

## **SOCIETAL SECURITY IN LATVIA: NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES?**

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As an analytical concept, societal security is rather new to Latvian policy-makers. In fact, it is so new there is not even a clear and ambiguous translation of “societal security” into Latvian: it is often rendered as *sabiedrības drošība* – a term traditionally used for denoting public security (border controls, police operations against drug trafficking etc.) – which does not necessarily correspond to how societal security is seen elsewhere. There is only one book these authors are aware of that explicitly deals with societal security in Latvia.<sup>1</sup> In policy documents, it is difficult to identify clear references to societal security due to the aforementioned translation issue and overall insufficient attention to the matter. (Resilience, or “noturība” in Latvian, did make it into public discourse as a result of recent EU and NATO focus on this concept, but resilience is an all-encompassing term that entails both non-military *and* military aspects.<sup>2</sup>) However, the broad understanding that society itself is something to be protected and can be a source of (in)security is not new to Latvia. We could even argue that it is cemented in the very foundations of the state – Latvia is a *nation-state*, a state created for protecting and furthering the interests of the nation (society), not the other way around. As Latvia’s Satversme [Constitution] says: “*The State of Latvia, proclaimed on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1918, has been established by uniting historical Latvian lands and on the basis of the unwavering will of the Latvian nation to have its own State and its inalienable right of self-determination in order to guarantee the existence and development of the Latvian nation, its language and culture throughout the centuries, to ensure freedom and promote welfare of the people of Latvia and each individual.*”<sup>3</sup>

This article will start by briefly describing the fundamentals of Latvia's security views and the place of society therein. It will also discuss the three main societal security narratives – interethnic relations, media environment and economic security – as well as the main stakeholders dealing with these issues and institutional structure. The article will conclude by examining how the various stakeholders influence the public debate and governmental policies. While thoughts on societal security in Latvia are relatively advanced at both governmental and non-governmental levels, the decoupling of societal security from external threats (at least to a certain extent) could stimulate a discussion on new societal security issues to be addressed, as well as new solutions to existing problems.

## **BACKGROUND**

In order to understand how societal security is seen in Latvia, it is useful to put it in the context of the broader national security vision. Here, it is important to recognise that, following the complete restoration of independence, Latvia's foreign and security policy has been driven by two conflicting imperatives – the modern and the postmodern one.<sup>4</sup> The first vision is driven by Latvia's tragic historical experiences of being invaded and occupied for half of its independent existence, and by its precarious location on the border with Russia. As such, it is first and foremost focused on the preservation and strengthening of the state through territorial defence and NATO membership. The nation has been very much present in this paradigm (as Gražina Miniotaitė notes, citizenship policies in the early 1990s became part of the “modern” strategy by adopting restrictive legislation “with the aim of restoring the inter-war ethnic composition of the states”<sup>5</sup>). However, in this quest for national security, sovereignty and strong state institutions – especially security-related – were prioritised over the society itself. Latvia's “modern” national security strategy, tied to EU and NATO membership and warding off Russian influence, has been considered self-explanatory and undoubtable, and alternatives were virtually never discussed.

At the same time, somewhat paradoxically, requirements for membership in the EU and NATO dictated the second, “postmodern” approach prevalent in these organisations at the time and were tied to diverse non-military, often transnational security aspects such as human rights, societal values and the environment. This paradigm is not centred on territoriality and, in fact, is linked to a more diluted and less securitised vision of sovereignty. In Gražina Miniotaitė’s words: “*The sovereignty [modern] discourse conceives the nation and the state as real ontological essences, while the integration [postmodern] discourse grants no pre-discursive existence to the nation and treats the state as merely instrumental in respect of human rights.*”<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the “postmodern” approach is less prone to defining the nation along ethnic lines, adopting a more inclusive vision instead.

In 2018, Latvian security views sit somewhat uneasily between the two camps. On the one hand, the “postmodern” paradigm has taken hold. Latvian policy-makers increasingly realise the dangers stemming, not only from ethnic tensions and Russian propaganda but also, for instance, economic and social disparities. While individual-level, human security is a more popular concept than societal security,<sup>7</sup> the society is also conceptualised as a security object. The 2016 State Defence Concept points out: “*[.] security challenges are posed by the consequences of the economic crisis which can still be felt in the society. Social inequality as well as a decreasing number of inhabitants caused by the crisis increase Latvia’s internal and external vulnerability to external threats.*”<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the crisis in Ukraine has reinvigorated “modern” concerns about sovereignty and territorial security, and “modern” thinking has made it to the top of the western security agenda, arguably for the first time since the end of the Cold War. Žaneta Ozoliņa writes that: “*Societal security has become a part of the political, military, and economic security agenda.*”<sup>9</sup> This duality directly affects the way in which societal security is conceptualised in Latvia.

## MAIN SOCIETAL SECURITY NARRATIVES

Before turning to the main societal security narratives existing in Latvia, it is important to note the high degree of politicisation, and securitisation, of the issue. Interviewing policy-makers dealing with societal security and national security more broadly was not an easy task. In particular, attempts to probe into who deals with interethnic relations as a security issue, and how, were met with evasive answers indicating that the interviewer was overstepping some perceived boundaries. This is yet another indication of societal security being subsumed under broader national/state security concerns and not just being an autonomous policy area.

Arguably, interethnic relations have been considered to be the main societal security issue by the majority of Latvian policy-makers, as well as the general public. Among different stakeholders, there is no single interpretation of this issue, its reasons or desired outcomes that would guarantee “security.” The ambiguity stems from the abovementioned tension between the more “modern” and ethnic nation-oriented security narrative, and the more “postmodern” and integrationist one. Thus, some actors believe that a “secure” society would be tightly integrated on the basis of the Latvian language and culture, because it would prevent Russia from exploiting the interethnic cleavage. (It should be noted that in the Latvian language and public discourse, the word “Latvian” denotes ethnicity, not civic identity; in turn, also in this article, “non-Latvians” indicates representatives of other ethnic groups.) In this view, the local non-Latvian population, which mainly immigrated during the Soviet occupation,<sup>10</sup> is an existing or a potential “fifth column” which can easily be exploited by the Kremlin to achieve its goals – basically, to weaken the Latvian state, the guarantee of the existence of the ethnically Latvian nation. As such, the “fifth column” is not to be trusted unless it proves its loyalty. These proofs of integration include, notably, adopting the Latvian language, the officially endorsed view of Latvian history, as well as supporting its foreign policy orientation. Notably, Latvia’s 2011 and 2015 National Security Strategies also stress the importance of the “Latvian language as the

state language and element unifying the society”, a unified information space that would foster “a sense of belonging to Latvia,”<sup>11</sup> as well as Latvia’s western and democratic identity.<sup>12</sup>

As could be expected, these ideas are not necessarily shared by many ethnically non-Latvian inhabitants and are actively opposed by Russian and local pro-Russian media and politicians. Pro-Russian players, but also a part of the Latvian society and political circles, believe that “security” is achievable through a more inclusive approach, embracing not only the Latvian, but also the non-Latvian, component of the population and downscaling mutual accusations and historical grievances. They are also more sceptical of Latvia’s foreign policy stance, describing it as unnecessarily anti-Russian.

