Another interesting example of social remittances is a celebration of New Year's Eve in Daugavpils[37]:

J. K.: And even when I was a kid, I remember on New Year's Eve people started celebrating first and starting fireworks an hour before. At eleven o'clock they already started fireworks because it was like New Year, Moscow Time. And then it was huge fireworks just on midnight and... It started few years ago, not very long ago, but they also started fireworks at two o'clock at night when it's New Year in London. They also had New Year, Greenwich Time. So now we have three fireworks.

## Cultural deficit and levelling effect

Social remittances are evidently a very important aspect that changes the habits of the sending nation. Migrants usually come back for holidays to visit their relatives in Latvia and this is a perfect time to share new practices with those in their homeland. To delve deeper into the real effects of emigration, I asked the participants what kind of changes they are seeing in their home towns in the past couple of years. It is important to note all these responses come from inhabitants of Daugavpils. They have exposed three main problems:

a. decrease in population and quantity of young people:

A. M.: It's clear that we have less population. You see ten people on the roads, in the streets and you think: «Cool! It's holiday in England.»
S. S.: I see that there are not enough young people here. I think that this is a problem, because we need young people. Young, creative...

b. cultural deficit

V. K.: If there are no culture consumers, there are no culture producers. Obviously more young people are interested in this and they're the ones that are leaving.
J. K.: Latvia has suffered from a lot of talented people leaving. A lot of rubbish people have left as well, it's true, but also a lot of talented people. I can name like three or four bands, also some painters, some great painters I know and just some people who could do more, who could help Daugavpils in terms of economical development, but also in terms of some spiritual or cultural advancement.
I. S.: There's nothing to do. Nothing to do in this city. No opportunities, no alternatives. Nothing.

[36] Favourable from the point of view of the migrant.

[37] Daugavpils is the second biggest city in Latvia and has a majority Russian-speaking population (62,7%).

c. general levelling effect

V. K.: One thing is the quantity of shops that sell specialized merchandize, like for me, it's bicycle shops. We had several and now we only have actually one good bicycle shop, one good non-specialized bicycle shop and few not very good bicycle shops, one of two. So it's less than ten, even five years ago. And even these shops consider closing, because there are very few people that buy stuff. Also around shops community is built like to connect people, micro shops like hobby shops, but here it's not like that, because there are too few people to make it meaningful, for shops to exist.

Decrease in population is a very evident trait of smaller Latvian towns. Rural depopulation is very strong in Latvia and internal migration is very strong (Chart 7). Most people move to Riga first to study and then they stay there. In addition to people leaving for the capital, they also move abroad. A typical migrant (internal and external) is thus a young person, mostly between 18 to 35 years of age. Young people are generally the drivers of change and innovation, therefore with their departure potential for advancement and development (either cultural or economic) decreases.

The second point is cultural deficit, which is a decrease and a lack of cultural production in a certain locality and relates to the decrease in young population in smaller cities. At this point it is important to explain in detail what is meant by "culture".

Anthropology, as the field of sciences that is most intimately connected to human culture, offers many definitions of culture, yet one seems to be particularly important and persistent throughout the ages. In 1871 Edward B. Taylor set the following definition:

> Culture, or civilization, taken in its wide [comparative] ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (1871)

Taylor thus envelopes a whole range of subfields (knowledge, custom, art, etc…) into one larger concept of culture. And all the while culture in the broader sense is indeed a complex whole of these subfields, for the purpose of this research it need to be narrowed down to certain smaller entities. Here Chris Jenks (1993: 11-12) suggests four main domains in which culture can used:

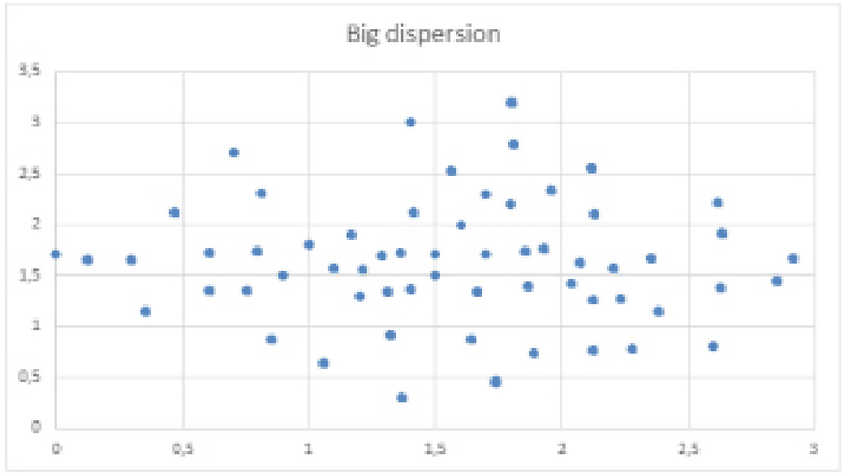
1. Culture as a cognitive category: a state of mind.
2. Culture as a collective category: intellectual and moral development of society.
3. Culture as a concrete category: the collective body of arts and intellectual work within any society.
4. Culture as a social category: a whole way of life.

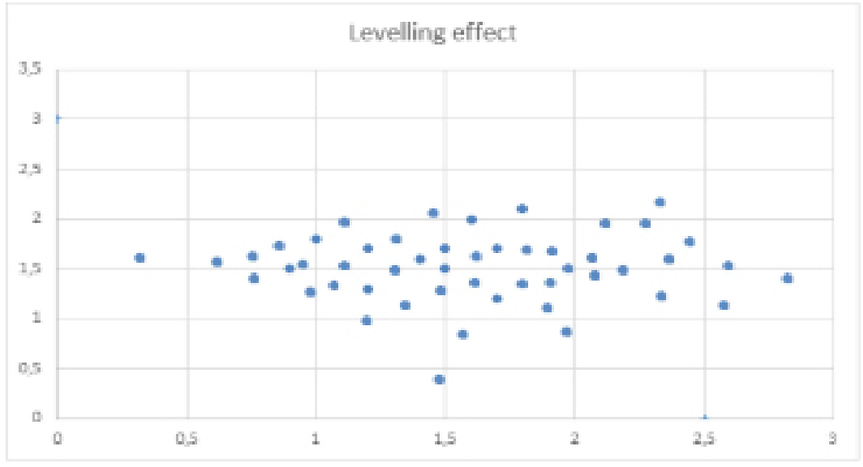
In these terms cultural deficit relates to the third domain, that is "culture as the collective body of arts and intellectual work within any society". Cultural deficit thus means a shortage, inadequacy or insufficiency of the intellectual and artistic activity in a certain society. For better clarity I use the terms "cultural production" and "high culture" for this specific phenomenon. In parts where culture is meant as "a whole way of life" and relates to the before-mentioned Bourdieu's habitus, I simply use the word "culture".

Youth is the driver of high culture, in particular alternative and avant-garde type of culture that every society needs for cultural advancement. When a significant part of painters, musicians and other artistic people leave, the country is left with a more generic cultural production that satisfies the general taste. Also, there is a drop in cultural production, which means fewer activities for the ones that stay. High culture is thus depleted of alternatives and more unique approaches, because, as V. K. aptly points out, if there are no cultural consumers, there are no cultural producers.

