

# LATVIA

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#### INTRODUCTION

Minorities are a traditional part of Latvian society; the right to their own cultural preservation and development is guaranteed by the Latvian state.

Article no. 114 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia (*Satversme*) states that minorities have the right to maintain and develop their language and their ethnic and cultural identity.

The Ministry of Culture aims to promote civic participation of minorities, support their cultural identity, and promote intercultural dialogue.

The ministry carries out this task in collaboration with minority organizations in the implementation of various measures, such as creative camps, cultural ambassador programmes, and youth participation programmes, which have a wider impact at national level.

Minority participation is ensured by regularly organizing cooperation platforms and advisory councils.

### STATISTICAL DATA

Nowadays there are more than 150 ethnicities living in Latvia. The largest ethnic groups are Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Poles, Lithuanians, Jews, Roma, Germans and Estonians.

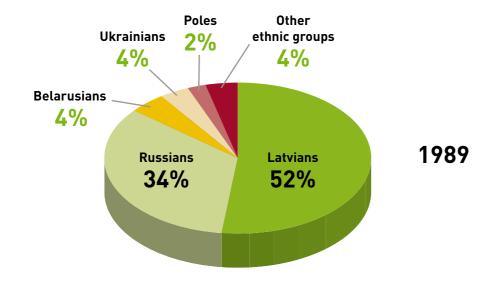
In 1991 the Latvian Republic passed a law guaranteeing the right to cultural autonomy and cultural self-government for all nationalities and ethnic groups.

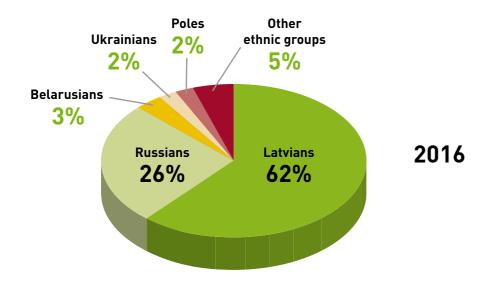
#### Resident population by ethnicity at the beginning of the year (number)

Year	Latvians	Russians	Belarusians	Ukrainians	Poles	Lithuanians	Jews	Roma	Germans	Estonians	Others
1935	1 467 035	168 266	26 803	1 844	48 637	22 843	93 370	3 839	62 116	6 928	4 255
1989	1 387 757	905 515	119 702	92 101	60 416	34 630	22 897	7 044	3 783	3 312	29 410
2000	1 370 703	703 243	97 150	63 644	59 505	33 430	10 385	8 205	3 465	2 652	25 001
2016	1 216 443	504 370	65 999	44 639	41 528	23 944	5 013	5 297	2 605	1 794	57 325

Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia

#### Resident population by ethnicity at the beginning of the year (%)





Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia

### MAIN PRINCIPLES OF MINORITY PARTICIPATION POLICY

### Preservation of minority uniqueness

Minorities and their cultures are an integral and important part of Latvian society and cultural space. In Latvia all minorities have the right to maintain and develop their language and ethnic and cultural identity; the state supports this.

# Each person's free choice is respected, human rights are respected

In the field of social integration every individual is free to choose how to preserve their own identity. Each choice is voluntary and is respected. The Latvian State is obliged to interact and cooperate with all citizens, regardless of their choice. The state's responsibility is to consolidate society on the basis of common values, promoting this process by democratic means.

### Identities are complementary, not exclusive

Latvia's national identity, civil society and integration policies underline the principle that identities complement one another, according to which, different identities enrich rather than exclude one another. Minority identities exist and develop alongside Latvian identity. An individual can have multiple identities at the same time (ethnic, Latvian, European, global).

### PARTICIPATORY MECHANISMS

#### Ministry of Culture:

- Advisory Committee of Representatives from Minority Non-Governmental Organizations;
- Advisory Council for Implementation of Roma Integration Policy;
- Advisory Council for the Integration of Thirdcountry Nationals.

In addition to the advisory councils, each year the Ministry of Culture organizes a minority forum, which acts as a broad participation platform for discussing various topical issues and planning further action in minority policy.

#### Other participatory mechanisms:

- President's Advisory Council on National Minorities;
- Council for Implementation of the Cooperation Memorandum (Memorandum) between NGOs and the Cabinet of Ministers;
- Advisory Council on Minority Education Affairs.

Education in minority languages is a precondition for maintaining Latvian minority cultural identity and ensure the integration of society. State-funded education is being implemented in seven Latvian minority education programs: Russian, Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, Estonian, Lithuanian and Belarusian.

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM MINORITY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Advisory Committee of Representatives from Minority Non-Governmental Organizations is a consultative body aimed at promoting the participation of non-governmental organizations in the formation of civil society and the development of ethnic policy, minority rights and culture. It was established in 2006 and in 2014 its composition was renewed, including representatives from the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and candidates from minority non-governmental organizations.

The Ministry of Culture in collaboration with the Committee plans and implements measures to support minorities – both for cultural preservation and for capacity building of non-governmental organizations throughout Latvia. As of 2014, the Committee is chaired by the Minister of Culture.



The Advisory Committee of Representatives from Minority Non-Governmental Organizations in Ventspils, June 25<sup>th</sup> 2014

Photo: archive of the Social Integration Department of the Ministry of Culture

### ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF ROMA INTEGRATION POLICY

The Advisory Council for Implementation of Roma Integration Policy was established in 2012 with the aim of promoting the integration policy of Latvian Roma, evaluating its implementation, as well as intensifying civic participation among the Roma community. Council members are representatives from public institutions, local government, education institutions, NGOs working to protect Roma interests, and Roma NGOs and communities; the Council is composed of experts on Roma integration.

In 2014 the **Network of regional experts on Roma integration issues** was created in order to facilitate the regular exchange of information and experience between local experts on Roma integration and the development of cooperation among the Ministry of Culture, local authorities and Roma communities for more effective integration of the Roma policy.

### MEASURES SUPPORTED BY THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE

### LATVIAN MINORITY FORUM

Since 2014, the Ministry of Culture has been bringing together minority, non-governmental-organization and state institution representatives, experts and stakeholders in the annual forum of national minorities, which is traditionally organized in November, marking the International Day for Tolerance.