There have been several focal points around which the interethnic narrative has centred. While this debate has continued since the 1990s, here we will focus on more recent events – the referendum on Russian as a second state language and the new preamble of the Latvian Constitution. These were by no means the only significant events; for instance, the asylum policy emerged as a new strand in the debate after the EU faced an unprecedented influx of refugees in 2015. However, they are not analysed in detail here due to space limitations.

The referendum on declaring the Russian language as a state language took place on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018. This highly polarising event marked a high point in the recent history of political participation in Latvia: 71.13% of voters took part, more than in the recent parliamentary elections or other referenda.<sup>13</sup> Preceding and subsequent to the actual vote, it was hotly debated in parliament, at the OSCE, in the press (even in *Playboy*<sup>14</sup>), and at a variety of events, and, inevitably, caused some tension within the society, with Latvians and non-Latvians becoming more apprehensive about their relations with each other. The issue was originally raised as a petition to parliament, initiated by the notorious pro-Russian activist Vladimirs Lindermans, and gathered signatures of more than 10% of all registered voters as a necessary first step before going to the referendum itself. According to Lindermans, this was actually a counter-proposal, in response to the initiative in 2010, by right-wing political force National Alliance, to use only Latvian as the language of

instruction in all state schools. (That initiative did not, however, gather the required number of signatures.) As a result, Russian as the second state language was supported by 24.88% of voters and opposed by 74.8%. According to Alexei Gusev's calculations, "the number of those who supported the Russian language was approximately equal to the number of Russophone citizens who were eligible to vote."<sup>15</sup> In a poll, one month after the referendum, almost two-thirds responded that it had not affected their daily life, but one-third believed it had; only 5% had no opinion.<sup>16</sup>

The prominent "for" campaigners included more than just Linderman's movement "For the native language." (Notably, the movement was later investigated by the Latvian Security Police and accused of receiving money from Russia, as well as in-kind information support from such mass media as the Russia-owned First Baltic Channel.<sup>17</sup>) The most prominent politician of Latvia's largest Russophone-supporting party Harmony, Riga's mayor, Nils Ušakovs, also signed in support of organising the referendum, a step which was later described as a grave political mistake, which provided other parties with the pretext for not including Harmony in the coalition.<sup>18</sup> According to Ušakovs himself, and also in the opinion of other experts, the vote was, in fact, more a protest vote *against* Latvia's ethnic policy than *for* Russian as a second state language: "*Myself personally and my party stand for only one official language in Latvia – Latvian. And, as a pragmatic politician, I understand that the referendum will hardly be successful. But I must be with the thousands of inhabitants of the Republic of Latvia who want to preserve their dignity.*"<sup>19</sup>

A large part of the Latvian population and mainstream Latvian political parties, however, did not quite see the referendum as a protest vote or a "quest for dignity," but rather as a determined attempt to challenge the status of the Latvian language and, by consequence, to endanger the survival of the Latvian nation. Some interpreted it as a considerable sign of bad will by the non-Latvian population. According to Raivis Dzintars, then co-chair of the right-wing party VL!TB/LNNK (the abbreviation stands for All for Latvia! For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvia's National Independence Movement): "[...] *part*

*of Latvia's inhabitants are altogether oriented in a different way to how they should be in our view – in relation to the basic values of the state of Latvia, to the common values of the population*” (note the interesting use of “common” values which, in the same sentence, prove not to be so “common” after all). Dzintars continued: *“Those who have signed for the second official language are Latvia's citizens; many of them are young people, who, after coming out of a school financed by the Latvian state, stand against this state [authors' italics].”*<sup>20</sup> More centrist politicians were also somewhat more moderate in their reactions. The highest officials were quoted, saying that the referendum was a “provocation” (Solvita Āboltiņa, speaker of parliament), by “marginal groups” (Valdis Dombrovskis, prime minister); ex-president Valdis Zatlers blamed the divided media environment, which, in his words, does not reflect the high level of cohesion in other spheres of society.<sup>21</sup> Nonetheless, in both cases we see a narrative of threat to the Latvian nation and Latvian state. For more extreme right-wing forces, the threat is more diffuse and emanates from a wide stratum of society, while more moderate political forces securitise certain external players who, nonetheless, have the power to shape the processes within the society in a harmful manner.

As a response to the language referendum, the new preamble of the Latvian Satversme (Constitution) was developed and, after heated public debates, adopted by the Saeima (parliament) of Latvia, in 2014. The preamble states that: *“The State of Latvia, proclaimed on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1918, has been established by uniting historical Latvian lands and on the basis of the unwavering will of the Latvian nation to have its own State and its inalienable right of self-determination in order to guarantee the existence and development of the Latvian nation, its language and culture throughout the centuries, to ensure freedom and promote welfare of the people of Latvia and each individual. [...] Latvia as a democratic, socially responsible and national state is based on the rule of law and on respect for human dignity and freedom; it recognises and protects fundamental human rights and respects ethnic minorities. The people of Latvia protect their sovereignty, national independence, territory, territorial integrity and democratic system of government of*

*the State of Latvia. Since ancient times, the identity of Latvia in the European cultural space has been shaped by Latvian and Liv traditions, Latvian folk wisdom, the Latvian language, universal human and Christian values. Loyalty to Latvia, the Latvian language as the only official language, freedom, equality, solidarity, justice, honesty, work ethics and family are the foundations of a cohesive society.”<sup>22</sup>*

We see here an attempt to reassert the strong link between the Latvian nation and the Latvian state, which, predictably, did not sit well with some groups of the population (not only Russophones). The process of adopting the new preamble was securitised – to a surprising extent. Latvian public television channel LTV reported that the text was drafted in secrecy, in a Riga hotel, without involving the Harmony party (citing Harmony itself). The main role was played by the prominent constitutional lawyer Egils Levits, the Chair of the President’s Constitutional Law Commission, who, in an interview with LTV, asserted his right to consult or not consult whomever he pleases.<sup>23</sup> The proponents of the new preamble argued that the work on this initiative, “judging from the strength of invested thought and moral strength is, in fact, the modern equivalent to the previous century’s military battles for Latvia’s independence and against its enemies.”<sup>24</sup> The opponents stressed that the preamble enshrined the “Latvia for Latvians” approach, reinforcing the ethnic division. (Additionally, they criticised the mention of Christian values.) In the words of political scientist Iveta Kažoka, the preamble was originally motivated by fear and the decision-makers’ mistrust of the population, not forward-looking views.<sup>25</sup> As a result, it is clear that there has been no consensus on either the definition or solutions for this particular societal security challenge.