I wanted to check whether the official data support the local perception of severe depletion of cultural production. I have contacted Latvian Tourism Development Agency, Riga Tourism Development Office and Department of Culture at Daugavpils Regional Council. The data were quite confusing to say the least. Latvian Tourism Development Agency reports on its page 9 events for April in Riga and 0 events for the Latgale region. The trend continues through the summer – Riga has 14 (May), 10 (June), 16 (July) and 12 (August) events per month throughout the summer, while the Latgale region consistently scores 0. The data from both local agencies were however quite different. Live Riga lists 89 events for April and 87 for May in Riga, while Daugavpils lists 130 events for April and 193 for May. This could be a tiny bit strange if Daugavpils didn't list very attentively every single event that goes on in the city, while Riga reports only those events that are interesting for foreigners. This was confirmed by Mrs Laura Efeja, Partnership Programme and Culture Project Manager of Riga Tourism Development Bureau, who told me Live Riga only list selected events that appeal to foreigners. Mrs Efeja also provided her view on the topic of cultural depletion:

> *My personal opinion is that the emigration has no large impact on the cultural events, because the Latvians are used to visit cultural events a lot, so there will always be a large amount of cultural offer in Riga. The real impact made the financial crisis and the amount of money that the population is ready to spend for culture. But as probably more than a half is subsidized from the state or municipalities, there will always be good events taking place in Riga.[sic]*
>
> (Efeja, e-mail correspondence, 26.3.2014)






Picture 1: big dispersion of cultural interest followed by a levelling effect.

It is therefore important to understand that high culture is subsidised by the state and can therefore exist almost independently of supply and demand mechanisms. However, regional disparities must be taken into account. It might be true that Riga gets subsidies for high culture as it is Latvia's largest and most populous city. Therefore government's investment in culture production "pays off". But is this true also for other regions in Latvia, especially for the most underprivileged Latgale region? Probably no. The very fact that official Latvian tourist portal lists no events whatsoever in the entire Latgale region implies disinterest and potentially lack of government investment into bigger cultural projects. Daugavpils did have quite many events on the official tourist website, but a lot of them were renovations, concourses, senior music concerts and small local sports events, probably many of them not much of an interest to the local youth. In the end, I would like to emphasise that this thesis is about qualitative approach and personal ethnographies and predominantly not so much about statistics. If people believe there is a lack of cultural production in their town, this must be taken as a valid and important point. It implies that events on offer are not what these people are used to or what they want to see in their city.

Now we come to the levelling effect, which is a general depletion and disappearance of cultural and societal deviations. If before there have been many unique cultural productions, many different tastes to satisfy, and many peculiar hobbies pursued, emigration leads to a more generic, unified and popular culture[38]. Imagine the average society having a cultural curve with many peaks and drops (see Picture 1). These peaks and drops represent all deviations from the standard, generally accepted culture. Such deviations[39] can be avant-garde art installations, flash mobs, horror movies, retro festivals, eco markets or specialized bike shops that focus on providing high quality gear for mountain bikes. All these deviations inevitably become obsolete as they cannot find enough enthusiasts to justify their existence.

[38] This time I'm referring to culture not in the sense of arts, but in the sense of community lifestyle.

[39] I use the word deviation in a neutral sense, meaning that it generally refers to a niche culture that is not usually consumed by the majority of population. These goes for subcultures, niche hobbies and other types of non-standard lifestyle choices.





That leads to the narrowing of the cultural dispersion into a flatter pattern. This is what I call the levelling effect as most deviations are eliminated in favour of a standardized culture. Levelling leads to societal stagnation, lack of innovation and delayed cultural evolution. Thus not only is there a drop in quality and quantity of cultural production, but also a transfiguration and depletion of culture as a way of life.

By becoming independent from the Soviet Union and later by joining the EU Latvia clearly showed its willingness to join Europe and the Western world. By increasing contact with the West Latvia, like other Eastern Bloc countries, soon experienced rapid globalization and the invasion of a new habitus – a transnational, global, connected one. Modernising factors related to globalization normally stimulate enhanced and diversified consumption. However, this doesn't entirely apply to Latvia. While Riga already serves as the cosmopolitan centre of Latvia with diversified consumption opportunities, the depletion of local purchasing power in other regions of Latvia actually diminished the diversification of consumption and forced entrepreneurs to enhance standard rather than unusual / unique products. Daugavpils represents a solid case of trend against diversification and towards mediocrity[40]. Due to the lack of diversified buyers living in Daugavpils, entrepreneurs are forced to offer increasingly standardized products with broad appeal. Thus, diversity and subculture are dying out with too few people to support such entrepreneurial and cultural endeavours.

## Regional disparities

Regional differences come in stark contrasts in Latvia. Although the population age structure is relatively similar across Latvian regions, there are substantial differences in education levels, wage level, employment rates, and, thus, total income flows. (Swedbank analysis 2013) The two biggest laggers are Latgale and Vidzeme regions. Both are much behind the national average in terms of household disposable income, Latgale for example being at 75% of national average and Riga being at 118%. Therefore, it doesn't come as a surprise that the most challenging situation with respect to household income is in Latgale. This region's population declined the most during the last decade. It has one of the smallest shares of young and highly educated people, and the lowest employment rate, and, consequently, the highest proportion of pensions in total incomes. (ibid.) However, Vidzeme is in this respect not doing much better.

Regional disparities were mentioned also in the interviews. Mostly my interviewees contrasted life in Riga with life in other parts of Latvia, something that doesn't come as a surprise if we consider the data mentioned before.

A. I.: In Riga things are slowly improving. Outside of Riga, the further you go, the worse things seem to be.
M. K.: From 20 people 3 stay in that village. Others move to other cities to work, to study. And I stayed in the city and go to the village in the weekends maybe, for the summer vacation maybe.

[40] Interpreted here as *mediocrity*: ordinariness as a consequence of being average and not outstanding.

Rural exodus is very prevalent in Latvia as noted also by their inhabitants. But the problem lies not only in a shrinking population of villages and small towns. One of my respondents aptly noted the problem of regional differences and wage disparities also within Latvia.

D. G.: I want to get one person more in my work and if you get young students or young people... and they came and "I have my Master degree, so I want my salary like 4- or 500 lats". But salaries in Riga and other cities are different. And of course you were living in Riga and you got some good education and then there is some confusion.

It is interesting that regions within Latvia face similar problems as Latvia does on European and/or global scale. If people leave Latvia for higher wages and better life abroad, then people also on internal level leave less developed regions for life in the capital. Migration flows within Latvia are thus of two kinds: internal to Riga and external to other European countries.

J. K.: Just a lot of people left Daugavpils and a lot of people moved to Riga. So we have two passes of migration. From Daugavpils to Riga and from Latvia to England.
D. G.: There are two trains, one train going to Riga and one train going abroad.