Forum activities promote co-operation and participation of minority non-governmental

organizations in important social processes. The forum's working groups of experts, national minorities and representatives of state institutions raise issues and seek solutions to problems in such areas of life as education, cultural preservation, civic participation and others. Forum decisions and solutions are implemented through joint programming of public integration policies for the coming year.



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### LATVIAN CULTURAL AMBASSADORS





Photo: Svetlana Rudzīte

The Latvian cultural ambassador programme has been implemented with the support of the Ministry of Culture since 2012 by the Latvian National Cultural Centre. The Latvian cultural ambassador training model is based on two international British Council programmes – "Intercultural Navigators" and "Active Citizens". The programme has trained Latvian cultural ambassadors in cooperation with the various ethnic communities in relation to ethnic Latvian culture and its interaction with ethnic minority cultures.

Trainees develop knowledge of cultural diversity, identity and social cohesion, which serves as the basis for the establishment and development of various partnerships (Latvians – ethnic minorities), as well as gaining inspiration for further work.

After completing the training programme, cultural ambassadors use their acquired knowledge to organize training for local communities and nongovernmental organizations wishing to participate in shaping better living conditions and a favorable environment in their own village, town or region.

### PROJECT "EUROPEAN TRACES IN LATVIA"

The project "European traces in Latvia" ("Eiropas pēdas Latvijā") has been organized since 2014. Its aim is to encourage cooperation between children and youth (especially ethnic minorities) in a creative, modern and interactive way and to help identify Latvia as part of the European cultural space, where its historic cultural heritage (art, architecture, music, cuisine, etc.) has left its mark and its presence can still be felt today.

Children and youth who were involved in the project created videos about evidence or traces of European culture in their city and region, as

well as participated in erudition competitions about the European Union. In a geocaching race, participants of the project team attracted more than 300 students from various Latvian schools. Using geocaching principles, hiding geocaches and searching for other team geocaches, project participants searched for and marked Europe's traces in Latvia.

By promoting European cultural values and an appreciation for diversity, the project promotes minority cultures belonging to Latvia and Europe, as well as strengthens minority youth participation in building a democratic society.





### LATVIAN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AWARENESS -SONG AND DANCE FESTIVAL TRADITION

The Song and Dance Festival tradition makes for a favourable environment for human creativity and collective action. The festival does not distinguish between professionals and amateurs, adults and children, Latvians and non-Latvians – everyone participates.

Minority representatives at the Latvian Song and Dance Festival are a good model for integration and create confidence that the collective participation of national minorities in the 2013 Latvian Song and XV Dance Festival will be a basis for further cooperation.

The Latvian National Cultural Centre also provides active co-operation with minority groups between Song and Dance Festivals, involving them in the international folklore festival "Baltica".



#### MINORITY CREATIVE CAMPS



Photo: Aiga Vasiļevska

After the active participation of minority groups in the 2013 Latvian Song and XV Dance Festival and the experience gained from preparing it, development of the intangible minority cultural heritage became a topical issue.

With the support of the Ministry of Culture from 2014, the Latvian National Cultural Centre organized minority creative camps, educating heads of Latvian minority artist groups with regard to their capacity for perfecting the quality of their artistic performance in preparation for each Nationwide Latvian Song and Dance Festival.

The creative camps invited Latvian and foreign experts to hold lectures and conduct classes on the similarities and differences between Latvian and minority cultures. Workshops and instructional presentations provide an opportunity to acquire stagecraft in the creative atmosphere of the culture of their heritage and that of Latvian folk traditions.



### ITA KOZAKEVIČA LATVIAN ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL CULTURAL SOCIETIES

Named after Ita Kozakeviča, the Latvian Association of National Culture Societies (LANCS) was founded 30 November 1988, during the National Awakening. It brings together cultural societies and associations of more than 20 nationalities living in Latvia.

LANCS helps minorities to become more aware of their ethnic roots and learn about their culture, language and traditions. LANCS and its associations often organize art exhibitions, concerts and meetings with cultural representa-

tives. LANCS provides support for various amateur club developments. Each year in November and December LANCS organizes a large-scale minority art festival called "United in diversity". Since 1990 LANCS's chairman of the board is Knight of the Order of the Three Stars, well known pianist and artist *Dr. art.* Raffi Kharajanyan, who, since 2014, has been representing LANCS on the Ministry of Culture's Advisory Committee of Representatives from Minority Non-Governmental Organizations.

### COUNCIL OF EUROPE CAMPAIGN "ENOUGH! GO BEYOND PREJUDICE, MEET THE ROMA!" IN LATVIA



In 2009 Latvia joined the Council of Europe campaign "Enough! (Dosta!) Go beyond prejudice, meet the Roma!", which aims to create a stronger link between Roma and non-Roma, raising awareness and active participation to break obstacles created by stereotypes and prejudices.

Since 2015 a variety of activities has been implemented, with the aim of promoting tolerance in society and a reduction of negative stereotypes against Roma, as well as promotion of Roma culture. For example, in 2015, marking International Roma Day on 8 April, a Roma Cultural Day "Latvian Roma - between the past and the future" took place. During this event there was also an expert discussion "Roma reflected in the Latvian media", where the results of media monitoring of Roma were presented.

Based on the results of these discussions and the monitoring, a training seminar was held for upcoming journalists on the Latvian Roma community, its socio-economic problems, cultural and historical heritage, as well as intolerance and discrimination directed at it.

Latvian Roma participation in these events is one of the main conditions and benefits. Involved in these events are state and local government authorities, mass media professionals, politicians, researchers, civil society activists and other interested parties.

Implementation of the campaign in Latvia is coordinated and financially supported by the Ministry of Culture. The non-governmental organization "Latvian Centre for Human Rights" is responsible for popularization of the campaign in Latvia.

### PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE

### SALDUS RUSSIAN COMMUNITY FRIENDSHIP DAY

Project implementers: "Saldus Russian community" association

Implementation period: October 2015 – January 2016

In order to get acquainted, tell about themselves and share experiences, a two-day experience exchange trip to Latgale was organized. Members of the "Saldus Russian community" association met with the Russian and Belarusian societies of Daugavpils, Kraslava, Rezekne and Balvi. Three friendship evenings and concerts were organized by Latvian associations in Saldus and Brocēni counties with joint performances, dancing, singing and national handicraft workshops. At the end of the project a book of photographs taken during the project was published.