Media environment is the second major societal security narrative. While it is very closely related to the issue of interethnic relations and foreign influence, as the main concern relates to the use of media (especially by Russia) in order to foment ethnic conflict and undermine Latvia’s statehood and security of the Latvian nation, the issue also has some distinctive traits that allow it to be singled out for academic purposes. Indeed, Latvia has become a European leader in search of



ways to counter Russian propaganda. As Mārtiņš Daugulis wrote, in 2017: “*all involved players and institutions have settled on the same page concerning the significance of strategic communication*”<sup>26</sup> – the idea that the government and international institutions should not leave the interpretation of their decisions to biased pro-Russian media, but should instead reach out to the society in a proactive manner. Other measures include, strengthening the independent media environment that would provide healthy alternatives to Russian propaganda, as well as promotion of media literacy and knowledge on how to distinguish “fake news” from real news. The primary achievement has been the establishment of the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence (StratCom). In addition, Latvia has its own expert in the EU East Stratcom Task Force – Latvian NGO, the Baltic Centre for Media Excellence (BCME) – which provides training to journalists in Latvia and beyond; Latvian investigative journalism non-profit organisation Re:Baltica has exposed the influence of Russia’s money in the Baltic States, and several Latvian think tanks regularly produce research on strategic communication and related issues.

Behind all this activism, however, there is a fair amount of soul-searching. The main differences in opinion concern the ways in which the ethnic division and linguistically (and politically) divided media environment is dealt with. Right-wing political forces and experts that are worried about the threat Russophones pose to the Latvian nation and the Latvian state believe that a “single national information space” is needed, meaning that communication in public media should only take place in Latvian. In addition, they tend to highlight technical issues, e.g. the fact that Latvian public media are technically incapable of broadcasting in the entire territory of Latvia, and therefore areas bordering with Russia and Belarus can only access the public media of these countries, or the need to improve the knowledge of the Latvian language in the society, so that everyone can access information in Latvian.<sup>27</sup> The 2015 National Security Concept also laments the fact that Russian TV channels constitute a major part of the packages offered by TV providers.<sup>28</sup> In turn, in 2014, the National Electronic Mass Media Council (NEPLP) came forward with the idea of establishing a

state-funded, Russian language TV channel for the three Baltic States, in order to provide impartial information and promote democratic values.<sup>29</sup> The proposed rationale was essentially the same as the one promoted by right-wing parties: to bring Russophones into the Latvian information space. As Ainārs Dimants, then the chairman of NEPLP, argued, it would be a strategic communication measure for promoting societal cohesion and countering “national security threats in Russia’s information war.”<sup>30</sup> Although this idea was supported by the prime minister and several other officials,<sup>31</sup> as of early 2018, no state funding has been granted. A similarly heated discussion was raised around the temporary prohibition of the Russian state TV channel RTR: while some believed this was the only possible way to protect Latvia’s media environment from unwelcome foreign influences, others argued that Latvia should focus on developing its own media environment, instead of silencing the alternatives.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, as with the first aspect of societal security, we see a lack of consensus. Even if all players are indeed in favour of developing strategic communication, there is no unanimity on either its content or mode of operation.

Economic security is the final key narrative to be mentioned here. While it may appear to lie within the realm of human (individual), not societal (collective) security, in practice, the debate on economic disparities and overall economic development often refers to society as a whole. It has also been named by policy-makers as a major component of societal cohesion.<sup>33</sup> Again, this narrative is closely tied to the issue of interethnic relations and Russia’s influence. The 2015 National Security Strategy recognises that “certain foreign countries” can use economic measures (in addition to political, humanitarian and informational ones) to “influence the unity of Latvia’s society, the state’s foreign policy orientation and domestic political stability.”<sup>34</sup> It also notes that a part of Russia’s strategy is the “gradual weakening of the state in the aspect of domestic politics, fostering growth of dissatisfaction and protest potential in the society, in order to cause explicit action against the existing state government and violent riots.”<sup>35</sup> Here we must remember that portraying Latvia as a “failed” or “bankrupt” state has been a longstanding strategy of Russian and pro-Russian media. For many

years, they have consistently pointed out (and exaggerated) Latvia's social and economic problems, such as closed Soviet era factories, unemployment and emigration, which allegedly have been ignored or even aggravated by Latvia's western partners – in contrast to the Soviet Union which allegedly had Latvia's best interests at heart and promoted universal well-being.<sup>36</sup>

While Russia certainly exaggerates, this is no reason to discount the real problems that Latvia is facing. Even coalition politicians have admitted that economic reasoning played a role in, for instance, the language referendum.<sup>37</sup> Latvia's transition to a free market economy in the 1990s was comparatively challenging for the society and the economy, and, as Gunārs Valdmanis argues: *“as the overall proportion of the Russian-speaking minority was high in many of the declining industries, it resulted in an overall higher level of unemployment and risk of social exclusion among the Russian-speaking minority.”*<sup>38</sup> Latvia's transportation and transit sector predominantly employs Russophones – a potential security issue considering the high politisation of the transit sector and its dependency on Russia and Belarus – and Russophones are more likely than Latvians to participate in the “shadow economy.”<sup>39</sup> Latvia's Gini coefficient (measuring inequality) and relative income poverty are among the highest in the OECD,<sup>40</sup> while the tradition of social solidarity is quite weak, with only approximately 13% belonging to trade unions (compared to approx. 25%, the OECD average).<sup>41</sup> Latgale, in particular, is a recurrent element of the debate. The Latgale region, bordering Russia and Belarus, has a disproportionate percentage of Russophones and a lower level of socioeconomic development compared to the rest of the country, and there is a broad consensus that it needs more investment<sup>42</sup> – although in practice, implementation of this idea has stalled. In addition, corruption, shadow economy and money laundering have been flagged as vulnerabilities that allow Russia to influence Latvian politics and society. Unfortunately, while there is broad consensus on the need to improve economic security, practical policies still leave much to be desired.