The Latvian government is trying to address regional differences with the help of European structural funds, yet the road to success is long and effectively hampered by internal and external migration. Emigration has depleted human capital of the worst performing regions, thus making development strategies somewhat futile in the sense that they are addressing less and less people. Nevertheless, serious steps have been made towards regional development. In Latgale, for example, Latgale Planning Region (LPR) Development Council was created in order to directly address the issues this region is dealing with. Development Council (DC) aims to implement LPR as a long-term development plan, with particular focus on economic development and stimulation of regional income per capita. Economic section of the programme is set to last between 2010 and 2017, while the entire strategy will be implemented by 2030. The strategy is designed to fit EU regional development strategy timeframe as this year (2014) a new programming period is starting both for the EU and LPR. Main aim for this period is to integrate LPR with the National development strategy.

Despite the fact that Latvia is by the most part not an immigration country, with its strict rules for third-country nationals, there has been an influx of people in the past few years. FDI has grown quite impressively since Latvia's accession to the EU. From 2004 it has increased almost two-fold (see Chart 18), meaning foreign countries have been drawn to Latvia for expanding or establishing their business, which created additional job openings for the local population. However, it wasn't only foreign companies coming to Latvia – also many foreigners have found their way to the country. In 2011 and 2012 there were 10,234 and 13,303 immigrants coming to Latvia respectively. The numbers aren't particularly high, yet it does come in contrast with 2010's 4,011 incoming migrants (source Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia). This was noted also by my respondents:

J. B.: Not only Latvians have moved out, there are some foreigners that have moved to Latvia. You could see more black people now in the street, then you used to, you can even see Chinese...



M. L.: Then I found out how many foreigners are actually living here [in Latvia]. They're not here like you usually think for some months, but also for 4, 6 years. And there are many more people like that. Do I like it? Honestly, yes. Because I like something new. Fresh culture.

Evidently, they don't see immigration was something bad, probably because at a certain point in life they have been migrants themselves. And even those who weren't are fairly eager to have a new perspective on their country. Of course, these are mostly young, educated and cosmopolitan[41] people.

D. G.: Now I have my opinions that people, who are coming here, foreigners, they may be more open-minded than Latvian mind. Some people don't want to open borders, but other people are coming here and they are really seeing the other side.

## Governmental efforts

Finally, I would like to address the view on potential changes Latvian government should make in regard to emigration. I've asked my interviewees what they would like to see the government do in respect to emigration or what they think the government should be doing. These answers are naturally not meant as explicit policy suggestions, but they do serve as an insight into the desires of the local population.

The acquiescence of homeland government is linked to views that emigration relieves unemployment and underemployment, generates remittances that improves the lives of disfavoured populations and promotes development. (Castles and Miller: 279) Governments of migrant-sending societies now increasingly nurture a relationship with citizens or subjects abroad. Such policies often are driven by economic concerns such as facilitating the sending of remittances. (Castles and Miller: 278) However, as we have seen, it is not only economy that matters. There are also important social issues that need to be addressed in every country of emigration. People are usually good observers and they immediately recognize the most burning issues in their locality which governments might find irrelevant at a first glance. When people have a sense of being heard and when they see their wishes being fulfilled, their civil allegiance and life satisfaction increase and there just might be one more person deciding to stay in the country rather than leave.

Interestingly enough, most of my respondents are fairly optimistic about the future of Latvia. They admit that elsewhere in the world things might be slightly better, but life in Latvia for them seems to be quite prosperous.

J. B.: I don't think that Latvia is in big trouble, you know. If Latvians are unable to improve their economic situation by creating more companies or creating more jobs, then there will be some companies from some other countries that will come here and do it.
J. K.: And the conditions we now have here are good, but abroad are the conditions people are looking for. Actually I don't think Latvia is that bad as it looks like. Sometimes I think people are exaggerating. It's not really that bad as people claim it to be.

[41] Cosmopolitanism is showing in their frequent travels and acceptance of non-Latvian cultures.

It is true that in the past years Latvia attracted a lot of foreign investment and foreign companies were opening their subsidiaries in the country due to cheap workforce. While the UK might offer bigger chances to succeed, Latvia, in the opinion of my respondents, offers a decent life to their inhabitants. A. M. confirms this with a profound observation:

A. M.: The problem is not migration, the problem is in people's minds, in people's brains. At first, came the problem, then migration and now migration – we use it as a problem. I don't see any point for Latvia to change their policies.

This basically implies Latvia is caught in a structural problem of global disparities. It is not that the country itself is unworthy of living in; other countries simply seem to offer more opportunities for a successful career and realisation of personal interest. Quite many respondents believe that the Latvian government is not to blame for this and that they cannot by themselves adequately address this global structural issue.

However, some interviewees did expose areas, where the government could or should do more for its people.

A. I.: Latvian government should create even more business friendly environment, focus on bringing investors to Latvian regions.

Boosting the Latvian economy could be potentially the big encouragement for people to stay (or come back). This is effectively what the government is trying to do with its strategy for increased cooperation with Latvian diaspora. In 2013 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs complied a 29-page document "*Par* Ārlietu *ministrijas sadarbību ar Latvijas diasporu 2013.-2015. gadā*" (The Foreign Ministry's Cooperation with Latvia's Diaspora, 2013-2015), which serves as an outline for future work with Latvia's growing diaspora. The main aim of this document is to maintain Latvian identity and links with the homeland for diaspora members, to encourage their political and civic participation in Latvian affairs, to cooperate with them in a broad variety of fields, and to design suitable policies for their potential re-emigration. It is encouraging for the government to recognize the growing issue of emigration and to try and create valuable contacts with its diaspora, but what is worrying is that there is still no strategy to address the root of the problem and to encourage those living in Latvia to continue to do so.

My respondents point out crucial issues of demographic decline and negative birth rate, which also in my opinion is one of the biggest societal issues in Latvia.

M. L.: The woman doesn't have the feeling that she is protected to actually make the baby. Kindergartens are all full. Also here you get 9 lats. My mum has 9 lats for two children. It's impossible! Per month!
V. K.: First of all some help for people having children. It looks like people who live now will get very small pensions. You need to make opportunities to work for people. Also government should get rid of privileges and spend more money on development.

Encouraging fertility rates is probably a very difficult task for any government to tackle, as one cannot force people into having children. Current trends go in the direction of one child per family, which inevitably leads to shrinking of the population. It is not the point of this work to debate whether people decide to have one child due to them choosing career over family or because governments fail to provide adequate incentives. However, stimulating people with additional childcare and tax reliefs for young families could probably prove to be a good popular measure for boosting national demography.

# Conclusion

This thesis aimed to show the wide scope of effects that large-scale emigration has on the country of origin. Whether positive or negative, migration-induced social change in sending countries and regions tends to be more far-reaching than in host societies. (Portes 2008: 29) Thus it is important to understand and properly address the changing sending societies on economic and social level. I wanted to understand a) what was the nature of emigration flows from Latvia after 2004 EU-enlargement, b) how did emigration affect the staying population in terms of lifestyles and community development, c) how do socio-demographic and economic factors shape the current situation in Latvia.