### ADVENT TIME IN ROMA RELIGION AND THE CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENT

Project implementers: Social integration association "Alternativas" Implementation period: August 2015 – November 2015

At the Roma friendship evening, Roma community representatives from Valmiera, Kandava, Sabile and Ventspils came together for Bible readings, songs of praise, as well as a lecture on the topic of the Advent, led

by a guest lecturer from Finland. The event concluded with a festive concert featuring collective etudes, sketches and songs of praise performed by youth.



Project implementers: Liepaja Polish Women's Club VANDA Implementation period: October 2015 – January 2016

At the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration of the Barricades, a concert was organized with the participation of minority and Latvian collectives, bringing together 54 performers and some 150 spectators. During the concert, the "Bursztynki" ensemble had the opportunity to show off their newly sewn costumes made during the project, and newly acquired musical instruments were played for the first time.



Photo: Tamāra Sivol

### LIEPAJA AND TUKUMS II POLISH FRIENDSHIP DAY

Project implementers: Liepaja Polish Women's Club VANDA

Implementation period: August 2014

The project's main activity was the two-day-long "Liepaja and Tukums II Polish friendship days". On the first day a total of 52 participants visited 12 historical sites in Liepaja. At the end of the first day, a friendship evening took place. On the second day participants visited the Liepaja Polish book repository and

took a wonderful trip by boat to see Liepaja city from the sea. At the end of the second day the participants shared their opinions about possible future cooperation, which would be implemented by common celebrations and concerts.

### BEHOLD WHAT'S NEXT TO YOU!

Project implementers: Society for development of art "Ilizanna" Implementation period: September 2014 - October 2014

In order to promote minority NGO civic participation in Saldus and Brocēni counties, as well as for the promotion of minority cultures among the population, several events were organized: concerts with folk festival participants, live performances, a theatrical performance, a singing masterclass to learn Russian folk songs, discussions on national minorities, culinary workshops of traditional Russian food recipes and presentation of the Russian folk tradition of tea drinking, Latvian and Russian folk traditional handicrafts creative workshops, and a photo exhibition.



### REST FOR THE SOUL

Project implementers: Russian association "Zhivica" Implementation period: October 2015 - January 2016

During the project, a Christmas party was organized for minorities and families with parents of various nationalities. There was a performance of H. C. Andersen's fairy-tale "The Snow Queen" with the participation of children's group "Živinka", the association's

women's vocal ensemble and the choir of the Saldus Orthodox Church of the Lord's Appearance. After the performance the participants and spectators were invited to participate in games. About 100 people attended the event.

### SONG AS A LINK FOR INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

Project implementers: "German cultural centre" Implementation period: September 2014 - October 2014

The project's main activity was the concert "Let's sing together", which took place on the premises of the German House with the participation of children, youth and seniors' ensembles. The morning concert of the Liepaja St. Trinity Cathedral was performed

by the children and youth ensemble, and in the evening concert, residents of Liepaja were entertained by a choir from Darmstadt, Germany. After the evening concert, a singing and friendship event was held.

### SETTING UP THE LIVONIAN ETHNOGRAPHIC ROOM IN THE LIV PEOPLE'S HOUSE\*

Project implementers: Association "Randalist" Implementation period: August 2014 – November 2014

The project's main objective was to set up the Livonian ethnographic room in the Liv People's House. Implementation included systematization and preparation for public viewing of 140 Liv ethnographic materials, the opening of the Liv ethnographic room and there were lectures on the lifestyle of the Livs (lecture themes included "Use of household items", "Traditional Liv dishes", "Liv cultural house – 75 years"), as well as other events.

### DIALOGUE OF KURZEME

Project implementers: Association "Mantinieki" Implementation period: September 2014 – November 2014

In order to promote intercultural dialogue, two mutual-understanding incentives with Kurzeme associations were organized: representatives from the association "Mantinieki" and the "Saldus Russian community" went on experience trips to minority associations in Liepaja and Ventspils, learning about

15 associations; the second was the Intercultural Dialogue Day in Saldus, bringing together previously acquainted minority associations, giving them the opportunity to get to know each other and plan the Kurzeme Intercultural Festival 2015.

### NATIONAL GAMES ARE A RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY AND CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Project implementers: Russian Society of Ventspils
Implementation period: September 2014 – November 2014

The project's main activity was organizing "National Games", which took place for two days. During the event seven different folk games were played: vishibali (вышибалы), salka (салки), babka (бабки), lapta (лапта), gorodki (городки), kettlebell lifting (поднятие гирь) and fisticuffs (кулачный бой).

The youngest participants received special acknowledgments and awards, but older participants had to make more of an effort, and only the strongest received awards. The project involved a total of 383 participants and about 200 spectators.



hoto: archive of Russian Society of Vel

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<sup>\*</sup> In the preamble of the Law on Free Development and Rights of Cultural Autonomy of National and Ethnic Groups adopted on 19 March 1991 has been stated that the Livs (Livonians) are indigenous ethnic group in Latvia: "In the Republic of Latvia live Latvian nation, the ancient indigenous ethnic group Livs, as well as national and ethnic minorities".

### INTERCULTURAL FRIENDLY LUNCH IN NĪCA

Project implementers: Barta river creative association Implementation period: August 2014 – October 2014

With the aim of getting acquainted and making friends with foreign residents in Nīca, local citizens organized an event together with foreigners - a cooking workshop where they prepared various national dishes. During the event, discussions and a guiz about different cultures was held with the aim of educating and bringing people closer together informally and with humour.



Project implementers: Society "VASSA" (Ventspils Active Women's Cooperation for Development) Implementation period: September 2014

In a project to promote intercultural dialogue, a seminar was organized: "Experience in the creative production of national costumes and the impact of modern style and culture", as well as "Kurzeme cotton ball 2014", during which Russian, Cossack, Latvian, Livonian, Polish, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Jewish, Tatar and German national costumes were presented. There was also the competition "Sewing by myself", a concert with participants from different nationalities, an interactive game "National costumes" and master classes in handicraft skills of different nations and an exhibition of the works made.