## MAIN STAKEHOLDERS AND INSTITUTIONAL SETUP

To begin with, although national security is the primary responsibility of the state according to the 2001 Law on National Security, each citizen is also obliged to defend “the state’s independence, freedom and democratic form of government.”<sup>43</sup> This “total defence” approach has been strengthened in recent years (see next section). The division of responsibilities concerning societal security among the official bodies can best be described as a “whole-of-government” approach, with no clear focal point. Integration of the society, the most notable component of societal security in Latvia, is coordinated by the Ministry of Culture and co-implemented by other ministries and the Society Integration Foundation. In addition, there is a Citizenship, Migration and Social Cohesion Committee in parliament, and the Ombudsman has also addressed integration issues. According to an independent study in 2016, there is, in fact, a lack of internal cohesion in the field of integration policy, and the Ministry of Culture does not have sufficient powers to strengthen its coordination.<sup>44</sup> The 2015 National Security Concept also asks to improve coordination among institutions that are responsible for integration.<sup>45</sup> The ministries of Economy and Finance work on strengthening economic security, along with bodies that fight corruption and supervise the financial sector, as well as such agencies as the Latvian Security Police.<sup>46</sup> CERT.LV – the Information Technology Security Incident Response Institution of the Republic of Latvia, subordinate to the Ministry of Defence – is responsible for information technology safety.

However, although in principle it is a “whole-of-government” responsibility, in practice promotion of societal security is heavily concentrated in the hands of institutions dealing with foreign policy, defence and intelligence. There is a separate cyber security strategy,<sup>47</sup> but, as mentioned above, Latvia’s cyber security is controlled by the Ministry of Defence and by no means is it a priority dimension of societal security. The 2012 Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy, for which the Ministry of Culture is responsible, do not explicitly deal with security, but the overall tone of the document

tends to mirror the key national security documents.<sup>48</sup> Although one interviewee noted that this ministry has taken on “too much responsibility,”<sup>49</sup> societal security concerns and proposed solutions are first and foremost described in the National Security Concept and State Defence Concept. In these documents, they are logically subordinated and linked to broader national security concerns – especially the ones posed by Russia.

According to two anonymous interviewees, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is another institution that has somewhat disproportionate responsibility over societal security issues.<sup>50</sup> While the Law on National Security stipulates that the MFA takes part in implementing the external, not societal security policy,<sup>51</sup> in practice it has been very active on issues related to the media environment and intercommunal relations – both through practical policies and playing a major role in public debates. To a large extent, this is understandable, because Russian propaganda and hybrid warfare tactics are international problems that require broader international solutions. Indeed, the MFA has been very consistent in lobbying for a tougher NATO and EU policy against disinformation and such measures as a new EU Russian language TV channel,<sup>52</sup> and in explaining Latvia’s history internationally. Being the body responsible for the sanctions regime against Russia, the MFA has cooperated with the Security Police to close down the Russian propaganda website Sputnik,<sup>53</sup> and Latvia’s foreign minister banned three Russian pop stars from entering Latvia in 2016 (citing their support for Russia’s annexation of Crimea).<sup>54</sup> The minister also commented on the need for Latvia to invest more in its own Russian language public media.<sup>55</sup> As is evident, there is a very tight connection between the domestic and the foreign policies in the MFA’s work.

While there is no consensus on the role of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), an anonymous interviewee has opined that the MoD also plays a more significant role than would be warranted under the circumstances, and is very attentive to societal trends and the media environment.<sup>56</sup> It initiated the creation of the NATO Stratcom, recently proposed amendments to the National Security Law stipulating in detail how each citizen is obliged to fight the aggressor in the case of

war or external invasion<sup>57</sup> (which could be seen as a logical extension of previous changes to the law – please see the next section), and has financed public discussions on cybersecurity and the fight against propaganda,<sup>58</sup> among other things. While the MoD clearly focuses on external security, its policies do have a marked societal component. In addition, in accordance with the 2017 National Security Concept, national security and law enforcement agencies are “directly responsible” for securing such basic values as democratic forms of governance and internal security.<sup>59</sup> For instance, the Constitution Protection Bureau (SAB), one of the three Latvian security and intelligence agencies, is very influential, not only through briefing policy-makers, but also through publishing annual public reports. According to SAB’s 2016 report, “Russia’s influence in Latvia’s information environment still constitutes one of the most important long-term threats to the security of the Latvian state,” and the compatriots’ policy is still the most visible instrument of Russia’s influence in Latvia.”<sup>60</sup>

A similar picture can be observed in the non-governmental sector. While societal security as such remains heavily underexplored and underdiscussed, the works that do appear are mainly published by foreign policy-oriented think tanks and researchers. The non-governmental Latvian Institute of International Affairs,<sup>61</sup> Centre for East European Policy Studies,<sup>62</sup> Centre for International Studies,<sup>63</sup> as well as the Centre for Security and Strategic Research at the National Defence Academy of Latvia<sup>64</sup> and the (now inactive) Advanced Social and Political Research Institute of the University of Latvia<sup>65</sup> have published widely on the three main societal security narratives discussed here (ethnic inclusion, media environment and economic security). As could be expected, taking into account these institutions’ international orientation, their research and analysis heavily ties societal and political/military security concerns. In fact, they tend to focus on so-called “hybrid” security and the state, not society and societal security as such. Many of these publications, somewhat akin to the right-wing of Latvia’s political spectrum, tend to securitise the Russophone community as a channel of Russia’s influence. For instance, Žaneta Ozoliņa starts her societal security book by asking: “*Why does*

*the Russian-speaking community sympathise with policies pursued by Russia? Why is the community immune to the Latvian information space? [...] Why do the younger generations of Russian speakers, born in the EU, enjoying all the privileges of democratic values, and being fluent in the Latvian language, seem inclined to sympathise with the Stalinist regime?”*<sup>66</sup> This direction of research has intensified after the conflict in Ukraine, with “hybrid threat” and “strategic communication” promptly becoming buzzwords. In and of itself, bringing Russia into the equation is a legitimate intellectual exercise; however, it could be complemented more widely by domestically-oriented research.