Latvia has a history of in- and out-migration that deeply influenced contemporary migration discourse and governmental policies. Large influx of Soviet immigrants left the country fairly sceptical to accepting new migrants, despite the fact that the country is now facing sharp population decline. The departure began already in the '90s when Latvia started losing its population at the expense of both its Russian minority and its co-ethnics that escaped the collapsing economy. Later accession to the EU opened new possibilities for Latvians to earn higher wages abroad and improve their lifestyles. There is no doubt EU enlargement had a significant influence on migration processes in Latvia and while this is not so evident in the early years of Latvia's EU membership due to the country's economic growth, there was a big increase in emigration after the 2008 crisis. Now Latvia has comparatively large émigré communities in the UK, Ireland and Sweden, with Norway and traditional immigration countries like Germany and the Netherlands also gaining prominence. In recent years (mostly after the crisis) emigration turned slightly from temporary to permanent, while the inclination to return is getting lower by the time spent abroad. We can expect further migration flows from the Baltic States due to their comparatively weaker economy, wage and unemployment disparities and the relative ease with which an individual can migrate within the EU.

Looking at the effects of emigration on the sending country, I roughly distinguish three types: economic, socio-economic and social. However, most of them are interrelated and together form a web of effects that transform the sending country.

In terms of economy, Latvia (as well as many other emigration countries) experienced big changes in its labour market. Loss of workers leads to a decline in working age population, skill shortages and a fall in productivity, which impedes economic development of the country. As there are less skilled workers to choose from, wages are forced to increase, which is beneficial for the staying population and not so much for the local economy. While unemployment in Latvia decreased, also partially due to emigration, this is not a particularly successful coping strategy in the long term as it impedes economic growth. Remittances are, in a similar manner, beneficial mostly on a household level, while they rarely contrib-

uted to the local development in the case of Eastern European countries. Finally, loss of tax income and loss of investment on education are an additional burden for the future national budget. With most emigrants being mostly young people, the fiscal pressure is bound to increase in the future should these migration patterns not change.

There is a big impact of the increasingly older population on both the economy and society. As the population is ageing, the bigger pool of pensioners requires bigger pension fund that the shrinking working age population simply cannot provide. Thus pensions become lower, which leads to senior poverty and increased pressure on the pension fund. Social expenditure increases together with an increase in the senior population, also as this part of society requires more health care than its younger counterparts.

Apart from economic there is a broad spectrum of social effects of emigration. The most evident one is changes in demography that directly impact the sending country. Latvia's population is getting smaller and older, which means the government will have to reconsider its national strategy. As Hidenori beautifully portrays in the case of Japan, the option for Latvia would be to modify its outlook on life to fit a contracting society. In order to maintain its social welfare system, it will have to bear higher tax levels and accept lower levels of pension and other benefits. (Hidenori 2005) Unless of course Latvia decides to admit larger numbers of foreign national to help boost its economy and population.

As return migration is in decline, the chance of receiving beneficial social remittances is getting lower for Latvia. Furthermore, Latvia is not attracting back as much human capital as it wants, which means the loss of educated workforce is becoming a real impediment to economic growth and social development. However, in the early stages of post-enlargement emigration Latvia did come in contact with social remittances from the host countries, which contributed to changed consumption patterns, values and lifestyles. Latvian society is becoming increasingly transnational, with mobility and global outlook as its main driving forces.

Another issue for Latvia are instances of family separation, when one or both parents migrate abroad, leaving the child behind in the care of his or her relatives. This puts a heavy strain on marriage and parent-child relationship, leading to increase in divorce rates and psychological problems of the child. When the child is raised by the grandparents, he or she often lacks parental authority, while the grandparents are put under additional stress, which leads to declining health as studies show.

Yet quite often the elderly have a different kind of problem. With families increasingly emigrating together (especially after the crisis), pensioners are left behind in Latvia, with no one to take care of them. They experience abandonment which is particularly evident in the countryside with dispersed settlement patterns. Their social life deteriorates and social services are becoming increasingly burdened by senior care, which is fairly costly for the government.

Ethnic balances shift slightly, as there are proportionately more ethnic Russian emigrants from Latvia than ethnic Latvians. With migration discourse being so closely connected to the ethnic question in Latvia, this might be seen as a favourable solution for pacifying the staying population, however Latvia's non-citizens (14% of the population) are not covered by the free movement provisions and cannot migrate freely within the EU. Thus ethnic balances shift mostly within the pool of Latvian citizens.



Latvia as initially a fairly rural country felt the impact of internal emigration very seriously. While abandoned farms are a sad sign of rural exodus, large-scale farming that is being encouraged mostly by international investors is destroying the traditional farming patterns of Latvia. Local economies feel the pressure from the decreasing purchasing power and on a social level the countryside is becoming an empty space robbed of perspectives for the future.

Through ethnographic narratives I have shown the importance of certain aspects of emigration. Respondents emphasise the problem of rural exodus and regional disparities, which is evident is abandoned countryside and lack of opportunities in the most affected regions (Latgale for example). They notice a decrease in population on an everyday level, with less people in the streets, shrunken social networks and decline in a variety of local businesses. Cultural deficit impacts mostly the younger population as the alternative culture doesn't have enough consumers. The same goes for local businesses and thus the local society is pushed into a more generic (cultural and economic) consumption patterns. Levelling effect, which is a societal transformation toward a more general culture, is mostly evident in smaller cities and less developed regions in Latvia, as Riga still serves as the metropolitan capital of the country. Thus not only is there a drop in quality and quantity of cultural production (cultural deficit), but also a transfiguration and depletion of culture as a way of life (levelling effect).

Finally, my respondents noted that it is not so much up to the government to address the problem of emigration. There are two reasons for this: a) freedom of movement of every human being and b) little chance of improving Latvia's economy overnight. However, they believe the country should aim to support new small and medium-sized businesses and mostly to provide opportunities for young people to have a family through tax relief and additional childcare.

And while most governmental bodies are still not ready to take serious measures for addressing the issue of demographic decline and severe outmigration, there has been some progress made is the last couple of years. Re-emigration plan, amendments to the Immigration Act and support for diaspora communities should be seen only as a stepping stone towards an overall improvement of the quality of life in Latvia.

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# Appendix – Charts and tables

Chart 1a: International long-term emigration by citizenship in 2011, source Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia (CSB).

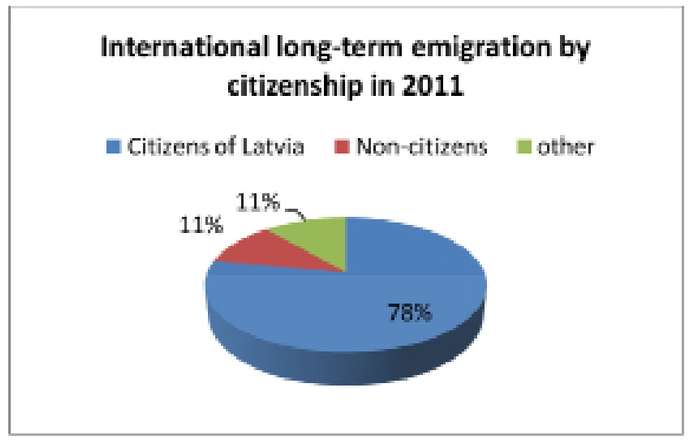



Chart 1b: International long-term emigration by citizenship in 2012, source Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia (CSB).