### **EXPLORATION AND PROMOTION** OF TRADITIONAL JEWISH MUSIC

Project implementers: Association "ARAYN" Implementation period: September 2015 – February 2016

Promotion and popularization of the study of traditional Jewish music was carried out by organizing a traditional klezmer music masterclass in Rezekne. It was directed by lecturer and multi-instrumentalist Ilja Šneijveiss. Participants got acquainted with klezmer music nuances, ornamentation, stylistics and other elements on how to decorate melodic lines and rhythms. After

the workshops the participants presented their newly acquired musical knowledge in a concert at "Ausmena Kebabs" café. The project gathered information on traditional Jewish music and culture in Rezekne and a stand was set up and exhibited in three places - the Culture House of National Societies of Rezekne. "Ausmena Kebabs" café and the Green synagogue of Rezekne.

### PRESERVATION OF BELARUSIAN NATIONALITY AND LANGUAGE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTEGRATION IN LATVIAN SOCIETY AND YOUTH **EDUCATION IN A BELARUSIAN HOLIDAY SCHOOL**

Project implementers: Daugavpils Belarusian cultural and educational association "Uzdim" Implementation period: September 2015 - February 2016

The aim of the project is to preserve and develop Belarusian culture and traditions in Latvia by teaching Belarusian children at a holiday school. An open-door event was held at the Belarusian holiday school, as well as a "Vjasolka - 20" concert and a roundtable "Belarusian school and integration experience".



### CULTURAL ROOTS

Project implementers: Society of folk musicians Implementation period: March 2015 - May 2015

The project was devoted to maintaining intangible cultural heritage, and within this project the Rezekne Higher Education Institution held practical workshops on acquisition of traditional cultural, which was attended by members of minority collectives, educational institutions and special-interest

teachers, as well as members of traditional Latgalian cultural collectives. In the experience-exchange seminar "Positive experience evening", the involved associations shared the best practices of their most valuable achievements, significant projects and future development opportunities.

### GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOUR

Project implementers: Preili Women's Club Implementation period: February 2015 - May 2015

During the project, several discussion events were organized for Preili county residents, where they discussed traditions for ushering in and celebrating Easter among various nations and denominations. In the concert "Get to know the neighborhood while waiting for Easter", visitors had the opportunity to participate in

Easter games and taste Easter specialties from various nationalities. Discussion participants submitted recipes, which were compiled in a trilingual booklet (in Latvian, Russian and Latgalian) describing the food and containing photos of the authors.

### YOUTH. ACTION. DIALOGUE

Project implementers: Latgale Multimedia workshop Implementation period: February 2015 – June 2015

In order to facilitate active citizenship building among minority youth and the development of co-operation with young Latvians, the project offered youth in Ozolaine and other Rezekne county districts the chance to participate in an interactive seminar-discussion on "Intercultural dialogue". In the "Behold diversity through a lens" training session, young people learned a variety of new skills and improved their video, photo and computer knowledge, and filmed and developed a video entitled

"Once upon a time, two cultures met...". Young people also took part in a cycling expedition "Get to know your neighbour", where through conversations with Latvians, Russians and Belarusians, they learned that people live peacefully, without division among neighbours and friends on the basis of nationality. During the activities, the youth not only got to know each other, but also studied various cultural characteristics together and learned to accept differences.

#### CHRISTMAS STAR

Project implementers: "Latvian Polish Union" society

Implementation period: 2015

The aim of the project "Christmas Star" was to show the differences and find things in common among the traditions of various nations while celebrating Christmas in Rezekne. As part of the project an interesting and emotional Christmas carol concert programme was prepared and creative workshops about Christmas culinary traditions were organized.

### LATGALE JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND ASSOCIATIONS FORUM

Project implementers:
Daugavpils Jewish Community
Implementation period:
October 2015 – December 2015

In order to strengthen Jewish communities in Latgale, a presentation of the "Kadiša" synagogue and museum "Jews in Daugavpils and Latgale" was organized, as well as a discussion: "Jews in Latgale at the beginning of the XXI century". The Rezekne Green Synagogue opening celebration after its renovation took place, as well as an amateur concert "Kadiša" at a synagogue in Daugavpils.



Photo: Vladimirs Vatmahters

### FEEL LATGALE (a broadcast on National Minorities)

Project implementers: "Bruoli un Muosys" society Implementation period: 2015

In the project a broadcast was created on national minorities living in Daugavpils, Kraslava and Preili. Location of the project: Daugavpils, Kraslava, Preili counties.



### STRENGTH IN TOGETHERNESS

Project implementers: Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Society "Mrija" Implementation period: October 2015 - December 2015

To popularize Rainis, Aspazija and T. Shevchenko's literary heritage, an exhibition entitled "Rainis - Aspasia - Shevchenko" was organized, as well as a literary event in the Rainis Museum in Berkenele. To maintain

its Ukrainian identity and cultural heritage, the amateur collective movement of Ukrainian cultural centre "Mrija" was supported and a discussion on traditions was organized.

### JOURNEY INTO THE DEPTHS OF ROMA CULTURE

Project implementers: Society for Roma culture and development "ME ROMA" Implementation period: September 2015 - February 2016

In order to involve representatives of the Roma community in social activities in Daugavpils city and county, thus reducing the negative bias against this nation and promoting their integration in the local community, the project

organized a number of activities. For example, a Roma youth dance school, traditional horse riding for city residents, as well as a cultural evening "Christmas with the Roma" were organized.

### INCLUSION OF THE ROMA COMMUNITY IN THE SOCIETY OF DAUGAVPILS COUNTY AND CITY

Project implementers: "NEVO DROM D" society Implementation period: September 2015 - February 2016

In order to promote the participation and involvement of Roma in Daugavpils city and county public life, special tailoring and design courses were organized, as well as a Christmas event for Roma children and youth.

### INTEGRATION OF ETHNICITIES OF DIFFERING GENERATIONS

Project implementers: "Multifunctional family support centre "Today for tomorrow"" Implementation period: February 2015 - May 2015

Several events and workshops were organized to enhance cohesion among various nationalities and generations. "Open Doors" in Līvāni cultural centre brought openness and greater understanding of the importance of expressing one's affiliation and of participation. The Slavic society "Uzori" celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The event highlighted the fact that Latgale has a wealth of different

cultures, because it has been enriched with cultural societies and initiative groups from all over the Latgale region. The event "Songs of different towns" heralded the fact that each of us has a story to tell - a story about childhood, about first love, friends, of loss, of something found, of hope. Life experiences and feelings were expressed in over 20 different songs.

### ZOLOVKINI POSIDELKI

Project implementers: Ziguri grandmothers' club "Omites" Implementation period: February 2015 - April 2015

In order to present ancient Russian and Latvian folk traditions of spring, a Maslenica and Meteni celebration was organized over seven

days. There were puppet-making workshops, as well as a collective Easter celebrations.