This gap in expertise and public debate is, to some extent, filled by the think tanks, Centre for Public Policy (PROVIDUS) and CERTUS, as well as NGO Latvian Centre for Human Rights (LCHR), several university-affiliated researchers and media outlets. PROVIDUS mainly focuses on domestic issues, and has published and organised debates on such issues as corruption, good governance and civic participation and integration of society.<sup>67</sup> In contrast to the more right-wing and Russia-oriented foreign policy think tanks, it advocates a liberal stance (for example, a more inclusionary and diversity-friendly policy towards local Russophones and refugees) and focuses on the internal dimension of societal security. The LCHR similarly promotes a more liberal view on integration.<sup>68</sup> CERTUS,<sup>69</sup> in turn, is more focused on economic security. We could also mention here Re:Baltica<sup>70</sup> which, in addition to exploring the diverse ways in which Russia influences Latvian society, has also focused on such aspects as demography and economic inequality. A large part of their research is actually framed as security issues. However, while being rather influential in the Latvian media landscape (especially PROVIDUS and Re:Baltica), these organisations do not seem to be substantially influencing national policies (see below).

Finally, an interesting addition to the debate about societal security in Latvia is public opinion polls. The custom has been to measure the attitudes of different linguistic groups – Latvian and Russian speakers’ – to various domestic and foreign policy issues. To quote some polling results, Russian speakers have a less positive perception of Latvia’s political elite,<sup>71</sup> are less inclined to defend Latvia with

arms,<sup>72</sup> are less positive about pro-western foreign policy orientation, and more inclined to cooperate with eastern countries.<sup>73</sup> On the other hand, the polls have also shown that Russian speakers do watch Latvian media,<sup>74</sup> that economic issues are a much higher priority for the society (68%) than the possibility of ethnic conflict (19% in 2016)<sup>75</sup> and that only 22% would be uncomfortable if a representative of a minority ethnic group took the highest elected political position in Latvia.<sup>76</sup> The predominant trend in both policy and scientific debates has been to focus on the differences, although a recent study concluded that, in fact, “differences in political views do not create a foundation for broad social destabilisation movements.”<sup>77</sup>

## **SOCIETAL SECURITY IN GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES**

According to an anonymous interviewee,<sup>78</sup> in recent years, as Latvia significantly improved its self-defence and deterrence capabilities, “the focus is slowly shifting to soft security.”<sup>79</sup> The solutions chosen to minimise the threat stemming from societal division have been, first and foremost, legalistic – focused more on minimising the possible consequences than on treating the underlying problems. In addition to the abovementioned investigation into the sources of funding for the referendum, the new preamble of the Constitution (see below) and much more restrictive rules for initiating new referenda that came into force in 2015, there have been some other notable changes to national legislation. These are mainly aimed at ensuring that Latvia’s society does engage in defending the state, but does not engage in any activities that might harm the state, directly or indirectly, or deepen the societal divisions. The primary reason for this was related to external concerns: Russia’s hybrid warfare tactics in Ukraine, recruiting “volunteers” also from foreign countries, and, to a lesser extent, the conflict in Syria. Latvia’s Security Police have identified Latvian nationals who have taken part in one or another conflict and “pose long-term risks to society and state security.”<sup>80</sup> Since 2016, such behaviour has been criminalised and Latvian citizens can only serve in the militaries of



a few “friendly countries,” including NATO and the EU,<sup>81</sup> so the Security Police have been able to start criminal proceedings against Syrian and Ukrainian “volunteers.” In addition, since the start of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, state officials are no longer allowed to ban citizens from fighting the aggressor, and in case of a sudden attack, the military does not need permission to show resistance.<sup>82</sup> According to an anonymous policy-maker, this was done in order to avoid repetition of the 1940 situation, when the undemocratic President Kārlis Ulmanis famously ordered everyone to “stay in their places” and show no resistance in the face of Soviet occupation. The changes in the law ensure “that they cannot find a president hooked by Russia and use him,”<sup>83</sup> basically acting as a safety valve against the possibility that highest officials may be corrupted by Russia. This leads us to another important conclusion: not only have the solutions been legalistic, but they have also been heavily linked (we could even say, subordinated) to overall foreign policy and defence goals.

There have also been multiple unsuccessful proposals. These ranged from a call to strip the citizenship from people deriding the Latvian language and nation, to an initiative that would allow inhabitants without Latvian ethnicity (at birth) to write “Latvian” in the ethnicity section of their passport, on the condition that they have lived in Latvia for at least 15 years, know the Latvian language and belong to the Latvian culture.<sup>84</sup> The president’s recent proposal to end the practice of conferring the status of Latvian non-citizen (“alien”) on children born to non-citizens was also rejected, despite the idea being supported by 76% of Latvia’s population (currently, the 50 to 80 children of non-citizens who are born every year can obtain citizenship if one of the parents submits a request, or via naturalisation, not automatically). Interestingly, both supporters and opponents of this decision justified their stance on the grounds of security. The president believed that this law would help to strengthen the state as well as patriotism in Latvia’s society; VL!TB/LNNK described it as being akin to political corruption and serving Moscow’s interests.<sup>85</sup> Ultimately, it proved somewhat difficult to convert sensitive societal security issues into legislation. (One must say that even the interpretation of the response being

“legalistic” is, of course, subjective, because some stakeholders would say that the main underlying problem is the very presence of disloyal non-Latvians and cannot be resolved with traditional integration policies and compromise without endangering the Latvian nation.)

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

A bird’s eye view on the architecture of societal security in Latvia shows a high degree of consensus on the definition of societal security across governmental and non-governmental elites. Interaction between the governing coalition and various think tanks, NGOs and media tends to focus heavily on societal division along ethnic lines, as well as Russia’s interference in Latvia’s politics, life of the society and economy. External security – namely, the Russian factor – is omnipresent in the debates, and the society itself is seen both as a crucial factor in providing resistance to external threat<sup>86</sup> and (especially its Russian-speaking component) as a potential security liability in view of unwelcome external influence. The degree of consensus on the exact ways for dealing with this challenge is somewhat lower. While some political forces and experts advocate more hardliner policies, such as an assimilative integration approach towards the Russophone part of the population (such as transferring all minority education into the Latvian language) and defending the Latvian information space by banning propagandist Russian media, others favour a dual-track approach; engagement with the local Russophone population (e.g. by creating a state-funded or EU-funded Russian TV channel) while at the same time maintaining a strict policy towards Russia. In both subgroups, interaction among governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, in principle, develops synergistically; both governmental and non-governmental players come up with new initiatives, and in many cases, long-term constructive cooperation has been established. It takes place not only through formal dialogue mechanisms, such as the foreign minister’s Council of Foreign Policy Experts,<sup>87</sup> but also through grants to research organisations (MFA, MoD and Stratcom are