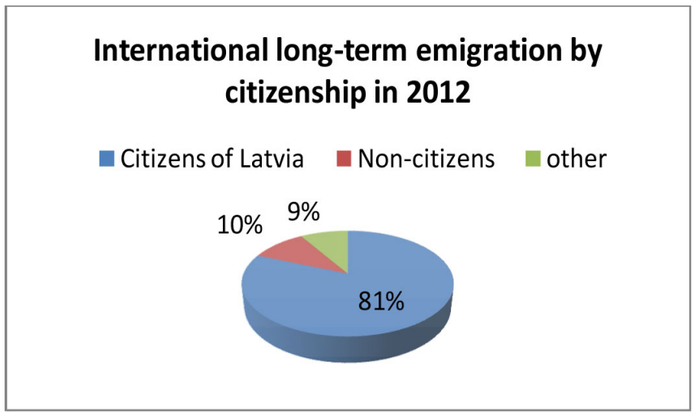


Chart 2: Unemployment in Latvia between 2001 and 2012, source Index Mundi (* marks estimates).

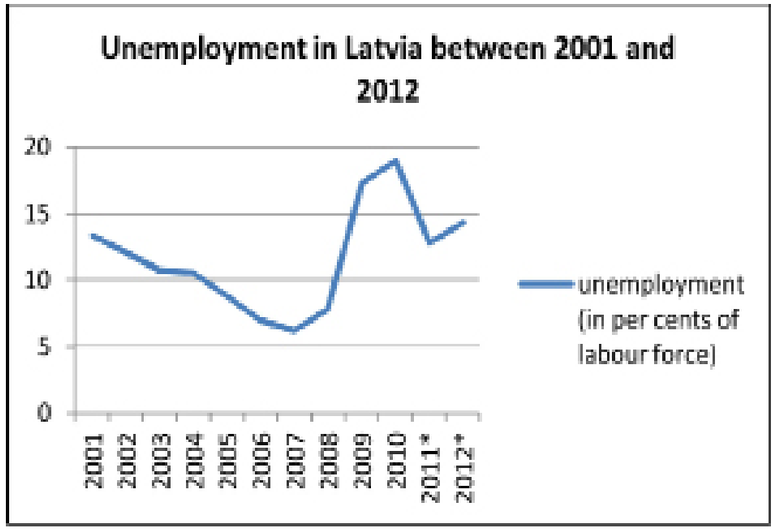



Chart 3: Real GDP growth in Latvia from 2001 to 2012, source IMF (*value for 2012 is an estimate).

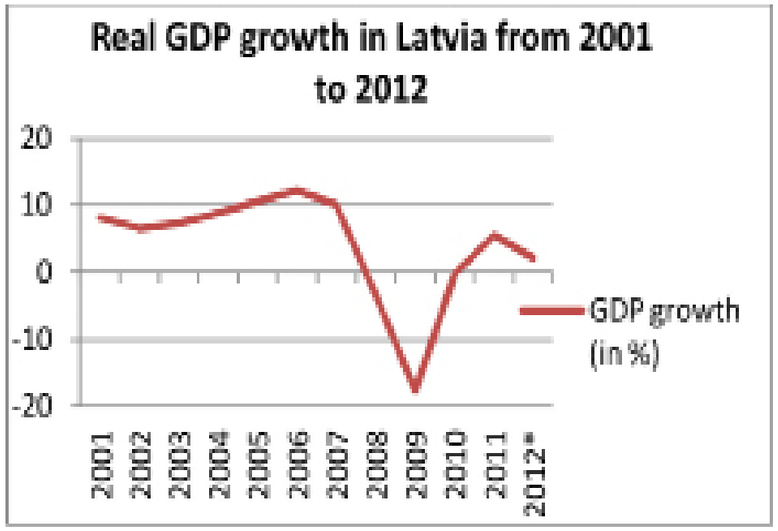





Chart 4: Total number of long-term emigrants from Latvia during the year of reference, source Eurostat 2013.

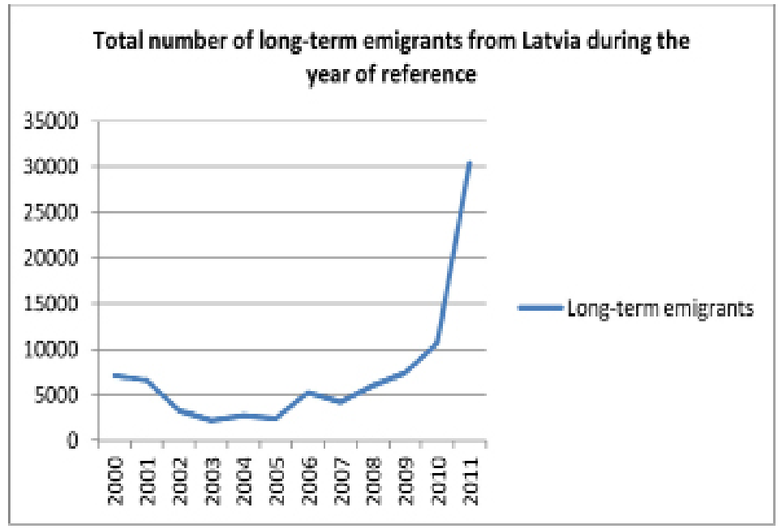



Chart 5: Registered National Insurance numbers and registered immigrants from Latvia in the UK with Workers Registration Scheme from 2002 to 2010, source: UK's Home Office and Apsite et al. 2012