### FROM ST. ANDREW'S DAY TO FAT THURSDAY -TRADITIONAL POLISH HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Project implementers: Daugavpils Polish cultural centre "Promień" Implementation period: November 2015 - February 2016

To promote Polish cultural traditions and their preservation, different Polish traditional holiday celebrations were organized. St. Andrew's Day was celebrated, a Christmas carol concert and traditional Polish

Christmas food workshop was organized. Fat Thursday also was celebrated (the last Thursday before Ash Wednesday, which marks the start of Lent).





hoto: Lauma (

### DEVELOPMENT OF A UKRAINIAN CENTRE FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES IN LATVIA

Project implementers: "Ukrainian centre for youth and children in Latvia" Implementation period: August 2015 – December 2015

During the project, an event series entitled "Ukrainian days in Latvia" was organized, with the participation of organizations from six countries. There were performances from youth artistic collectives – presentations by the represented country as well as an exhibition. There was also a craft fair – presenta-

tions of national craftsmen and traditional handicrafts. During the meeting, best practices of minority organizations were identified; there was a demonstration of the documentary film "Economics of happiness" and an online NGO discussion "Minority organizations in Latvia – challenges, opportunities...".

### OLD BELIEVERS CULTURAL DAYS

Project implementers: Ivan Zavoloko Old Believers' Society Implementation period: August 2015 – November 2015

The event "Old Believers (Old Russian and Old Slavonic) Culture Days" included informative lectures and workshops on the Old Believers' ancient culture and their ethnic, religious, linguistic foundation and heritage. The event was open to residents of Rīga and anyone else interested.



Photo: archive of the Ivan Zavoloko Old Believers' Society

### MUSIC UNITES ALL

Project implementers: "Health and Social Services Society "Artemīda"" Implementation period: September 2014 – November 2014

During the project, Roma living in Jūrmala improved their guitar and synthesizer playing skills, mastered vocal arts, as well as Latvian folk dances and songs. Participants in the project, Roma music group "Gypsy voice" took part in the Jūrmala City boarding school concert dedicated to Latvia's birthday, as well as ethnic minorities' forum "Polyphony,"

listening and commonly created: minorities in Latvia" and the association's "Alternativas" project "United in Diversity – Intercultural Dialogue: culture and social issues" event. The project has encouraged Roma, including youth, involvement in cultural activities by developing a dialogue between Jūrmala residents and the Roma.

### THE PLACE OF PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS IN CULTURAL PROCESSES

Project implementers: Society of Russian Culture in Latvia Implementation period: September 2014 – November 2014

A 26-panel exhibition "Society of Russian Culture in Latvia, activities over 25 years" was set up. There were two workshops for Russian and Latvian poets-translators attended by 24 people, as well as the usual "Rīga Almanaha" presentation, which was attended by 35 people. The project enabled modification

and improvement of several society website www.lork.lv sections. There was also a discussion on the place and role of non-governmental organizations in today's cultural environment with the participation of 52 people.

# MIKHAIL ALEXANDROVICH YOUNG SINGERS COMPETITION

Project implementers: Makss Goldin Society "Jewish Cultural Heritage" Implementation period: September 2014 – November 2014

During the project the Mikhail Alexandrovich Young Singers Competition was organized with the participation of 30 performers, of whom 15 young singers were selected. After receiving additional funding from the Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund for the

implementation of this competition, more auditions were announced, attracting even more new artists. During the project Mikhail Aleksandrovich's 100-year anniversary concert was organized, attended by 80 viewers.

### SAINT NICHOLAS CELEBRATION

Project implementers: Latvian Association of Ukrainian societies Implementation period: September 2014 – November 2014

The project organized a St. Nicholas celebration for children and their parents at the Rīga Ukrainian secondary school. The festival was attended by 214 participants – Latvian Ukrainian diaspora, the Ukrainian secondary school in Rīga, the Latvian-Armenian Asso-

ciation dance group, Smiltene Gymnasium dance group, and collectives from Ukraine: participants from Drogobicha city charity fund "Posvit" in Lviv region and the Drogobicha ensemble "Verhovinka".



Photo: Dzintars Ko



אסto: Inga Čukr

### TRADITION KEEPER – SEDA VOCAL ENSEMBLE "SUDARUŠKA"

Project implementers: "Šūpolēs" society

Implementation period: September 2014 - November 2014

An "Evening by the Samovar" was organized for local residents, ensemble members, their parents and invited guests to have a cup of tea and a small treat. During the event Russian folk songs were played on the kokle, Russian folk-costume wearing traditions were presented, and Strenci music school students and Seda pre-school ensemble students performed "kokoshniks" (headdres-

ses) made by the teachers. During the event, participants were able to get acquainted with the national costume exhibition from the Smiltene and Strenci house of culture dance collective costume collections, as well as admire the "matryoshkas" painted by nursery school children and "kokoshniks" decorated by teachers.

### SAINT NICHOLAS CELEBRATION IN CESIS

Project implementers: Latvian Association of Ukrainian societies Implementation period: September 2015 – December 2015

In order to promote the knowledge of Latvian residents about Ukrainian traditions, various activities in connection with St. Nicholas day were organized. There was a concert in Cēsis as well as three workshops (Ukrainian embroidery, jewelry creation; Ukrainian songs

and games; and collective Ukrainian traditional towel embroidery). During the project a children's creative artwork competition and an exhibition took place, which displayed Ukrainian embroidery, traditional towels, paintings and drawings.

# PEDEDZE HISTORICAL WEDDING TRADITIONS OF THE PAST AND TODAY

Project implementers: Association Pededze Future

Implementation period: 2014

The project aimed to introduce parish and county residents with border-area traditions, promoting cooperation among different nationalities and generations. The project used research conducted by Pededze museum and Pededze cultural centre. In the event, organized in cooperation with cultural centres and museums, participants had the opportunity

to watch the presentation of a historical Pededze wedding and get acquainted with authentic wedding items and old photographs. As a result, all parish and region residents interested in history and seeking to preserve ancient customs can access comprehensive information on the historical wedding traditions of Pededze region.