among the sources of these grants) and through informal/unstructured dialogue at public events, in the media, and in private discussions. However, the degree of cooperation is heavily dependent on ideational factors. The more different a world view is promoted by a stakeholder, the less likely this stakeholder seems to be included in the official policy debate. A good example is the Latvian Centre of Human Rights, which has historically sat on the margins of the integration debate. The PROVIDUS centre, with its moderate attitude towards ethnic issues, seems to share its views with a more centrist part of the Latvian political spectrum, but not with right-wing parties. Harmony Centre, the major pro-Russia political force, is altogether ignored by the ruling coalition. While worries regarding Harmony Centre's close ties with Russia are understandable, overall, Latvia's public and policy sphere could benefit from a more daring and open debate on major societal security issues with alternative voices – even if it only serves to refine the existing policies.<sup>88</sup>

The externally-oriented view of societal security in Latvia is mirrored in the distribution of responsibilities among state bodies. While the Ministry of Culture is responsible for the overall integration policy, there is broad consensus that it cannot satisfactorily fulfil its coordination duties. At the same time, a major (and, in the opinion of several experts, somewhat disproportionate) role, both in political and public debate, is played by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, as well as national security agencies such as the Security Police. All the main societal security challenges mentioned in this article, as well as the proposed solutions, are described in great detail in the National Security Concept and National Defence Concept. This leads us to the next conclusion: Latvia could benefit from a less security-oriented approach to societal security, instead fully implementing the “whole-of-government approach.” As several anonymous interviewees also noted, the prime minister and his office could engage more in both coordination of societal security issues and agenda-setting. At the moment, there is a “fairly good understanding” of societal security challenges at the Cabinet of Ministers level, but the main agenda-setting initiatives come from such bodies as the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the president, while the cabinet mainly plays a controlling role.<sup>89</sup>

As this chapter has shown, the ideas of society and state are closely interlinked in the current Latvian debate. Latvian policy-makers still have a markedly statist perspective on societal security: although the state, in their opinion, mainly exists for securing the nation, in practice the nation should increase its capacity and efforts to secure the state.<sup>90</sup> Decoupling of societal security from the overall debate on “national security” could not only enable debates about new solutions in the areas of ethnic division, media environment and economic security, but also help Latvian researchers and policy-makers focus on other, previously ignored or underexplored societal security issues. It could lead to exploring the challenges which exist within the society but are not necessarily relevant to national security. Environmental challenges, regional disparities in such aspects as access to medical care or generational divide could all be examples of such challenges. Since the newly identified societal security aspects may not necessarily fit the existing “national” security concepts, they may require new strategies and perhaps new posts within the state apparatus. They also call for creative and original research.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> “Societal Security. Inclusion-Exclusion Dilemma. A Portrait of the Russian-Speaking Community in Latvia”, ed. by Žaneta Ozoliņa, Zinātne, 2016

<sup>2</sup> See the following documents for NATO’s view on resilience: NATO, *The North Atlantic Treaty*, Article III, 04.04.1949, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm); NATO, “Commitment to enhance resilience” issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw, 8-9.07.2016, [https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133180.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/official_texts_133180.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Saeima, *The Constitution of the Republic of Latvia*, <http://www.saeima.lv/en/legislation/constitution>

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. Gražina Miniotaitė, “The Baltic States: In Search of Security And Identity”, <http://studylib.net/doc/8066089/the-baltic-states--in-search-of-security-and-identity>; Paul Holtom, “The Gatekeeper “Hinge” Concept and the Promotion of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian New/Postmodern Security Agendas”, *The Baltic States and Their Region: New Europe Or Old?*, ed. David James Smith, Rodopi, 2005

<sup>5</sup> Gražina Miniotaitė, “The Baltic States [..]”, op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>7</sup> See Žaneta Ozoliņa, “Introduction”, *Societal Security. Inclusion-Exclusion Dilemma [..]*, op. cit., 9–10.
- <sup>8</sup> Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, *Valsts Aizsardzības Konceptija* [State Security Conception], 2016, [http://www.mod.gov.lv/~media/AM/Par\\_aizsardzibas\\_nozari/Plani,%20konceptijas/2016/AIMVAK\\_260516.ashx](http://www.mod.gov.lv/~media/AM/Par_aizsardzibas_nozari/Plani,%20konceptijas/2016/AIMVAK_260516.ashx)
- <sup>9</sup> Žaneta Ozoliņa, “Introduction”, op. cit., 11.
- <sup>10</sup> “The percentage of Latvians in Latvia decreased from 77 per cent in 1935 to 52 per cent in 1989, while the number of Russians grew from 8,8 to 34 per cent”. Gražina Miniotaitė, “The Baltic States [..]”, op. cit.
- <sup>11</sup> Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, *Nacionālās drošības koncepcija (informatīvā daļa)* [National Security Conception (informative part)], 2011, [http://www.mod.gov.lv/~media/AM/Par\\_aizsardzibas\\_nozari/Plani,%20konceptijas/2011\\_nd.ashx](http://www.mod.gov.lv/~media/AM/Par_aizsardzibas_nozari/Plani,%20konceptijas/2011_nd.ashx)
- <sup>12</sup> Here and below – authors’ translation. Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, *Nacionālās drošības koncepcija (informatīvā [..])*, op. cit.
- <sup>13</sup> See the website of the Central Election Commission of Latvia, <https://www.cvk.lv/pub/public/>
- <sup>14</sup> Quoted in: *Diena*, “Elksniņš: Politika savā būtībā ir amorāla” [Elksins: Politics in immoral at core], 04.07.2013, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/viedokli/elksnins-politika-sava-butiba-ir-amorala-14014898>
- <sup>15</sup> LETA, “CVK: Grozījumi Satversmē par krievu valodu nav pieņemti” [Central Electoral Committee: Amendments to the Constitution as regards to Russian language have not been passed], 23.02. 2012, [http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/411998-cvk\\_grozijumi\\_satversme\\_par\\_krievu\\_valodu\\_nav\\_pienemti](http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/411998-cvk_grozijumi_satversme_par_krievu_valodu_nav_pienemti)
- <sup>16</sup> *Diena*, “62% iedzīvotāju uzskata, ka referendumā rezultāti nav ietekmējuši sabiedrības ikdienu” [62% of the inhabitants consider that the referendum’s outcome has not impacted the daily life of the society], 15.03.2012, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/zinas/62-iedzivotaju-uzskata-ka-referenduma-rezultati-nav-ietekmejusi-sabiedribas-ikdienu-13936978>
- <sup>17</sup> LETA, “DP: Valodas referendumā organizētāju finanses veidoja arī Krievijas iedzīvotāju ziedojumi” [State Security Police: the Finances of the language referendum’s organised were constituted by the donations of the Russian inhabitants], 22.02.2014, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/zinas/dp-valodas-referenduma-organizetaju-finanses-veidoja-ari-krievijas-iedzivotaju-ziedojumi-14045284>
- <sup>18</sup> Alexey Gusev, “Pochemu v Latvii russkiy yazyk nikogda ne budet gosudarstvennym” [Why Russian language will never become an official language in Latvia], *Meduza*, 17.02.2017, <https://meduza.io/feature/2017/02/17/pochemu-v-latvii-russkiy-yazyk-nikogda-ne-budet-gosudarstvennym>
- <sup>19</sup> Quoted in *Mixnews*, “Ushakov podpisalsya za russkiy gosudarstvennyi yazyk” [Ushakov signed for Russian official language], 8.11.2011, [http://www.mixnews.lv/ru/politics/news/80675\\_ushakov-podpisalsya-za-russkiy-gosudarstvennyj-yazyk/](http://www.mixnews.lv/ru/politics/news/80675_ushakov-podpisalsya-za-russkiy-gosudarstvennyj-yazyk/)
- <sup>20</sup> Elita Veidemane, “Raivis Dzintars: Latviešu politiķi nedrīkst kāpties atpakaļ” [Raivis Dzintars: Latvian politicians cannot step back], *Neatkarīgā Rīgas Avīze*, 24.02.2012, <http://nra.lv/latvija/politika/66788-raivis-dzintars-latviesu-politiki-nedrikst-kapties-atpakal.htm>
- <sup>21</sup> *Delfi*.lv, “Āboltiņa: referendums bija provokācija, kurai vēlētāji nepakļāvās” [Aboltina: the referendum was a provocation that the voters did not fall for], 19.02.2012, <http://www.delfi.lv/news/national/politics/aboltina-referendums-bija-provokacija-kurai->