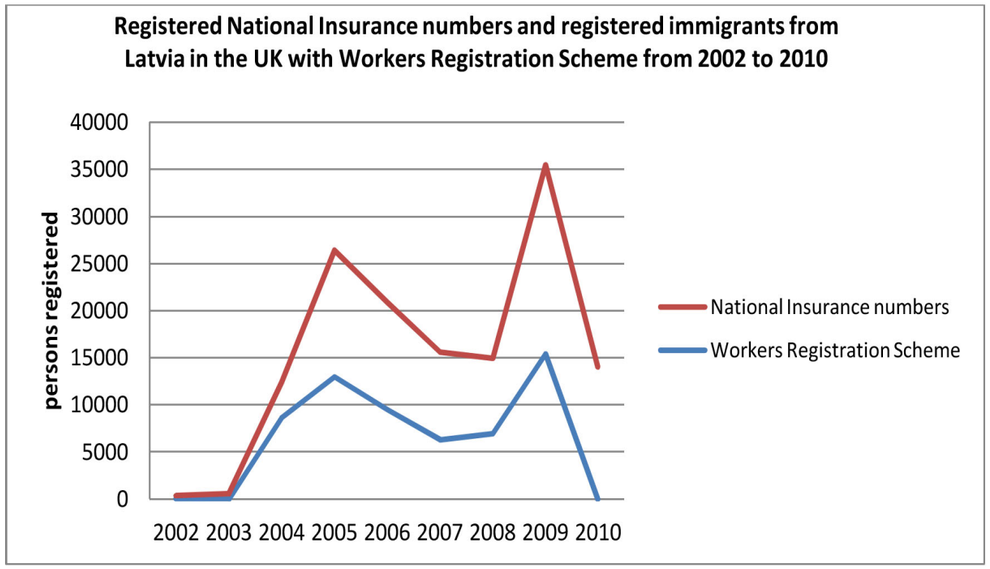
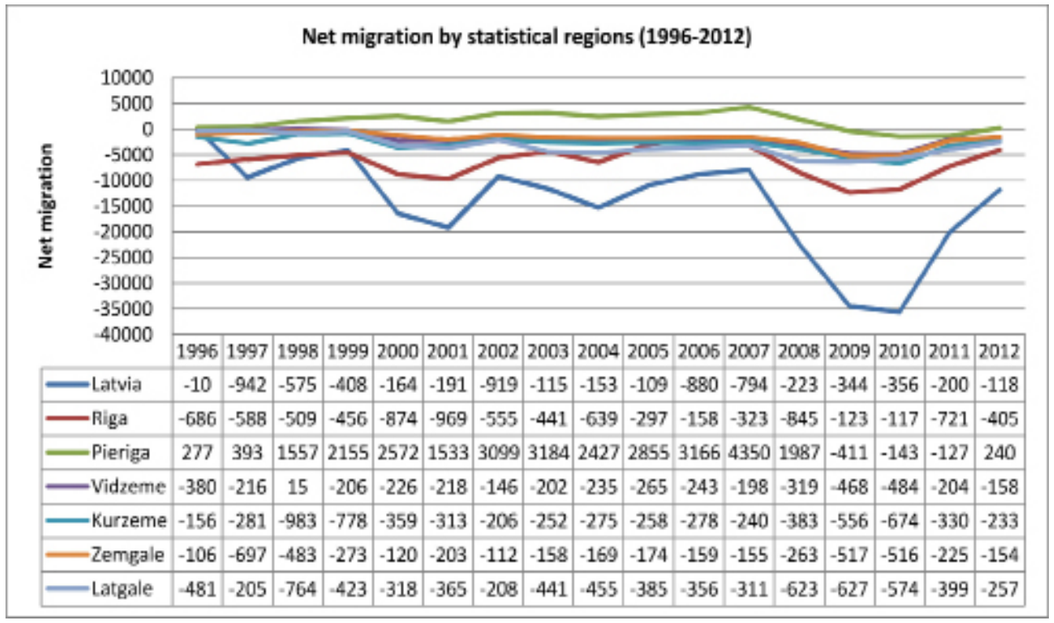


Chart 6: Net migration by statistical regions (1996-2012), source CSB.




| | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Latvia | -10 | -942 | -575 | -408 | -164 | -191 | -919 | -115 | -153 | -109 | -880 | -794 | -223 | -344 | -356 | -200 | -118 |
| Riga | -686 | -588 | -509 | -456 | -874 | -969 | -555 | -441 | -639 | -297 | -158 | -323 | -845 | -123 | -117 | -721 | -405 |
| Pieriga | 277 | 393 | 1557 | 2155 | 2572 | 1533 | 3099 | 3184 | 2427 | 2855 | 3166 | 4350 | 1987 | -411 | -143 | -127 | 240 |
| Vidzeme | -380 | -216 | 15 | -206 | -226 | -218 | -146 | -202 | -235 | -265 | -243 | -198 | -319 | -468 | -484 | -204 | -158 |
| Kurzeme | -156 | -281 | -983 | -778 | -359 | -313 | -206 | -252 | -275 | -258 | -278 | -240 | -383 | -556 | -674 | -330 | -233 |
| Zemgale | -106 | -697 | -483 | -273 | -120 | -203 | -112 | -158 | -169 | -174 | -159 | -155 | -263 | -517 | -516 | -225 | -154 |
| Latgale | -481 | -205 | -764 | -423 | -318 | -365 | -208 | -441 | -455 | -385 | -356 | -311 | -623 | -627 | -574 | -399 | -257 |

Chart 7: Population growth rate in Latvia between 2001 and 2012, source Index Mundi.

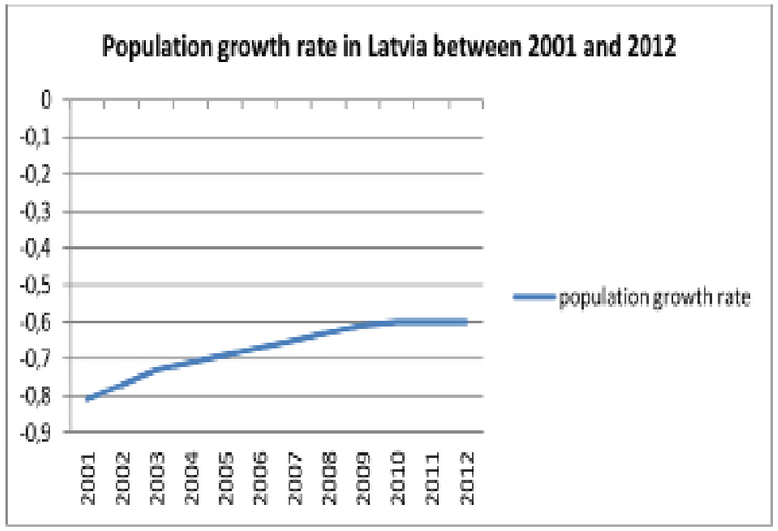





Chart 8: Population of Latvia (2012-2013), source CSB.

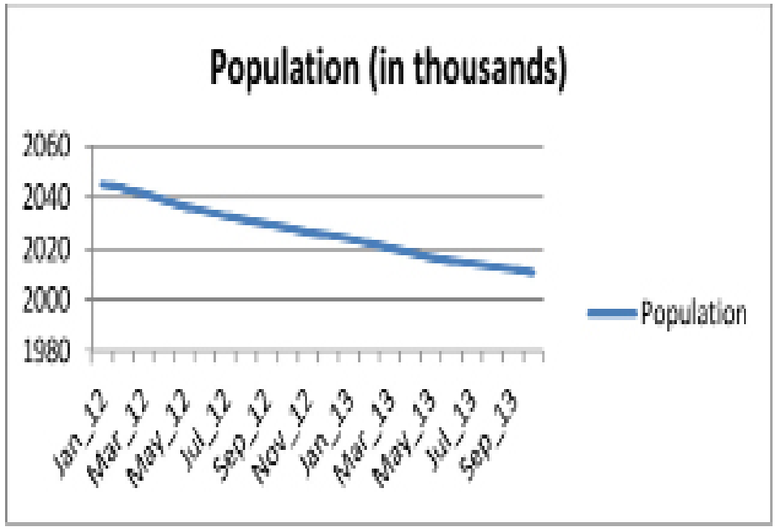



Chart 9: Percentage of population change as a result of migration in Latvia, source CSB.