### CULTURAL AMBASSADORS VIDZEME

Project implementers: Association "Goral"

Implementation period: September 2015 – November 2015

The project organized a two-day camp in Valmiera for Vidzeme minority NGOs and previously trained Latvian cultural ambassadors as well as a live interactive discussion for NGOs on TV in cooperation with the Baltic regional funds. This was attended by representatives from two Vidzeme regional

organizations to define the emerging issues of minority organizations' work, explore common experiences in resolving them and inviting the views of experts in the field – social organizations and state and local government representatives.

### CULTURAL GATHERING OF DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES IN BURTNIEKI

Project implementers: "Dziesmotā senatne" society

Implementation period: October 2014

In order to encourage the knowledge of, preservation and development of different nationalities' singing cultures, a community singing evening "Culture of different nationalities in songs and dances" was organized.

This gave the opportunity to introduce Valmiera and Burtnieki county residents to new music and friends of different nationalities living in Latvia.

# EXHIBITION "THE ROMA HOLOCAUST IN LATVIA, 1941–1945" AND EDUCATIONAL EVENTS IN MADONA

Project implementers: "Baltic Roma association"

Implementation period: 2015

In order to promote public awareness about the Roma Holocaust during World War II in Latvia, the "Baltic Roma Association", in cooperation with the association "The Roma Cultural Centre", implemented the project in which the exhibition "The Roma Holocaust Latvian, 1941–1945" was opened.

It brought together representatives of both local government and the local community. An educational lecture was held for high school students as well as a student essay competition on their experience of visiting exhibitions and lectures.

# YOUNG MOTHERS IN TWO COUNTRIES - ONE TOWN

Project implementers: Association "Creative Group "Lugazi"" Implementation period: August 2014 – November 2014

The project was based on the idea that women belonging to different nationalities with different interests and beliefs could come together in joint events and activities. During the project, mothers from Valka and

Valga jointly discussed issues affecting baby physiotherapy, as well as meeting various professionals – physiotherapists and psychologists. The project included both educational seminars and practical work.

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### LOVE LATVIA, REMEMBER YOUR ROOTS!

Project implementers: Latvian Belarusian Union

Implementation period: 2015

During the project, similarities and differences were sought out in Belarusian and Latvian motifs, symbols and traditions. In Valmiera there was a festive evening "Kaladu

and Belarusian costume traditions", during which the participants were introduced to the Belarusian Kalyadi holiday traditions, Belarusian folk costumes and ornaments.

#### FROM THE AUTUMN CHEST

Project implementers: Association "Evolution. Progress. Growth"

Implementation period: 2014

The project was aimed at promoting dialogue among different cultures and demonstrating Vidzeme minority cultural diversity, thus expanding people's knowledge of the cultural values of ethnic minorities. The project

organized events in Zilaiskalns, Pededze and Valka, where amateur ensembles carried out performances typical of Latvian and Slavic people.

### LET'S EXPLORE DIVERSITY!

Project implementers: Vidzeme Culture and Art Association "Haritas"

Implementation period: 2014

In order to promote intercultural dialogue and intercultural understanding in Valmiera and Vidzeme as a whole, a Different Culture Festival for youth was organized. The festival involved students from Valmiera Secondary School No. 2, Valmiera Secondary School No. 5, as well as pupils from schools in Rīga – Ita Kozakeviča Polish secondary, Rīga Lithuanian secondary and Rīga Ukrainian secondary schools.



### ZORA-7

Project implementers: Association "ZORA-7"

Implementation period: September 2015 – November 2015

A cultural exchange event was organized in order to reduce cross-cultural barriers and promote mutual understanding and respect between different generations and different ethnic groups by developing co-operation among society, the local Roma community

and Dobele municipality representatives. The event was attended by 50 different nationalities. Representatives from Dobele municipality, social and probation services, as well as from national minorities were introduced to existing problems and practical solutions.

### LET'S GET ACQUAINTED - WE ARE THE UKRAINIANS!

Project implementers: UKC "Džerelo"

Implementation period: August 2015 – December 2015

In honour of Ukraine's Independence Day, there was a concert and an exhibition of works by three Ukrainian photographers – J. Kovtonuk, R. Chigrinyecs and I. Morgan "Ukraine – Latvia: a combination of national traditions". The project contributed to the making of a children's theatrical studio "Džerelce" production by combining fifteen

children of different nationalities from 1st-4th grade. To familiarize students with Ukrainian culture, traditions and national cuisine, six Jelgava schools (around 120 children) held Ukrainian culture hours – "Let's get acquainted – we are the Ukrainians!", in which the children's theatre staged a play.

### CULTURE FELLOWSHIP PROJECT: THINKING UNCONVENTIONALLY ABOUT TRADITIONS

Project implementers: Association "Parents for Aizkraukle" Implementation period: September 2014 – November 2014

The project aimed to promote intercultural friendship at the pre-school educational institution "Zilite", where a total of four events took place. In the first event children gave performances in the Latvian and Russian languages, as well as watched cartoons in both languages. In the second event, "Learning from each other", Jēkabpils folk group "Rodnik" showed Russian folk dances and costumes for families. Participating children told and showed "Fairytale of a turnip", which

was performed in two languages – Russian and Latvian. Children were introduced to traditional Russian musical instruments and toys – matryoshkas and a bear in national costume. In the third event, folklore group "Karikste" demonstrated Latvian folk dances and costumes. All were involved in the Latvian games devoted to Martin's Day. Children were introduced to traditional Latvian musical instruments and toys.

#### **HERITAGE**

Project implementers: Association "Rodacy"
Implementation period: August 2015 – January 2016

The project provided an opportunity to organize lectures, creative workshops and festive concerts. The creative workshop "Studying and the making of Latvian folk costumes" was dedicated to the study of Krustpils county folk costumes and the making of Krustpils county garters. In honour of the society's "Rodacy"  $25^{th}$  anniversary, the concert "Polish dance and song traditions" performed not only in Polish, but also in the Latvian, Ukrainian, Russian and Belarusian languages, and participants danced Polish dances – the

polonaise, mazurka and others. Within the project a lecture was organized featuring the Jekabpils History Museum's presentation "Polish traces in Jekabpils", and the exhibition "Polish costumes and those of other nationalities in Jekabpils" and two concerts were performed. One concert was held in Varieši in honour of Latvian Independence proclamation day, the other was a Polish dance and song performance in Jekabpils nursing home with the participation of Belarusian society "Spatkanne".