- veletaji-nepaklavas.d?id=42142614; LETA, “Dombrovskis: Referendumu rosinājušie margināli ir cietuši sakāvi” [Dombrovskis: the margianals who encoraged the referendum have been defeated], 19.02.2012, [http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/411405-dombrovskis\\_referendumu\\_rosinajusie\\_marginali\\_ir\\_cietusi\\_sakavi](http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/411405-dombrovskis_referendumu_rosinajusie_marginali_ir_cietusi_sakavi); Diena, “Zatlers: Referenduma sekas ir negatīvas visos līmeņos” [Zatlers: the consequences of the referendum are negative on all levels], 19.03.2012, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/viedokli/zatlers-referenduma-sekas-ir-negativas-visos-limenos-13937645>
- <sup>22</sup> Saeima, *The Constitution of the Republic of Latvia*, op. cit.
- <sup>23</sup> Panorāma, “Top Satversmes jaunā preambula” [The new preamble of the Constitution in the making], 09.03.2013, <https://ltv.lsm.lv/lv/raksts/09.09.2013-top-satversmes-jauna-preambula.id17710/>
- <sup>24</sup> Aldis Alliks, “Paplašināta Satversmes preambula – jo ātrāk, jo labāk” [The broadened preamble of the Constitution: the faster, the better], NA/VL/TB/LNNK, 05.11.2013, <http://www.nacionalaapvieniba.lv/aktualitate/paplasinata-satversmes-preambula-jo-atrak-jo-labak/>
- <sup>25</sup> While the original draft of the preamble criticized here was later modified, Kažoka’s original points still seem valid in application to the final version. Iveta Kažoka, “Kādēļ Islandes konstitūcijas melnraksta preambula iedvesmo, bet Latvijas – pagaidām nē?” [Why does the preamble of the Constituion inspires, by Latvia’s – not yet?], Providus, 28.09.2013, <http://providus.lv/article/tris-vertibu-konfliktisatversmes-preambula; Reitingi.lv, ““Saskaņas centrs”: Nav nekādas nepieciešamības papildināt Satversmi ar jaunu preambulu,” 27.03.2014, http://www.reitingi.lv/lv/news/politika/88427-saskanas-centrs-nav-nekadas-nepieciešamības-papildinat-satversmi-ar-jaunu-preambulu.html>
- <sup>26</sup> Mārtiņš Daugulis, “Strategic Communication in Latvia: Writing a New Page in a Western Sense of Security and Foreign Policy”, *Latvian Foreign and Security Policy Yearbook 2018*, ed. by Andris Sprūds, Ilvija Bruģe, Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 2018, <http://liia.lv/en/publications/latvian-foreign-and-security-policy-yearbook-2018-669>
- <sup>27</sup> Elita Veidemane, “Raivis Dzintars: Latviešu politiķi nedrīkst [...]”, op. cit.
- <sup>28</sup> Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, *Nacionālās drošības koncepcija [...]*, op. cit.
- <sup>29</sup> LETA, “NEPLP: Par kopīgu Baltijas televīzijas kanālu krievu valodā ir jāpieņem politisks lēmums,” 23.04.2014, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/viedokli/neplp-par-kopigu-baltijas-televizijas-kanalu-krievu-valoda-ir-japienem-politisks-lemums-14053251>
- <sup>30</sup> Ainārs Dimants, “Dimants: LTV kanāls krieviski – stratēģiskās komunikācijas, ne valodas politikas jautājums” [Dimants: Latvian Public Media’s chanel in Russian – a question of strategic communication, not langauge politics], *Diena*, 03.02.2016, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/viedokli/dimants-ltv-kanals-krieviski--strategiskas-komunikācijas-ne-valodas-politikas-jautajums-14128525>
- <sup>31</sup> LETA, “NEPLP: Par kopīgu Baltijas televīzijas kanālu krievu valodā ir jāpieņem politisks lēmums,” *Diena*, 23.04.2014, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/viedokli/neplp-par-kopigu-baltijas-televizijas-kanalu-krievu-valoda-ir-japienem-politisks-lemums-14053251>
- <sup>32</sup> Aisma Orupe, “Krievu TV kanāla aizliegums – neefektīvs” [The ban on the Russian channel – ineffective], NRA.lv, 11.11.2016, <http://nra.lv/latvija/187656-krievu-tv-kanala-aizliegums-neepektivis.htm>
- <sup>33</sup> Author’s interview with an anonymous policy-maker, December 2017