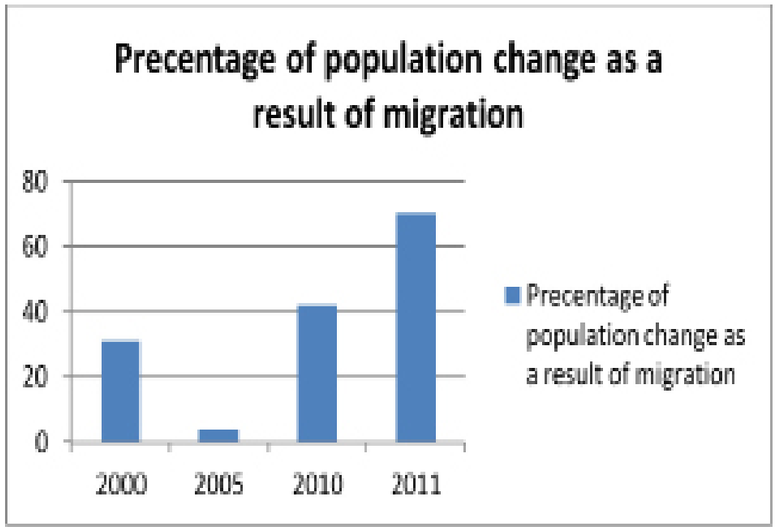


Chart 10: International long-term emigration per age group from 2000 to 2013 in Latvia, source CSB.

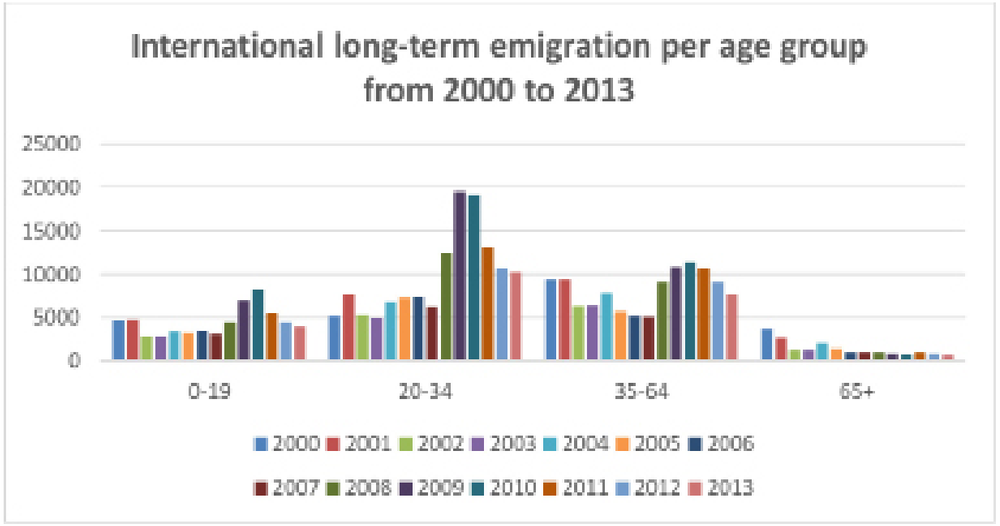



Chart 11: International long-term emigration by sex in Latvia, source CSB.

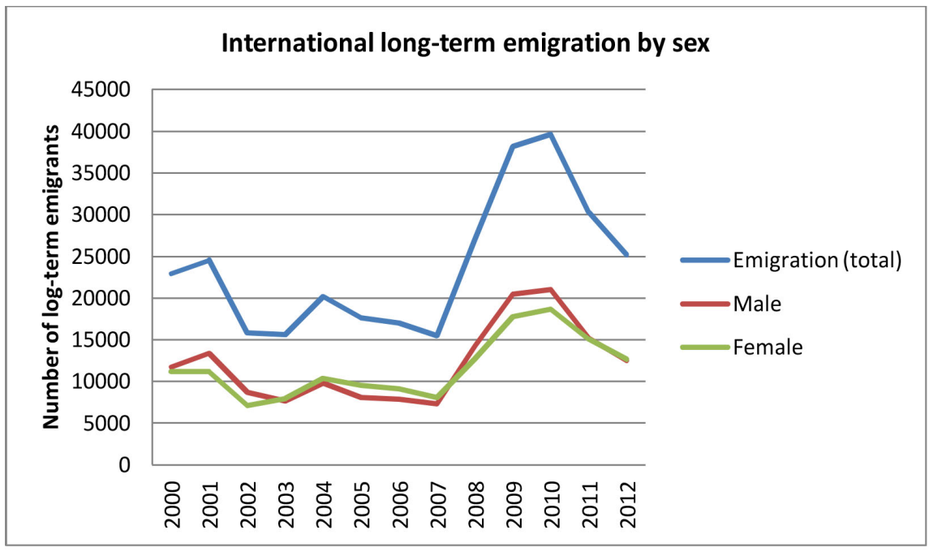





Chart 12a: International long-term emigration by marital status in 2011 in Latvia, source CSB.

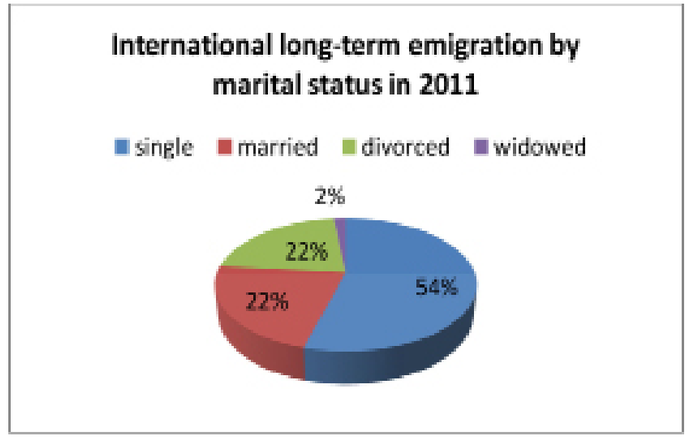



Chart 12b: International long-term emigration by marital status in 2012 in Latvia, source CSB.

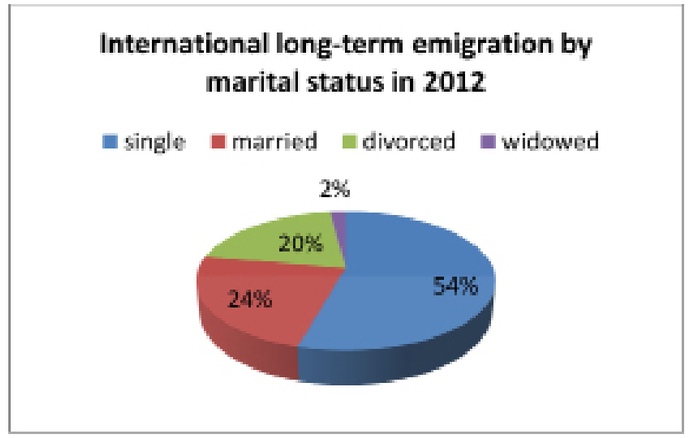


Chart 13a: International long-term emigration by ethnicity in 2011 in Latvia, source CSB.