Photo: Rihards Barkovsk



### SEARCHING FOR COMMON THEMES

Project implementers: Jelgava Russian society "Istok" Implementation period: October 2014 - November 2014

An amulet-making workshop was organized attended by 30 participants. At the beginning of the workshop, participants were introduced to various amulet types and their differences. In three hours' time, everybody could learn how to make an amulet with their own hands. without using scissors. 116 participants took part in the concert "Searching for common themes", and it was attended by 600 people from Jelgava and other cities and counties.

### WITH LOVE FOR UKRAINE

Project implementers: UKC "Džerelo" Implementation period: August 2014 - November 2014

In honour of the anniversary of Ukraine's Independence, a festive event and concert was organized, where in a musical performance "With love for Ukraine", the Ukrainian song group "Dzerele", children's ensemble "Džerelce", students and guests of the Latvian Society and Jelgava pensioners' associations performed. During the event, M. Chernov's photo exhibition "Freedom territory" and drawings of the children's collective "Džerelce" were displayed, as well as handicrafts with

Ukrainian themes. There were also two workshops - traditional rag-doll making and "friendship-bracelet" weaving workshops for children of various nationalities, who had the opportunity to participate in different games, songs, and dances and enjoy delicious pies. Society representatives visited a nursing home, presenting an exhibition of children's drawings on the theme of Ukraine, as well as performed a concert.

### PARTICIPATE!

Project implementers: Roma NGO "Romanu čačipen" Implementation period: September 2015 – December 2015

The project aimed to promote Roma community involvement in social processes, as well as Roma culture and traditions by strengthening the capacity of the association and the development of human resources involved in the project. In the project a workshop "Wood in our lives" was organized to teach Roma and non-Roma children to work together, in order to promote the creation and consolidation of

society and promote intercultural dialogue. During project activities, Latvian children's poetry and folk tales were translated into the Roma language, and Roma youth had the opportunity to learn traditional cultural practices that contribute to the preservation of ethnic identity and passing it on to the next generation. The project involved around 70 people of various nationalities.

### SEE YOU IN JELGAVA!

Project implementers: Jelgava National Culture Society Association Implementation period: August 2014 – November 2014

In honor of the Latvian Republic's Proclamation of Independence Day, a unification campaign "Jelgava nationalities' light" was organized. Jelgava residents – both Latvians and minorities – were invited to donate candles (and candle ends) to pour one single large candle with the idea of combining all human wishes and thoughts about a unified Latvia. A candle was lit at the 14 November ceremonial event "Through thirty-nine circles"

for light...". In the first part of the event there was a concert with the participation of various ethnic cultural associations and ensembles from Jelgava, Nakotne and other guest artists. In the second part a festive evening was held, where members of the association had the opportunity to strengthen social contacts and discuss future cooperation. The event was attended by about 400 people of various nationalities.

### DIALOGUES IN LIFE AND ON STAGE

Project implementers: Jelgava Student theatre support union "Miniatra" Implementation period: August 2014 – November 2014

During the project two cross-cultural experience exchange events were organized. One was in Jekabpils, where the Jekabpils Russian Society "Rodnik" introduced LLU Jelgava Student theatre actors to Russian culture and mentality. The second event was in Jelgava,

which was visited by the Jekabpils Russian Society "Rodnik". The event concluded with a joint romantic Russian evening with Arnis Miltins. Project activities included four performances of A. Chekhov's play "The Wood Demon" in Latvian and Russian.

## RESEARCH PROJECT "MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES IN LATVIA" RESULTS

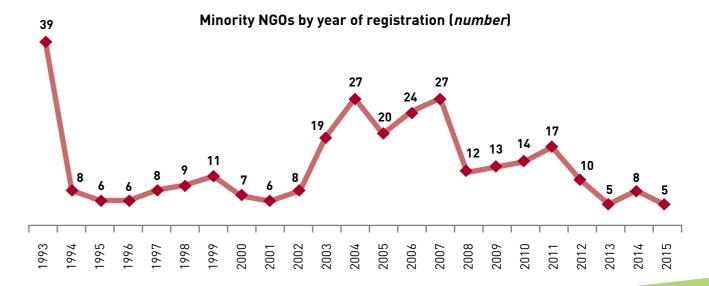
In order to analyze minority participation and minority NGOs, the Baltic Institute of Social Sciences (BISS) on behalf of the Ministry of Culture carried out a study on "Minority Participation in Democratic Processes in Latvia". The

study provides information on minorities and important issues of minority organizations. The Ministry of Culture will use this information for the further planning of activities.

### MINORITY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVITIES IN LATVIA

As of June 1, 2015, there were 423 organizations registered with the Latvian Company Register that have statutes which indicate that they work with minorities in Latvia. **309** are **associations of ethnic minorities**, while **117** are

linked to minorities (language teaching centres, folk dance studios, partnership organizations between Latvia and other countries in the world, friendship organizations between Latvians and representatives of other ethnicities, etc.)



Currently **157** of the 309 minority associations and foundations **are active. 108** minority associations and foundations **have intense or moderate activity.** 

#### Registered minority NGOs by place of registration (%)



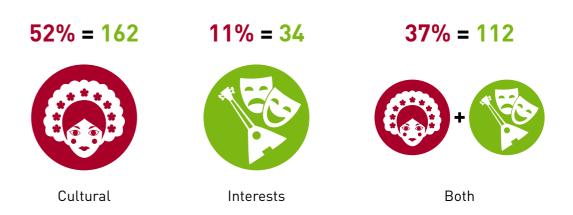
#### Registered minority NGOs by activity level (number)