- <sup>34</sup> Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, *Nacionālās drošības koncepcija [..]*, op. cit.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup> Mārtiņš Kaprāns, “Vecs vīns vecā ādas maisā: Latvijas ierāmēšana Krievijas medijos” [Old wine in an old leather bag: framing Latvia in the Russian media], *Krievijas publiskā diplomātija Latvijā: mediji un nevalstiskais sektors*, ed. by Andis Kudors, Austrumeiropas politikas pētījumu centrs, 2014, 68-70, <http://appc.lv/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/gramata-ar-vaku-Publ.diplomatija.pdf>
- <sup>37</sup> BNS, “Kūtris: Referendumā balsojumu vadīja arī ekonomiskie apsvērumi” [Kutris: the voting in the referendum was also guided by economic calculation], *Diena*, 23.02.2012, <https://www.diena.lv/raksts/latvija/zinas/kutris-referenduma-balsojumu-vadija-ari-ekonomiskie-apsverumi-13933124>
- <sup>38</sup> Gunārs Valdmāns, “Economic Threats and the Russian-speaking Community”, *Societal Security. Inclusion-Exclusion Dilemma [..]*, op. cit., 76
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid., 76-85
- <sup>40</sup> According to 2015 data. See: OECD, *OECD Income Distribution Database (IDD): Gini, poverty, income, Methods and Concepts*, <http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/income-distribution-database.htm>
- <sup>41</sup> According to 2012 data (latest available). OECD, “Coverage rates of collective bargaining agreements and trade union density rates”, 2018, [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/economic-policy-reforms-2017/coverage-rates-of-collective-bargaining-agreements-and-trade-union-density-rates\\_growth-2017-graph183-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/economic-policy-reforms-2017/coverage-rates-of-collective-bargaining-agreements-and-trade-union-density-rates_growth-2017-graph183-en)
- <sup>42</sup> See e.g. Elita Veidemane, “Raivis Dzintars: Latviešu politiķi nedrīkst [..]”, op. cit.
- <sup>43</sup> Likumi.lv, “Nacionālās drošības likums” [National Law of Security], in force 12.01.2001, <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=14011>
- <sup>44</sup> Kultūras ministrija, “Sabiedrības integrācijas politikas organizatoriskā un tiesiskā ietvara pilnveides iespējas” [Possibilities for the improvement of the organizational and legal framework of the society’s integration policy], 29.06.2016, [https://www.mk.gov.lv/sites/default/files/editor/memo\\_padomei\\_par\\_integracijas\\_modeliem\\_29062016.pdf](https://www.mk.gov.lv/sites/default/files/editor/memo_padomei_par_integracijas_modeliem_29062016.pdf)
- <sup>45</sup> Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, *Nacionālās drošības koncepcija (informatīvā [..])*, op. cit.
- <sup>46</sup> On the latter, see: Drošības policija, *Ekonomiskā drošība* [Economic security] <http://dp.gov.lv/lv/darbibas-jomas/ekonomiska-drosiba/>
- <sup>47</sup> Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, *Latvijas kiberdrošības stratēģija 2014–2018 (Ministru kabineta 2014. gada 21. janvāra rīkojums Nr. 40)* [The Cybersecurity strategy of Latvia 2014–2018 (Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of 21 January 2014, No 40)], [http://www.mod.gov.lv/~media/AM/Aktualitates/Publikacijas/Informativie%20materiali/Bukleti\\_Broshuras/Kiberdroshibas\\_strategija.ashx](http://www.mod.gov.lv/~media/AM/Aktualitates/Publikacijas/Informativie%20materiali/Bukleti_Broshuras/Kiberdroshibas_strategija.ashx)
- <sup>48</sup> See: Kultūras ministrija, *Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy (2012–2018)*, 2012, [https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedrības\\_integracija/Petijumi/En\\_Pamatnostad.pdf](https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedrības_integracija/Petijumi/En_Pamatnostad.pdf)
- <sup>49</sup> Author’s interview with an anonymous policy-maker, December 2017
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid.; Author’s interview with an anonymous policy-maker, January 2018
- <sup>51</sup> Likumi.lv, “Nacionālās drošības likums” [..], op. cit.
- <sup>52</sup> On the latter, see: LETA, “Rinkēvičs: ES mēģina pārliecināt atvēlēt līdzekļus ziņu un izklaides kanālam krievu valodā,” *TVNET*, 28.12.2014, [http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/541368-rinkevics\\_es\\_megina\\_parliecinat\\_atvelet\\_lidzeklus\\_zinu\\_un\\_izklaides\\_kanalam\\_krievu\\_valoda](http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/541368-rinkevics_es_megina_parliecinat_atvelet_lidzeklus_zinu_un_izklaides_kanalam_krievu_valoda)

- <sup>53</sup> Filips Lastovskis, "Cīņa pret "Sputnik": ĀM vēstuli no EDSO saņēmusi; nostāju nemainīs" [The fight against "Sputnik": The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has received OSCE's letter; will not change it's mind], Delfi, 01.04.2016, <http://www.delfi.lv/news/national/politics/cina-pret-sputnik-am-vestuli-no-edso-sanemusi-nostaju-nemainis.d?id=47260805>
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- <sup>55</sup> LETA, "Rinkēvičs: ES mēģina pārliecināt [..]", op. cit.
- <sup>56</sup> Author's interview with an anonymous expert, January 2018
- <sup>57</sup> LETA, "Aizsardzības ministrija noteikusi, kā Latvijas pilsoņiem jārikojas kara gadījumā" [The Ministry of Defence has defined how citizens should act in case of war], TVNET, 17.12.2017, [http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/765146-aizsardzibas\\_ministrija\\_noteikusi\\_ka\\_latvijas\\_pilsoniem\\_jarikojas\\_kara\\_gadjuma](http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/765146-aizsardzibas_ministrija_noteikusi_ka_latvijas_pilsoniem_jarikojas_kara_gadjuma)
- <sup>58</sup> See e.g. Aizsardzības ministrija, "Eksperti diskutēs par kibernetiskiem un propagandas izraisītajiem draudiem" [Experts will discuss cyberattacks and challenges of propaganda], 27.03.2015, <http://www.mod.gov.lv/Aktualitates/Aktuali/2015/03/27-01.aspx>
- <sup>59</sup> Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, *Nacionālās drošības koncepcija (informatīvā [..])*, op. cit.
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