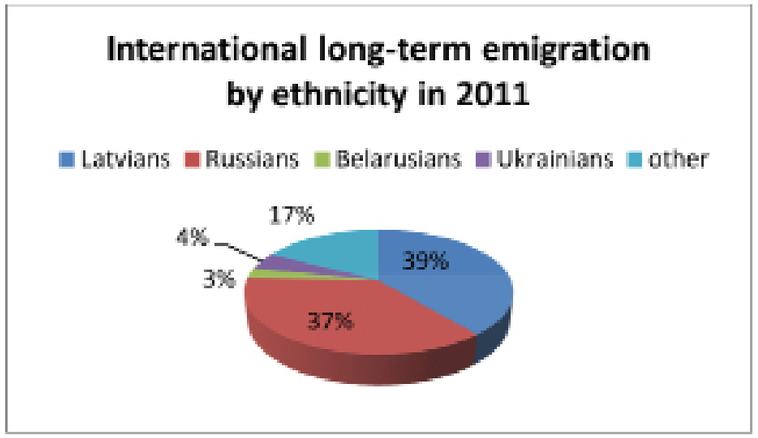



Chart 13b: International long-term emigration by ethnicity in 2012 in Latvia, source CSB.

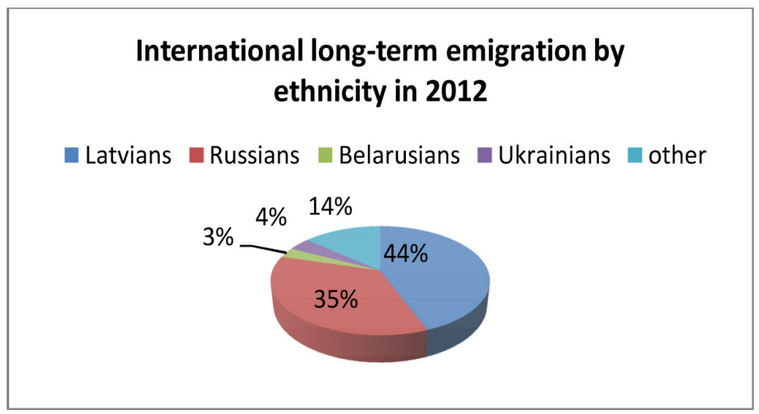





Chart 14: 2011 Population Census in Latvia, source CSB.

| 2011 POPULATION CENSUS | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Population | % | Emigration | % | % of Russian-speaking emigrants: 2% |
| **Total** | 2,070,371 | 100 | 30,311 | 1.4 | |
| Latvians | 1,285,136 | 62 | 11,823 | 0.9 | |
| Belorusians | 68,202 | 3 | 810 | 1.1 | |
| Russians | 557,119 | 27 | 11,087 | 2 | |
| Ukrainians | 45,798 | 2 | 1,320 | 2.9 | |

Chart 15: Economically active statistical units by statistical region in Latvia, source CSB.

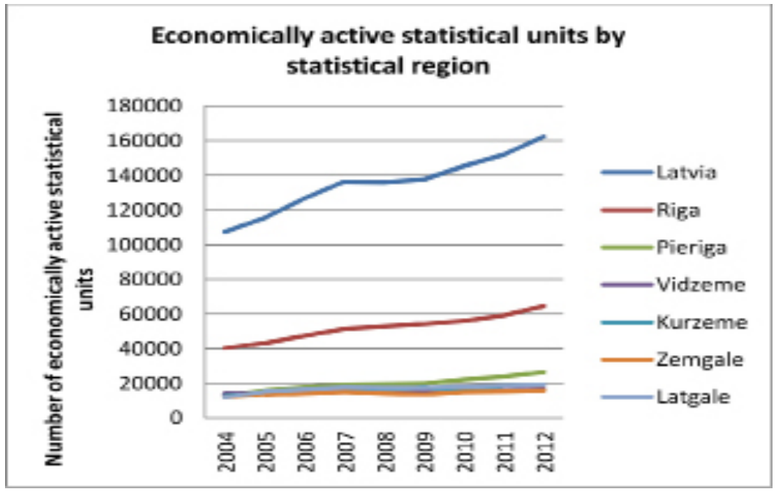



Chart 16: Average monthly wages and salaries in cities under state jurisdiction in Latvia, source CSB.

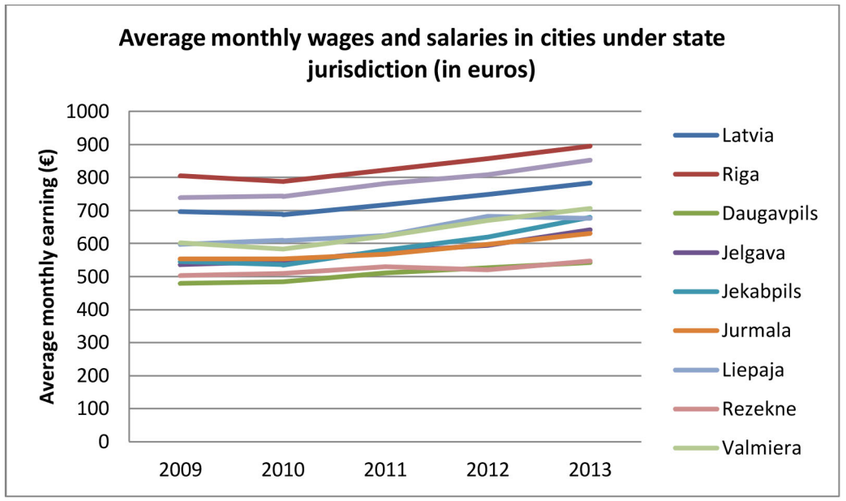


Chart 17: Foreign direct investment in million euros per year in Lativa, source CSB.

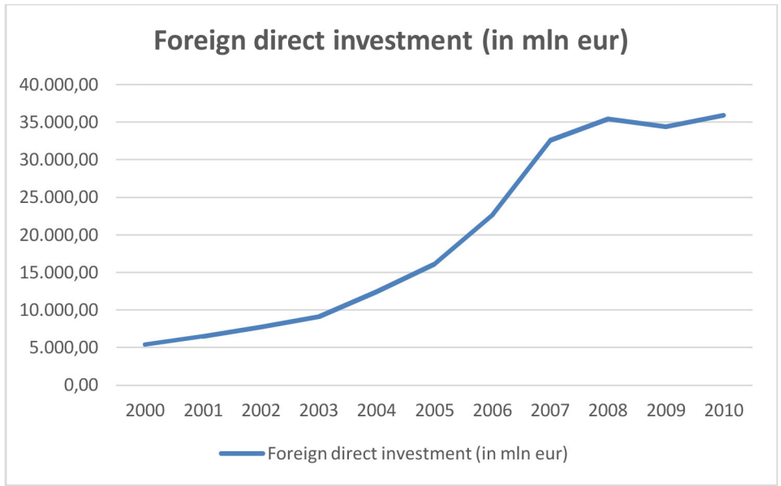



Chart 18: Population Censuses in Latvia, source CBS.

| | 1935 | 1989 | 2000 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 1,905,936 | 2,666,567 | 2,377,383 | 2,074,605 | 2,044,813 | 2,023,825 | 2,001,468 |
| Latvians | 1,467,035 | 1,387,757 | 1,370,703 | 1,255,785 | 1,245,246 | 1,237,463 | 1,229,067 |
| Percentage of Latvians | 77% | 52% | 57.7% | 60.5% | 61% | 61.1% | 61.4% |

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