Working

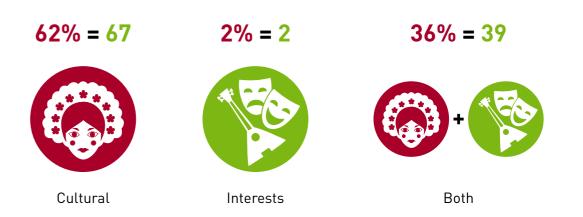
intensively



#### Registered minority NGOs by area of activity (% and number)



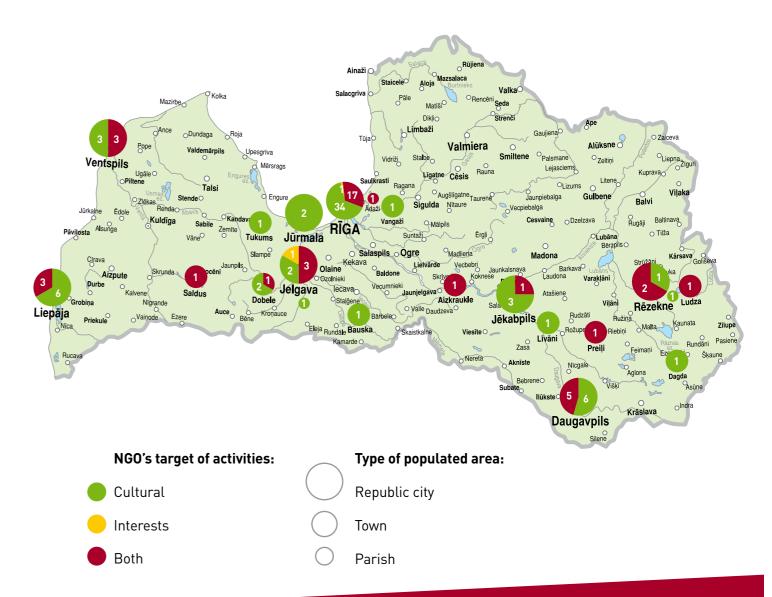
#### Active minority NGOs by area of activity (% and number)



#### Minorities' non-governmental organizations in Latvia by target of their activities

# Tukums Jūrmala NGO's target of activities: Type of populated area: Republic city Cultural Interests Town Both Parish

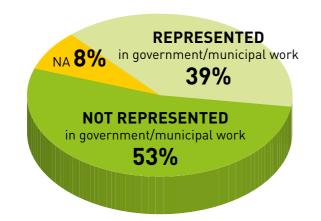
### Minorities' non-governmental organizations in Latvia by their activity level (marked only those whose activities are seen as intense or moderate)



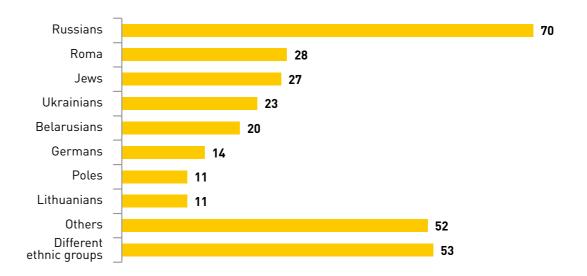
#### Active minority NGOs by location (number)



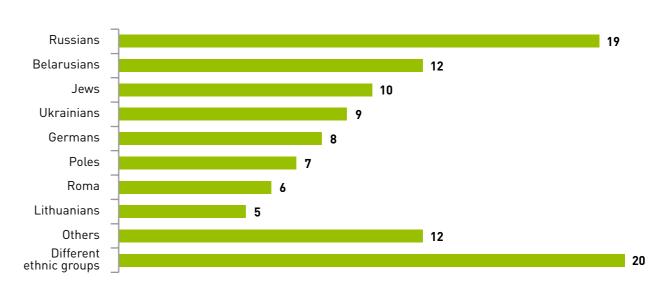
### Representation of active minority NGOs in decision-making processes at the national and local level (%)



#### Registered minority NGOs by represented ethnic group (number)



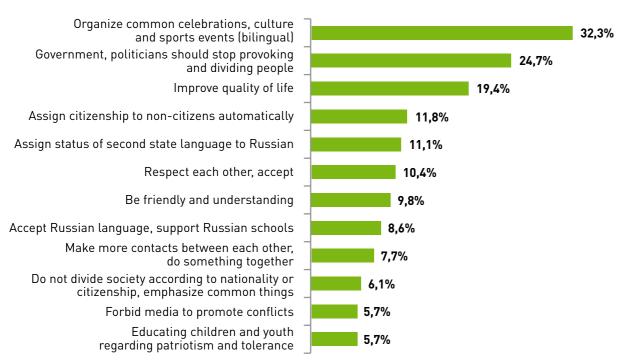
#### Active minority NGOs by represented ethnic group (number)



# SURVEY OF MINORITIES IN LATVIA ON SENSE OF BELONGING AND CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

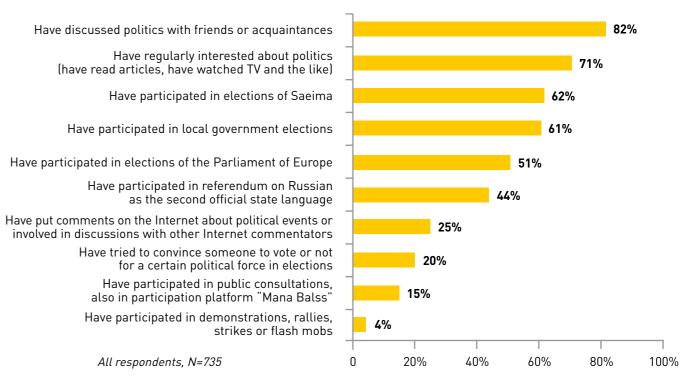
Survey period: July 15<sup>th</sup> 2015 – September 10<sup>th</sup> 2015 Sample: 735 representatives of minority communities (a survey of residents) and 91 representatives of minority organizations

#### Views about ethnic relations in Latvia Proposals on facilitating social integration (%)

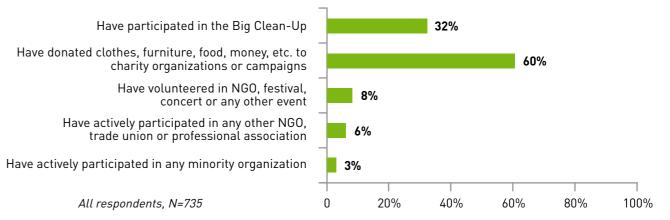


Multiple response question

### Civic participation Involvement in political activities during the last three years (%)



#### Involvement in social processes during the past three years (%)



# MOST ACTIVE LIV AND MINORITY ORGANIZATIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION\*

#### Kurzeme

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<sup>\*</sup> In the preamble of the Law on Free Development and Rights of Cultural Autonomy of National and Ethnic Groups adopted on 19 March 1991 has been stated that the Livs (Livonians) are indigenous ethnic group in Latvia: "In the Republic of Latvia live Latvian nation, the ancient indigenous ethnic group Livs, as well as national and ethnic minorities".

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